

KAZEI 5



Animepunk Roleplaying

Michael Surbrook

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Animepunk role-playing set in a not-too-distant dark future

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PART ONE:

INTRODUCTION

カゼイ5 基本

At one point the twenty-first century was predicted to be a technological paradise, with flying cars, vacations on the moon, and robotic servants performing most household chores. Food would come in small pills, crippling diseases would be a thing of the past, automation would mean more leisure time for everyone, and atomic power would hold the answers to all of man's energy needs.

If only it were so simple.

The world of 2030 is a far cry from the one imagined during the highly optimistic 1950s. Instead of a bright, shiny future, filled with gleaming chrome and bright plastics, there is a dark and disturbing reality. Multinational corporations rule nearly every segment of their employees' lives — where they live, what they eat, where they spend their money, and what they spend it on. The police are just another profit-minded company, supplying their services only to those who can afford to pay. It is a world where replicated humans are manufactured and sold as commercial products, no different from cars, computers, or home appliances, where crime and urban violence has become so prevalent, whole sections of cities have been sealed off and abandoned. A future where man, in the never-ending effort to improve himself, has turned to genetic engineering to produce a superior human, and technology has exchanged mere flesh for cybernetic enhancements. And most frightening of all, so-called “esper weapons” command vast telekinetic forces capable of wreaking wide-scale havoc.

Welcome to the future.

What's In This Book?

Kazei 5 (a.k.a. K5) contains all you need to run a near-future animepunk action-adventure game. While set in its own universe, many elements of *Kazei 5* can easily be used in other settings, and much of the material in this book is readily adaptable for *Champions*, *Dark Champions*, and *Star Hero* campaigns. A GM wishing to run a *Kazei 5* campaign should read through the entire book first. This will allow you to decide what sort of campaign you wish to run, as well as which parts of the book you wish to use. The GM's Vault contains suggestions for different types of *Kazei 5* campaigns, including ones featuring only espers, or a world in which magic works along-side high-technology. Players should feel free to make a thorough examination of the book as well, although they should try to avoid the GM's Vault.

“I firmly believe that before many centuries more, science will be the master of man. The engines he will have invented will be beyond his strength to control. Some day science shall have the existence of mankind in its power, and the human race shall commit suicide by blowing up the world.”

— Henry Adams, 1862

Kazei 5 is laid out as follows:

- **Part I: Introduction And Campaign Basics** — The section you are reading right now, which includes a brief discussion of the cyberpunk genre, as well as anime and manga, and how the two relate to *Kazei 5*.
- **Part 2: Cybertech, Cyberspace, and Cyberarmor: The Animepunk Sourcebook** — This section is broken into a series of chapters, each of which examines a different facet of the animepunk genre. Here you will find *HERO System* rules and game mechanics for such campaign elements as cyberware, cyborgs, powered-armor suits, mecha, cyberhacking, and esper powers. While geared specifically for the *Kazei 5* setting, GMs should have no problem picking out specific rules and power sets for use in their own games.
- **Part 3: Cyborgs, Esper Weapons, and Replicate Humans: Characters For Kazei 5** — This section starts with character creation and development, then discusses the use of Resource Points, before wrapping up with extensive listings of weapons, armor, vehicles, and other gadgets.
- **Part 4: Arcologies, Zero Zones & Multinationals: The World of Kazei 5** — Here we take an in-depth look into the *Kazei 5* universe itself, including such elements as the history, geopolitical makeup, and technology of the setting.
- **Part 5: Corporate Operatives, Fixers, And Street Samurai: The People of Kazei 5** — This section presents a wide variety of characters, including espers, cyborgs, cyberdroids, and replicated humans.
- **Part 6: The GM's Vault** — Here you will find advice on running a *Kazei 5* campaign, a discussion of campaign styles and tone, secret “GM's eyes only” information, a timeline, as well as numerous scenarios and plot seeds.
- **Part 7: Appendices** — This section has a brief glossary of Japanese and slang terms, a bibliography, and a suggested *Kazei 5* soundtrack.

NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

Some of you may recall (and even own) the earlier, Hero Games edition of *Kazei 5* and may wonder what this volume will offer that the previous book didn't. My intent when writing *Kazei 5* Second Edition was to update the rules to the newest edition of the *HERO System*, expand upon and clarify certain concepts (such as how cyberware works, or what the side effects of esper powers are), and present the material in a clear and coherent fashion. Most everything from the first edition can be found in the second edition, just updated and expanded upon. A few things are missing (such as the Biochemistry section and some NPCs), but I think the material that replaces it more than makes up for the omissions.

REQUIRED HERO SYSTEM BOOKS

The only book required to run a *Kazei 5* campaign (aside from *Kazei 5* itself) is *HERO System 6th Edition*. Recommended additional books include the following 5th Edition volumes: *Dark Champions*, *The Ultimate Martial Artist*, *The Ultimate Mentalist*, *The Ultimate Skill*, *The Ultimate Vehicle*, and *The Hero System Vehicle Sourcebook*.

What's Not In This Book

While *Kazei 5* is billed as “animepunk role-playing” it certainly isn’t meant as a sourcebook for either anime or cyberpunk as a whole. It presents just a single setting, and while you can use the book to help create and simulate other settings and genres, you shouldn’t consider it the sole authority on such matters. In addition, this book doesn’t contain material printed in other Hero Games products. For example, while many of the firearms found in *Dark Champions* exist in 2030 and are used in the *Kazei 5* setting, they won’t appear on the equipment lists. The same goes for the expanded rules for mental powers (specifically Telekinesis) from *The Ultimate Mentalist*, or the Strength rules from *The Ultimate Brick*. Instead, *Kazei 5* will reference the required work where needed.

When reading this book, keep in mind that nothing here has been “written in stone.” Portions of the book (such as historical background) have been kept deliberately vague, in order to allow you, the reader and potential Game Master, to alter as you see fit. For example, some people may decide the whole concept of espers is too outlandish for a cyberpunk setting. If that’s the case, then remove them! Would you rather go the other direction and include even more extreme supernatural elements such as magic? Go ahead! (But see Part 6 before you do!) Simply put, there is no “correct” way to run a *Kazei 5* campaign. Each game is what you make of it.

What The Players Can (And Should) Read

Most of this book can be read by both the players and the GM. However, it is recommended players stick to the following sections:

Part 1: Introduction And Campaign Basics; Part 2: Cybertech, Cyberspace, and Cyberarmor: The Animepunk Sourcebook; Part 3: Cyborgs, Esper Weapons, and Replicate Humans: The World of *Kazei 5*; and Part 6: Appendices.

Players should be careful reading through Part 4: Corporate Operatives, Solos, And Street Samurai: The People Of *Kazei 5*. While it gives many sample characters and character ideas, it also presents many campaign NPCs the players should know little to nothing about.

Part 5: The GM’s Vault is meant only for the GM.



Figure by Urban Mammoth Ltd

BASIC CONCEPTS

Before we start, let’s take a look at some basic concepts behind the word “animepunk.”

What Is Anime?

“Anime” is what the Japanese call all animation in general, be it an episode of *Ghost In The Shell: Stand Alone Complex* or Pixar’s *The Incredibles*. It has its roots in postwar Japan, when Osamu Tezuka, the father of Japanese animation, first saw the animated films of Walt Disney Studios. Inspired, he then started his own animation studio, and went on to create such well-known characters as *Tetsuwan Atom* (a.k.a. *Astro Boy*) and *Jungle Emperor Leo* (a.k.a. *Kimba the White Lion*). These creations, in turn, influenced and inspired the next generation of anime (and manga) artists, who copied and modified Tezuka’s style while developing their own material. As time passed, this cycle repeated itself, until anime became the multibillion dollar industry it is today, in which animated TV shows can be found running at all hours of the night. Today, one half of all movie tickets sold in Japan are for animated movies, and one third of all books produced are manga.

Anime is not a genre in itself, but a storytelling medium, much like television or comic books. It is comprised of numerous genres and sub-genres, including science fiction and space opera, martial arts, horror and the supernatural, fantasy, and even superheroes. In addition, anime has a highly distinctive and easily recognizable artistic style, as well as a number of common conventions and stereotypes that tend to appear regardless of subject matter. These conventions include the “big eyes, small mouth” look common to most anime characters, how hair color can help define personality (black or blue hair is the hero, yellow is the American, red is the hotheaded character, and so on), exaggerated facial expressions, the ability for most anyone to leap incredible distances, and many more. Of course, as odd as some of these seem, they are no different than the common artistic conventions of Western comic books (specifically superhero books), such as impossibly skintight and/or impractical costumes, the exaggerated proportions of the heroes, and the occasional gravity-defying hairstyle.

One thing that sets anime apart from most Western (or, at least, American) animation is that anime isn’t “just for kids.” Anime (and manga) is usually geared for a specific age group, and can contain very serious and adult themes. A common description of anime is “those really violent cartoons from Japan,” often made by people who don’t realize that just because anime is a “cartoon,” it isn’t necessarily a “kids” cartoon. This is an important thing to remember when creating and playing an anime-inspired game.

What Is Manga?

The Japanese word “manga,” meaning “random (or whimsical) pictures” refers to printed cartoons and comic books. While it can be used to refer to any comic, regardless of national origin, today the word is specifically used to describe comics coming from Japan. Like anime, manga is a huge industry in Japan and has made large inroads into the American market. Manga shares many of the artistic conventions and styling of anime, and the two are often confused by people unfamiliar with the media.

What Is Cyberpunk?

Simply put, cyberpunk is a sub-genre of science fiction usually set in a bleak near-future Earth. The word was first coined in 1980 by Bruce Bethke as the title for his short story “Cyberpunk,” and was popularized by the publication of William Gibson’s novel *Neuromancer* in 1984. *Neuromancer* presented the reader with a dark, dystopian future where corporations had become more important than governments; information, no matter how insignificant, was more important than money; and people struggled to retain their own humanity in the face of body-altering technologies. An immensely popular book, it won the Hugo, Nebula, and Philip K. Dick awards, and served to inspire other writers, such as Bruce Sterling (*Mirrorshades*, *The Difference Engine*) and Walter John Williams (*Hardwired*), to create their own views of a not-so-bright future.

As cyberpunk has evolved and progressed, a number of fairly standard themes have emerged. The most common is the merging of man and machine through the use of cybernetics, creating an augmented human — one who is faster, stronger, and even smarter than before. The second is cyberspace, the linking of all the world’s computers into a single massive information net, similar to today’s World Wide Web. The third is artificial intelligence, where machines, either electronic or organic, become self-aware, and are indistinguishable from normal humans. Other themes include genetic engineering and biological modification (known as transhumanism), nanotechnology, artificial lifeforms, and class warfare (usually between the corporate elite and street-level “rabble”). Finally, cyberpunk stories tend to feature a great deal of violence, sex, rock music, and an extensive influence of Japanese culture (even before anime become popular!)

So... What Is Kazei 5?

Kazei 5 is a melding of certain anime and cyberpunk themes (along with a little transhumanism) into a coherent whole. It follows in the footsteps of such cyberpunk anime/manga as *Akira*, *Appleseed*, *Bubblegum Crisis*, *Ghost In The Shell*, and *Silent Möbius*, presenting a dark near-future world where technology has begun to run rampant, and humanity, as a whole, has started to question if it’s rendered itself obsolete through its own ingenuity. It’s also a world where a new type of human, the esper, has appeared. Initially a product of random selection and mutation, man’s meddling has turned the esper from a scientific curiosity only capable of limited telekinetic parlor tricks into a highly destructive powerhouse, with seemingly immeasurable powers and abilities.

When reading *Kazei 5*, keep in mind the following: this isn’t our future, it is a future. Many events in *Kazei 5*, while based on real-world occurrences, work out far differently. Technological advancements tend to follow a “best case” scenario, while political happenings are “worst case.” Thus, *Kazei 5*’s technology has advanced faster than ours, while many geopolitical crises resulted in disaster. At the same time, there is an effort to apply a veneer of “cinematic realism” to the setting, in which many campaign elements (such as espers and replicated humans) are given a logical reason for existing, even if their existence seems to be a bit improbable. Of course, you can also totally ignore any (or all) of the setting’s history and simply go with everything as presented, no questions asked. After all, when *Blade Runner* tells us it is 2019 and shows us replicants, antigravity cars, and off-world colonies, we don’t stop the movie and ask “Where did all of this come from?”

WHAT DOES “KAZEI” MEAN, ANYWAY?

The word “kazei”, when written in this fashion:

寡勢

means “small or numerically inferior military force.” This definition sums up perfectly the situation faced by the PCs if they chose to play the default *Kazei 5* campaign setting. Oh, and if you’re wondering, the “5” was included because the first sessions had five players, and it sounded cool. Besides, “Small Military Force Five” just sounds like an anime series, doesn’t it?

PART TWO:

**CYBERTECH, CYBERSPACE,
& CYBERARMOR:**

**THE ANIMEPUNK
SOURCEBOOK**

サイバーウェア

Cybernetics is the science of joining mechanical devices to a living body. It has its roots in the field of prosthetics, and many modern cybernetic systems are directly descended from older,

more primitive artificial body parts. Some of the first recorded examples of cyberware implants date from the mid-1960s, when CIA and KBG scientists attempted to surgically graft radios to domestic cats and dogs. Toward the end of the twentieth century, improvements in robotics allowed for highly functional artificial limbs, allowing those with physical disabilities to live normal lives. These days, advances in medicine have made a wide range of modifications possible, ranging from simple cosmetic body sculpts to the complete replacement of the human body. With the desired systems installed, you can become faster, stronger, and even smarter, pushing your physical capabilities far beyond the range of mere flesh and bone.

Cyberware And Society

Cybernetic modification is fairly common in the world of 2030, mainly due to the intense competition for material gain and desire for advancement found both on the streets and in the corporate boardroom. Dataports, used to link into any number of computer systems, are a *de rigueur* part of any corporate executive's life, as essential and commonplace as a well-tailored suit, PDA, and genetically-tailored secretary. In Japan, alcohol filters are typical among the salarimen who wish to be able to impress their bosses at company parties. On the streets, smartgun targeting systems are sought by those who want to be successful street samurai. Mercenaries and soldiers will often undergo the most extreme modifications, opting for such things as vision enhancements, internal radios, armored plates inserted under the skin, and action-reaction upgrades.

There are differing degrees of cyberware tolerance depending on social standing. Corporate executives, for example, will readily accept such systems as Datalinks, Direct Neural Interface (DNI) links, Cranial Computers, and Skillports, but tend to frown on extreme body modifications — such as cyberlimbs, artificial eyes, dermal plating, and the like. On the street, however, the philosophy is “more is better.” Anyone possessing extensive cyberware implants, especially such systems as cyber razors, replacement limbs, internal weapons systems, implanted armored sheathing, and the like is given a great deal of respect, while those with more passive cyberware systems are considered to be weaklings. Among paramilitary forces, the trend is quality over quantity. The specific systems you have aren't as important as what you can do with them.

“Check it out! Carbon-steel retractable razors, twin smart-gun links, synthetic muscle implants, reflex boost, synaptic accelerator, and reinforced skeleton. I am a state-of-the-art street samurai badass! You do not want to mess with me!”

— Marta Nys

if man is losing his identity as a living organism, and predict a future in which the world is populated by biomechanical monstrosities. Some go so far as to consider cyber implants to be an aberration against nature. Consisting mainly of those who still retain strong traditional religious beliefs, they include fundamentalist Christians and Muslims, Hasidic Jews, and Shintoists. As a rule, they will have little or nothing to do with anyone possessing obvious cybernetic implants, including cyborgs and replicated humans.

Acquiring Cyberware

In order to get a cybernetic implant installed, a character must first select the desired system and make sure it is compatible with both his body and any systems he currently has installed. This can be accomplished with a simple examination at any major hospital or reputable cybernetic clinic. If the character has never had any cyberware implanted, the examination will also tell them if they suffer from cyber-rejection (see page 97). This examination also includes a psychological screening process. The exam is designed to weed out persons with unstable personalities who might suffer psychological trauma resulting from their cybersurgery. Although mandatory, characters may be able to bypass the exam through bribery or blackmail — provided they find the right doctor. Of course, if a character goes to a street-level “chop shop,” the character's state of mind and/or body is of no concern, only his ability to pay.

After the surgery, characters must register their new cybernetic implant with a nationally accessible medical database. Bypassing the registration process is considered a crime and using unregistered cyberware to commit a crime is considered a felony. Of course, as with the psych exam, characters can avoid registering through the use of blackmail, bribery, extortion, or by simply going to a black-market street doc (but as the saying goes — *caveat emptor*).

In game terms, characters buy cyberware with money and Character Points. If the characters are government agents, they probably won't need to bother with the monetary cost of a new system, but will need to deal with the idea of the government “owning” their shiny new cybernetics. If the characters are street samurai and the like, GMs can charge whatever he feels will make for an interesting campaign sequence. Typically, black

Of course, cyberware still isn't fully accepted by everyone. There are those who question the current trend for otherwise healthy people to have body parts replaced by cybernetics. Others ask

CYBERWARE IN ANIME

Cybernetic systems of all kinds can be found in a number of anime and manga, including *AD Police*, *Appleseed*, *Cowboy Bebop*, and Dark Horse Comic's version of the *Dirty Pair*. It's especially prominent in various incarnations of Masamune Shirow's series *Ghost in the Shell*. In most anime and manga the existence of cybernetics is accepted as a normal part of life. However, a notable exception is found in *AD Police* when a character questions the need for replacing otherwise healthy body parts with cybernetic implants. Additionally, the presence of extensive cyberware modification is a prominent plot point in the film *Ghost in the Shell II: Innocence* — specifically its vulnerability to being “hacked” by an outside source.

market cyberware goes for 200% to 1000% of the normal costs, not counting the price of surgery. In the Neo York Zero Zone, cyberware is nigh-on to priceless, as there is virtually none to be had “on-hand.” Zoners tend to get new systems by smuggling them in from Neo York or by “acquiring” it from someone who doesn’t need it anymore.

Creating Cybernetic Systems

Cybernetic systems come in three basic groups — electrical, static, and bioware. Electrical systems include any and all devices designed to run off of either the body’s own bio-electrical field (*i.e.* they use the character’s normal END) or small high-yield batteries (*i.e.* they use an Endurance Reserve). Static systems are just that — fixed non-reactive implants. Bioware systems are lab-grown artificial organs designed to supplement (or replace) normal body functions. Each system is further explained and defined below.

WHAT’S IN A NAME?

Terminology associated with cyberware and cybernetics.

‘ware: A generic term for all cybernetics. Example: “How’s your ‘ware? Been runnin’ okay?”

Wetware: Usually used to refer to biological cyberware (a.k.a. bioware). Example: “Wetware? Never touch the stuff. I’ll take my own heart over some vat-grown replacement any day!”

Wire: Typically used to refer to combat ‘ware. Example: “I’ve got some Alpha-Class wire now! Now to find someone to ‘test’ it on....” To be “wired” is to be equipped with wire.

Cyberbrain: The common term for a cybernetic input/output processor, *i.e.* the interface between your cyberware and your brain. Example: “She hasn’t been right since someone hacked her Cyberbrain.”

CI/O: Short for “cybernetic input/output processor.” In a semi-sarcastic play on corporate terminology, “CI/O” refers to your Cyberbrain, while “CEO” refers to your original meat brain. Example: “My CI/O and my CEO ain’t gettin’ along, y’know? Not only am I sufferin’ the mother of all migraines, buy my ‘ware’s acting all jittery. I’m going to bed till they sort all this out.”

Chromed: To have visible cyberware. Comes from the current trend to disregard synthflesh coverings for cyberlimbs and the like. Example: “That boy’s way too chromed for his own good. Somebody’s gonna think he’s up to something and mess him up bad.”

Chromeboy/girl: Someone with an excessive amount of obvious cybernetic implants. Example: “He’s got a couple of chromeboys on display. Probably just for show. But I still wouldn’t mess with them. Ya never know.”

ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

Electrical systems are themselves divided into two broad categories: headware and bodyware. Headware includes systems designed to replace or augment the senses (such as vision or hearing enhancements), communication devices (such as implanted cellphones or radios), data input ports linked directly to the brain, and compact computer systems. Bodyware consists of virtually everything else, including cyberlimbs, reflex accelerators (designed to increase a character’s DEX), reaction accelerators (designed to increase a character’s SPD), as well as various forms of limb-mounted weapons systems, such as retractable blades, tasers, and firearms.

High-quality electrical systems use optical fibers to transmit data from implanted devices to processor chips in the brain. Known as a cybernetic input/output processor, the common term for this processor is a “Cyberbrain.” Just about anyone who wants or needs high-performance cyberware will have a Cyberbrain installed. It allows a person to interface fully with his cyberware, granting real-time sensory input and feedback.

Low-quality systems tend to link to clusters of nerves located near the spine, or to nerve endings in a specific limb. The use of optical fibers renders most electrical systems immune to adverse electromagnetic effects, although unshielded cybernetics, those with the *Poor Quality Limitation* (see below), have been known to short out and fail when exposed to intense electrical or magnetic fields (such as those found around power stations).

Game Masters who wish for a slightly more realistic treatment of electrical systems can require characters to buy an Endurance Reserve to power their cyberware. At its most basic, the Endurance Reserve has no REC score, but must be recharged from an external source. Slightly more advanced versions do have a REC score, but can only take recoveries when the character can and must take the *Limitation Personal REC* (-1/2). Some cyberware can be made to use external batteries (usually mounted on the belt), that can be swapped out quickly. These setups still require external wires, however. Larger batteries, usually mounted in artificial limbs, are possible, but will have reduced recovery time (*i.e.* the Endurance Reserve recovers every Minute instead of every Turn). The REC score for such systems should be fairly low — say 3-5 END per recovery period. Characters can buy additional REC with the *Limited Recovery Limitation* and recharge the battery by plugging into an external power source. In all cases, a character’s internal Endurance Reserve will only power his electrical cyber-systems; he can’t use it for bioware. This is considered a -0 Limitation and doesn’t appear on character sheets or system descriptions.

STATIC SYSTEMS

This form of cyberware consists of non-powered implants. Examples include armored plates and/or sheets implanted under the skin or wrapped around vital organs, skeletal reinforcement using either plastics or metal, and implanted vat-grown muscle tissue.

BIOWARE SYSTEMS

Also known as biological hardware or “wetware”, these systems are artificial organs designed to modify normal bodily functions. Usually this is by manufacturing chemical additives meant to boost the character’s physical capabilities. Examples include blood filters designed to screen out unwanted toxins, adrenal pumps to improve physical activity, and glands that release concentrated chemical signals in order to speed recovery from physical trauma. More extreme forms of bioware modification involve moving the internal organs to more protected areas of the body, or modifying existing body parts so they grant better protection to internal organs.

While less invasive than regular cyberware (*i.e.* it has less chance of being rejected by the body), bioware is still fairly experimental and the long-term effects of its use are still unknown. The concentrated stimulants and performance enhancements produced by bioware put an inordinate amount of stress on a normal body. It is generally considered a given that users of these systems will suffer from debilitating side effects as they grow older. On the other hand, most people who use such systems usually don’t expect to live long enough for this to become a problem.

In order for a character to be able to use bioware, he needs to have an adaptable immune system in order to avoid rejecting invasive foreign objects such as artificial organs and glands, or have them grown from his own cells. Characters who wish to use off-the-shelf bioware must buy the Talent *Bioware Compatible* for 5 Character Points. This Talent is hereditary and normally can’t be gained in play. Characters the GM allows to undergo extensive (and expensive) gene therapy can buy this Talent after character creation. In addition, bioware can be grown for individuals using tissue cultures taken from the host’s own DNA. This is an expensive and time-consuming process, but guarantees the character will avoid any complications from host-graft disease or implant rejection. Finally, many bioware recipients find they must change their diet and/or partake of specific dietary supplements and antibiotics in order to keep their bioware in proper working order. Such supplements may require prescriptions and can provide clues to investigators as to what sort of bioware an individual might have implanted.

Cybernetic Abilities

A wide range of Powers, Talents, and Skills are available as cybernetic implants. Any implant a character purchases is considered a Power. Characteristics bought this way are not affected by the increased pricing due to exceeding the campaign’s Characteristic Maxima. If a cybernetic device incorporates a Characteristic-Based Skill, the appropriate Characteristic is assumed to be 0. Thus, the base Skill Roll for such as system would be $9 + \text{CHAR}/5 = 9$. If the cyberware system grants a character a Characteristic-Based Skill (through certain forms of headware for example), then the Skill Roll is determined normally.

Cybernetic Limitations And Complications

Attaching a cybernetic device to the human body isn’t without its costs. Any character who does so has replaced a portion of his body with an artificial implant, and this may cause unknown and unpredictable problems at some point in the future. Although the cyberware of 2030 is fairly advanced, it is still a new science. Man still hasn’t fully understood the ramifications of what he has done. As many of these problems may take decades to become fully apparent, they are beyond the scope of most *Kazei 5* campaigns. However, cyberware can cause immediate medical issues as well. These issues are considered part of the *Cybersystem* Limitation (see page 12) and will be described under the individual cybernetic system entries.

While cyberware can correct many physical problems, it is not a cure-all for every medical issue. A character’s brain and nervous system must be able to accept the implants and controller chips (a.k.a. a “Cyberbrain”). Severe damage to a limb (such as from a fire) might render it physically impossible to accept a cybernetic implant or replacement. For example, if a character injures his hand so badly as to damage the nerves, he won’t be able to get a simple hand replacement. He might have to look into replacing his forearm or maybe even his entire arm. Even worse, damage to the spinal cord will certainly render most bodyware inoperable, while damage to the brain (from drug abuse, cybersystem feedback, and some neurological disorders) will prevent a character from using any cyberware at all.

Aside from the medical consequences of implanted cyberware, characters can encounter other problems when using secondhand cybernetics. Many implants have encoded serial and registration numbers. These numbers can be easily traced and may result in the character being Hunted by corporate or government law-enforcement agencies. Anyone caught possessing stolen cyberware will face a host of charges, such as: theft, murder (if the previous owner is dead), attempted murder, possession of stolen goods, possession of unregistered cybergear, and so on.

There are social issues regarding cyberware to deal with as well. As mentioned above, different social circles have different standards when it comes to accepting cybernetic implants. Normally this isn’t worth a Social Complication, unless the character spends a great deal of his time interacting with people outside of his normal social group. If he does, then the character can purchase a Social Complication of *Cyber Prejudice*, Occasionally, Minor (5 points).

Characters who possess excessive and/or obvious cyberware can purchase the Distinctive Features Complication. Obvious cyberware includes having armored plates set under the skin, replacing the character’s original eyes with metallic ones, leaving cybernetic limbs uncovered, having an external smartgun link (complete with cable), numerous dataports implanted into the scalp, and so on. Distinctive Features *Extensive Cyberware* is bought as Concealable, Noticed And Recognizable (10 points).

There are specific Limitations associated with all cyberware. These are detailed below.

RESTRAINABLE

All “off the shelf” electronic cyberware comes with built-in cutoff switches activated by specific electromagnetic pulses. Corporate and government security forces normally have EMP devices designed to activate these switches and can usually turn off all of a character’s cyberware with a single shot. (This is defined as a Dispel of all Powers with a cyberware special effect.) The cutoff switch is defined using the Limitation of *Restrained* (-1/4). Naturally, these cutoffs can be removed and/or disabled by anyone with the proper tools and technical expertise. Such modifications are common among certain corporate and government “black ops” units as well as gray and black-market cyberware. Simply recalculate the cost of the cybersystem without the *Restrained* Limitation to find what the character must pay for such modifications.

Certain systems have *Restrained* at the -1/2 level. This is used for such things as concealed guns and blades — although implanted into the body and not a Focus, they still can be rendered unusable via Grabs and Entangles as well as EMP weapons. If the character disables the EMP cutoff, he buys the Limitation at -1/4.

CYBERSYSTEM

All cybernetics (including static systems and bioware) must take the Limitation *Cybersystem* (-1/4). This is a “catchall” Limitation representing a wide assortment of drawbacks and side effects one may experience from having artificial body parts. Cybersystem effects include: the character having obvious modifications (*i.e.* a form of *Perceivable*), systems can be broken, disabled or hacked, they are detectable with specific scanners (*i.e.* a form of *Distinctive Features*), they can interfere with various medical procedures, they can increase a person’s weight (and thus can be detected via pressure sensors), and they may cause assorted psychological problems.

Specific drawbacks and side effects are listed with the individual cyberware systems (see pages 14-33). Psychological issues can result from most any cyber implant and include: phantom pains involving the missing limb or limbs (or other body parts); hallucinations, often of phantom voices (such as the character’s cyber limb talking to him), or of the people around the character assuming strange and sinister shapes; delusions, such as feelings of godhood or inhumanity; and finally a loss of identity, where the character feels less than human and more like a machine. In extreme cases the character can display psychopathic or sociopathic tendencies. At this point the character no longer considers himself to be human in the slightest and has become a living machine. Such individuals are known to engage in acts of extreme violence, and often will assault others, either taking their cybernetic systems to add to his own, or attempt to make his victim see the world as he does. Few survive the process.

POOR QUALITY CYBERSYSTEM

Cybernetic systems of low or questionable quality receive an additional -1/4 Limitation. This is recommended only for those characters who are equipped with cheap street-level or gray-market cybernetics, and only for electric systems or bioware. *Poor Quality* cyberware is notorious for requiring consistent and extensive maintenance (above and beyond what normal cyberware requires), shorting out in strong electromagnetic fields (such as those found around power stations or during extreme thunderstorms), or outright failing when under stress.

Game Masters can apply this Limitation to characters in a number of ways, including: giving the cybernetic system the Limitation *Requires A Roll* if the unit is not properly maintained, reducing the operating capacity of the system (*i.e.*, reducing its Characteristic bonus temporarily), or simply declaring the cyberware has out-and-out failed. The best time to implement this sort of occurrence is when the character is exposed to extreme stress (such as the middle of a fire-fight with a corporate security team) and needs the system’s benefits the most.

Other problems with using *Poor Quality* cybernetics can include the following: *Requires A Roll* (in order to get the system running when needed), Dependence (on regular maintenance), Physical Complications (dealing with things the cyberware can’t do, or prevents the character from doing), Susceptibility (to EMP fields and the like, the character may either take STUN [defined as bio-feedback] or the system make take dice of Dispel), and even Vulnerability (usually to attacks to a certain

Hit Location or from taser and other electrical attacks). Game Masters may want to declare that characters who take BODY damage from their Susceptibilities or Vulnerabilities are damaging

“Having trouble with your cyberarm? Update your cyberlimb OS today for faster and more reliable performance! Firmware upgrades available now at www.wecanrebuildit.com!”

the neurons in their brain and have such characters take Physical Complications relating to memory loss (either short-term or older memories), forgetfulness, short-attention span, or symptoms similar to Alzheimer’s. For more extreme cases, characters may lose points of INT and/or EGO. See Hiroko O’Hara (page 248) and Payne (page 257) for more examples of the problems characters can have with low-quality cybernetic implants.

As a final note, characters with *Poor Quality* cybersystems should consider taking a Vulnerability to Cyberhacking attacks (see the next section).

Hacking Cyberware

A common fear among people with cyberware implants is having their systems (in the form of their internal Cyberbrain) accessed remotely, or “hacked.” While the entertainment industry likes to use cyberhacking as an excuse for all sorts of cyberware problems, in the real world it’s fairly rare. The ability to remotely hack another’s cyberware requires fairly specialized equipment and is normally found solely in the hands of corporate or government special forces, and technologically-savvy criminal organizations. Most people will never encounter a cyberhacking attempt, despite what the movies, video-zines, and Net rumors would lead them to believe.

Cyberhacking is the ability to access another’s cybernetics and override their normal operations. Cyber-docs do this all the time, since they need to test implanted cybersystems before finishing an operation. Most external cybersystems (such as limbs) have I/O ports a technician can use to run diagnostics and tests. Doing it remotely, however, requires a character to override the Cyberbrain interface into the person’s nervous system by using specific radio frequencies.

In order to affect the target’s Cyberbrain, the character must buy specific Mental Powers, such as Mind Scanning (used to look for active Cyberbrains), Mind Control (defined as a programming override), or Mental Illusions (the sending of false data input). The target character isn’t totally helpless, however, as he can equip his Cyberbrain with a firewall (Mental Defense) or an attack barrier (Mental Blast with the *Trigger* Advantage). For more on hacking cyberware, see the Cyberhacking section on pages 41-42.

Damaging Cyberware

Any time a cybered Hit Location takes BODY damage after applying defenses, there’s a chance of a cybernetic implant in that Location failing. Characters should roll on the Cyberware Malfunction Table for each system in the affected Hit Location. Failure indicates the system is currently not working and has gone off-line. The character won’t be able to use the system until he visits a cyber doc for repairs.

It is possible for a Hit Location to be either Impaired or Disabled and still have operating cyberware. Of course, depending on the Impaired or Disabled area, this might not be of much help to the character. Conversely, failure of a cybersystem in one Location may adversely affect an otherwise unharmed part of the body. For example, a character shot in the torso might lose their reflex augmentation, and thus operate at a reduced Dexterity. This loss of DEX affects the character’s entire body, not just the torso (where the primary process for the system is located).

Repairing damaged cyberware usually requires a visit to a qualified cybersurgeon (unless the system is externally accessible, such as a cyberlimb). Repair and replacement of internal cyberimplants damaged due to physical trauma (such as getting shot or stabbed) usually is done when the character visits the doctor to have his injuries taken care of. The exact time to enact the repairs depends both on the system itself and the damage done.

It typically only takes 2-4 hours for minor systems, and 4-8 hours for more complex systems, bioware, and headware. The system itself is usually up and running as soon the surgery is over, but the character will require rest to heal any BODY damage he took to cause the system to become damaged in the first place. At the very least, characters need 12-24 hours to “break in” any new or recently repaired piece of cyberware.

“You do realize that only a complete and utter tool doesn’t get his cyber kill-switches disabled before going out to play? Right?”

— Sandra Blackmore

Damage

Less than 1/4 of the Character’s BODY	8-
1/4 to 1/2 the Character’s BODY	11-
Greater than 1/2 the Character’s BODY	14-

Chance of Failure

Type Of Damage

Location is now Impaired	-2
Location is now Disabled	-4

Modifier

UNHACKABLE CYBERWARE

Not all cyberware is hackable. Bioware and static systems are impervious to hacking, as are any systems the character links to via a data cable (although one can still try and hack the Cyberbrain directly). In addition, the GM may decide that some cyberware implants, such as a Basic Cyberarm (see page 24), have such simple interface systems they are effectively immune to cyberhacking. However, such systems should be those that offer only the most basic of abilities. In other words, if a system has a practical use in combat, then it can be hacked; if it’s there for “flavor,” it probably can’t.

ALL-IN-ONE 'WARE

Although listed individually, most headware is actually made up of several systems packaged and sold as one. For example, a Cranial Cellphone usually comes with a basic Datalink and an Internal Locator, while cybereye modifications are normally equipped with Flare Filters. Game Masters can easily link similar devices together to create off-the-shelf 'packages' for PCs to purchase.

ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

Headware

AUDIO AMPLIFIER

Effect: +2 versus Range Modifier for Hearing Group

Target: Self

Duration: Persistent

Range: Self

END Cost: 0

Description: Based on the same principal as the shotgun microphone, Audio Amplifiers are mounted in the character's ear, extending the distance they can pick up sounds. The use of helmets and other head coverings will severely hamper the Audio Amplifier's ability to pick up distance noises.

Game Information: +2 versus Range Modifier for Hearing Group (3 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 2 points.

Options:

1) Strong Audio Amplifier: Increase to +4 versus Range Modifier for Hearing Group. 6 Active Points; total cost 4 points.

2) Stronger Audio Amplifier: Increase to +6 versus Range Modifier for Hearing Group. 9 Active Points; total cost 6 points

AUDIO ENHANCEMENT

Effect: +2 PER with Hearing Group

Target: Self

Duration: Persistent

Range: Self

END Cost: 0

Description: This device functions like a broad-spectrum microphone and is capable of picking up a wide range of sounds. As with the Audio Amplifier, the use of a helmet or other head gear can interfere with the device's ability to function properly. In addition, very loud noises (such as explosions or jet engines) can overwhelm the audio pickup and render the character temporarily deaf.

Game Information: +2 PER with Hearing Group (4 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 3 points.

Options:

1) Strong Audio Enhancement: Increase to +4 PER with Hearing Group. 8 Active Points; total cost 5 points.

2) Stronger Audio Enhancement: Increase to +6 PER with Hearing Group. 12 Active Points; total cost 8 points.

AUDIO RECORDER

Effect: Eidetic Memory; Audio Only

Target: Self

Duration: Persistent

Range: Self

Charges: 1 Continuing Charge

Description: With this implant, the character can digitally record anything he hears to a compact flash-drive. The recorded data can then be downloaded via a Datajack or played through external speakers. As with all other ear-based cybersystems, various forms of head coverings can reduce the ability of an Audio Recorder to perform as desired. Most Audio Recorders come with at least a base-level Noise Filter to allow for more intelligible recordings (see page 18).

Game Information: *Eidetic Memory*, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (flash-drive, easy to obtain, 1 Hour; +0) (5 Active Points); Audio Only (-1), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 2 points.

CORNEA CLOCK

Effect: Absolute Time Sense

Target: Self

Duration: Persistent

Range: Self

END Cost: 0

Description: This simple implant projects a virtual digital read-out of the current time through the character's cybernetically augmented eyes. The character must have some sort of eyewear (such as the Cornea Range Finder or Low-Light Filter) in place before the Cornea Clock can be installed.

Game Information: *Absolute Time Sense* (3 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 2 points.

CORNEA RANGE FINDER

Effect: +2 versus Range Modifier with All Attacks plus Absolute Range Sense

Target: Self

Duration: Persistent

Range: Self

Charges: 0

Description: Using sophisticated microprocessors, this system allows the character to determine the range to a desired target, and then correct his aim accordingly. Since it uses the same neural pathway, a Cornea Range Finder isn't compatible with a Smartgun Link. *Poor Quality* Range Finders have been known to give incorrect readings, usually when confronted with cluttered terrain or multiple targets.

Game Information: +2 versus Range Modifier with All Attacks (6 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) (Total cost: 4 points) **plus** *Absolute Range Sense* (3 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) (Total cost: 2 points). Total cost: 6 points.

Options:

- 1) Improved Cornea Range Finder:** Increase to +4 versus Range Modifier with All Attacks. 12 Active Points; total cost 10 points.
- 2) Highly-Improved Cornea Range Finder:** Increase to +6 versus Range Modifier with All Attacks. 18 Active Points; total cost 14 points.

CODED TRANSMITTER

Effect: Mind Link, up to 8 specific minds
Target: Up to 8 characters
Duration: Persistent
Range: Special (see text)
END Cost: 0

Description: This is a specialized radio transmitter that broadcasts scrambled signals via a specific encryption sequence. Intelligible reception is only possible using a Coded Transmitter with the proper decryption key. Anyone else listening to the Coded Transmitter's unique frequency will hear undecipherable sonic garbage. As there are an almost unlimited number of signal combinations, the Coded Transmitter is a secure and effective method of communication.

The range of a Coded Transmitter depends on the environment. Most Transmitters can broadcast their signals over a radius of 3-4 kilometers. Longer ranges can be obtained by linking the Transmitter to an external booster (via the character's Datajack). Characters with the proper Systems Operations Skill can link their Transmitter's signal to their Cranial Cellphone (if they have one) and "piggy-back" on the Cellphone signal. This will require anyone receiving the signal to have a Cranial Cellphone as well.

Since most of the people using a Coded Transmitter are involved in covert operations with either the multinationals or various government agencies, the EMP cut-off switch is almost always disabled. A damaged or *Poor Quality* Coded Transmitter may experience gaps in its transmission (either bursts of static or dead space), reduced range, or the inability to stay on the proper frequency. In addition, a *Poor Quality* Coded Transmitter may share its frequency with other Transmitters (leading to cross-talk if the two are ever within range of each other), or it may suffer the occasional failure of its encryption key, and broadcast perfectly clear radio signals.

Game Information: *Mind Link to others on same coded frequency, specific group of up to any 8 minds, No LOS Needed (35 Active Points); Only With Others Who Have Mind Link (-1), Affected As Hearing Group And Radio Group, Not Mental Group (-1/2), Restrained (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 12 points.*

Options:

- 1) Encrypted Transmitter:** A slightly less expensive and easier to obtain version of the Coded Transmitter uses a less elaborate encryption/decryption process. An Encrypted Transmitter can be detected and decoded, although it's not an easy process.

Encrypted Transmitter: Radio Perception/Transmission (Radio Group), Concealed (-10 to Radio Group PER Rolls) (20 Active Points); Affected As Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-1/2), Restrained (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 10 points.

CRANIAL COMPUTER

Effect: Computer (INT 15, DEX 15, Speed 3, 35 points devoted to skills and programs)
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: A Cranial Computer is a fully functional microprocessor implanted in and linked to the character's brain. In many ways, a Cranial Computer is similar to a Skilljack (see below), the major difference being the Cranial Computer runs programs on its own, allowing the character to use more skills at once. Skill limitations for a Cranial Computer are the same as a Skilljack. One of the major drawbacks to a Cranial Computer is the difficulty of upgrading one. Any sort of major upgrade (or repair) will require an invasive surgical procedure with all the inherent risks and complications. In addition, a botched install may cause brain damage.

A damaged Cranial Computer may lose points of DEX and/or SPD, or may be unable to access desired skills or programs. A *Poor Quality* Cranial Computer may suffer from frequent system crashes and data errors.

Game Information: *Computer (INT 15, DEX 15, Speed 3, 35 points devoted to skills and programs (70 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrained (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 9 points.*

Options:

- 1) Cranial Computer Mark II:** Computer (INT 20, DEX 20, Speed 4, 50 points devoted to Skills and programs (110 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrained (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 15 points.

2) Additional Computer Functions: The Cranial Computer offers only the most basic form of possible computer installs. Game Masters should allow characters to purchase Computers with differing amounts of INT, DEX, and SPD, as well the following Talents: Absolute Time Sense (internal clock), Bump Of Direction (GPS link), Eidetic Memory (defined as the ability to store input), Lightning Calculator (dedicated math coprocessor), Lightsleep ("wait mode"), and Speed Reading (data scanning). A Cranial Computer may even have various Mental Powers for use against other computers, defined as wireless access programs. See the Cyberspace chapter for more.

CRANIAL CELLPHONE

Effect: Radio Listen and Transmit
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: This system installs a cellular telephone in the character's head. As with all such devices, signal quality depends greatly on the distance to the nearest relay station. Cranial Cellphones are installed so the character may choose to speak under his breath when using it. A damaged Cranial Cellphone may not be able to "dial out," while a *Poor Quality* version may suffer interference from other Cellphones or may have a very weak signal in all but the most open of environments.

Game Information: *Radio Perception/Transmission (Radio Group) (10 Active Points); Affected As Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 6 points.*

Options:

1) Secure Cranial Cellphone: Similar in concept to the Coded Transmitter, a Secure Cranial Cellphone allows for a direct connection with other Secure Cranial Cellphone users. As it can only connect to another Secure Cellphone, this implant tends to only be found among corporate couriers and executives.

Secure Cranial Cellphone: Mind Link, Any One Mind, No LOS Needed (25 Active Points); Only With Others Who Have Mind Link (cellphone access; -1), Affected As Hearing Group And Radio Group, Not Mental Group (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) Total cost: 8 points.

CRANIAL RADIO

Effect: High Range Radio Hearing
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: A full-spectrum, limited-range transmitter, the Cranial Radio allows the user access to a wide range of communication channels. The character has the option of speaking under his breath when operating this device, so as not to disturb those nearby. As with the Cranial Cellphone and Coded Transmitter, damage to the Cranial Radio will affect its reception and range, while a *Poor Quality* device may suffer from interference problems or inability to hold a proper signal.

Game Information: *HRRP (Radio Group) (12 Active Points); Affected As Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 6 points.*

DATAJACK

Effect: +1 with all computer-related Skills
Target: Self
Duration: Constant
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: Also known as a Direct Neural Interface (or DNI for short) this is an input/output jack coupled with a dedicated processor implanted into the character's skull. Common implant locations are the temple, behind the ear, or the back of the neck. Characters can have more than one 'jack implanted, as each Datajack is normally linked to a single device. Datajacks are readily visible, and while most people in the business world have one, those with four or more are often seen as "datajunkies" and are presumed to be obsessed with cyberware, the Net, and data input. When not in use, Datajacks can be filled with a dummy plug to prevent damage to the port itself. As Datajacks are linked to the character's nervous system, it is possible to wire any input device to trigger an electrical charge once it is plugged in. These charges will invariably burn out both the input device and the Datajack and can harm the user. Depending on the strength of the charge, he may be temporarily incapacitated or outright killed.

Game Information: *+1 with all computer-related Skills (4 Active Points); Requires DNI-Capable Device And Accessible Databable (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 2 points.*

Options:

1) Level Two Datajack: Increase to +2 with all computer-related Skills. 8 Active Points; total cost 4 points.

2) Level Three Datajack: Increase to +3 with all computer-related Skills 12 Active Points; total cost 6 points.

3) Input Processing: The datajack can be modified to allow the character to very quickly scan incoming data.

Input Processor: Speed Reading (x10) (4 Active Points); Requires DNI-Capable Computer And Accessible Databable (-1/2), Only Applies To Direct Neural Feed Data (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 2 points.

DATALINK

Effect: Cramming, Absolute Time Sense
Target: Self
Duration: Constant
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: A datalink is the simplest and most common form of Cranial Computer. It doesn't have much processing power itself, but it allows access to vast amounts of publicly-accessible data on the Net. Within five minutes, a character can acquire basic in-

formation on virtually any subject, download publicly accessible maps — or just check the time or weather anywhere on the globe. With a successful Computer Programming Skill Roll the character can reduce his base search time of 5 Minutes one step down the Time Chart for every two points his Skill Roll is made by.

Information gained by a Datalink should be only the most basic of facts. It doesn't allow a character to learn new Skills (use the Skilljack for that), but does allow him to quickly look up the answers to simple questions, scan newspaper headlines, check the time and weather, and so on.

To use a datalink, the character must have a Cranial Radio or Cellphone and be in range of a cellular transmitter (in a city, that's almost anywhere that isn't actively shielded) or connect to a terminal using a Datajack.

A damaged Datalink may tend to drop its Net connection, may take longer to access information, or may fail outright.

Game Information: *Cramming* (5 Active Points); *Requires DNI-Capable Device And Accessible Data-cable Or Cranial Cellphone/Radio* (-1/2), *Cybersystem* (-1/4), *Restrainable* (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) (Total cost: 2 points) **plus** *Absolute Time Sense* (3 Active Points); *Requires DNI-Capable Device And Accessible Data-cable Or Cranial Cellphone/Radio* (-1/2), *Restrainable* (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), *Cybersystem* (-1/4) (Total cost: 1 point) **plus** *Speed Reading* (x10) (4 Active Points); *Requires DNI-Capable Device And Accessible Data-cable Or Cranial Cellphone/Radio* (-1/2), *Cybersystem* (-1/4), *Restrainable* (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) (Total cost: 2 points). Total cost: 5 points.

Options:

- 1) **Better Access:** Add an extra use of Cramming. 17 Active Points; total cost 8 points.

EYE SHIELD

Effect: Resistant Protection (1 PD/1 ED) over the eyes
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: An Eye Shield is a rigid sheet of transparent armored plastic placed over the eye and mounted along the edge of the eye socket. Although it provides only minimal protection from most forms of attack, the shield will keep the eye free of dust, grit, liquids, and debris. As an option, the shield can be polarized, acting as a Flare Filter (see the next entry). Eye Shields, if not kept clean, can cause problems with other optical implants, such as Range Finders, Smart-gun Links, and the like. A damaged Eye Shield might send fragments into the eye or might cause perception problems.

Game Information: *Resistant Protection* (1 PD/1 ED) (3 Active Points); *Only Protects The Eyes* (-2), *Cybersystem* (-1/4). Total cost: 1 point.

Options:

- 1) **Thicker Eye Shield:** Increase to Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED). 6 Active Points; total cost 3 points.

FLARE FILTER

Effect: 5 points of Sight Group Flash Defense
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: A Flare Filter is an optical overlay designed to protect the character from intense glare and blinding flashes of light. They are popular with military personnel as well as those who work in adverse environmental conditions. As Flare Filters are made from polarized film, they can't be turned off by EMP pulses. However, *Poor Quality* Filters may work too well, making it harder for the character to detect objects in dimly lit areas or to tell the difference between similarly colored items.

Game Information: *Sight Group Flash Defense* (5 points) (5 Active Points); *Cybersystem* (-1/4). 4 points.

Options:

- 1) **Strong Flare Filter:** Increase to Sight Group Flash Defense (7 points). Total cost: 6 points.
 2) **Stronger Flare Filter:** Increase to Sight Group Flash Defense (9 points). Total cost: 7 points.

GRIT FILTER

Effect: 3 points of Sight Group Flash Defense, Only Works Against Particle-Based Irritants
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: Based off of the idea of nictitating membranes, a grit filter is a simple protective shield covering the surface of the eye. It prevents such things as blown dust, sand, and smoke from affecting the user's vision. It can be combined with a Flare Filter, but has been known to cause problems with certain other optical modifications, such as Range Finders.

Game Information: *Sight Group Flash Defense* (3 points) (3 Active Points); *Only Works Against Particle-Based Irritants* (-1), *Cybersystem* (-1/4). 1 point.

Options:

- 1) **Strong Grit Filter:** Increase to Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points). Total cost: 2 points.
 2) **Stronger Grit Filter:** Increase to Sight Group Flash Defense (7 points). Total cost: 3 points.

ACCESSING THE NET WITH YOUR MIND

Datajacks and -links allow a character to perform numerous activities that don't express well in game terms. For example, a standard Cranial Cellphone/Datalink combination (the world's most popular hardware option) should allow a character to get into voice contact with others, as well as video contact and conferencing, send and receive text messages and email, engage in instant messaging, browse the Net, listen to music (and purchase new songs as desired), read maps, read online books, check a 'to-do' list, online calendar, or address book, and download and play games. If desired, you can simulate this though the use of certain Talents (like Absolute Time Sense and Bump Of Direction), or Skills (usually a form of Knowledge Skill representing an accessible database). Game Masters who wish to better define the ability these abilities should use the Cranial Computer as a standard component of any Datajack/link implant.

INNER EAR ENHANCEMENT

Effect: +1 with Acrobatics, Breakfall, Climbing, and all other balance-related Skills

Target: Self

Duration: Constant

Range: Self

END Cost: 0

Description: This implant is mounted in the character's inner ear, helping him retain his sense of balance at all times. A damaged or *Poor Quality* Enhancement may give the character false readings, leading to minuses to his Skill Roll, or may Require A Roll to work properly in the first place.

Game Information: +1 with Acrobatics, Breakfall, Climbing, and all other balance-related Skills (6 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 4 points.

Options:

- 1) **Improved Inner Ear Enhancement:** Increase to +2 with Acrobatics, Breakfall, Climbing, and all other balance-related Skills. 12 Active Points; total cost 8 points.

INTERNAL LOCATOR

Effect: Absolute Time Sense, Bump Of Direction, Area Knowledge (see text)

Target: Self

Duration: Constant

Range: Self

END Cost: 0

Description: This implant is a specialized form of Skilljack (see below). It creates a virtual map for the character, showing the exact time, true north, and the surrounding layout. Of course, the map is only accurate as of the last update, and won't show internal features of buildings (unless this information is specifically programmed into the device). Internal Locators aren't true GPS devices, and aren't always 100% accurate; however, if linked to a Cranial Cellphone, they can become almost error-free in determining where the character is at any moment.

A damaged Internal Locator may show an incorrect time or no longer point north (both of which can result in a character getting lost fairly quickly). *Poor Quality* Locators often have large gaps in their virtual maps.

Game Information: Absolute Time Sense (3 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) (total cost: 2 points) **plus** Bump Of Direction (3 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) (total cost: 2 points) **plus** AK: area described in specific map skillsoft 14-, Variable Special Effects (any number of different areas, one at a time; +1/4) (6 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) (total cost: 4 points). Total cost: 8 points.

LOW-LIGHT FILTER

Effect: +4 to Sight Group Penalties, Only To Counteract Darkness Penalties

Target: Self

Duration: Persistent

Range: Self

END Cost: 0

Description: By gathering and amplifying ambient light, Low-Light Filters allow the character to see in very dimly lit conditions, presenting the world in various shades of green. As a Low-Light Filter requires at least a little light to function, it won't work in total darkness. As Low-Light Filters amplify all available light, the sudden presence of a bright light source (such as a flashlight) can blind the character. Low-Light Filters are often combined with Flare and Infrared Filters in order to provide a complete suite of vision enhancement and protection. Those who can afford it use Ultraviolet Filters instead. *Poor Quality* Low-Light Filters have a tendency to present murky images to the character and may burnout in the presence of bright or sudden light sources.

Game Information: +4 to Sight Group PER Rolls (8 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Requires Ambient Light (it won't work in total darkness; -1/4), Side Effect (character suffers a 2 x Effect Vulnerability to Sight Group Flashes while Low-Light Filter is active, and may experience a minor Sight Group Flash from looking at bright light, always occurs; -1/2). Total cost: 3 points.

NOISE FILTER

Effect: 5 points of Hearing Group Flash Defense

Target: Self

Duration: Persistent

Range: Self

END Cost: 0

Description: A popular implant with rockers and anyone who expects to be exposed to constant and/or loud noises, a Noise Filter provides some protection from high volumes of sound as well as extreme changes in sound intensity. As Noise Filters modify the ear itself, an improperly installed or *Poor Quality* Filter can cause problems with the inner ear and the character's sense of balance.

Game Information: Hearing Group Flash Defense (5 points) (5 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 3 points.

Options:

- 1) **Strong Noise Filter:** Increase to Hearing Group Flash Defense (7 points). Total cost: 5 points.
- 2) **Stronger Noise Filter:** Increase to Hearing Group Flash Defense (9 points). Total cost: 6 points.

OCULAR FLASH-PACK

Effect: 6d6 Sight Group Flash
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 4m
Charges: 1

Description: This system is a flash-pack mounted in the character's cybernetically augmented eyes. When activated the Flash-Pack projects an intense burst of light, similar to the flash on a digital camera. Although the overall range of the Flash-Pack is limited, in the right circumstances it can be highly effective. Damage to the character's cybereyes can cause the Flash-Pack to fail to function, while a *Poor Quality* Flash-Pack might not have the desired output (*i.e.* the Flash Attack is less than 6d6), or the device might also "leak" light into the character's own optics (a Side Effect Flash Attack).

Game Information: *Sight Group Flash 6d6 (30 Active Points); 1 Charge (-2), Limited Range (4m; -1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 8 points.*

Options:

- 1) Strong Flash-Pack:** Increase to 8d6 Sight Group Flash. 40 Active Points; total cost 11 points.
- 2) Weak Flash-Pack:** Decrease to 4d6 Sight Group Flash. 20 Active Points; total cost 5 points.

OCULAR FLASHLIGHT

Effect: Sight Group Images, +4 to PER Rolls
Target: Self
Duration: Constant
Range: No Range
Charges: 1 Continuing Charge

Description: Similar to an Ocular Flash-Pack, this device projects a brilliant beam of light from around the eyes, clearly illuminating any nearby object. While useful, these implants may conflict with other optical enhancements, such as Eyes Shields, Grit Filters, and the like. Also, damaged or *Poor Quality* Flashlights may produce less than the desired output of light (*i.e.* reduce the bonus to PER Rolls).

Game Information: *Sight Group Images, +4 to PER Rolls. Are Of Effect (1m Radius; +1/4) (27 Active Points); Only To Create Light (-1), No Range (-1/2), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (battery pack, easy to obtain, 20 Minutes; -1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 8 points.*

SKILLJACK

Effect: Various Skills (see text)
Target: Self
Duration: Constant
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: A Skilljack is a specialized type of Datajack, which links the input-output (*i.e.* I/O) port directly to the motor-skills center of the brain, allowing the character to access pre-programmed Skills (known as "skillssofts"). Typically, a character can access roughly three Skills at a time, although more powerful versions do exist. As with Datajacks, the common locations for a Skilljack implant are the temple or behind the ear. Characters can have more than one Skilljack, but this isn't recommended, as the character may encounter program conflicts between the different Skilljacks as well as the pre-programmed skills.

Due to the nature of the I/O interface and processor a Skilljack uses, characters are limited in the Skills they may select for their Skilljack. Skills that require physical ability or training, or that require a degree of inherent talent (and/or practice) can't be made into a pre-programmed Skill. For example, while one could set-up a skillsoft for a specific martial art, if the character using the skillsoft had never practiced said martial art (or any martial art for that matter), the skillsoft would be worse than useless, as the character wouldn't have the physical ability and muscle memory to reproduce the programmed maneuvers with any level of skill or speed. At best, he'd end up merely an ineffectual fighter; at worst, he'd injure himself. Of course, this hasn't stopped researchers and some amateur enthusiasts from trying to figure a way around this problem.

The following Skills are allowed in a Skilljack: Analyze (normally of physical objects), Bugging, Computer Programming, Criminology, Cryptography, Demolitions, Disguise, Electronics, Forensics, Forgery, Gambling, Knowledge Skill (including Area, City, and Culture Knowledges), Languages, Lockpicking, Mechanics, Navigation, Paramedic, Professional Skill, Science Skill, Security Systems, Survival, Systems Operations, Tactics, Transport Familiarity, Weapons Familiarity and Weaponsmith. If the GM allows optional skills from *The Ultimate Skill*, the following are also available: Armorsmith, Instructor, Musical Instrument Familiarity, Poisoning, and Research. It is possible to include various Interaction Skills in this list (such as High Society or Streetwise), but such Skills will be limited in application and use, and give the character an 11- in the Skill at best. For example, with High Society the character will know how to behave properly, how to dress, and so on, but unless the person who programmed the skill has interacted with the same people the character will, the character using the High Society skillsoft won't know "who's who," and won't be able to make any real observations about what is going on behind the scenes. This goes for Streetwise as well. Some Interaction Skills, such as Bribery or Seduction, can't be programmed into a Skillsoft.

WIRES? WHO USES WIRES?

Considering the spread of wireless computing in the real world, readers might wonder at the mention of things like physical skillsofts and DNI cables. There are several reasons for this sort of “old school” approach to cyberpunk. The first is the desire for a slightly “retro” look and feel to the setting. Some how, it just seems a little more “cyber” if people have cables running from their temples to their guns and guitars. The second is one of security. A wired link is far harder (if not impossible) to hack than a wireless one. Then there’s the whole plug-and-play aspect. Even considering the advances in twenty first century networking, it’s far faster to simply plug into a computer, device, or vehicle than it is to link via wireless. Also, once you’re plugged in, the dataflow is faster and more reliable. Of course, it does require you to have a wire in the first place and you usually can’t access anything covertly.

For GMs who’d rather go with a sleeker and more streamlined look, various wireless options are given for certain cybersystems. Those systems without such options can still be made wireless; just remove any Limitations relating to physical cables and the like.

As with any Variable Power Pool, characters need to keep a record of exactly which skillsofts they have available. These skillsofts can be switched out at anytime, but it takes a full Turn to do so. As with Datajacks, a Skilljack can use dummy plugs to prevent damage when not in use. A skillsoft can be damaged through rough handling or improper storage; a damaged skillsoft may be unreadable or may cut out and/or lockup at inopportune moments. A damaged Skilljack may require a Requires A Roll each time the character tries to use a Skill, or character may find his current Skill selection to be jammed in the ‘jack and can’t be switched until the ‘jack is repaired. *Poor Quality* Skilljacks may suffer all of these problems, as well as Skill conflicts, where different Skill sets prove to be incompatible. If this happens, some Skills may shut others out, limiting the character’s access to his Skill sets.

Game Information: *Variable Power Pool, 10 Pool + 5 Control Cost, No Skill Roll Required (+1) (14 Active Points); Limited Class Of Powers Available (only specific Skills may be used; -1/2), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 12 points.*

Options:

- 1) **Advanced Skilljack:** Increase to 15 Pool + 5 Control Cost. 19 Active Points; total cost 17 points.
- 2) **Very Advanced Skilljack:** Increase to 20 Pool + 5 Control Cost. 24 Active Points; total cost 22 points.
- 3) **Less Advanced Skill Jack:** Decrease to 5 Pool + 5 Control Cost. 9 Active Points; total cost 7 points.
- 4) **Wireless Skilljack:** Instead of using physical skillsofts, the character keeps his up on the Net, where he can access them at any time. Swapping skillsofts takes virtually no time, as the character simply quits one and then loads another. Add Powers Can Be Changed As A Zero-Phase Action (+1). 16 Active Points; total cost 13 points.

SYNTHESIZER LINK

Effect: +1 with all musical instrument-related Skills
Target: Self
Duration: Constant
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: This is a highly-specialized form of Skilljack, with an I/O port designed to interface directly with various electronic musical instruments. This cybermod is very popular with rockers and the like. Synth Links are similar in all other respects to Datajacks and Skilljacks.

Game Information: *+1 with all musical instrument-related Skills (4 Active Points); Requires DNI-Capable Musical Instrument And Accessible Datacable (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 2 points.*

Options:

- 1) **Improved Synthesizer Link Mark I:** Increase to +2 with musical instrument-related Skills. 8 Active Points; total cost 4 points.
- 2) **Improved Synthesizer Link Mark II:** Increase to +3 with musical instrument-related Skills. 12 Active Points; total cost 6 points.

THERMOGRAPHIC FILTER

Effect: Infrared Perception (Sight Group)
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: A Thermographic Filter allows the character to see heat patterns and traces. This can allow the character to see in (and possible operate in) dark or dimly-lit surroundings, although he will only see the outlines of most people and objects. Cold objects tend to appear as black shapes, while warmer objects will range from dark red to bright white (depending on temperature). Most people combine Thermographic Filters with Flare and Low-Light Filters in order to operate in a variety of environmental conditions.

Game Information: *Infrared Perception (Sight Group) (5 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 3 points.*

TRACHEA MODULATOR

Effect: Perfect Pitch, Mimicry 14-
Target: Self
Duration: Constant
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: Popular with rockers and other entertainers, this implant allows the character to control variations of pitch and tone. In addition the character can also duplicate most sounds he hears. *Poor Quality* Trachea Modulators tend to work erratically at best and have been known to burn out and require frequent adjustments.

Game Information: *Perfect Pitch* (3 Active Points); *Cybersystem* (-1/4), *Restraining* (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) (total cost: 2 points) **plus** *Mimicry* 14- (13 Active Points); *Restraining* (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), *Cybersystem* (-1/4) (total cost: 9 points). Total cost: 11 points.

ULTRASONIC RECEIVER

Effect: Ultrasonic Perception (Hearing Group)
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: Similar in design to an Audio Enhancement implant, this modification allows the character to hear both high- and low-frequency sounds. It is recommended this device be combined with a Noise Filter to prevent damage to the inner ear.

Game Information: *Ultrasonic Perception* (Hearing Group) (3 Active Points); *Cybersystem* (-1/4), *Restraining* (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). 2 points.

ULTRASOUND SCANNER

Effect: Active Sonar, Ultrasonic Perception (Hearing Group)
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: The Ultrasound Scanner is an implant mounted in the character's skull. It combines an ultrasonic projector with a receiver/processor to create a digital map of the character's surroundings, allowing him to "see" in all directions and to operate in total darkness. As it uses an active sonar "ping" while in use, the Scanner can be heard by anyone with an Ultrasonic Receiver implant. As with any sonar device, the signal can be bounced off clouds of small objects, giving false readings. In addition, *Poor Quality* Scanners may have trouble creating an accurate map and may run into trouble in areas with a great deal of clutter.

Game Information: *Active Sonar* (Hearing Group), *Discriminatory*, *Increased Arc Of Perception* (360 Degrees) (25 Active Points); *Cybersystem* (-1/4), *Restraining* (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) (Total cost: 17) **plus** *Ultrasonic Perception* (Hearing Group), *Increased Arc Of Perception* (360 Degrees); *Restraining* (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), *Cybersystem* (-1/4) (Total cost: 5 points). Total cost: 22 points.

ULTRAVIOLET FILTER

Effect: Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group)
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: This visual enhancement allows the character to see into the ultraviolet (UV) spectrum. During the day this can enable the character to see patterns (such as on flowers) not normally visible to

the unmodified eye. It can also allow the character to see a wide variety of forensic evidence, such as old bloodstains, footprints, and fingerprints (see *Dark Champions* for more). At night it allows the character to see normally, provided there is some form of UV light available. Ultraviolet Filters are more expensive than Low-Light Filters, and correspondingly less common.

Game Information: *Ultraviolet Perception* (Sight Group) (5 Active Points); *Cybersystem* (-1/4), *Restraining* (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 3 points.

VIDEO RECORDER

Effect: Eidetic Memory; Video Only
Target: Self
Duration: Constant
Range: Self
Charges: 1 Continuing Charge

Description: The character has a camera mounted in his eyes, allowing him to record anything he sees. The data can then be downloaded to a computer or digital video processor via a Datajack, or output directly to an external monitor. A Video Recorder can only record what the character sees, so the use of sunglasses, protective visors, and certain forms of Flare and Grit Filters can interfere with the recording process. Even so, Video Recorder implants, when combined with the Audio Recorder, have proven very popular with reporters.

Game Information: *Eidetic Memory*, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (flash drive, easy to obtain, 1 Hour; +0) (5 Active Points); *Video Only* (-1), *Cybersystem* (-1/4), *Restraining* (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 2 points.

VISION ENHANCEMENT

Effect: +2 PER with Sight Group
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: A Vision Enhancement replaces the character's natural eyes with cybernetically-modified vat-grown eyes. The result is sharper, clearer vision without needing glasses or corrective surgery. As with any cyberware affecting the eyes, characters need to make sure they are getting the best possible implants and surgery. *Poor Quality* cybereyes may short out (rendering the character temporarily blind), lack proper depth perception, lose color sensitivity (up to complete color blindness), or transmit images only in black and white. Even worse, improperly installed cybereyes may drift out of focus or may not be able to process input fast enough, leading to blurring and ghosting effects.

Game Information: +2 PER with Sight Group (4 Active Points); *Cybersystem* (-1/4), *Restraining* (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 3.

Options:

- 1) **Strong Vision Enhancement:** Increase to +4 PER with Sight Group. 8 Active Points; total cost 5 points.
- 2) **Stronger Vision Enhancement:** Increase to +6 PER with Sight Group. 12 Active Points; total cost 8 points.
- 3) **Telescopic Option:** +2 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group (3 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrained (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 2 points.
- 4) **Strong Telescopic Option:** Increase to +4 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group. 6 Active Points; total cost 4 points.
- 5) **Stronger Telescopic Option:** Increase to +6 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group. 9 Active Points; total cost 6 points.

Bodyware**CYBER BLADE**

Effect: Varies
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: Touch
END Cost: 0

Description: A Cyber Blade implant is normally attached to the radius and ulna in the character's forearm. There are a wide variety of implants available, including a single blade set to project from just behind the wrist, sets of two or three blades designed to project from the back of the hand, single armor-piercing punch spikes set into the forearm, short knuckle-mounted spurs/spikes, and tiny razor-sharp blades set into housings in the ends of the fingers.

Although extremely sharp and made from high-grade titanium-steel alloy, Cyber Blades aren't the all-purpose cutting tool the entertainment industry likes to make them out to be. Care must be taken to ensure the blades don't rip free of their mountings during a fight. The best targets for Cyber Blades are unarmored or lightly armored opponents (such as those wearing basic armored clothing). Heavy armor is usually impervious to a Cyber Blade, and trying to cut through military-grade combat armor may result in the blade breaking or the character damaging his own arm. A damaged Cyber Blade may not be able to be extended or retracted, or worse, may tear loose of its mountings and make it nearly impossible for the character to use his arm. *Poor Quality* Cyber Blades may not always extend when triggered, or may not lock in place once extended, retracting the moment the character strikes a foe.

Game Information:

Basic Cyber Blade: HKA 2d6, *Reduced Endurance* (0 END; +1/2) (45 Active Points); *Restrained* (can be restrained via EMP pulse and/or Grabs and Entangles; -1/2), *Reduced Penetration* (-1/4), *Cybersystem* (-1/4), *No Knockback* (-1/4), *Real Weapon* (-1/4). Total cost: 18 points.

Forearm Blade: HKA 1d6+1, *Reduced Endurance* (0 END; +1/2) (30 Active Points); *Restrained* (can be restrained via EMP pulse and/or Grabs and Entangles; -1/2), *Cybersystem* (-1/4), *No Knockback* (-1/4), *Real Weapon* (-1/4). Total cost: 13 points.

Punch Spike: HKA 1 1/2d6, *Reduced Endurance* (0 END; +1/2), *Armor Piercing* (+1/4) (32 Active Points); *Restrained* (can be restrained via EMP pulse and/or Grabs and Entangles; -1/2), -1 *Decreased STUN Multiplier* (-1/4), *Cybersystem* (-1/4), *No Knockback* (-1/4), *Real Weapon* (-1/4). Total cost: 13 points.

Knuckle Spurs: HKA 1 1/2d6, *Reduced Endurance* (0 END; +1/2) (37 Active Points); *Restrained* (can be restrained via EMP pulse and/or Grabs and Entangles; -1/2), *Cybersystem* (-1/4), *No Knockback* (-1/4), *Real Weapon* (-1/4). Total cost: 16 points.

Finger Razors: HKA 1d6, *Reduced Endurance* (0 END; +1/2) (22 Active Points); *Restrained* (can be affected by EMP pulses as well as Grabs and Entangles; -1/2), *Reduced Penetration* (-1/4), *Cybersystem* (-1/4), *No Knockback* (-1/4), *Real Weapon* (-1/4). Total cost: 9 points.

CYBER GUN

Effect: Varies
Target: Varies
Duration: Instant
Range: Varies
Charges: Varies

Description: Cyber Guns are specially designed firearms mounted in a character's Cyber Limb. A variety of weapons, from pistols to shotguns are available. The firing port is in the base of the palm, although in some models the barrel pops out from the forearm. The weapon's magazine resides within the arm, unless the character has a Machine Pistol or a Submachine Gun, in which case the magazine will be quite obvious. Only one cybergun can be mounted in a character's arm.

A variation of the Cyber Gun has the character alter a finger (or fingers) of his Cyber Arm to accept a pistol or shotgun round. This results in a single-shot weapon, reloaded through the muzzle and fired by a preset finger motion (usually by a certain flexing of the thumb). Characters can modify all five fingers of this hand this way and can fire all of them at once if they wish.

A Cyber Gun mount in a Cyber Limb is usually obvious if the viewer knows what to look for. There will be an eject port for spent shells (unless the character uses caseless rounds), another port for loading the clip or magazine, and a third port in the palm for the muzzle. For larger weapons, such as shotguns, there may be an opening under the arm for the weapon to pop out of when in use. Fingers with Cyber Gun mounts are longer and thicker than normal, and may cause problems when the character attempts to work with small objects. Finally, characters who wish to combine Cyber Blades and Cyber Guns usually have to get a forearm that is larger and/or thicker than normal for their Cyber Arm in order to properly fit both mechanisms.

Characters who have Cyber Guns should take care when engaging in hand-to-hand combat. While a sharp blow to the forearm normally won't set the weapon off, such impacts can cause problems with the firing mechanism, leading to misfires and jamming. A *Poor Quality* weapon may go off if the Cyber Gun is struck with a hard blow, and they are known to jam and/or misfire unless very well maintained and kept scrupulously clean. Firing a damaged Cyber Gun could result in the round detonating while still in the barrel (doing damage to the Cyber Arm itself) or in run-away fire, where the weapon continues to shoot until the magazine is exhausted.

Game Information:

Pistol: RKA 1d6+1 (20 Active Points); *Restrained* (can be affected by EMP pulses as well as Grabs and Entangles; -1/2), Beam (-1/4), 12 Charges (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (8; -1/4). Total cost: 8 points.

Machine Pistol: RKA 1d6+1, Autofire (3 shots; +1/4), 20 Charges (+1/4) (30 Active Points); *Restrained* (can be affected by EMP pulses as well as Grabs and Entangles; -1/2), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (10; -1/4). Total cost: 13 points.

Magnum Pistol: RKA 2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4) (37 Active Points); 6 Charges (-3/4), *Restrained* (can be affected by EMP pulses as well as Grabs and Entangles; -1/2), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (12; -1/4). Total cost: 12 points.

Submachine Gun: RKA 1d6+1, 30 Charges (+1/4), Autofire (5 shots; +1/2) (35 Active Points); *Restrained* (can be affected by EMP pulses as well as Grabs and Entangles; -1/2), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (13; -1/4). Total cost: 15 points.

Shotgun: RKA 2 1/2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4) (50 Active Points); 4 Charges (-1), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (-2 Range Modifier; -1/2), *Restrained* (can be affected by EMP pulses as well as Grabs and Entangles; -1/2), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), Reduced By Range (-1/4), Reduced Penetration (-1/4), STR Minimum (13; -1/4). Total cost: 12 points.

Options:

1) Finger-Mounted Cyber Gun (Pistol): RKA 1d6+1 (20 Active Points); Beam (-1/4), 1 Charge (-2), Real Weapon (-1/4), *Restrained* (can be affected by EMP pulses as well as Grabs and Entangles; -1/2), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (-2 Range Modifier; -1/2), STR Minimum (8; -1/4). Total cost: 4 points.

2) Finger-Mounted Cyber Gun (Magnum Pistol): RKA 2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4) (37 Active Points); Beam (-1/4), 1 Charge (-2), Real Weapon (-1/4), *Restrained* (can be affected by EMP pulses as well as Grabs and Entangles; -1/2), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (-2 Range Modifier; -1/2), STR Minimum (12; -1/4). Total cost: 8 points.

3) Finger-Mounted Cyber Gun (Shotgun Pistol): RKA 2 1/2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4) (50 Active Points); Beam (-1/4), 1 Charge (-2), Real Weapon (-1/4), Reduced By Range (-1/4), Reduced Penetration (-1/4), *Restrained* (can be affected by EMP pulses as well as Grabs and Entangles; -1/2), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (-2 Range Modifier; -1/2), STR Minimum (13; -1/4). Total cost: 9 points.

4) Multiple Finger Cyber Guns: Add Autofire (2-3 shots; +1/4) or (4-5 shots; +1/2) and increase the number of Charges to match the number of the fingers the character has modified.

CYBER LIMBS

Effect: Varies
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: Varies

Description: Replacement limbs come in two varieties: cybernetic implants and organic replacements. An organic replacement limb is usually grown from the character's own muscle tissue (to prevent rejection) and functions exactly like the original limb. Cybernetic implants are fully functional prostheses capable of performing all standard limb movements. A Cyber Limb can be covered with a layer of synthetic flesh ("faux skin") or left with the metal exposed (a common option for street samurai and those who dwell in Zero Zones).

The basic Cyber Limb is simply a lightly armored prosthetic. It is secured to the character's skeleton via a support framework designed to keep the limb from tearing free from the body (represented by the +1 BODY bonus). Characters can add Armor to a Cyber Limb, with the typical limb having 2-4 DEF. Heavier armor is possible, with 7 DEF being the maximum for non-cyborg characters. In order to reduce issues of psychological trauma, phantom pains, and the like, Cyber Limbs are also wired to the character's nervous system, giving the character a sense of touch throughout the limb. This neural link also means the character can feel heat, cold, and even pain through the limb. Dampeners can be installed to reduce or virtually eliminate unwanted sensations.

All cyberlimbs cost END to use (since the body needs to exert itself to a certain extent while the limb is in operation). However, GMs should allow characters to maintain Grabs and/or brace themselves with their Cyber Limbs without charging them END per Phase (or, barring that, charge them only a single point of END per Phase). This represents the idea that once the character has grabbed onto something with a Cyber Arm (for example), he can simply "lock" the hand in place and no longer worry about maintaining his grip. Of course, the reverse is also true — characters with damaged or *Poor Quality* limbs may find they can't maintain a grip, they can't open a closed hand, or a joint may have become frozen, making walking (or other actions) impossible. Worse yet, a damaged

hand may keep tightening its grip on an object doing STR Damage every Phase until the object (or the limb) breaks.

A *Poor Quality* limb may have other problems, including no sense of touch (making it hard for the character to manipulate objects), an extra sensitive neural link (meaning the character takes 2x STUN from damage to the limb), a lack of motion (resulting in minuses to DEX Rolls made with the limb), or episodes of “the shakes” where the limb vibrates and/or shudders for a short period of time and is functionally useless.

The STR bonuses from Cyber Limbs are not compatible with the STR bonuses from Muscle Augmentation. If a character has both systems, the GM needs to decide which system works with which actions. Usually, the Muscle Augmentation will affect any action performed with the whole body, while the Cyber Arm will only affect actions with that arm. Actions requiring both limbs should take an average of the bonuses. For example, a 10 STR character has a +5 STR Cyber Arm (his right) and +10 STR from Muscle Augmentation. Kicks, leaping, punches with the left arm, and certain forms of lifting will use the character's full 20 STR. Grabs and punches with the right arm will use 15 STR. Anything requiring both arms (such as meeting the STR Minimum of Two-Handed Weapon), will use the average, which in this case is 18 STR $((10 + 5)/2 = 15/2 = +8 \text{ STR})$.

Game Information:

Basic Cyberarm: +1 BODY (total cost: 1 point) **plus** Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED) (6 Active Points); Requires A Roll 9- (or Locations 6-8; -1 1/2), Only Affects Right/Left Arm (-1) (total cost: 2 points). Total cost: 3 points.

Basic Cyberleg: +1 BODY (total cost: 1 point) **plus** Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED) (6 Active Points); Requires A Roll 11- (or Locations 14-18; -1), Only Affects Right/Left Leg (-1) (total cost: 2 points). Total cost: 3 points.

Single Strength Arm: +5 STR (5 Active Points); Only When Using [Right/Left] Arm (-1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4) (total cost: 3 points) **plus** +1 BODY (total cost: 1 point) **plus** Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED) (6 Active Points); Requires A Roll 9- (or Locations 6-8; -1 1/2), Only Affects Right/Left Arm (-1) (total cost: 2 points). Total cost: 6 points.

Dual Strength Arms: +5 STR, Only When Using Arms (+0) (5 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4) (total cost: 4 points) **plus** +2 BODY (total cost: 2 points) **plus** Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED) (6 Active Points); Requires A Roll 9- (or Locations 6-8; -1 1/2) (total cost: 2 points). Total cost: 8 points.

Single Strength Hand: +5 STR; Only When Using [Right/Left] Hand (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4) (total cost: 3 points) **plus** Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED) (6 Active Points); Requires A Roll 8- (or Location 6; -1 3/4), Only Affects Right/Left Hand (-1) (total cost: 2 point). Total cost: 5 points.

Dual Strength Legs: +5 STR, Only When Using Legs (+0) (5 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4) (total cost: 4 points) **plus** +2 BODY (total cost: 2 points) **plus** Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED) (6 Active Points); Requires A Roll 11- (or Locations 14-18; -1) (total cost: 3 points). Total cost: 9 points.

FILTRATION SYSTEMS

Effect: Varies
Target: Self
Duration: Constant
Range: Self
END Cost: Varies

Description: A Filtration System is an implant designed to protect the character from certain harmful substances. An Air Filter allows the character to breathe in the presence of smoke, dust, and similar air-borne irritants. An Alcohol Filter, set into the kidney, removes the effects of ingested alcohol on the body. A Gill Implant allows a character to breathe underwater. An Internal Respirator allows the character to forego breathing entirely, although only for a short period of time. A Pathogen Filter provides almost total protection from a wide variety of communicable diseases.

Damaged Filters usually simply stop working until repaired or replaced. *Poor Quality* Filters tend to work sporadically (i.e. suffer from the *Requires A Roll Limitation*).

Game Information:

Air Filter: Life Support (Expanded Breathing (can breathe in the presence of heavy smoke, dust, and similar particles)) (5 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 4 points.

Alcohol Filter: Life Support (Immunity: Alcohol) (2 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 2 points.

Gill Implant: Life Support (Expanded Breathing (can breathe underwater)) (5 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 4 points.

Internal Respirator: Life Support (Self-Contained Breathing) (10 Active Points); 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (oxygen, easy to obtain, 5 Minutes; -1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 6 points.

Pathogen Filter: Life Support (Immunity: All terrestrial diseases and biowarfare agents) (5 Active Points); Requires A Roll 14- (-1/4), Not Versus Bioweapons (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 3 points.

HYDRAULIC JACK

Effect: Leaping +8m
Target: Self
Duration: Constant
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: Also known as “rabbit legs,” “spring heels,” and “spring legs,” a Hydraulic Jack is mounted in the character's Cyber Legs, allowing him to make great leaps. A damaged Jack suffers from reduced performance, while *Poor Quality* Jacks may operate

only sporadically or tend to throw the character off-balance, giving him minuses to his To-Hit Rolls for landing.

Game Information: *Leaping +8m, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) (6 Active Points); No Noncombat Movement (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 3 points.*

Options:

1) Strong Hydraulic Jack: Increase to Leaping +12m. 9 Active Points; total cost 5 points.

2) Stronger Hydraulic Jack: Increase to Leaping +16m. 12 Active Points; total cost 7 points.

IMPACT BRACE

Effect: Knockback Resistance -6m, HKA 1d6
Target: Varies
Duration: Varies
Range: Varies
END Cost: 0

Description: Mountable only in Cyber Legs, Impact Braces are heavy spikes that project from the heel, anchoring the character into soft earth, clay, gravel, asphalt, and most other surfaces. Impact Braces can also be used as a weapon if needed.

Game Information: *Knockback Resistance -6m (6 Active Points); Character Must Be Aware Of Attack (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4), Not Usable On Surfaces With A DEF Greater Than 5 (-1/4) (total cost: 3 points) plus HKA 1d6, Armor Piercing (+1/4), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) (26 Active Points); Restrainable (can be affected by EMP pulses as well as Grabs and Entangles; -1/2), No Knockback (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4) (total cost: 11 points). Total cost: 14 points.*

MAGNETIC PADS

Effect: Clinging (25 STR)
Target: Self
Duration: Constant
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: These are electromagnetic pads placed on the extremities of a character's Cyber Limbs, allowing him to cling securely to any ferrous material, such as metal sheeting. Magnetic Pads have a weight rating of 800 kilograms, which cannot be exceeded (in other words, the 25 STR is used, regardless of the character's actual STR).

Game Information: *Clinging 25 STR (15 Active Points); Can Only Cling To Ferrous Metals (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total Cost: 7 points.*

REFLEX ENHANCEMENT

Effect: +6 DEX, +2 OCV, +2 DCV
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

*"There's quick, there's fast, and then there's me."
 — Marta Nys*

Description: The character's nervous system is augmented and upgraded through the use of adrenal injectors and neural accelerators. As with all physical alterations of this type, the character's skeletal and muscle structure must be modified to accommodate his new abilities (*i.e.* characters should buy 1-2 points of extra BODY or such cyberware as Muscle Augmentation or Skeletal Reinforcement in addition to their Reflex Enhancement).

The character's Reflex Enhancement isn't active at all times and must be triggered as a Zero-Phase Action. Once active, the character's accelerated nervous system is usually easily identifiable by anyone who knows what to look for, and people new to their Reflex Enhancement tend to be accident prone — knocking over objects they are trying to pick up, tripping over their own feet, and sometimes walking into things. Some characters have older forms of Reflex Enhancement, which require a chemical activator before they will "kick in." This activator takes the form of a simple inhaler and is taken orally into the lungs.

It is difficult to damage a Reflex Enhancement due to the dispersed nature of the implant. The primary processor is located in the small of the back along the spine; an impact there can shut the entire cybersystem down, eliminating the character's DEX bonus. *Poor Quality* Enhancement's may have trouble activating or may short out if used for an extended period. People with *Poor Quality* Reflex Enhancement are known to suffer from bouts of "the shakes."

Game Information: +6 DEX (12 Active Points); *Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) (total cost: 8 points) plus +2 OCV (10 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) (total cost: 7 points) plus +2 DCV (10 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) (total cost: 7 points). Total cost: 20 points.*

Options:

1) Strong Enhancement: Increase to +9 DEX, +3 OCV, +3 DCV. 48 Active Points; total cost 32 points.

2) Stronger Enhancement: Increase to +12 DEX, +4 OCV, +4 DCV. 64 Active Points; total cost 42 points.

3) Weaker Enhancement: Decrease to +3 DEX, +1 OCV, +1 DCV. 16 Active Points; total cost 10 points.

4) Chemical Activation: The character uses an inhaler to activate his Reflex Enhancement. Remove Restrainable (-1/4). Add 6 Continuing Charges lasting 5 Minutes each (+0), OAF (inhaler; -1), Extra Time (Extra Phase, Only to Activate, -1/2).

CHARACTER- ISTICS MAXES FOR CYBERWARE

Characters who purchase characteristics through cyberware should “top out” at around 30-33. The value presumes that the best cyberware can do is add roughly +10 to the Characteristic Maxima of 20. It also represents the limits the human body can endure from cybernetic implants and preserves a form of play-balance between characters with cyberware and cyborgs.

Standard: 32 Active Points; total cost 12 points.

Strong: 48 Active Points; total cost 16 points.

Stronger: 64 Active Points; total cost 23 points.

Weak: 16 Active Points; total cost 6 points.

5) Accelerated Reflexes: This is a less-elaborate form of Reflex Enhancement. Instead of purchasing DEX and CV, the character purchases Lightning Reflexes with all actions. The Limitations remain the same and the character can purchase Chemical Activation for his Accelerated Reflexes if he so wishes. Characters can purchase from +2 to +8 DEX in this manner.

6) Ambidexterity: The character’s nervous system is modified so he can use both hands with equal skill. *Ambidexterity (no Off Hand penalty) (3 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 2 points.*

SMARTGUN LINK

Effect: +2 with Ranged Combat, +1 versus Range Modifier

Target: Self

Duration: Constant

Range: Self

END Cost: 0

Description: With this device, the character has an action-reaction feedback circuit implant, allowing him to properly use a smartgun-equipped firearm. When active, the Smartgun Link places a floating crosshair in the character’s field of vision, allowing for greater accuracy. The Link will also display an ammunition counter in the lower right edge of the eye.

The standard Smartgun Link uses an implanted subdermal receiver in the palm of the hand, which then links the receptor in the grip of a smartlinked weapon. Lesser quality systems use an external cable, which runs from the character’s datalink to the weapon. The most basic version of the Smartgun Link forgoes any implants and consists of goggles (allowing for a holographic “heads up” display) and cable.

Due to the nature of the feedback circuit, a Smartgun Link isn’t compatible with a Cornea Range Finder, a lasersight, or a scope. A damaged Smartgun Link usually fails outright, although some might give false ammunition counts or have a crosshair that’s off-center, causing OCV minuses instead of bonuses. *Poor Quality* Links almost invariably have external cables and are known to suffer from targeting issues when dealing with numerous opponents. In addition, all Smartgun Links can only provide bonuses to targets the character can actually see. They will not help if the character is firing blindly, firing in two different directions at once, behind his back, and so on. Having a second Smartgun Link will allow the character to use the granted bonuses with two weapons at once, although the system may still have problems with tracking widely separated targets.

Game Information: +2 with Ranged Combat (16 Active Points); *Requires Smartlinked Weapon (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch;*

-1/4), Limited Range (64m; -1/4) (total cost: 7 points) plus +1 Range Skill Level with All Attacks (3 Active Points); Requires Smartlinked Weapon (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Limited Range (64m; -1/4) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 8 points.

Options:

1) Ammo Counter: Game Masters who wish to include this feature on the character sheet should include this power: *Detect Ammunition Remaining 11- (Sight Group) (5 Active Points); Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 3 points.*

2) High-Quality Smartgun Link: Increase to +3 with Ranged Combat and +2 with Range Modifier. 30 Active Points; total cost: 14 points.

3) Low-Quality Smartgun Link: Add OAF (external cable; -1). Total cost: 6 points.

4) Basic Smartgun Link: Reduce to +1 with Ranged Combat, add OAF (goggles and external cable; -1). Total cost: 3 points.

5) Twin Smartgun Links: Add a second Smartgun Link. +5 points.

ENHANCED SMARTGUN LINK

Effect: Absolute Range Sense, +2 with Ranged Combat, +2 versus Range Modifier, Detect Weapon Status

Target: Self

Duration: Constant

Range: Self

END Cost: 0

Description: An Enhanced Smartgun Link includes a built-in range finder and a highly-detailed “weapon status” retinal display, indicating not only the ammunition remaining but also pertinent information about the weapon itself (*i.e.*, jammed, overheating, operating within normal parameters, and so on). The weapon status read-out tells the character if the weapon safety is on or not, which burst fire setting has been selected, and whether or not the target is within the weapon’s maximum effective range.

Enhanced Smartgun Links have the same compatibility limitations as a regular Smartgun Link as well as the same problems if damaged. Due to their complex design, it’s not possible to get a *Poor Quality* Enhanced Smartgun Link.

Game Information: +2 with Ranged Combat (16 Active Points); *Requires Smartlinked Weapon (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Limited Range (64m; -1/4) (total cost: 7 points) plus +2 Range Skill Level with All Attacks (6 Active Points); Requires Smartlinked Weapon (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Limited Range (64m; -1/4) (total cost: 3 points). plus Absolute Range Sense (3 Active Points); Requires Smartlinked Weapon (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) (total cost: 1 point) plus Detect Status of Smartlinked Weapon 13- (Sight Group) Analyze, Discriminatory (14 Active Points);*

Requires Smartlinked Weapon (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) (total cost: 7 points). Total cost: 18 points.

Options:

1) Gun Camera Link: An optical pickup in the weapon allows the character to see what the weapon “sees,” regardless of where it is pointed. *Adjacent for Normal Sight (2 Active Points); Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 1 point.*

2) Enhanced Smartgun Targeting: *Lightning Reflexes: +5 DEX to act first with Smartlinked weapon (1 Active Point); Requires Smartlinked Weapon (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 1 point.*

SPEED LEGS

Effect: Running +8m
Target: Self
Duration: Constant
Range: Self
END Cost: 1

Description: Utilizing booster implants, muscle adaptation, and extensive tendon replacement, Speed Legs can dramatically increase a character’s running speed. Damaged Speed Legs will suffer from reduced performance, while *Poor Quality* Speed Legs will have Requires A Roll and may Burnout after extended use.

Game Information: *Running +8m (8 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 5 points.*

Options:

1) Weaker Speed Legs: Decrease to Running +4m. 4 Active Points; total cost 3 points.

2) Stronger Speed Legs: Increase to Running +12m. 12 Active Points; total cost 8 points.

SUB-DERMAL BLUDGEON

Effect: HA +2d6, Invisible to Sight Group
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: Touch
END Cost: 0

Description: A Sub-Dermal Bludgeon is created by grafting organic cements and strips of either metal or ceramic plate on to the bones of the character’s hand. This results in a hand and fingers that are thicker than normal, and the presence of a Bludgeon is usually apparent to anyone who shakes hands with the character. However, to the casual observer the implant is difficult to detect, especially if the character in question wears gloves. The extra damage granted by a Sub-Dermal Bludgeon only affects unarmed attacks and will not add to any attacks performed with a weapon.

Game Information: *HA +2d6, Invisible Power Effects (Inobvious to Sight Group [see text]); +1/4, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) (17 Active Points); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 11 points.*

Options:

1) Weaker Bludgeon: Decrease to HA +1d6. Active Cost: 9 Points; total cost 6 points.

SUB-DERMAL NEEDLER

Effect: Blast 4d6, NND
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 10m
Charges: 1

Description: With this device, one (or more) of the character’s fingers in his cybernetic hand are altered to accept hypodermic darts. As with the finger-mounted Cyber Gun, the darts fit into the last joint of the finger, resulting in a thicker than normal digit. As the Needler uses a compressed gas cartridge, it is virtually silent when fired and is very hard to detect. This makes the Needler a popular choice of weapon for subduing targets quietly and with a minimum of attention. About the only drawback to the Needler is its short range and need to target unarmored parts of the body. See the section on Cyber Guns for more information about limb-mounted firearms.

Game Information: *Blast 4d6, Invisible Power Effects (Invisible to Hearing Group; +1/2), NND (defense is any Resistant PD; +0) (30 Active Points); 1 Charge (-2), Limited Range (10m; -1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), Restrainable (can be affected by EMP pulses as well as Grabs and Entangles; -1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 7 points.*

Options:

1) Strong Sub-Dermal Needler: Increase to Blast 5d6. 37 Active Cost; total cost 9 points.

2) Stronger Sub-Dermal Needler: Increase to Blast 6d6. 45 Active Points; total cost 10 points.

3) Multiple Sub-Dermal Needlers: Add Autofire (2-3 shots; +1/4) or (4-5 shots; +1/2) and increase the number of Charges to match the number of the fingers the character has modified.

SUB-DERMAL TASER

Effect: Blast 4d6, NND, Invisible to Sight Group
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: No Range
Charges: 6

Description: Also known as a Sub-Dermal Stungun, this system consists of electrodes placed in two fingers of the character’s choice. The character then touches these fingers to an exposed body part of his target, releasing an incapacitating electrical discharge. The Taser is good for six uses before the internal batteries are drained and must await recharging by the body’s natural bio-electric field. If the Taser is mounted in a Cyber Arm, the character can opt for a replaceable battery pack, good enough for 12 uses.

A damaged Taser will usually work at a reduced value or not at all, while a *Poor Quality* Taser may suffer issues with the triggering mechanism and may not always work when fired.

Game Information: *Blast 4d6, Invisible Power Effects (Inobvious to Sight Group, Source Only; +1/4), NND (any form of Resistant ED or fully insulated target; +0) (25 Active Points); 6 Charges (-3/4), No Range (-1/2), Restrained (can be affected by EMP pulses as well as Grabs and Entangles; -1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 8 points.*

Options:

1) Strong Sub-Dermal Taser: Increase to Blast 5d6. 31 Active Cost; total cost 10 points.

2) Stronger Sub-Dermal Taser: Increase to Blast 6d6. 37 Active Points; total cost 12 points.

3) Larger Battery: Increase to 12 Charges (-1/4).

Sub-Dermal Taser: 25 Active Points; total cost 10 points.

Strong Sub-Dermal Taser: 31 Active Cost; total cost 12 points.

Stronger Sub-Dermal Taser: 37 Active Points; total cost 15 points.

SYNAPTIC ACCELERATOR

Effect: +1 SPD

Target: Self

Duration: Constant

Range: Self

END Cost: 1

Description: The Synaptic Accelerator is a microprocessor spliced into the character's nervous system (usually at the base of the spine), accelerating all neuromotor signals. As with Reflex Enhancement, this modification requires some alteration of the character's muscles to cope with the new response times. In addition, a Synaptic Accelerator must be triggered in order to use it. See Reflex Enhancement for information and details on required body modifications, activation methods, and the consequences of damaged or *Poor Quality* systems.

Game Information: +1 SPD (10 Active Points); *Costs Endurance (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrained (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 5 points.*

Options:

1) Stronger Accelerator: Increase to +2 SPD. 20 Active Points; total cost: 10 points.

2) Strongest Accelerator: Increase to +3 SPD. 30 Active Points; total cost: 15 points.

3) Chemical Activation: The character uses an inhaler to activate his Synaptic Accelerator. Remove Restrained (-1/4). Add 6 Continuing Charges lasting 5 Minutes each (+0), OAF (inhaler; -1), Extra Time (Extra Phase, Only to Activate, -1/2).

Standard: 10 Active Points; total cost 4 points.

Strong: 20 Active Points; total cost 9 points.

Stronger: 30 Active Points; total cost 13 points.

VEHICLE CONTROL LINK

Effect: +6 DEX, +1 SPD, +5 Levels with Combat Driving

Target: Self

Duration: Persistent

Range: Self

END Cost: 0

Description: This neural interface and reflex augmentation system allows the character greater control of a vehicle through the use of a Datajack (see page 16). It requires a properly equipped vehicle, into which the character plugs a cable running from his Control Link I/O port. Once connected, the character can drive the vehicle purely through mental commands. However, most Control Link users tend to keep their hands on the steering wheel, "just in case" (It is also more comforting to most passengers.)

The standard default for a Vehicle Control Link allows the character to drive Ground Vehicles. This can be swapped out for a different Transport Familiarity if desired, and Combat Driving can be made Combat Piloting. The Linkage can also be upgraded, allowing the character to control and operate just about any sort of vehicle that exists.

While a Vehicle Control Link doesn't require the same degree of modification as a Reflex Enhancement or Synaptic Accelerator, it can be exhausting to use (GMs may require the Costs Endurance Limitation for the DEX and SPD bonuses). In addition, the Characteristic bonuses only affect the character's ability to operate a vehicle and don't make him any faster outside of one. Finally, a Vehicle Control Link isn't compatible with a Reflex Enhancement or Synaptic Accelerator. The systems do not "stack." If a character wishes to use his Vehicle Control Link outside of his vehicle, he should buy off the *Requires DNI-Capable Vehicle* Limitation.

Game Masters should look at the descriptions for Reflex Enhancement and Synaptic Accelerator for information on how to handle a damaged or *Poor Quality* Vehicle Control Link.

Game Information: +6 DEX (12 Active Points); *Requires DNI-Capable Vehicle (-1/2), Restrained (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4) (total cost: 6 points) plus +1 SPD (10 Active Points); Requires DNI-Capable Vehicle (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrained (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) (total cost: 5 points) plus +5 with Combat Driving (10 Active Points); Requires DNI-Capable Vehicle (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrained (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) (total cost: 5 points). Total cost: 16 points.*

Options:

1) Strong Control Link: Increase to +9 DEX. Total cost: 19 points.

2) Stronger Control Link: Increase to +12 DEX. Total cost: 22 points.

3) Weaker Control Link: Decrease to +3 DEX. Total cost: 13 points.

STATIC SYSTEMS

ARTICULATION AUGMENTATION

Effect: +1 DCV, +1 with Agility Skills, Double Jointed
Target: Self
Duration: Constant
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: With Articulation Augmentation the character's tendons and ligaments are extensively rebuilt, remounted, and in some cases replaced with synthetic materials, allowing for a greater degree of flexibility and agility.

Game Information: +1 DCV (5 Active Points); Only In HTH Combat (-1/2) (total cost: 3 points) **plus** +1 with Agility Skills (total cost: 6 points) **plus** Double Jointed (total cost: 4 points). Total cost: 13 points.

Options:

1) Bi-Directional Joints: The character's joints allow him a far greater range of motion than that of an unmodified human. This allows him to escape from most Grabs and joint locks with ease. Add +5 STR (5 Active Points); Only To Escape From Grabs/Entangles (-1). Total Cost: 2 points.

SKELETAL REINFORCEMENT

Effect: +4 PD Resistant Protection, HA +1d6, Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25%
Target: Self
Duration: Constant
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: With this modification, the character's skeletal structure is reinforced and partially replaced with a variety of high-tensile strength materials, such as armored plastics or steel alloys. This reinforcement allows the character to withstand a good deal of physical punishment, and makes it very difficult to fracture or break the character's bones. In addition, the character's punches and kicks hit with significant force due to the extra weight from the Skeletal Reinforcement (see the Sub-Dermal Bludgeon for more).

Skeletal Reinforcement will increase the character's weight. A Level One modification will add around 15 pounds; a Level Two, 20 pounds; and Level Three, 30 pounds. In addition, the character runs the risk of various medical problems, such as increased chances of joint dislocations, while the undue stress placed on the character's skeleton can lead to bone spurs. Also, having a reinforced skeleton makes it harder for doctors to operate on the character — all Paramedics and other medical rolls are at -3 for a character with a Level One modification, -4 for Level Two, and -5 for Level Three. Finally, if the character does manage to break a bone, it takes twice as long to fully heal.

Due to the expense and expertise needed to install a Skeletal Reinforcement modification, characters may not take the *Poor Quality* Limitation.

Game Information: +4 PD Resistant Protection (12 Active Points); Only Works Against BODY Damage (-1), Only To Protect Against Breaking Bones (-2) (total cost: 3 points) **plus** HA +1d6, Invisible Power Effects (Inobvious to Sight Group [see text]); +1/4, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) (9 Active Points); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/4) (total cost: 7 points) **plus** Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25% (15 Active Points); Only Works Against HTH Attacks (-1), BODY Only (-1/2) (total cost: 6 points). Total cost: 16 points.

Options:

1) Level Two Skeletal Reinforcement: +5 PD Resistant Protection (15 Active Points); Only Works Against BODY Damage (-1), Only To Protect Against Breaking Bones (-2) (total cost: 4 points) **plus** HA +2d6, Invisible Power Effects (Inobvious to Sight Group [see text]); +1/4, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) (17 Active Points); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/4) (total cost: 14 points) **plus** Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50% (30 Active Points); Only Works Against HTH Attacks (-1), BODY Only (-1/2) (total cost: 12 points). Total cost: 30 points.

2) Level Three Skeletal Reinforcement: +6 PD Resistant Protection (18 Active Points); Only Works Against BODY Damage (-1), Only To Protect Against Breaking Bones (-2) (total cost: 4 points) **plus** HA +3d6, Invisible Power Effects (Inobvious to Sight Group [see text]); +1/4, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) (26 Active Points); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/4) (total cost: 21 points) **plus** Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 75% (60 Active Points); Only Works Against HTH Attacks (-1), BODY Only (-1/2) (total cost: 24 points). Total cost: 49 points.

SUB-DERMAL PLATING

Effect: Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED)
Target: Self
Duration: Constant
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: With this system, plates formed from bonded-armored plastics and reinforced with graphite metal fibers are implanted under the skin. These plates are virtually undetectable when the character is dressed, although their existence is immediately obvious if he removes his upper body clothing. When attempting to treat a character with Sub-Dermal Plating, all Paramedics and other medical rolls are at -3.

Due to the nature of Sub-Dermal Plates, it's not possible to have a *Poor Quality* implant. Game Masters who wish to simulate low-quality Sub-Dermal Plates should simply use a lesser DEF value. It is possible to break Sub-Dermal Plating. If this happens, the plate will need to be removed and replaced, and the character may have to deal with loose fragments of the original plate still in his body.

Game Information: Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED) (6 Active Points); Requires A Roll 10- (or Locations 9-12; -1 1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 2 points.

Options:

- 1) Stronger Plating:** Increase to Resistant Protection (3 PD/3 ED). 9 Active Points; total cost 4 points.
- 2) Weaker Plating:** Reduce to Resistant Protection (1 PD/1 ED). 3 Active Points; total cost 1 point.

VITALS SHEATHING

Effect: Varies
Target: Self
Duration: Constant
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: Vitals Sheathing is a variation of Sub-Dermal Plating that utilizes advanced armored fabrics and orthoskin sheeting to weave an energy-diffusing layer of material around vulnerable portions of the character's body. Areas typically protected are the rib cage, abdomen, or lower stomach and groin. Skull Reinforcement is a similar system in which armor plating is bonded directly to the character's skull. Vitals Sheathing is effectively invisible to even an experienced observer, unless he has access to x-ray scanners. As with Sub-Dermal Plating, all attempts to use Paramedics or other medical skills on a character with Vitals Sheathing are at -3.

As with Sub-Dermal Plating, the *Poor Quality* Limitation should be simulated through the use of lower DEF values. Unlike Sub-Dermal Plates, it's not really possible to "break" Vitals Sheathing, although one can puncture or tear it with various forms of weaponry. If this occurs, the Sheathing will need to be patched or replaced.

Game Information:

Abdominal Sheathing: *Resistant Protection (3 PD/3 ED), Invisible Power Effects (Invisible To Sight Group, source only; +1/4) (11 Active Points); Requires A Roll 9- (or Locations 11-13; -1 1/2), Always Lets First BODY Through (attacks with Reduced Penetration are counted as two separate attacks; -1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 3 points.*

Ribcage Sheathing: *Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED), Invisible Power Effects (Invisible To Sight Group, source only; +1/4) (15 Active Points); Requires A Roll 8- (or Locations 10-11; -1 3/4), Always Lets First BODY Through (attacks with Reduced Penetration are counted as two separate attacks; -1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 4 points.*

Skull Reinforcement: *Resistant Protection (5 PD/5 ED), Invisible Power Effects (Invisible To Sight Group, source only; +1/4) (19 Active Points); Requires A Roll 9- (or Locations 3-5; -1 1/2), Always Lets First BODY Through (attacks with Reduced Penetration are counted as two separate attacks; -1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4) (total cost: 6 points) plus HA +1d6, Only With Headbutts (+0), Invisible Power Effects (Inobvious to Sight Group); +1/4), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) (9 Active Points); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4) (total cost: 6 points). Total cost: 15 points.*

Vitals Sheathing: *Resistant Protection (3 PD/3 ED), Invisible Power Effects (Invisible To Sight Group, source only; +1/4) (11 Active Points); Requires A Roll 8- (or Locations 13; -1 3/4), Always Lets First BODY Through (attacks with Reduced Penetration are counted as two separate attacks; -1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 3 points.*

Options:

- 1) Stronger Sheathing:** Add +1 PD/ED. Total cost:

Abdominal Sheathing: 5 points.

Ribcage Sheathing: 5 points.

Skull Reinforcement: 13 points.

Vitals Sheathing: 4 points.

- 2) Strongest Sheathing:** Add +2 PD/ED. Total cost:

Abdominal Sheathing: 6 points.

Ribcage Sheathing: 6 points.

Skull Reinforcement: 14 points.

Vitals Sheathing: 5 points.

Bioware**COMBAT PUMP**

Effect: Aid STR, DEX, END, STUN 1d6, Self Only
Target: Self
Duration: Instant
Range: Self
Charges: 4

Description: This implant is designed to pump concentrated adrenaline and noradrenalin into the character's bloodstream, increasing his physical capabilities for a short period of time. When the effects of the Combat Pump wear off, the inrush of accumulated fatigue poisons can cause temporary unconsciousness. Extended use of a Combat Pump may have other, even more harmful, effects on the character's system.

Due to the nature of bioware, characters may not buy the *Poor Quality* Limitation for the Combat Pump, or any other bioware implant. Bioware can be damaged, however, and a damaged Combat Pump may operate at reduced efficiency (*i.e.* it loses a Damage Class or two), may suffers a loss of chemical reserves (*i.e.* lose Charges), or may operate erratically (*i.e.* suffers from the Requires A Roll Limitation).

Game Information: *Aid STR, DEX, END, STUN 1d6, all four characteristics simultaneously (+1 1/2), Invisible Power Effects (Fully Invisible; +1) (21 Active Points); 4 Charges (-1), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (2d6 STUN Drain when Aid effects wear off; -1), Only Aid Self (-1), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 10 points.*

Options:

- 1) Level Two Combat Pump:** Increase to Aid STR, DEX, END, STUN 2d6. 42 Active Points; total cost 8 points.

IMPACT COMPENSATOR

Effect: Aid STUN 2d6; Self Only
Target: Self
Duration: Instant
Range: Self
Charges: 6

Description: Impact Compensators are implanted bio-ware pumps designed to release a fibrogen activation factor (to stop bleeding) and a leukocyte migratory factor (to mobilize cells to repair tissue damage and prevent infection) in the event of physical trauma. Depending on the implanted device, this release can occur when the character wishes, or when certain changes are detected by the Compensator's bio-monitor. A variation of the Impact Compensator is the Stim-Dorphan Pharmacope, which is designed to allow the character to temporarily operate effectively after receiving possibly disabling physical trauma.

As with Combat Pumps, Impact Compensators can't have the *Poor Quality* Limitation and can be damaged (see the Combat Pump for suggested effects). Long-term use of an Impact Compensator, especially the Stim-Dorphan Pharmacope, can have hazardous effects on the character's system. The Stim-Dorphan Pharmacope is especially dangerous as its effects are only temporary, and once they wear off, the character may find himself in a potentially life-threatening state.

An Impact Compensator will not prevent a character from being Stunned. While the Compensator is Triggered by taking STUN, and will replace lost STUN, it can't reduce the amount of STUN taken. If you wish to do that, see the Trauma Editor below.

Game Information: Aid STUN 1d6, Trigger (when character takes STUN damage, activates as an Action that takes no time, resets immediately, Character does not control activation of personal Trigger; +3/4), Invisible Power Effects (Fully Invisible; +1) (16 Active Points); 6 Charges (-3/4), Only Restores to Starting Values (-1/2), Only Aid Self (-1), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 4 points.

Options:

1) Level Two Impact Compensator: Aid STUN 2d6, Trigger (when character takes STUN damage, activates as an Action that takes no time, resets immediately, Character does not control activation of personal Trigger; +3/4), Invisible Power Effects (Fully Invisible; +1) (33 Active Points); 3 Charges (-1 1/4), Only Restores to Starting Values (-1/2), Only Aid Self (-1), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 8 points.

2) Level One Stim-Dorphan Pharmacope: Aid BODY 1d6, Delayed Return Rate (points return at the rate of 5 per Minute; +1), Trigger (when character takes BODY damage, activates as an Action that takes no time, resets immediately, Character does not control activation of personal Trigger; +3/4), Invisible Power Effects (Fully Invisible; +1) (22 Active Points); 6 Charges (-3/4), Only Restores to Starting Values (-1/2), Only Aid Self (-1), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 6 points.

3) Level Two Stim-Dorphan Pharmacope: Aid BODY 2d6, Delayed Return Rate (points return at the rate of 5 per Minute; +1), Trigger (when character takes BODY damage, activates as an Action that takes no time, resets immediately, Character does not control activation of personal Trigger; +3/4), Invisible Power Effects (Fully Invisible; +1) (45 Active Points); 3 Charges (-1 1/4), Only Restores to Starting Values (-1/2), Only Aid Self (-1), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 11 points.

4) Impact Compensator Variant: This is a slightly older form of Impact Compensator. Unlike newer Compensators, which activate for virtually any injury, no matter how minor, this version requires conscious effort from the character. This has the advantage of allowing the character to decide when to use the device; however it also means the device will not activate if the character is Stunned or rendered unconscious.

Change *Trigger* Advantage to "Activating The Trigger requires a Zero Phase Action, Trigger resets automatically, immediately after it activates; character must activate the device (+3/4)." All costs, both Active and Real, remain unchanged.

MUSCLE AUGMENTATION

Effect: +5 STR
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 1

"Get your body sculpted with Buff-Tuff: The Natural Body Builder's Answer!"

Description: By implanting a mixture of vat-grown and synthetic muscles (made from long plastic polymer threads), ligaments, and tendons, the character's natural strength is increased greatly. In addition, tendons are polarized in order to make them more flexible, while the ligaments are realigned and reanchored, allowing for a greater lifting capacity. Finally, the skeleton is reinforced to allow the character to exercise his full strength without harm (i.e. characters should buy 1-2 points of extra BODY or at least one level of Skeletal Reinforcement in addition to their Muscle Augmentation).

Muscle Augmentation is a deceptively benign bioware implant. For the most part, the improvement offered doesn't have an adverse effect on the character, provided he maintains a regular regime of exercise and doesn't try to push his new physical abilities to any great degree. Problems arise if/when the character stops exercising or tries to push his body beyond its physical limits (i.e. attempts too many Pushes). If this happens the GM may consider applying such Limitations as Requires A Roll, Increased Endurance Costs, or Side Effects (such as BODY damage defined as a pulled muscle[s], STUN Drains, or END Drains) to the character's Muscle Augmentation. As with all other bioware, it is yet unknown what effect this implant will have on a character as he ages.

Game Information: +5 STR (5 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 4 points.

TRAUMA EDITOR AND WAR GLAND NOTES

Both the Trauma Editor and War Gland are considered compound powers. A character can't selectively use only one power out of the power set, he must use all of the powers that make up the compound power each and every time he activates his bioware implant.

Options:

- 1) **Stronger Augmentation:** Increase to +10 STR. 10 Active Points; total cost: 8 points.
- 2) **Strongest Augmentation:** Increase to +15 STR. 15 Active Points; total cost: 12 points.
- 3) **Weaker Augmentation:** Decrease to +3 STR. 3 Active Points; total cost: 2 points.

OXYGEN BOOSTER

Effect: Aid REC 1d6
Target: Self
Duration: Instant
Range: Self
Charges: 4

Description: Mounted adjacent to the heart and linked to the lungs, this implant allows the character to super-oxygenate his blood. This will wash fatigue poisons out of the character's system at a vastly increased rate, allowing him to quickly recover from intense physical activity.

See the Combat Pump for comments on *Poor Quality* bioware and the effects of a damaged Oxygen Booster. Long-term use of an Oxygen Booster may have debilitating effects on the character's heart, lungs, and arterial network.

Game Information: Aid REC 1d6, *Invisible Power Effects (Fully Invisible; +1) (12 Active Points); 4 Charges (-1), Only Aid Self (-1), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 4 points.*

Options:

- 1) **Level Two Oxygen Booster:** Aid REC 2d6, *Invisible Power Effects (Fully Invisible; +1) (24 Active Points); 2 Charges (-1 1/2), Only Aid Self (-1), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 6 points.*

RESPIRATION AUGMENTATION

Effect: +3 CON, +2 REC
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: Respiration Augmentation uses a bioware pump in the character's lungs to increase his intake and absorption of oxygen. This will allow for greater feats of physical exertion and endurance, as well as a faster recovery from such activities.

See the Combat Pump for more information on *Poor Quality* bioware. A damaged Respiration Augmentation implant may operate at reduced effectiveness (*i.e.* offer lower characteristic modifiers), operate intermittently (*i.e.* Requires A Roll), or may have hazardous Side Effects (usually in the form of END or STUN Drains). Long term use of a Respiration Augmentation may have debilitating effects on the character's heart, lungs, and arterial network

Game Information: +3 CON (3 Active Points); *Cybersystem (-1/4) (total cost: 2 points) plus +2 REC (2 Active Points); Cybersystem (-1/4) (total cost: 2 points). Total cost: 4 points.*

TRAUMA EDITOR

Effect: Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25%
Target: Self
Duration: Constant
Range: Self
Charges: 4

Description: A Trauma Editor is a sensory regulator implanted into the character's brain and is designed to reduce all sensation of pain. Once activated, the character has reduced awareness of physical injury and can withstand virtually incapacitating amounts of abuse to his body. Use of a Trauma Editor is extremely dangerous, since, as stated, he has little to no sensation of physical harm. Extended use of an Editor may result in a psychological breakdown for the character as he begins to doubt any and all sensations as real and may begin to fall out of touch with the world around him, leading to psychopathic and/or sociopathic episodes. In addition, the sudden rush of sensations and fatigue poisons after the Editor shuts off can incapacitate a person and may lead to long-term damage to the brain and nervous system.

As with all forms of neurological bioware, it's not possible to have a *Poor Quality* Trauma Editor. Due to its location within the brain, a damaged Trauma Editor usually means a severely incapacitated or dead character. However, GMs could have an Editor become damaged through other means (electrical shocks, concussion, and so on). A damaged Trauma Editor may Require A Roll, may have shorter Continuing Charges, or may work at reduced effectiveness (*i.e.*, a lower form of Damage Reduction).

A Trauma Editor will prevent a character from being Stunned, provided it has been activated before the STUN damage is taken.

Game Information: *Physical And Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25% (30 Active Points); Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (character takes 3d6 STUN and 1d6 END Drain once the Trauma Editor shuts off; -1), STUN Only (-1/2), 4 Continuing Charges lasting 1 Minute each (-1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 10 points.*

Options:

- 1) **Level Two Trauma Editor:** *Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50% (60 Active Points); 2 Continuing Charges lasting 1 Turn each (-1), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (character takes 4d6 STUN and 2d6 END Drain once the Trauma Editor shuts off; -1), STUN Only (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 18 points.*
- 2) **Level Three Trauma Editor:** *Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 75% (120 Active Points); 1 Continuing Charge lasting 1 Turn (-1 1/4), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (character takes 6d6 STUN and 3d6 END Drain once the Trauma Editor shuts off; -1), STUN Only (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 30 points.*

WAR GLAND

Effect: +5 STR, +6 DEX, +5 CON, +10 STUN, +10 END, +2 with Perception Rolls for all sense groups, Rapid Adder for Sight group, Combat Luck (3 rPD, 3rED)

Target: Self

Duration: Constant

Range: Self

END Cost: 0

Description: An advanced form of the Combat Pump, the War Gland floods the character's bloodstream with a tailored cocktail of combat drugs and an enhanced mix of adrenaline and noradrenalin to stimulate the body and mind into an optimal state for combat. While "boosting" with the War Gland, the character perceives the world moving in slow motion around him — he's faster, stronger, tougher, and more able to withstand pain and trauma. The character's senses are sharpened to a razor's edge, and — for a short time — he's a far more formidable combatant. However, once the boost from the War Gland ends, the shock to the character's system can be severe.

Extreme fatigue is the most common aftereffect, but repeated use of the War Gland risks permanent damage to the character's biological systems. Once the effects of the War Gland end, the Side Effects occur immediately (6D6 Stun Damage). The Recoverable Charge recovers once the character has time to rest and the War Gland has refilled its reservoir -- typically 4-6 hours.

See the *Combat Pump* for comments on *Poor Quality* bioware and the effects of a damaged War Gland. Long term use of a War Gland may have debilitating effects on the character's heart, nervous system, and arterial network.

Game Information: +5 STR, +6 DEX, +5 CON, +2 OCV, +2 DCV, +10 END, +10 STUN, +2 PER, *Rapid (x10) for Sight Group, Combat Luck 3 rPD/3 rED (66 Active Points); 1 Continuing Charge (1 Turn, recoverable, -3/4), Cybersystem (-1/4), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (character takes 2D6 STUN Damage once the War Gland shuts off; -1/2). Total cost: 26 points.*



cyborgs

CYBORGS IN ANIME

Cyborgs are fairly common in anime and manga set in the near (and not so near) future. The most well-known cyborg is probably Major Motoko Kusanagi from Masamune Shirow's series *Ghost in the Shell*. Other examples include Armitage (*Armitage III*), Batou (*Ghost in the Shell*), Billy Fanword (*AD. Police 25:00*), Briareos Hecatonchries (*Appleseed*) Alita (*Battle Angel Alita* and *Battle Angel Alita: Last Order*), Kiddy Phenil (*Silent Möbius*), Ross Sylibus (*Armitage III*), and Sonnet Barje (*Blue Sonnet*). Although all of these characters come from different settings and series, they all have several things in common, such as increased physical strength, durability, and general resistance to physical harm. Of course, such abilities are not without their price, as many cyborgs suffer from a crisis of identity, and wonder if they are still really human underneath the armored plating and synthetic skin.

A cyborg is any living organism with implanted cybernetics. Thus, by the strictest definition of the term, someone with an implant as simple as a new valve for his heart is

a cyborg. However, in the world of 2030 the accepted interpretation is anyone who's had more than 50% of his body replaced with artificial parts. Of course, this definition isn't exactly precise, and the question of where the human ends and the machine begins is an ongoing one.

Cyborgs are a fairly new phenomena, dating back to around 2010, when advances in cyberware technology made it possible to rebuild most the human body in what is currently called a "cybergraft upgrade." In the early 2020s the process for a full-body cybernetic replacement was perfected, resulting in cyborgs with no human body parts — aside from the brain.

Initially, cyborgs were conceived as a way for those born with debilitating birth defects, who had suffered crippling injuries, or had sustained severe war wounds, to be made whole again, and thus capable of normal interaction with society. However, as cybernetics, and thus cyborgs, became more advanced, the capabilities of an all-cybernetic body increased. This led to people deliberately choosing to replace their organic bodies with mechanical ones in order to be faster, stronger, and more durable than unmodified humans.

Currently, the chance to obtain the ultimate in cybernetic enhancement and augmentation is too good for many to pass up, and cyborgs are becoming increasingly common, especially among corporate and military special forces.

Cyborgs And Society

As with cyberware, society has varying levels of acceptance for cyborgs. Among the corporate elite, cyborgs who look fully human fare best, as anything obviously mechanical tends to be treated more as a machine than a person. On the street, the opposite tends to hold true, as cyborgs with heavily augmented artificial bodies are usually given a wide berth and a great deal of respect. That said, even more "normal"-looking cyborgs have a certain degree of "street cred," if merely for undergoing the procedure. Military, paramilitary, and security forces tend to treat all cyborgs equally, recognizing different body modifications serve different purposes. Finally, the general public tends to better accept a cyborg the more human-looking he is (and a properly designed full-conversion body is identical in appearance to the human body). Partial-conversions are tolerated, but the public is usually put-off by anyone whose body is obviously heavily mechanized.

"Will you stop calling me 'metal man'? I mean, if I've told you once I've told you a hundred times, there's no metal in here!"

— Malachi Brogan, combat cybergraft upgrade

Even with the general acceptance of cyberware, there are those who question the use of cyborg bodies. Usually, accident victims and people with genetic birth defects are

given a certain degree of understanding, while those who have voluntarily undergone the process are treated as if they've lost a portion of their humanity. In extreme cases, cyborgs may encounter others who treat them, at best, as something less than human, and at worst as little more than machines.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Terminology associated with cyborgs.

'borg: The slang form of cyborg. Example: "I hear the Jinsei CEO's really brain-in-a-box 'borg. That true?"

'borged: A cyborg with an excess of cyberware, usually of a combat nature. Example: "Dude's 'borged out beyond belief. He's got enough firepower implanted to fight a small war — and win."

Brain-In-A-Box: A full-conversion cyborg. The term comes from the ability of many full-conversion cyborgs to take the armored shell containing their brain and move it from one body to another.

Cybergraft Upgrade: To be made into a cyborg. A "combat" cybergraft upgrade is a cyborg designed for military applications.

Cybernetic Organism: The official term for a cyborg. Now obsolete.

FMJ: Short for "full metal jacket." Used when referring to armored full-conversion cyborgs.

Full-Conversion: A cyborg whose entire body, except for the brain, has been replaced with cybernetics.

Hard Shell: A cyborg whose body is covered with rigid armored plates. Most hard shell cyborgs don't bother covering their bodies with synthflesh.

Iron Angel: A partial-conversion cyborg with cybernetic arms and legs. With the rise of full-conversion cyborgs, this term is falling out of use.

Partial-Conversion: A cyborg who retains most of his original body (usually his head and torso), with the rest replaced with cybernetics.

Soft Shell: A full-conversion cyborg made to look (and feel) as close to a normal human as possible.

A cyborg needs to indicate his status as such on his identity cards. He must also indicate what sort of body he has (*i.e.*, a “full-body cybergraft”), as well as a breakdown of implanted systems. Although it is nearly impossible to hide the fact someone is a cyborg (even basic sensor systems can detect a cybernetic chassis), cyborg ID cards regularly underreport the capabilities of their bodies, especially for those involved in corporate security or government operations.

Acquiring A Cyborg Body

In order to become a cyborg, a character must be willing to give up some or all of his original body. In certain cases, the character doesn't have a choice, as is the case for accident victims and severely wounded military personnel. Others must simply be willing to pay the cost for a new body (which can be exorbitant) or be willing to sign a contract with either a corporate or government sponsor for a cybergraft upgrade. In any case, the character in question must pass a psychological evaluation akin to those given to cyberware recipients (see page 9). As with the cyberware exam, this evaluation attempts to find out if the cyborg-to-be will suffer any undue psychological issues from the conversion process.

Once a character has undergone his cybergraft operation, he needs to spend a period of several weeks adjusting to his new body, undergoing both physical and mental therapy. However, this only applies to a new recipient of a cybergraft upgrade. Characters who've already spent some time as a cyborg often require very little time to adjust to a new or improved body (especially those with full-conversion bodies).

Players who wish to create a cyborg character must do so with Character Points. The GM may require them to pay money as well, making the cost of the upgrade an ongoing plot in the game (Imagine a cyborg hunted by creditors seeking back-payments on his body!) If the character is part of a corporate or government team, the cost of the process will probably be absorbed by their employer, at which point the character will certainly acquire a Hunted (*i.e.* Watched by his employer) and the Social Complication *Subject To Orders* to help offset the points he's spent on his cyborg abilities.

Due to the nature of cyborg bodies, GMs should disallow (or, at least, seriously limit) a cyborg character from taking the *Poor Quality* Limitation on any implanted cybernetic systems he may have. On the other hand, it might be possible for a cyborg to be suffering from a slowly failing body and require constant attention and tune-ups. In this case, GMs should ensure any character who takes such a Limitation feels the effects in play.

As a final note, full-conversion cyborg bodies are normally designed to allow the brain to be extracted easily so it can be placed in a new body as required. Thus, it is possible to find “empty” full-conversion cyborg bodies on the black market. Of course, any such body will probably be hideously expensive, no matter its condition.

Creating A Cyborg Body

There are primarily two types of cyborgs: partial-conversion and full-conversion. Full-conversion cyborgs are then broken down into two further categories: soft-shell and hard-shell.

Partial-Conversion Cyborg

A partial-conversion cyborg retains some of his original body (usually the head and torso), with everything else replaced with cybernetics. The cybergraft process almost always involves replacing the character's limbs, as well as reinforcement of the skeleton (specifically the spine and ribs), augmentation of specific muscle groups (such as in the shoulders and hips), the removal of certain internal organs (for example, female partial-conversion cyborgs usually lack ovaries and a uterus) and/or augmentation of specific organs (such as the heart and lungs), and finally, adding a Sub-Dermal damage-diffusing weave. In more extreme cases, the torso may be covered in a shaped layer of armor plate, leaving only the head and portions of the groin exposed.

Despite all of this augmentation, real blood still pumps through what's left of the cyborg's body; he still needs to eat, breath, and sleep, and he still retains all of his regular human senses (although his sense of touch might be reduced). The new cyborg will also retain his natural physical features (such as height, hair and eye color, and general appearance), although his weight will have increased drastically.

Examples of partial-conversion cyborgs include Darth Vader (*Star Wars*), Grey (*Grey*), Kiddy Phenil (*Silent Möbius*), Ross Sylibus (*Armitage III*), and Colonel Steve Austin (*Cyborg* and *The Six-Million Dollar Man*).

Full-Conversion Cyborg

A full-conversion cyborg takes the cybergraft process one step further. With a full-conversion, the character's entire body is discarded and replaced with a completely artificial one. This allows the full-conversion cyborg to look radically different from his original “meat” body. However, in most cases, the new body follows the same general proportions as the old, so the character won't need to relearn his physical capabilities all over again. In addition, many cyber docs are loath to provide a full-conversion cybergraft with a body that's non-human in shape or appearance, fearing it will only cause psychological issues (such as loss of identity or inability to identify with other humans).

Since a full-conversion cyborg has an entirely mechanical body, this allows for extensive internal modifications. As the cyborg's brain still requires oxygen, the character still needs to breath, but his lungs will be larger and more efficient, as will his heart and circulatory system. His digestive system will be tailored for maximum efficiency and will contain filters to strip out unwanted toxins (such as alcohol). Weaponry may be implanted in the cyborg's limbs, as well as enhanced optical and audio sensors in the head. Finally, the entire body will then be covered with a layer of armor plate, followed by layers of tactile sensitive sheeting (in order to provide the cyborg

THE BEST BODY MONEY CAN BUY

There's probably no better visual example of what soft-shell full-conversion cyborg looks like than the opening credits of *Ghost In The Shell*. In addition, Chapter 5 of the original *Ghost In The Shell* manga, titled *Megatech Machine 02: The Making Of A Cyborg* gives an in-depth explanation of how a soft-shell full-conversion cyborg is made and is a must-read for any Kazei 5 GM wanting to understand the process.

CHARACTERISTICS MAXES FOR CYBORGS

Cyborg characters are limited in how high they can buy certain Characteristics in order to keep their physical capabilities within certain “realistic” limits with regards to the setting. It also preserves a measure of game balance between cyborgs, cybernetics, espers, and mecha.

with a sense of touch). The more advanced (or expensive) the cyborg, the more elaborate the tactile sheeting overlay. A properly made full-conversion cyborg is visually indistinguishable from a normal human.

Examples of full-conversion cyborgs include Alita (*Battle Angel*), Billy Fanword (*AD Police 25:00*), Briareos Hecatonchries (*Appleseed*), Motoko Kusanagi (*Ghost In The Shell*), and Sonnet Barje (*Blue Sonnet*).

Soft-Shell: A soft-shell full-conversion cyborg is designed to replicate the human body from the inside out with artificial components. Bones of plastic and steel are connected with synthetic muscle, which is then covered with layers of artificial skin and an extensive series of sensory receptors. Once complete, the only way to tell a soft-shell cyborg apart from the rest of humanity is through its mass or the use of infrared sensors.

Due to the hidden nature of their cybernetics, soft-shell cyborgs are popular among corporate security concerns, as they are able to easily interact with all levels of society. However, they are less durable than hard-shell cyborgs. Soft-shell cyborgs tend to be used by police, corporate security, and certain government forces.

Hard-Shell: Hard-shell cyborgs replace the plastic bones, synthetic muscle, and artificial skin of a soft-shell with a steel framework, hydraulic actuators, and armored plate. Often larger and bulkier than a normal human, a hard-shell has almost unmatched levels of strength and durability. At the same time, they are significantly heavier than a normal human, often lack most human facial features, and require constant maintenance.

Although cheaper to make than a soft-shell, hard-shell cyborgs are not normally encountered in regular society. Instead they are used extensively in special forces combat units, for the exploration of hazardous environments, and in space construction.

Cyborg Characteristics

While cyborgs come in a wide variety of sizes and styles, all have a few things in common. First, even the most basic of cyborg bodies is stronger than the human norm, with combat models capable of using extremely heavy weapons, lifting small vehicles, and smashing through walls with ease. Second, all cyborgs utilize reinforced chassis, meaning they are extremely rugged, very durable, and hard to damage. Third, the combination of cybernetic limbs, armor plate, and mechanical infrastructure means any cyborg weighs significantly more than a normal human. Finally, although mostly machine, cyborgs still require the basic human requirements of oxygen, food, and sleep.

STRENGTH, DURABILITY, AND STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY

All cyborgs are stronger than normal, unaltered humans. When creating a cyborg, the minimum STR score for the character should be 15, with 20 being typical. The maximum STR score for cyborgs should be no more than 40 (45 if you want a more “cinematic” feel to your game). Since cyborgs are also very durable and hard to hurt, the basic CON score should be a 15, with values of 20-28 being typical for combat models (with a maximum of 30). Similarly, the cyborg needs a high BODY score in order to represent how well-constructed his artificial body is. The base BODY score for any cyborg should be 13, with a maximum of 25 (and an average of 15-18). Of course, many of these values presume the character is a full-conversion hard-shell combat-capable cybergraft, designed for military or law-enforcement duties. Lightweight models, such as those used for accident victims, would have values at the lower end of the suggested scales.

BODY CONSTRUCTION

All cyborgs have an armored outer surface. Players should purchase Resistant Protection to represent this, and apply the Limitation Requires A Roll for those partial-conversion cyborgs who aren't fully covered with reinforced plating. Usually this means just the head, as the torso ends up covered in an armored shell in order to help support the stress of cybernetic limbs on the body. See Katherine Ramis on page 285 as an example.

At minimum, a cyborg's Resistant Protection should be DEF 3, with DEF 6-9 typical for most models. Law-enforcement and security cyborgs have up to 12 DEF, while military models may have up to 15 DEF. Any cyborg with more than 10 DEF is visibly armored, and many take the *Perceivable* Limitation.

Due to the sheer amount of cybernetic implants, it is difficult for most cyborgs to feel pain from physical impacts and the like. However, research has shown a cyborg requires some sort of tactile sensation over most of his body, or else he runs the risk of going insane from sensory deprivation (usually taking the form of disconnecting with reality), and thus they have sensors (including pain receptors) connected to the brain's nervous systems placed throughout the body. Cyborg characters represent this reduced tactile input by buying Resistant Damage Reduction with the Limitation of *STUN Only*.

As a cyborg's body is mostly machine, GMs should allow full-conversion cyborgs to purchase the Power *Does Not Bleed*. While normally only allowed for Automotons, this ability perfectly represents a cyborg's ability to continue functioning even after taking extensive physical damage (although you could have damage cause the loss of different cybernetic systems in the same manner as Automotons). At the same time, the Automaton Powers of Cannot Be Stunned and Takes No STUN should *never* be purchased for cyborg characters, as they are far too unbalancing to be allowed in regular play. These two powers should only be applied to cyberdroids and robots. See page 70 for more.

MASS

At bare minimum, a cyborg weighs roughly 100 kilograms (for a small adult, a cyborg body for a child will weigh less). Even with modern composites, artificial bones, sinews, and muscle weigh far more than the organic parts they are replacing. The typical PC cyborg (which is probably a combat capable model) should weigh around 200 kg, with certain oversized combat or industrial designs weighing even more. Players who want to build a cyborg that is heavier or larger than normal should see *The Ultimate Brick* for suggestions on building such characters. Game Masters should check any such characters to make sure they are within the Characteristic limits set for cyborgs. For example, while cyborgs can (and do) weigh more than 200 kg, none should weigh more than 1,000 kg.

Game Masters can apply the Heavy Physical Complication to cyborgs in a number of ways. For starters, a cyborg's mass-to-body-size ratio is too high to allow the cyborg to swim (or even float) in water. It's possible to counteract this problem with a buoyancy suit, but otherwise the character will sink like a stone (of course, cyborgs with internal respirators or artificial gills will find this a minor nuisance at best.) Larger (or heavier) than normal cyborgs may not be able to ride in (or on) certain vehicles, such as motorcycles or small cars. They may bend or break stair risers when stepping on them, or may find that they can't sit in anything but reinforced chairs. When landing after any sort of leap or drop, cyborgs may shatter the pavement, bend roofing sheets, or even break through roofs and other landing surfaces.

Cyborg Limitations And Complications

Although a cybergraft upgrade can vastly improve the physical abilities of a character, it shouldn't be considered a free ticket to "powers and abilities far beyond those of mortal men." The character, whether voluntarily or not, has replaced most of his body with mechanical implants, and will need to deal with the ramifications which are sure to follow. This section will describe some of the common issues with having a cyborg body, breaking them down into *HERO System* Complications. In addition, players with cyborg characters and GMs should see the "Cybernetic Limitations and Complications" on page 11 for more information on the possible drawbacks to having cyberware and a cyborg body.

"My cyber doc asked me why I spent so much time and money getting full-body synthflesh coatings with tactile overlay. I told him I liked to pretend I was still human."

— Katherine "Kitten" Ramis

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

Cyborg Body (Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses; 10 points): Full-conversion cyborgs are easily recognizable as such, especially if they don't bother with any sort of synthskin coating. Some full-conversion models don't even attempt to look human anymore, resulting in Distinctive Features that are "Not Concealable." Even those cyborgs who have bodies designed to look as natural as possible still have to worry about the fact their weight is far greater than their size indicates, their skin may not feel right, damage to their skin could expose internal plates, and so on. Finally, a cyborg character may have an "off-the-rack" body, with a fairly standard physical layout. Not only does this mean the character may look similar to other cyborgs in his model line, but his body may have a standard suite of features and implanted devices — information his foes could use against him.

PHYSICAL COMPLICATION

Cyborg (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing; 15 points): The character is a cyborg, which means there are a number of issues he'll need to deal with in day-to-day living. For starters, the character will require specialized medical attention any time he gets sick or injured. Any Paramedics Rolls will be at -3 to treat the character, while some injuries (such as gunshot wounds) will be next to impossible to treat without access to specific tools. For example, any extensive injuries to the cyborg's torso will usually be untreatable in the field unless a carapace cracker is available (which is highly unlikely).

Since his body is made mostly of mechanical parts, the character will require periodic maintenance. This includes full-body MRI scans (to look for joint wear and stress fractures) and possible re-lubrication of limbs and actuators, as well as system checks to ensure that all components are working properly. Depending on the character's perception of his cyborg state, this may or may not be a rather dehumanizing experience.

The extensive mechanization of the body means the character doesn't heal BODY in the same way normal, unmodified humans do. Instead, he must have his damage repaired by a cyber doc. Broken limbs and ruptured armor plating will require replacement, while damage to internal organs may require them to be swapped out for new ones. If the character is a partial-conversion cyborg, then his original flesh-and-blood organs will heal at the normal rate, although the process might be slowed due to his cyborg state. While access to a cyber doc may mean the cyborg character can repair BODY damage fairly quickly, in the field it means he'll have to deal with most such BODY loss as best as he can.

Possibly a cyborg's greatest fear is damage to his Cyberbrain. Sufficient damage to the character's torso may cause a shutdown of the cyborg's primary control systems, turning off the character's cybernetically augmented strength and reflexes. Until these systems can be repaired, the character is effectively helpless.

CYBORG MEDICINE

Cyborg-capable medical centers are found only in larger hospitals or specialized cyborg-only service centers. Depending on the cyborg's size and mass, getting an injured cyborg to such a center can be a rather difficult task. Full-body cyborgs are usually designed so the brain and spine are in a single, field-removable module. This makes on-location salvage of heavily damaged cyborgs extremely simple, a necessary feature when dealing with military and special forces models.

CYBERGRAFT DURABILITY

Players should buy +1 PD for every +5 STR and +1 ED for every +5 CON they purchase for their cyborg characters. In addition, players should consider purchasing +3 STUN for every +5 STR or CON they buy their characters as well. This represents the general structural integrity of their cybergraft.

In the case of full-conversion cyborgs, this may cause the internal organs to shutdown as well, causing further problems.

Finally, with full-conversion cyborgs, it is often possible to override the Cyberbrain via an I/O port. Normally used by cyber docs to prep a cyborg for medial treatment, this can be used to render a character virtually helpless by turning off all cyber systems. However, as it requires inserting a program stick into the port in question, this sort of thing is normally impossible to perform on an actively resisting cyborg.

SUSCEPTIBILITY AND VULNERABILITY

Modern cyborgs are fairly well-shielded and use optical fibers to avoid problems with electromagnetic fields. However, older cyborgs (or those with systems in poor repair) may suffer debilitating problems when exposed to intense electrical or magnetic fields (such as those found around power stations or certain reactors).

Example: The cyborg is an older model and doesn't use optical fibers. When around certain electromagnetic fields, the cyborg suffers from a loss of coordination.

Susceptibility: to intense electromagnetic fields, suffer 1d6 DEX Drain every 5 Minutes (Uncommon). 0 Points.

Example: The cyborg is an older model and doesn't use optical fibers. When around certain electromagnetic fields, the cyborg suffers from a loss of physical capability.

Susceptibility: to intense electromagnetic fields, suffer 1d6 STR Drain every 5 Minutes (Uncommon). 0 Points.

Example: The cyborg is an older model and doesn't use optical fibers or has a poorly connected nervous interface. If hit by an electromagnetic pulse (such as from a Taser), he'll take extra damage.

Vulnerability: 2 x STUN from Electromagnetic Pulses (Uncommon). 10 Points.

ARMORED LIMBS

Getting hit by a cyborg hurts. Aside from the sheer mass of the cyberlimb and the augmented muscle behind it, most cyborgs are armored, meaning the average cyborg fist is akin to a Sub-Dermal Bludgeon. Any cyborg with at least 6 PD of Resistant Protection can buy the following:

Armored Limbs: HA +2d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) (15 Active Points); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4). Total cost: 10 points.

The Limitation *Real Weapon* means that while a strong 35-45 STR cyborg may be able to dish out 9-11d6 punches (more if he has Martial Arts) there are still some things they simply can't punch through. Also, GMs might want to consider applying some of the BODY damage the cyborg does to his target (even before defenses) to the cyborg himself, especially if his foe has more Physical Resistant Protection than he does.

Building A Cyborg Character

Before you create a cyborg character you need to decide if the cyborg will be a partial- or a full-conversion. If the latter, you then need to decide if the cyborg will be a hard shell or a soft shell conversion. In either case, all cyborgs start out with the following template:

BASIC CYBORG TEMPLATE

Abilities

Cost Ability

- 5 Cybernetic Strength Enhancements:** +5 STR
- 10 Cybergraft Toughness:** +5 CON, +6 STUN
- 2 Cybergraft Durability:** +1 PD, +1 ED
- 9 Cybergraft Shell:** Resistant Protection (3 PD/3 ED)
- 2 Heavy:** Knockback Resistance -2m
- 4 Cybernetic Legs:** Leaping +8m, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); No Noncombat Leaping (-1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 2 Cyborg Body:** Swimming -4m

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 30

Complications

Value Complication

- 10 Distinctive Features:** Syntheskin/Cyborg Body (skin doesn't quite feel right to the touch, the cyborg doesn't sweat, the cyborg's mass is much greater than his size indicates, the cyborg's skin degrades if he is hit by an attack) (Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 10 Physical Complication:** Cyborg (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 5 Physical Complication:** Heavy (weighs roughly 200 kg) (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)

Total Cost Of Template Complications: 25

PARTIAL-CONVERSION CYBORG

A partial-conversion cyborg can add any of the following suggested options to the basic cyborg package.

PARTIAL-CONVERSION OPTIONS**Abilities****Cost Power**

- 15 Cybernetic Strength Augmentation:** +15 STR
- 7 Cybernetic Strength Augmentation:** Reduced Endurance (1/2 END; +1/4) on up to 30 points of STR
- 50 Reflex Enhancement:** +10 DEX, +2 OCV, +2 DCV, +1 SPD
- 18 Cybergraft Toughness:** +10 CON, +16 STUN
- 15 Cybergraft Durability:** +5 PD, +5 ED, +5 BODY
- 14 Cybergraft Shell:** Resistant Protection (6 PD/6 ED); Required Roll 15- or Locations 6-18 (-1/4)
- 17 Combat Cybergraft Shell:** Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%; Linked (to Resistant Protection Activation; -1/4), STUN Only (-1/2)
- 17 Combat Cybergraft Shell:** Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%; Linked (to Resistant Protection Activation; -1/4), STUN Only (-1/2)
- 3 Cybernetic Legs:** Running +4m; Cybersystem (-1/4)
- var** Any desired standard or electrical cybersystem from the Cyberware chapter.

Complications**Value Complication**

- 10 Hunted:** Local Government 8- (MoPow, NCI, Watching)

FULL-CONVERSION CYBORG

A full-conversion cyborg can add any of the following suggested options to the basic cyborg package.

FULL-CONVERSION OPTIONS**Abilities****Cost Ability**

- 25 Cybernetic Strength Augmentation:** +25 STR
- 10 Cybernetic Strength Augmentation:** Reduced Endurance (1/2 END; +1/4) on up to 40 points of STR
- 50 Reflex Enhancement:** +10 DEX, +2 OCV, +2 DCV, +1 SPD
- 25 Cybergraft Toughness:** +15 CON, +20 STUN
- 26 Cybergraft Durability:** +8 PD, +8 ED, +10 BODY
- 22 Cybergraft Shell:** Resistant Protection (+9 PD/+9 ED); Perceivable (obviously armored cybergraft; -1/4)
- 20 Combat Cybergraft Shell:** Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%; STUN Only (-1/2)
- 20 Combat Cybergraft Shell:** Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%; STUN Only (-1/2)
- 15 Full-Conversion Cyborg Body:** Does Not Bleed
- 3 Cybernetic Legs:** Running +4m; Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 17 Full-Conversion Cyborg Body:** Life Support (Immunity: All terrestrial diseases and biowarfare agents; All terrestrial diseases and chemical warfare agents; Safe Environment: High Pressure; Intense Cold; Intense Heat; Low Pressure/Vacuum)
- var** Any desired standard or electrical cybersystem from the Cyberware chapter.

Complications**Value Complication**

- 10 Hunted:** Local Government 8- (MoPow, NCL, Watching)
- var Physical Complication:** Heavy (weight varies) (varies)

サイバー空間

CYBERSPACE IN ANIME

As the World Wide Web has evolved and become more complex in the real world, so has it in anime and manga. One of the first anime to feature the Web was *Bubblegum Crisis* (as well as its companion series, *AD Police*), where it appears as little more than a text interface and is accessed via computer terminals. In the series *Silent Möbius*, the Web, called 'Logic Space,' can be entered and manipulated by skilled computer programmers known as 'visionaries.' *Ghost In The Shell* has features various forms of the Web, each version more complex than the last in response to the growth of the real world internet. Access can be via the traditional keyboard interface, or by plugging in directly and experiencing a vast virtual world. Finally, *Cowboy Bebop*, goes beyond the limits of the World Wide Web to present the viewer with the SSW, or 'Solar System Web.' Accessible through standard terminals, one can also 'surf' the Web using virtual reality goggles, while in one episode a character uses a VR (virtual-reality) headset to hack into a computer network without ever touching a keyboard.

The word "cyberspace"

was coined by William Gibson for use in his 1982 short story, "Burn- ing Chrome." He used it again in his 1984 follow-up novel *Neuromancer*, where it referred to the abstract graphical representation of data found in the world's interconnected network of comput- ers. At the time, the real world didn't have anything like Gibson's vision of cyberspace, but it did have the Internet (in the form of a wide-area computer network), which first came online January 1, 1983. Although mostly text based, it allowed for the transmission of email and docu- ments, and heralded the beginnings of a larger, more global network.

The next step in the development of cyberspace came in 1989, when the World Wide Web was introduced with the first publicly accessible Web server put online in 1991. However, it wasn't until 1993 that the concept of cyberspace finally went from fiction to fact.

On April 30, 1993, CERN — the European laboratory responsible for developing the World Wide Web — an- nounced its creation would be free to all users. Later that year, the National Center for Supercomputing Applica- tions released Mosaic, the first popular Web browser and the first to integrate images and text together. Now it was possible for just about anyone with computer access to connect to, interact with, and create web-based content.

As computers and computer applications evolved, so did the World Wide Web. Websites became more complex and elaborate as software options allowed for greater and greater levels of interactivity. Soon, sound, video, and visitor-manipulatable animations became part of the Web experience. Commercial interests quickly took notice of the potential of the Web as well, resulting in the highly profitable realm of Internet-based com- merce.

The next big jump was the introduction of wireless computing, or "Wi-Fi." By disconnecting computers, phones, and game consoles from physical wires, users were free to move about and still retain network connec- tions. Now, with the right technology, one could access cyberspace from almost anywhere on the planet.

Cyberspace And Society

The World Wide Web has become so ingrained into modern society most people don't give it a second thought. Anyone with a Datalink can maintain continu- ous access to the Net. Thus, a person can wake in the morning, check his email, the contents of the refrig- erator, and the news, and never go near a computer terminal or television. Mass transit commuters can look up financial reports, read a book, listen to music, or play games, often resulting in virtually silent subway cars since each passenger is engrossed in his own online experience. A shopper can instantly compare products, access additional product information, or receive adver-

"Surf the net? You're tooling me, right? I'm totally wired with top-grade 'ware. I don't just 'surf' the Net, I live it!"
— DB_Bandit, self-proclaimed "super-hacker"

tisements, purchasing incentives, or product announcements tailored to his personality profile and buying history. Even

those who don't have Datalinks or similar cybernetic implants still can access the Net via various portable devices that combine the features of a cellphone, digital music player, game console, e-book reader, and laptop computer.

Although almost constant access to the "Information Superhighway" has resulted in unprecedented world- wide connectivity, it's also had a radical effect on certain aspects of daily life. Newspapers, magazines, and regular mail delivery have either diminished in scale or out-right vanished. Periodicals tend to be strictly online affairs, with only a few specialized titles appearing in print. Newspapers are handled the same way, although some can be purchased in POD (print-on-demand) editions. For the most part, email has totally replaced physical (or "snail") mail. About the only things shipped via snail mail are mail-order purchases, although advances in 3-D printers may see even that vanishing.

With the sheer volume of online services available, some people have found cyberspace to be preferable to the real world. Once plugged in, they isolate themselves from the world at large, disconnecting only to see to the most basic of bodily needs (and sometimes not even then). Known as *otaku*, these people tend to become with obsessed with a certain aspect of cyberspace culture and society, such as collecting immense amounts of data and information (and then racing to be the first to disclose a desired fact), engaging in marathon sessions of online game play, or acquiring the newest and most cutting-edge computer and cybernetic technology. In addition, many *otaku* avidly follow developments in the artificial intelligence field, feeling it's only a matter of time before computer systems are powerful enough to allow them to upload their consciousnesses into the Net and leave their physical bodies (and the world) behind.

In addition to *otaku*, who tend to be non-violent despite their obsessive nature, there's a darker aspect to the world of cyberspace. Known as "cyber-crime," it refers to any number of illegal activities carried out online. The most basic form of cyber-crime is data theft, usually of documents stored in secure servers, but also of programs, music, and movies. Monetary theft is next, in which funds are diverted from one account to another, often routed through different financial institutions along the way to disguise the route taken. Then there's identity theft, where thieves seek to acquire a person's bank account, credit card, or social security numbers. Finally, there's the most feared cybercrime of them all — "cyberhacking." While fairly rare, it's a real threat, and can be devastating (and sometimes deadly) to anyone unlucky enough to be targeted.

"The Net is the ultimate sensory experience. You can be anybody you want, do anything you want, see and listen to anything you want. And all you need to do is link up, authenticate, and drop in."

— W. Jason Marsh, Net activist

Cyberhacking

As stated in the cyberware section, cyberhacking is an attempt to access and over-ride a character's Cyberbrain.

CYBERHACKING EXPLAINED

The rules for cyberhacking aren't meant to realistically simulate how computers work, even ones in the year 2030. Instead, the desire is to create a system that allows PCs to interact with the Net (and each other) dynamically without resorting to a lot of special rules. Thus, cyberhackers use the same *HERO System* combat rules as everyone else, therefor preventing a game stoppage whenever a PC attempts to interact with the Net in some fashion. While somewhat simplistic, it does mean the cyberhacker is on fairly equal footing with everyone else, games mechanic-wise. In addition, for those used to *Champions*, it means the cyberhacker fits the "mentalizer" archetype, with other *Kazei 5* characters as follows: APEX pilot = powered armor user; cybernetically-augmented warrior = martial artist/weaponsmaster; cyborg = brick; esper = energy projector.

CYBERHACKING BASICS

A cyberhack is treated as a form of mental combat and uses standard *HERO System* Mental Powers. Characters engaged in a cyberhack must obey all standard rules for mental combat — including Line Of Sight (LOS), Effect Rolls, and so on. All Mental Powers defined as cyberhacking utilities are assumed to affect the Machine Class of minds, allowing characters to hack not only Cyberbrains, but any sort of computer system.

In order to perform a cyberhack, a character needs either a Cyberbrain or a physical computer system (such as a laptop or palmtop) to store his cyberhacking software programs. These programs are created by using various Mental Powers (or other Powers given the proper Advantages to allow them to act as Mental Powers) to simulate different computer-based effects. The END cost for these Powers is supplied by an Endurance Reserve, which simulates the processing capacity and memory of character's Cyberbrain or computer. Thus, the character can run as many applications as he wants, provided he has sufficient RAM and processor power (*i.e.* END in his Endurance Reserve).

Cyberbrains

A Cyberbrain is bought as stand-alone EGO, OMCV, and DMCV. These Characteristics represent the Cyberbrain's processing power and access capabilities and have no connection to the character's regular EGO, OMCV, and DMCV Characteristics. All cyberhacking attempts use either the Cyberbrain's OMCV or DMCV, depending on if the Cyberbrain is being used to cyberhack another Cyberbrain or defend against an incoming attack. If an attack is successful, the Cyberbrain's EGO score is used to make Breakout Rolls and the like. A Basic Cyberbrain has an EGO of 8-12 with an OMCV/DMCV of 3-4, an Advanced Cyberbrain has an EGO of 13-18 with an OMCV/DMCV of 5-6, Secure Cyberbrains have an EGO of 19-25 with an OMCV/DMCV of 7-8, and Military-Grade Cyberbrains have an EGO of 26 or better with an OMCV/DMCV of 9+. Unlike a character's EGO, a Cyberbrain's ECV doesn't drop to 0 when the character is asleep or unconscious. A Cyberbrain takes the standard -1/4 Limitation for all cyberware.

A Cyberbrain's EGO score is meant to abstractly represent the encryption/decryption capabilities and processing power of the cybernetic input/output interface running a character's cyberware. The more EGO a Cyberbrain has, the more security blocks and subroutines it uses to override and prevent external hacking attempts. It also represents how "advanced" the Cyberbrain's processor is, and GMs may want to require characters with a large amount of cyberware to purchase a higher-level of Cyberbrain. A rough guide would be 3 points of EGO for each electrical cybersystem (such as a Datalink, Cranial Cellphone, or Skilljack) the character has. However, a character with a full communications suite implanted in his head may find he needs a Cyberbrain EGO of 25-30 to run it all.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Terminology associated with cyberspace.

Net: Short for 'internet,' it refers to all forms of cyberspace.

Web: Short for World Wide Web. In 2030, the 'Net' is entirely made up of web-based information.

Otaku: Used to refer to cyberspace-addicted individuals who almost never leave their rooms and/or disconnect from the Net. Example: "Guy's a total *otaku*. All he does sit in his room and collect trivia about world-class espers. Dude's totally obsessed with finding Shion's measurements."

Hack/Hacking: To force one's way into a protected or secure data site. In the early days of computers and the internet, a hack referred to an attempt to fix a software or hardware computer problem, and Net purists (such as some *otaku*) prefer this definition. Example: "Yeah, I hacked the application package and found a tool-load of useless code. So I deleted it all and now it runs like a charm."

Cyberhack: To override someone's Cyberbrain and/or cyberware, usually with malicious intent. Example: "According to the diagnostics, a cyberhack was attempted on your right arm at 16:32. That'd be why it tried to strangle you."

Crack/Cracking: Similar in meaning to "hack," "cracking" refers to defeating security protocols (such as serial numbers or activation codes) for software programs. Cyberspace purists prefer to use the term 'crack' to refer to any attempt to force one's way into a secure system, site, or program. Example: "Sweet! Someone's cracked the access codes for Never-Ending World Of Gestalts! I'm gonna play for a week!"

Surf: To browse the web without having a specific goal in mind. Example: "Work's gotten to the point where half the time I'm just surfing the Net trying to fight the boredom."

Virii: Cyberspace-specific plural of the word "virus." Used to refer to infestations by a computer virus or viruses. Example: "That d-base's been hit by more *otaku* than a two-dollar street walker. It's drippin' with virii and I'll probably infect your Cyberbrain just lookin' at it."

CYBER-HACKING EXAMPLE

Temple decides to perform a data steal on an unsuspecting corporate executive. Her Cyberbrain has an OMCV of 8, the executive's has a DMCV of 5. Temple also has +2 with all Cyberhacking, giving her a total OMCV of 10. She rolls a 13 and hits a DMCV of 8, accessing the executive's Cyberbrain with ease. She then rolls 12d6 of Telepathy in order to scan the executive's Cyberbrain for data. Her result of 49 is reduced to 39 by her target's 10 points of Mental Defense (a.k.a. an Attack Barrier). This value is then compared to the Cyberbrain's EGO of 15, with a result of EGO +20, allowing Temple to search for specific data strings.

To counter this, GMs should consider grouping certain cybersystems together and counting them as a single item. Game Masters can also allow a character with more cyberware than their Cyberbrain can normally handle to turn systems off and on as a Zero-Phase Action.

Characters can have Poor-Quality Cyberbrains. They receive the additional -1/4 Limitation for *Poor Quality* cyberware, and GM's should strictly follow the EGO/3 formula for how many systems the character can have operating at any one time.

Cyberbrain Processor

In order to run cyberspace utilities, characters need to define their Cyberbrain's processor. Bought as an Endurance Reserve, it defines how many applications the character can run and for how long. If characters want to run programs after their processor has reached max capacity (*i.e.* has run out of END in the Reserve) they may use their own END, but run the risk of taking damage as the processor overheats (this is defined as a Side Effect).

Most Cyberbrains have fairly small Endurance Reserves (if at all), mainly because they don't need to run much beyond various Detects and the like, none of which cost END. Those processors used by cyberhackers (or those who expect to deal with cyberhackers) have significantly larger Reserves. A good rule of thumb is to multiply the character's Cyberbrain by 3-5 to determine how much END is in the Endurance Reserve. The Reserve's REC should at least be equal to the Cyberbrain's EGO score.

Just like a Cyberbrain, a Cyberbrain Processor can have the *Poor Quality* Limitation. *Poor Quality* processors usually have reduced Endurance Reserves or suffer from the Limitation *Slow Recovery*.

CYBERHACKING COMBAT

For the most part, a cyberhack attempt works like normal mental combat. The attacking character must have LOS to his target, must hit his opponent's DMCV, and then must roll for effect with whatever Mental Power he's using. The big difference comes in special effects and how Mental Powers are interpreted when used for cyberhacking.

First, Mental Powers used for cyberhacking affect the Machine class of minds *only*. They can't be bought with an Adder to affect the Human class of minds nor can a character take minuses to his OMCV to affect a different class of minds. Second, a character needs to be able to distinguish his target. He can do this visually (using the "personal recognizability" aspect of LOS) or through a Targeting Sense (such as Mind Scanning or a "Detect Cyberbrains" Sense). In addition, Mental Powers can't buy *Invisible Power Effects* to make their powers invisible to detection. Third, Combat Skill Levels don't represent the character's personal skill with his powers, but software enhancements. Fourth, a cyberhacker's Mental Powers aren't powers *per se*, but instead are sophisticated software programs which replicate the effects of certain Mental Powers for game purposes.

Cyberhacking Effects

By defining various Mental Powers as software programs, the nature of some Powers is changed slightly. However, the end result stays the same. Here we take a look at the regular Mental Powers and what they mean when used for cyberhacking.

Mental Awareness: Used to detect active program activity, Mental Awareness can be used to find out who's broadcasting programs. Adding Discriminatory allows one to determine what type of program it might be. Analyze should give things like the software's maker, version number, and so on (*i.e.*, "Scan shows he's using Morton's Hackblaster-C version 3.5."). Mental Awareness shouldn't be bought with Targeting — use Mind Scanning instead.

Mental Blast: This represents bursts of data, such as large amounts of sensory input or conflicting software commands, that overwhelm the Cyberbrain's processors. Unable to cope with the influx, the Cyberbrain neural connections overload, resulting in painful headache for the target. A Mental Blast that Does BODY sets up a potentially lethal feedback loop capable of damaging the target's nervous system.

Mental Defense: Known as an "Attack Barrier," this is an outgrowth of older firewall technology. It prevents intrusive programs from affecting the Cyberbrain. Attack Barriers can be Hardened.

Mental Illusions: Defined as false sensory data input, Mental Illusions allow a hacker to override a target's cybereyes and ears, and present different audio and visual stimuli. Mental Illusions can't affect a target's sense of smell, touch, or taste, unless the target is a full-body cyborg and depends totally on artificial senses. In addition, since this power is defined as a software program and not a true mental suggestion, it must be bought with the Limitation of *Depends On Character's Knowledge*. The "character knowledge" is defined as an effects database the Mental Illusions program can draw from.

Mind Control: While Mental Illusions allow a hacker to override sensory input, Mind Control affects a Cyberbrain's instructional output. However, the target must have some form of cyberware capable of remote control and any commands given must be for an action the affected cyberware is capable of performing. For example, a hacker could use Mind Control to force a target to retract his Finger Razors, but he couldn't force the target to use his Finger Razors to strike at a third person. Instead, the hacker would need to direct his commands at the target's cyberarm — provided he had one. In addition, the Mind Control Effects Table is changed slightly. Instead of basic control levels on the degree to which the target will perform the action, the level depends on how complex the action is. For example:

Characters can recover from Mind Control through the standard method (make an EGO Roll based on your Cyberbrain's EGO), or they can reboot their Cyberbrain, which takes a Turn and renders all cyberware unusable for that Turn..

Mind Control Effects

Greater Than EGO: Target cybernetics can be commanded to perform simple functions. Examples include turning minor systems off/on (such as various types of Headware) or making systems open/close (such as a Strength Hand or Finger Razors).

EGO +10: Target cybernetics can be commanded to perform moderately complex functions or 2-3 simple functions. Examples include extending a concealed Cyber Gun and then ejecting the magazine, or simultaneously switching off multiple Headware systems.

EGO +20: Target cybernetics can be commanded to perform highly complex functions or a sequence of 4-5 simple functions. Examples include directing a target's Cyberarm to draw a weapon and fire it, or prevent a Cyberlimb (or matched set of limbs) from moving.

EGO +30: Hacker has total control over the targeted cybernetics. This could allow the hacker to force a victim to punch himself in the face with his own cyberarm or shut down all of a target's headware, rendering him deaf and blind. This level of Mind Control is required to shutdown a Cyberbrain and allows a hacker to almost totally control a full-conversion cyborg (a technique known as "bodyjacking" [see page 46 for more]).

Mind Link: Similar in concept to a Coded Transmitter, Mind Link is defined as a software program that uses key-based encryption to send email messages from one person to another.

Mind Scan: When using Mind Scan, the hacker isn't looking for minds *per se*, but Cyberbrains. Specifically, he's looking for the unique address and data packets associated with a specific Cyberbrain. Once this address has been acquired, the hacker can try and access the Cyberbrain with other Mental Powers. If the hacker already knows the address of the Cyberbrain he's looking for, he receives a +5 OMCV bonus on his Mind Scan.

The software version of Mind Scan will only find Cyberbrains and can't locate anyone who doesn't possess one. Thus, when using the Mind Scan Modifiers Table, this needs to be taken into account. If a character Mind Scans a conference room with a hundred people in it, but only one of them has a Cyberbrain, the Mind Scan OMCV Modifier is -0 not -4.

Telepathy: Cyberhackers use Telepathy to quickly sift through collections of data. It can be used on any data storage device, which includes computers and various forms of cyberware. As this form of Telepathy is a software program and not a true Mental Power, it must take the Limitation of *Language Barrier*.

As with Mind Control, the Telepathy Effects Table is changed to reflect not how deep a thought is, but how common the desired data is:

Telepathy Effects

Greater Than EGO: Character can locate all data files containing a common phrase or word string. Of course, this may result in the character recovering a large amount of unrelated files that must be sifted through at a later date. Example: search for all references to "espers."

EGO +10: Character can locate data files using a narrowly defined search string. Example: search for all references to "World Class espers."

EGO +20: Character can locate data files using an extremely specific search string. Example: search for all references to "Shion Nys."

EGO +30: Character can locate a single data file (or files) based on a complex or highly restricted search string. Example: search for "Shion Nys to Raven Clark correspondence dated August 12, 2030."

Game Masters who feel this form of Telepathy is too complex or doesn't reflect search engines properly should consider the following options:

Instead of frequency of data, the Effects Roll determines amount and accuracy of the data gathered. The further down the Effects Chart one goes, the more data pertaining to the desired subject the character can recover, or the more accurate the data is.

The Effects Chart determines the time it takes to find the desired file, not the frequency of a data string. The initial search (*i.e.* the Effect Roll) takes mere seconds, but afterwards, the character will need to further sort through the data he's retrieved. The time period can range from hours (for Greater Than EGO), to instant access (for EGO +40). Game Masters who use such a system may want to apply a blanket *Extra Time* Limitation to represent the need to sift through data after each attempt.

SOFTWARE LIMITATION

All Mental Powers defined as software programs must include the Limitation of *Software* (-1/2). Akin in concept to the *Cybersystem* Limitation, Software is a blanket Limitation covering all the things a software program, no matter how advanced, *can't* do. These Limitations are on top of any of the required Limitations mentioned under Cyberhacking Effects and will vary slightly from software program to software program. The restrictions the Software Limitation places on Mental Powers bought as cyberhacking programs are as follows:

- Affects the Machine Class of minds *only*.
- Cannot use the following Combat Modifiers: Spreading.
- Cannot use the following Combat Maneuvers: Blazing Away, Cover, Hipshot, Hurry, Pulling A Punch, Rapid Fire, Snap Shot, Strafe, Suppression Fire, and Sweep.
- Cannot be Haymakered or Pushed. Software programs are fairly set in their capabilities, so if you want more dice of effect with a program, acquire a new version.

PRODUCT PLACEMENT

The cyberspace utilities listed here have all been given fairly generic, albeit descriptive, names. However, when used in game play you might want to be far more specific, labeling each utility with a manufacturer, application name, and version number. For example, a character with Telepathy could write down DavTom TextString 2.0 instead of Data Scan. Another character with the same power, but more dice of effect could note TextString 3.0, and so on. In general most application names relate to what the utility is supposed to do or what it's used for. Viruses on the other hand, often seem to have random or nonsense names. For example, a Data Bomb could be called something understandable, like "Migraine Maker A", or could be given a far more cryptic name, such as "Chum".

- Can be interfered with or blocked by certain environmental conditions. Cyberhacking uses radio signals to engage in wireless contact between Cyberbrains. It's possible certain structures may interfere with the signals (best represented by applying the Limitation *Reduced By Range*), while Radio-Based Flashes, Darkness, or even Change Environment effects may prevent the use of wireless communication.
- Finally, cyberhacking programs are only as effective as the cyber they have to work with. No matter how good the Effect Roll, a character can't force his target to experience a certain effect if the appropriate cyberware isn't in place.

"A lot of people thought the future of computer cracking to be one of virtual avatars hurling elaborate attack programs at each other in a computer-generated fantasy land. Well, as you can see, they were wrong."

— Asagiri

CYBERSPACE UTILITIES

While primarily designed to affect Cyberbrains, cyberspace utilities can be used to interact with normal computers. Simply substitute INT for EGO. However, cyberspace utilities cannot be used on just any machine, only on those with a wireless-capable interface and processor.

ADVANCED CYBERBRAIN

Effect: 15 EGO, 5 OMCV, 5 DMCV
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: Also known as cybernetic input/output processors, Cyberbrains are used to control a character's various cybernetic systems. The more cybernetics a character has implanted, the better the Cyberbrain needed to run them. Upgrading a Cyberbrain is possible, but suffers the same issues as upgrading a Cranial Computer: invasive surgery and the danger of brain damage.

A damaged Cyberbrain may be unable to interface with certain cybersystems or be limited in the number of systems it can interface with at any one time. *Poor Quality* Cyberbrains are limited to EGO/3 in the number of cybersystems they can access at any one time, normally forcing the character to switch between desired systems as needed. This is a Zero-Phase Action.

Game Information: 15 EGO, 5 OMCV, 5 DMCV (45 Active Points); *Cybersystem* (-1/4), *Restrained* (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4). Total cost: 30 points.

Options:

- 1) **Secure Cyberbrain:** Increase to 20 EGO, 7 OMCV, 7 DMCV. 62 Active Points; total cost 41 points.

- 2) **Military-Grade Cyberbrain:** Increase to 25 EGO, 9 OMCV, 9 DMCV. 79 Active Points; total cost 53 points.

- 3) **Basic Cyberbrain:** This is the standard Cyberbrain for most people with cybernetic implants. Decrease to 10 EGO, 3 OMCV, 3 DMCV. 40 Active Points; total cost 27 points.

- 4) **Intrusion Countermeasures:** Add +2 DMCV. 6 Active Points; total cost 4 points.

ADVANCED CYBERBRAIN PROCESSOR

Effect: Endurance Reserve (45 END, 15 REC)
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: A Cyberbrain Processor is used specifically to run various cyberspace utilities. Most people don't need one, only those who intend to actively access the Net (or other Cyberbrains) via their Cyberbrain need to invest in one. The larger the Processor, the more RAM and processing power the character has, and the more programs he can run. As with Cyberbrains, characters can upgrade their Processor, but run the same risks.

Damaged Processors may lose END or REC or may be unable to access and run certain programs (*i.e.* the Limitation *Requires A Roll* is used). A *Poor Quality* Cyberbrain Processor should have the *Slow Recovery* Limitation, reduced END, or suffer the *Requires A Roll* Limitation.

Game Information: *Endurance Reserve* (45 END, 15 REC) (22 Active Points); *Cybersystem* (-1/4), *Restrained* (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), *Restricted Use* (cyberspace utilities only; -1/4) *Side Effect* (1/2d6 RKA plus 1d6 END Drain if character uses personal END after *Endurance Reserve* is exhausted; -0). Total cost: 12 points.

Options:

- 1) **Secure Cyberbrain Processor:** Increase to *Endurance Reserve* (60 END, 20 REC). 28 Active Points; total cost 16 points.
- 2) **Military-Grade Cyberbrain Processor:** Increase to *Endurance Reserve* (75 END, 25 REC) 36 Active Points; total cost 20 points.
- 3) **Basic Cyberbrain Processor:** Decrease to *Endurance Reserve* (30 END, 10 REC) . 15 Active Points; total cost 8 points.



Offensive Powers

DATA BOMB

Effect: Mental Blast 6d6
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: LOS
END Cost: 6

Description: This program bombards a Cyberbrain with a mass of contradictory data instructions and input. The result is painful feedback for the character so attacked, as his nervous system attempts to deal with the Cyberbrain's buffer overflow errors.

Game Information: *Mental Blast 6d6 (60 Active Points); Software (-1/2). Total cost: 40 points.*

Options:

- 1) Strong Data Bomb:** Increase to Mental Blast 8d6. Total cost: 53 points.
- 2) Weak Data Bomb:** Decrease to Mental Blast 4d6. Total cost: 27 points.
- 3) Firewall Cutter:** Add Armor Piercing (+1/4). Total cost: 50 points.
- 4) Denial Of Service Attack:** Decrease to Mental Blast 4d6. Add Autofire (5 shots; +1 1/2). 100 Active Points; total cost 67 points.
- 5) Lethal Data Bomb:** Add Does BODY (+1). Total cost: 60 points.

DATA SCAN

Effect: Telepathy 12d6
Target: One character
Duration: Constant
Range: LOS
END Cost: 6

Description: With this program, a character can quickly sort through masses of stored data in order to find the information he needs. The more specific the data request, the longer the search will take.

Game Information: *Telepathy 12d6 (60 Active Points); Receive Only (-1/2), Language Barrier (-1/2), Software (-1/2). Total cost: 24 points.*

Options:

- 1) Deep Data Scan:** Increase to Telepathy 14d6. Total cost: 28 points.
- 2) Weak Data Scan:** Decrease to Telepathy 8d6. Total cost: 16 points.
- 3) Multiple Data Scan:** Add Autofire (5 shots; +1 1/2). 150 Active Points; total cost 60 points.

MAKING CYBERHACKING EFFECTIVE

Don't think you can do much to someone's Cyberbrain with just 12d6 of effect? Keep in mind that the bulk of people with Cyberbrains have systems with 8-12 EGO, CVs of 4, and 8-10 points of Mental Defense. Thus, even 12d6 of powers like Mind Control and Telepathy is sufficient to get a reasonable result. The issue comes when PCs, who probably have far more advanced Cyberbrains with significantly more points of Mental Defense, try to affect NPCs and cyberdroids with abilities akin to their own. In cases like this, don't be afraid to let the PCs have Advantages such as *Armor Piercing* or *Cumulative* on their cyberhacking utilities, or allow them to buy 90-120 Active Points of Mental Powers. You can also consider stating that anyone who's not important to the plot (*i.e.* not a major NPC or the like) takes 2 x Effect from all cyberhacking utilities.

If you really want to reduce the Real Point cost of cyberhacking programs, have anyone who wants to be a cyberhacker buy a Cranial Computer loaded with all of the desired programs. Of course, since a Cranial Computer's point cost is divided by five to determine what a character has to pay to have one, it might make cyberhacking utilities *too cheap*.

INPUT OVERRIDE

Effect: Mental Illusions 12d6
Target: One character
Duration: Constant
Range: LOS
END Cost: 6

Description: Used to override the sensory input from a target's cyber-enhanced senses, this program allows the character to alter what another character can see and hear (as well as smell, feel, and taste in extreme cases of cybernetic augmentation).

Game Information: *Mental Illusions 12d6 (60 Active Points); Depends On Character's Knowledge (-1/2), Software (-1/2). Total cost: 30 points.*

Options:

- 1) Strong Input:** Increase to Mental Illusions 14d6. Total cost: 35 points.
- 2) Weak Input:** Decrease to Mental Illusions 8d6. Total cost: 20 points.
- 3) Adaptable Override:** The character can quickly change the software's instructions to meet changing conditions. Add Constant (+1/2). Total cost: 45 points.
- 4) Broadcast Override:** The character can affect all Cyberbrains in the local area. Add Area Of Effect (32m Radius; +1) and No Range (-1/2). 120 Active Points; 48 total cost points.

OUTPUT OVERRIDE

Effect: Mind Control 12d6
Target: One character
Duration: Constant
Range: LOS
END Cost: 6

Description: Similar to Input Override, this program alters a Cyberbrain's output as opposed to the data it receives. Due to the security blocks found in all Cyberbrains, the more complex the given command, the less likely it is to succeed.

Game Information: *Mind Control 12d6, Telepathic (+1/4) (75 Active Points); Software (-1/2). Total cost: 50 points.*

Options:

- 1) Strong Output:** Increase to Mind Control 14d6. Total cost: 58 points.
- 2) Weak Output:** Decrease to Mind Control 8d6. Total cost: 33 points.
- 3) Override Worm:** With this software program the character can "infect" his target with a slow-acting worm. The desired effect needs to be pre-set before the program is activated, but after one run it needs no further attention from the character. Change to: Mind Control 2d6, Telepathic (+1/4), Constant (+1/2), Uncontrolled (+1/2), Cumulative (+1/2), Increased Cumulative Points (96 points; +3/4) (35 Active Points); Software (-1/2). Total cost: 23 points.

- 4) Bodyjacking:** When a Mind Control Effect Roll reaches EGO+30 or better, the character's control over his target is virtually complete. Known as "bodyjacking," this can result in a character being a prisoner in his own cybernetic body, subject to the whims of a cyberhacker. Most Output Override programs aren't powerful enough to enable a hacker to properly bodyjack a target, but certain tailor-made applications do exist. Used mainly by corporate, government, and terrorist organizations, this program is extremely dangerous. Change to: Mind Control 16d6, Telepathic (+1/4), Long-Term Control (+1/2) (140 Active Points); Mandatory Effect (EGO+30; -3/4), Software (-1/2). Total cost: 62 points.

POPUP WINDOWS

Effect: Sight and Hearing Groups Flash 4d6
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: LOS
END Cost: 0

Description: Launching this software application unleashes a barrage of audio-visual advertising popups, usually rendering a target blind and deaf for a few moments. Normally the advertisements are randomly culled from the Web, but it is possible to custom load the program with specific audio and visual sequences.

Game Information: *Sight and Hearing Groups Flash 4d6, ACV (uses OMCV versus DMCV; +1/4), AVAD (Mental Defense applies; +0), Invisible Power Effects (Invisible to Sight Group: +1/2), Line Of Sight (+1/2) (56 Active Points); Software (-1/2). Total cost: 37 points.*

Options:

- 1) More Windows:** Increase to Sight and Hearing Groups Flash 8d6. Total cost: 67 points.
- 2) Fewer Windows:** Decrease to Sight and Hearing Groups Flash 3d6. Total cost: 30 points.
- 3) Won't Take No For An Answer:** Add Armor Piercing (+1/4). Total cost: 41 points.

ATTACK VIRUS

Effect: Major Transform 4d6
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: LOS
END Cost: 10

Description: There are thousands and thousands of viruses loose in the Web. Some are programs so old they don't even function anymore, their code just a mere curiosity. Others are more insidious and appear to be valid programs until accessed. These are known as "Trojans," after the Trojan horse. Some work their way slowly into a system. Known as "Worms," their existence might not be detected until it's too late. Once active, viruses usually have a harmful purpose — deleting data, scouring a storage device for sensitive information (such as passwords, serial numbers, access codes, and financial data), installing monitoring applications, or re-writing code.

The Attack Virus listed here is a fairly generic form of malicious data-destroying code. Delivered directly to a target, it starts to destroy data within seconds, and can wreak untold havoc on an unprotected system.

Technically, any of the Offensive Powers listed in this section can be made into a virus though the application of such Advantages as *Uncontrolled* (+1/2), *Time Delay* (+1/4), *Trigger*, and so on. Self-replicating viruses are significantly more complex and may require the addition of the Advantages *Mental Damage Shield* (6E1 page 322) and/or *Trigger* in order to allow the virus to attack (and infect) anyone attempting to remove the virus or contact the infected Cyberbrain. A more complex infectious virus would use two different Transforms: one to delete data, the other to the grant the infected Cyberbrain the ability use the data-deletion Transform against other targets. The new power should also have the *Trigger* Advantage, so it can infect any other Cyberbrain or computer the character comes in contact with.

Game Information: *Major Transform 4d6 (add, alter, erase, or otherwise edit stored data files and programs, heals back through application of a data editor [basically the reverse of this power], reprogramming, and/or re-entering the data), Partial Transform (+1/2), ACV (uses OMCV versus DMCV; +1/4), AVAD (Mental Defense applies; +0), Invisible Power Effects (Invisible to Sight Group: +1/2), Line Of Sight (+1/2), Works Against EGO Not BODY(+0) (110 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Turn (Post-Segment 12), -1 1/4), Software (-1/2), Limited Target (computer/Cyberbrain files and software; -1/2). Total cost: 40 points.*

Options:

- 1) **Stronger Attack Virus:** Increase to Major Transform 6d6. Total cost: 60 points.
- 2) **Weaker Attack Virus:** Decrease to Major Transform 2d6. Total cost: 20 points.
- 3) **Well-Coded Virus:** Add Difficult To Dispel (+1/4). Total cost: 44 points.
- 4) **Trojan:** The virus appears to be a legitimate software application. Add: Sight Group and Detect Viruses Images 2m radius, -6 to PER Rolls (to be detected as Trojan), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) (42 Active Points); Set Effect (only to appear as a normal software program; -1), Linked (Virus; -1/2), Limited Effect (normal sight only; -1/4). Total cost: 15 points.

The virus itself should have a single-use Trigger added which will activate the virus the moment a character attempts to run the program.

- 5) **Worm:** Add Time Delay (+1/4). Total cost: 44 points.
- 6) **Slow-Acting Virus:** Add Damage Over Time. The number of increments and the time between them is up to the GM. It could be little as a Minute or as long as a Month (or more)!

Defensive Powers

ANTI-VIRUS SOFTWARE

Effect: Dispel Virus, all Virus powers simultaneously
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: LOS
END Cost: 10

*"I'm stealin' ur warez
 I'm crackin' ur codez
 And when you ask where I iz
 I'm in ur base killin' ur d00dz"
 — Cyberspace Hero, Bad Data Finger*

Description: Used to combat virus infections, Anti-Virus Software works to isolate and delete all forms of malicious code found in an infected Cyberbrain. In game terms, the Dispel rolls its dice of effect once per Turn, spreading the dice out over each Turn. The net result is 1d6 of Dispel rolled every 2 Segments until the Virus is dispelled or until the 240 points of effect are reached. This will eliminate most Attack Viruses such as the one listed above, but won't recover lost data. Data recovery requires the use of Transform (erased data storage device to restored data storage device) which is the reverse of the Attack Virus program.

Game Information: *Dispel Viruses 5d6 (standard effect: 15 points), all Virus powers simultaneously (+2), Cumulative (+1/2), Increased Cumulative Points (240 points; +3/4), ACV (uses OMCV versus DMCV; +1/4), AVAD (Mental Defense applies; +0), Constant (+1/2), Invisible Power Effects (Invisible to Sight Group: +1/2), Line Of Sight (+1/2), Uncontrolled (lasts for 12 Phases, can be stopped by rebooting the targeted Cyberbrain; +1/2) (97 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Turn (Post-Segment 12) to scan target Cyberbrain, -1 1/4), Software (-1/2). Total cost: 35 points.*

Options:

- 1) **Stronger Anti-Virus Software:** Increase to Dispel 8d6. Total cost: 57 points.
- 2) **Weaker Anti-Virus Software:** Decrease to Dispel 3d6. Total cost: 21 points.
- 3) **Self-Scan Only:** Add No Range (-1/2). Total cost: 30 points.

ATTACK BARRIER

Effect: Mental Defense (15 points)
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: All Cyberbrains possess system firewalls to prevent unauthorized access. *Poor Quality* Cyberbrains may have firewalls with greatly reduced protective capabilities or be lacking a firewall altogether.

Game Information: *Mental Defense (15 points) (15 Active Points); Software (-1/2). Total cost: 10 points.*

Options:

- 1) **Stronger Attack Barrier:** Increase to Mental Defense (25 points). Total cost: 17 points. This is the typical level of Attack Barrier for military-grade Cyberbrains.

2) Weaker Attack Barrier: Decrease to Mental Defense (10 points). Total cost: 7 points. This is the typical level of Attack Barrier for commercial-grade Cyberbrains.

3) Multi-Layered Attack Barrier: Add Hardened (+1/4). Total cost: 17 points.

4) Offensive Attack Barrier: Add Mental Blast 3d6, Area Of Effect (personal Surface; +1/4), Constant (+1/2), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) (67 Active Points); Linked (Mental Defense; -1/4), Mental Contact Only (-1/2), No Range (-1/2), Software (-1/2). Total cost: 24 points.

ENCRYPTED CYBERBRAIN

Effect: +10 EGO; Only To Resist Cyberhacking Utilities

Target: Self

Duration: Persistent

Range: Self

END Cost: 0

Description: Defensive subroutines and security blocks make it much more difficult to subvert the normal input/output processes of the character's Cyberbrain. The extra EGO granted by an Encrypted Cyberbrain has no effect on EGO Rolls, ECV, or Mental Defense totals; it only acts to increase the character's Cyberbrain EGO when checking the results of various Effect Rolls.

Game Information: +10 EGO (10 Active Points); Only To Resist Cyberhacking Utilities (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4). Total cost: 5 points.

Options:

1) Greater Encryption: Increase to +15 EGO. Total cost: 7 points.

2) Lesser Encryption: Decrease to +5 EGO. Total cost: 2 points.

POPUK BLOCKER

Effect: Sight and Hearing Group Flash Defense (5 points each)

Target: Self

Duration: Persistent

Range: Self

END Cost: 0

Description: A Pop-Up Blocker seeks to either remove pop-ups as soon as they appear or to prevent them from appearing in the first place.

Game Information: Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points) (5 Active Points); Software (-1/2) (Real Cost: 3) plus Hearing Group Flash Defense (5 points) (5 Active Points); Software (-1/2) (Real Cost: 3). Total cost: 10 points.

Options:

1) Stronger Blocker: Increase to Sight and Hearing Group Flash Defense (10 points each). Total cost: 14 points.

2) Weaker Blocker: Decrease to Sight and Hearing Group Flash Defense (3 points each). Total cost: 4 points.

3) Multi-Layered Blocker: Add Hardened (+1/4). Total cost: 8 points.

VIRUS DETECTION

Effect: Detect Viruses

Target: Self

Duration: Persistent

Range: Self

END Cost: 0

Description: This utility constantly scans incoming files and downloaded applications looking for hidden viruses and other malware. Once it detects a suspicious file, an alert is sent to the Cyberbrain, at which point the character can decide to delete, repair, or isolate the item in question. More advanced versions of Virus Detection software can determine the nature of the virus and what actions it will perform once activated.

Game Information: Detect Computer Viruses (INT Roll) (Mental Group), Rapid: x10, Sense (10 Active Points); Software (-1/2). Total cost: 7 points.

Options:

1) Precise Virus Scan: Add Discriminatory, Analyze. Total cost: 13 points.

Sensory Powers

ACTIVE CYBERBRAIN SCAN

Effect: Detect Cyberbrains

Target: Self

Duration: Persistent

Range: Self

END Cost: 0

Description: With this utility a character can scan the local area and look for open Cyberbrain nodes. While it won't allow him to launch a cyberhacking attempt, it will give him an idea of how many active Cyberbrains are in the area and who they belong to.

Game Information: Detect Cyberbrains (INT Roll) (Mental Group), Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees), Rapid: x10 (11 Active Points); Software (-1/2). Total cost: 7 points.

Options:

1) Enhanced Active Cyberbrain Scan: Increase to INT Roll +3. Total cost: 9 points.

2) Precise Active Cyberbrain Scan: The advanced form of the basic utility allows a character to know the type of Cyberbrain detected (Basic, Advanced, and so on), the amount of EGO the Cyberbrain has (within 1-3 points), as well the Active Points (within +/-10%) of any active software. Attack Barriers will give a PER Roll penalty of total Mental Defense/5 to the software detection portion of the die roll. Add Discriminatory and Analyze. Total cost: 16 points.

3) Scanning Takes Time: Add Extra Time (Full Phase; -1/2). Total cost: 5 points.

IMPROVED CYBERBRAIN SCAN

Effect: Mind Scan 8d6
Target: Self
Duration: Constant
Range: Special
END Cost: 6

Description: Instead of simply detecting active Cyberbrains, the program looks for open access ports, hijackable data packets, and broadcast addresses. It can use this data to exploit security holes and firewall flaws in the Cyberbrain's encryption protection programs to launch invasive software applications.

Game Information: *Mind Scan 12d6 (60 Active Points); Software (-1/2). Total cost: 40 points.*

Options:

- 1) Stronger Scan:** Increase to Mind Scan 14d6. Total cost: 47 points.
- 2) Weaker Scan:** Decrease to Mind Scan 8d6. Total cost: 27 points.
- 3) Accurate Scan:** Various software plug-ins enable the character to pinpoint the exact Cyberbrain he's looking for. Add +10 OMCV. Total cost: 53 points.
- 4) Cyberhacker's Scan:** By utilizing various software blocks and signal encryption routines, this version of the software allows a character to attack his target without fear of being attacked in turn. Add One-Way Link (+1). Total cost: 80 points.
- 5) Cyberbrain Finder:** Similar to an Active Cyberbrain Scan, this utility allows a character to quickly locate Cyberbrains in the local area, but he can't launch attacks through this link. Increase to Mind Scan 14d6 and add Cannot Attack Through Link (-1). 70 Active Points; total cost 28 points.
- 6) You Can Run But You Can't Hide:** This version of the software can exploit even the tiniest of security flaws, allowing the hacker to get a toehold into almost any system. Add Partial Lock-On (+1/2). Total cost: 60 points.
- 7) Scanning Takes Time:** Add Extra Time (Full Phase; -1/2). Total cost: 30 points.

PROGRAM ACTIVITY MONITOR

Effect: Mental Awareness
Target: Self
Duration: Constant
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: Launching this program allows the character to monitor wireless activity in the local area. He can determine which Cyberbrains are broadcasting data and which are downloading files. By monitoring the flow and size of data packets he can even tell which Cyberbrains might be engaged in cyberhacking attempts.

This form of Mental Awareness can only be used to detect other software programs, not esper-based Mental Powers.

Game Information: *Mental Awareness, Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees), Rapid: x10 (13 Active Points); Software (-1/2). Total cost: 9 points.*

Options:

- 1) Precise Program Activity Monitor:** With this plug-in, the character can determine the software programs in use, as well as their version numbers and basic capabilities. Add Discriminatory, Analyze. Total cost: 15 points.

Miscellaneous Powers**ENCRYPTED EMAIL**

Effect: Mind Link, Any Willing Target
Target: One character
Duration: Persistent
Range: LOS
END Cost: 0

Description: By using specific encryption keys, the character can send secure emails to anyone with the proper decryption certificate. If he sends the email to anyone else he knows, all they will get is unreadable gibberish. The Extra Time and Concentration Limitations represent how long it takes the character to compose a message. Characters who wish to send a message to more than one person at time should simply buy up the number of simultaneous targets.

Game Information: *Mind Link, Any Willing Target, No LOS Needed (25 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Turn (Post-Segment 12), -1 1/4), Only With Others Who Have Mind Link (-1), Concentration, Must Concentrate throughout use of Constant Power (1/2 DCV; -1/2), Software (-1/2). Total cost: 6 points.*

ESPERES

ESPERS IN ANIME

The term “esper” (derived from “ESP,” for “extra-sensory perception”) is an all-encompassing one in anime and manga, used to refer to anyone with telekinetic and/or telepathic powers. Espers exhibit a wide variety of power and control levels, ranging from the fairly weak to on-par with American superheroes. Some, such as Yuki Saiko from *Silent Möbius* and Lan from *Blue Sonnet* have little conscious control over their abilities and often only manifest them under great stress. However, when their powers *do* appear, the results are often rather destructive. Others, such as Kyosuke Kasuga from *Kimagure Orange Road*, Annie from *Silent Möbius* and Sonnet from *Blue Sonnet* can invoke their powers at will, but have a recognizable upper limit to their powers and what they can do with them. Then, there are such characters as Cho from *Domu*, as well as Tetsuo Shima and Akira from *Akira*, who seem capable of doing almost anything they desire. Finally, some characters seem to be unaware of the full extent of their powers, as is the case with Ai Shiomi from *Psychic Academy*.

No one really knows when the first espers appeared. At best guess they have always been with us, their occasional appearances recorded as accounts of gods, demons, or magicians. Some of the earliest known espers appeared in the mid- to late-1800s, demonstrating their powers on the stage as so-called “spirit-mediums.” While many such individuals were exposed as frauds, there were sufficient examples of unexplainable paranormal ability to attract interest from the scientific community. Scientific proof of esper abilities was achieved in the 1930s at Duke University, when Dr. J. B. Rhine was able to document examples of telekinesis and telepathy both in and out of the laboratory.

This discovery soon set off a multitude of secret projects among the governments of the world. Through World War II and the following Cold War, with names like ARTICHOKE, BLUEBIRD, MKULTRA, and STARGATE, they sought to further discover, document, and augment esper abilities. And they succeeded.

The application of various psychoactive drugs made it possible to active latent esper powers with sufficient regularity to make it a viable process. These drugs could also be used to improve existing esper powers, and were given to many counter-intelligence esper agents in order to provide a much-needed boost. At the same time a frightening discovery was made: the presence of an esper, even one who was acting covertly, was enough to activate other latent espers, and those so activated were often more powerful than the person who trigged their abilities in the first place! To make matters even worse, it became apparent that activation drugs might skip a generation. In other words, two people who showed no effect from a dose of esper activators might have a child who was an active esper almost from the moment of birth. The genie had been let of the bottle — and there was no way to put it back.

Most governments quickly realized the folly of trying to eliminate the esper population. There were simply too many and their numbers seemed to be growing every day. Military force was out of the question — things had reached a point where too many espers were more than powerful enough to deal with man-portable weapons, while biological warfare was far too indiscriminate. Faced with the realization that the only thing capable of facing an esper was *another* esper, the common solution become one of persuasion and bribery. The multinational corporations were the first to realize having their own “esper weapon” would give them a huge advantage over their competition, and were quick to offer espers lucrative employment contracts, which considering the turbulent economic situation, most were eager to accept. The esper weapon arms race had begun.

“They call ‘em ‘esper weapons’ for a reason, y’know. I was there when two of them decided to have a go. Ya had two guys just staring at each other... then glass was breaking, the street was pitching every which way, people screamin’.... How am I supposed to stop something like that?”

— Grady Watson, NYPD, Inc. patrol officer

Espers And Society

Espers, as a rule, both fascinate and frighten the general public. They possess paranormal powers and abilities beyond anything technology has to offer, and this makes

them objects of curiosity and wonder. There’s also a mystique associated with their powers and many regard espers in the same way they do sim-sense stars, top athletes, and world-famous musicians. Of course, it doesn’t hurt that many of the world’s most powerful espers are physically attractive, and there is a certain allure to them and their lifestyles.

At the same time, espers possess powers which are barely understood by science. No one is sure how they do what they do, but everyone knows it can be *very* destructive. In addition, an esper can look like just about anyone. There’s no real way to identify an esper in a crowd — *unless* you’re an esper yourself. This has led to a certain degree of paranoia on the part of the general public. Is that man staring at you on the train simply rude, or is he reading your mind? If you cut someone off on the drive home, will she simply yell curses at you, or toss your car off of the road with a thought? Usually these fears are groundless, but anti-esper backlash has been known to happen, with people thought to be espers attacked and beaten (and even killed) for any number of presumed “crimes.”

If there is one thing about espers that gives most people cause for alarm is the news the number of espers is growing. It’s a slow process, but a steady one. Espers tend to “breed true” and the children of an esper couple will almost certainly be active espers themselves. There is also the issue of espers activating other espers by their mere presence (and even more so if an esper uses his powers to any great degree). This has led to the fear of “regular” humanity becoming obsolete (so to speak), as the espers eventually take over the world. On the other hand, it has been pointed out that while certain powerful espers have an air of arrogance about them and look down on non-espers, they don’t think of themselves as a separate species... yet.

CORPORATE ESPERS

Multinational corporations tend to consider espers a valuable business commodity and are always looking for new recruits. The children of employees are often tested for esper potential, with those who show promising power levels often recruited into specialized esper schools — usually through promises of financial incentives to the child's parents. These children are then placed in specific training classes designed to fully unlock the subject's full esper potential. This training isn't without its hazards, however, as some nascent espers have been known to manifest their powers with incredibly destructive results. The best-known example of this occurred in the early 2020s, when an entire esper research center in Japan was virtually demolished.

Corporate espers tend to be well-paid, well-trained, and well-treated in part because they are considered valuable assets and because no one wants to set one off and end up on his "bad side." On the other hand, the common designation of "esper weapon" tends to make most people forget that the esper, once you subtract their telekinetic and/or telepathic powers, is still just a person and not a mindless killing machine.

A corporate esper will find his life ranges from periods of monumental boredom to nigh-on sheer terror. The majority of his time is spent acting as a deterrent. He'll live in a corporate facility where no attempt is made to hide his presence (usually by having him appear at corporate functions and the like), with the hope the esper's mere existence will scare off some corporate espionage attempts. Anyone who plans to strike the facility where he's based will have to incorporate how to deal with an esper in their planning. If the facility is attacked, then the esper is the first line of the corporation's defense. At the same time, espers may also be used in an offensive manner, to strike at corporations that either don't have an esper of their own (and thus are ripe for exploitation), or to neutralize a known esper so that a separate strike team can complete a mission objective.

Acquiring Esper Powers

Espers can be either born or made. The former depends on the random chance of genetics, while the latter requires specific doses of tailored chemical compounds. It's easier to create an esper, but they tend to be less reliable power-wise and are known to burn out or become so dependent on their activation drugs as to be effectively useless. Natural espers are often significantly more powerful, but harder to come by. They also exhibit more unconventional powers, such as teleportation, regeneration, or various telepathic abilities.

Not all espers are active from the moment of birth. Many are latent espers, with no real powers other than the potential to develop into a full-fledged esper once they are "activated." This activation can be the result of chemical triggers, but usually occurs when the latent esper is around an active one. Apparently there is a resonance of sorts between espers, and the mere presence of one with developed powers will trigger the awakening of any latents in his general area. The latents need to be fairly close by (usually no more than a dozen yards or so, although the most powerful espers can affect latents

upwards of a city block away) and activation is most successful if the active esper is currently manifesting his powers.

Activation is almost never a pleasant process. The nascent esper will usually suffer headaches, migraines, nausea, dizziness, and so on, as well as flashes of esper power. These flashes tend to relate to the powers the esper will manifest, so a telepath will hear voices in his head (or will speak to people mentally when he thinks he's speaking normally), a telekinetic might think about getting an object only to have it move toward him on its own, while someone with teleportation powers may wake up to find himself far away from home — with no idea how he got there!

Game Masters should allow anyone who would like to play a potential esper to buy the Talent *Latent Esper*. This Talent should cost either 5 Character Points if the GM would like latency to be common, or 10 if he wants it to be rarer. If espers are very rare in the campaign, then the Talent should 20 points, or be disallowed altogether. Once events make it possible for the PC to buy esper powers, the Talent can be "cashed in" and the points used to purchase the character's new powers.

Building The Perfect Esper

Not satisfied with the random chance inherent in drug-activated or natural espers, certain multinational corporations have secretly started researching methods for reliably creating their own "pet" espers. Initial attempts involved replicated humans, but proved to be an utter failure. While technically a copy of a normal human, a replicate seems to lose something in the growing process that renders their brains unsuitable for esper activation. So far, the best any corporation can offer is a "synthetic" esper with a life span of only a few months.

A more recent development involves cloning. Using genetic samples acquired from different espers, certain corporations have attempted to produce their own espers. However, use of accelerated growth processes and intensive education necessary to produce a viable clone in a period of years rather than decades has resulted in espers who are far less stable and much more dangerous than natural espers. Still, research continues as the first multinational corporation that can mass-produce func-

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Terminology associated with espers.

Esper Weapon: An esper whose powers are suitable for combat applications. Example: "In my opinion there're two kinds of espers. There's the regular ones, who you hope ignore you. And then there're esper weapons, who you hope ignore you and every thing around you for several blocks."

The Power: Usually used by espers to refer to their paranormal abilities. Example: "Imagine your Power is a stream of clear, cool water flowing through you. On a good day you can dip your hands into the stream and take as much or as little as you need. On a bad day you're drowning in it."

Brainburn: The common term for a variety of esper-related disorders, such as Acute Synaptic Distress Syndrome, Acute Synaptic Hyperfunction, and Psychokinetic Hyperfunction. Example: "I told her over and over, 'don't push yourself.' But she wouldn't listen and kept trying to do more with her power. Next thing I know, she's brainburned and is lying there bleeding all over the floor."

PK: Short for "psychokinetic," an older term for an esper. Now obsolete.

Psychokinesis: The technical term for esper telekinesis.

Psionics: The technical term for esper telepathy.

Teek: Short for "telekinetic," another older term for an esper. Also obsolete.

tional, stable espers will have a lock on a very lucrative market (not to mention possibly controlling the world around them — if they can first control their own creations). Until that time, however, the multinationals have to make do with using natural and/or activated espers.

“Being in the middle of an esper fight is like being in the middle of a typhoon. Except you usually get advance warning about the typhoon.”

— Sarah J. Ferrari, manager of Mandarin Towers, Hong Kong

Esper Abilities

Esper powers can be divided into two broad groups; telekinetics (or psychokinetics) and telepaths (or psionics). Most modern espers are telekinetics, with a typical individual having the ability to mentally lift great weights, projects bolts of kinetic force, surround himself with a protective field, and leap great distances (or outright fly). Other abilities are possible, with some espers being able to knit their own (or another's) damaged tissues together, survive environmental extremes with no ill effects, or in some rare cases, instantaneously transport themselves from one location to another.

Telepathic espers are far less common and have more unusual powers. They can read minds, project their thoughts, control the actions of others, assault another mind with pure mental force, and so on. Some can project their thoughts in such a way as to create highly believable illusions, while a few rare individuals apparently have the ability to see (or dream of) events before they happen.

All esper powers, whether telekinetic or telepathic, are mental in origin. When dealing with telekinetic powers, this means the power itself is effectively invisible. Blasts don't manifest as colored beams of energy; an esper using Flight doesn't leave a glowing trail; Resistant Protection, although Perceivable, doesn't produce a bright aura, and so on. At the same time, these powers affect the environment around the esper. The aforementioned Blast will rip up the ground it passes over, a flying character will pull small objects along to swirl around his body (or cause objects he passes by to bend or break), an esper activating his Resistant Protection will push small objects away, while a Barrier will crack the ground along its path. Known as *Esper Side Effects*, these phenomena are explained in greater detail in the next section.

Esper Limitations And Complications

Espers have a number of unique side effects associated with their abilities. An esper's power is never under his complete control, and in many cases, the more powerful the esper the more disruptive his powers are when he chooses to use them. This section describes several esper-specific *HERO System* Complications and then gives an in-depth explanation of the *Esper Side Effects* Limitation.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

All espers, regardless of how powerful they are, can detect another esper's presence by his esper signature (see *Esper Awareness* in the *Esper Powers* section). The more powerful (or unstable) the esper, the easier the signature is to detect. Thus, any esper character must take one of the following forms of Distinctive Features:

Negligible Esper (Easily Concealable, Noticed and Recognizable, Detectable Only With Unusual Senses; 0 points): The esper only creates a detectable esper signature when actively using his powers. If he wishes to avoid detection by other espers, he simply needs to stop using them. A Negligible Esper can't be detected if he's not using his powers, otherwise standard bonuses apply. Only the weakest of espers can take this level of Distinctive Features.

Esper (Concealable, Noticed and Recognizable, Detectable Only With Unusual Senses; 5 points): The esper generates a detectable esper signature at all times, but can dampen it if he concentrates. While concentrating on controlling his esper output, he can perform simple tasks (such as making lunch), but not complex ones (such as computer repairs), and may break concentration if surprised. Concentration is lost automatically if the esper becomes involved in combat, is rendered unconscious, or falls asleep. Any attempt to detect an Obvious Esper is at +2 (on top of any other bonuses), +0 if he is concentrating on dampening his power. This is the default level of Distinctive Features for esper characters.

Powerful Esper (Not Concealable, Always Noticed and Causes Major Reaction, Detectable Only With Unusual Senses; 10 points): The esper is so powerful he can't dampen his esper signature, no matter how hard he tries. He's easily detectable by other espers, and his signature can often be picked up long before he's visually apparent. Any attempt to detect a Powerful Esper is at +5, whether he is using his powers or not. Only the most powerful espers can take this form of Distinctive Features.

As she stalked into the smoky ruin of the warehouse, Shion Nys wrapped layer after layer of telekinetic power around herself, forming it into a thick shield that frighteningly enough, managed to create a visible distortion in the air. Excess Power dripped off of her, each step of her booted feet making the aged and rotting concrete shatter and fragment, the chips swirling in her wake like dead leaves.

A dust-covered figure stumbled out of the gloom. It was too tall, the hair too short, and most importantly, male. Shion reached out, slapped her hands on to either side of the man's head, and with a howl of anger used her phenomenal physical strength to wrench it almost full circle. There was a wet popping sound as the spine gave way, and then the body dropped bonelessly to the floor.

Another figure opened fire with a shotgun, the blast almost deafening in the confined space. The range was such Shion's shields could be seen to bend and twist, before the dark mass of shot was scattered to the ground. An almost absent-minded flick of the wrist sent a fountain of telekinetic force to rip its way across the floor before hurling the screaming figure back the way it'd come.

With a second wave of her hand, the wall of debris in front of her blew up and out, to rain down in bits and pieces amid the wreckage of the blasted warehouse. Scattered bits of junk scurried out of her path to bounce along the floor before being sucked up by her Power and hurled the way she'd come. Her hair and cloak fluttered in a nonexistent wind as she narrowed her eyes against the airborne grit.

A third figure, this one wearing dust-coated red and black armor lunged for her, his fist crackling with electricity. Shion slapped the punch aside with one hand, ignoring the brilliant blue-white worms of energy crawling harmlessly over her arm. Forming her other hand into a flat blade shape, she stepped forward and punched, concentrated Power reducing the plates of graphite ceramic to fine powder as her arm slammed through the man's body.

Pausing to wrench her arm free, Shion hurled the corpse to the floor, the man's life blood running off of her shields like water. She then turned and looked deeper into the warehouse. She could feel Power being used in there, and she meant to find it.

— Shion Nys seeks her sister, apparently kidnapped by Zero Zone gangers who really should have known better.

PHYSICAL COMPLICATION

Powers Are Occasionally Out Of Control

(Infrequently, Greatly; 15 points): The esper's powers are so great he can't control them at all times. Unlike *Esper Side Effects*, this Limitation can affect the esper directly, as opposed to just his surroundings. It should occur when certain appropriate conditions have been met, such as: the esper becomes Enraged (or Berserk); an Activation (or EGO) Roll is failed, a Susceptibility has been triggered, or the esper himself is sick, intoxicated, or under the influence of mind- or emotion-altering drugs. The results of the esper's powers going out of control are up to the GM but should be based on any powers the esper is currently using and the situation at hand. Suggested effects include: the power gains the Advantage *Area Of Effect* (although this could be balanced by the power keeping the same Active Points and losing appropriate dice of effect); the power becomes much more powerful than desired (*i.e.*, extra dice of effect are added), the power uses more END than normal; the power uses STUN instead of (or along with) the regular END cost; the esper takes BODY and STUN damage (treat as a Side Effect); if the esper is trying to lift something with TK, he applies STR damage instead, and so on. In addition, any increase in power should be accompanied by a debilitating after-effect, such as headaches, nausea, dizziness, vomiting, blood from the nose, mouth, and ears, or the like (This can often be expressed by applying several dice of Drain against the esper's DEX, CON, END, and STUN with a recovery rate of 5 points per Minute [at minimum]). Game Masters may also want to reduce the esper's powers for a time, allowing them to slowly build back up to normal levels. In addition, see the section on Brainburn for more suggestions.

SOCIAL COMPLICATION

Esper (Frequently, Minor; 10 points): Espers both fascinate and frighten people. Media reports tend to emphasize the destructive nature of esper powers while presenting the subtle message that espers are something other than human.

When coupled with the term "esper weapon" the result is most people

treat the average esper (such as a PC esper) as a loaded gun, capable of going off at any moment. More powerful espers (such as Shion and especially Ran) are looked at as living weapons of mass destruction, just waiting for some event to trigger wide-spread devastation. Worse yet is the fear of telepathic intrusion. While this power is extremely rare, most people think all espers are telepaths and there's an unvoiced fear that "they" are reading the minds of the people around them, digging out dark secrets and the like. The end result is most known espers are treated with a certain degree of fear and apprehension and will find it hard for anyone to accept them as themselves and not treat them as living weapons.

"I don't trust those espers one bit! Always reading people's minds and making them do things. They're not decent people and should be banned!"
— Lisa Stiles, Neo York homemaker

BRAINBURN

A catch-all term for a number of similar esper-specific disorders, Brainburn, also known as "psychic strain," is what happens when an esper overextends himself. An esper who strains too hard to summon and control his power runs the risk of causing himself serious injury. The typical results of Brainburn include: bleeding from the eyes, nose and ears, dizziness, migraine headaches, nausea, and vomiting. It's not a specific Disadvantage in itself, but is normally simulated through the use of Side Effects, Physical Complications, or Susceptibility. For example, powers with the Limitation *Requires A Roll* may trigger a case of Brainburn (defined as Side Effects or a Susceptibility) if the roll is failed.

ESPER SIDE EFFECTS SUGGESTIONS

The GM can do a lot with *Esper Side Effects* and how they relate to individual PCs. For starters, PCs with Luck may reduce the level of side effect by one for each point of Luck they roll. Conversely, PCs with Unluck may see their side effects increase by one level for each level of Unluck they roll (However, this shouldn't mean a character with minor espers powers can wipe out a city with enough levels of Unluck.).

The side effects of esper powers don't have to be purely telekinetic/telepathic in nature either. Appropriate alternate effects include: temperature changes (ranging from very cold to very hot, usually with secondary effects, such as frost or steam); telekinetic wind (which springs up from around the esper's feet and swirls around him dramatically, billowing out his clothes and blowing dust and small debris about); electrical fluctuations (in which lights flicker, cellphones cut in and out, and radio transmissions turn into static, even if they are on coded channels), and so forth. In extreme cases the damage may adversely affect the espers friends and foes in unexpected way. Gun barrels may bend, while lenses in scopes might crack or shatter. Power cells could discharge, arcing electricity, while cellphones might go dead and computers crash.

If GMs chose, an esper can mitigate his side effects through the use of an EGO Roll. The Roll is -1 for every 10 Active Points in the power, with success allowing him to drop the effects one level or to chose a different form of manifestation (such as lowering the temperature in a room to freezing levels as opposed to shattering a bank of video monitors).

Esper Side Effects are also heavily dependent on the esper's mental state. Extreme stress (more so than regular combat), fear, a lack of sleep, surprise, extreme and unexpected pain, and the like can make any Side Effects worse and may increase the esper's current side effects by one level. On the other hand, taking Extra Time (usually a Minute or more), extended periods of meditation, certain drugs, extreme focus on the matter at hand (defined as making an EGO Roll at -3 [or more]), being in a Zen-like state of "no mind," and the like can reduce side effects or might eliminate them all together.

Sample Side Effects for Brainburn include Blast, Drain (versus DEX, END, or STUN), Flash (versus Sight and/or Hearing Groups), and Mental Blast. Players should be allowed to combine powers into one single Side Effect.

Example: Blade has an 8d6 Telekinetic Force Bolt with the Requires An Esper Powers Skill Roll Limitation. If she ever fails the Skill Roll, she'll be subject to a Major Side Effect (-1/2) defined as a Mental Blast 3d6.

Example: Takeda Johnson has a 60-point Variable Power Pool with the Requires An Esper Powers Skill Roll Limitation. If he ever fails the Skill Roll, he'll be subject to an Extreme Side Effect (-1) defined as Drain DEX 2d6, Blast 4d6, and Flash 4d6 versus Sight Group. The special effects for the Side Effects are defined as a mixture of burst blood vessels, dizziness, and momentary blindness due to the pain.

Any Brainburn Side Effect is in addition to the standard *Esper Side Effects* Limitation common to all espers (see the next section).

Characters can also use Physical Complications to simulate such Brainburn (or other esper-related) effects as dizziness, headaches, or nausea. A *Brainburn* Physical Complication will reduce a PC's CV, PER Rolls, and Movement for a period of time (usually 1-3 hours) and will often be triggered by the failure of Requires A Roll, EGO Rolls, or Skill Rolls (or overly stressful situations, or a bad reaction to alcohol or drugs). The Occurrence of such a Complication is usually Infrequent (any higher and the PC might become unplayable, although it is a valid Complication for NPCs), while the Impairment level varies. Slightly Limiting would probably mean

a -3 to the Character's Skill Rolls (this includes PER Rolls), -1 CV, and -2m of Running. Greatly Limiting would be -6 to all Skill Rolls, -3 CV, and -6m Running. Fully Limiting would render the PC virtually helpless, near blind, with a CV of 0 and only 2m of Running (and it might require an EGO Roll to stand upright!).

Example: Paula MacArthur Laurs periodically suffers from massive migraine headaches. They are defined as follows: Migraine headaches — character suffers -3 to Skill and PER Rolls, -1 CV, and -2m Running for duration of headache (Infrequent, Greatly Limiting): 15 Character Points.

The minuses to Skill Rolls should affect any *Requires A Roll* Limitations the character may have. Of course, this means a greater chance of failing such a roll, which usually means the character will take some sort of Brainburn Side Effect, thus causing more problems (and damage to the character). In addition, if the esper has the *Powers Are Occasionally Out Of Control* Physical Complication, now is the perfect time for you to introduce it. There's a good reason sick espers tend to stay in bed....

ESPER SIDE EFFECTS

As stated under *Esper Abilities*, all espers have a detrimental effect on the local environment when using their powers. No esper, it seems, is fully in control of his powers, and a certain level of "leakage" is expected. Most of the time, this leakage consists of trivial effects, such as light pressure waves emanating from the esper as he activates his powers, localized telekinetic manifestations (such as swirling debris) or even light damage to objects in the esper's immediate vicinity (such as cracks developing in windows, walls, and floors). However, as the intensity of esper activity rises, so does the damage to the environment.

Esper Side Effects is a -1/4 Limitation applied to all powers with an esper special effect. It always occurs whenever an esper uses his powers, and has five effect levels: Trivial, Minor, Major, Extreme, and Catastrophic. Trivial represents 15 Active Points of Side Effects, Minor 30, Major 60, Extreme 120, and Catastrophic is GM's option as to the end result. The exact nature of these side effects is detailed below.

The severity of *Esper Side Effects* depends on several factors: the power level of the esper in question, the espers state of mind, and the number of espers present. As a general rule, an esper's side effects can't be of a level greater than the Active Points in his largest power (rounded up). For example, Ryder (page 262) has an 8d6 Blast (40 Active Points), which means he shouldn't go beyond the Major level of Side Effects. Of course, if all Ryder wants to do is lift a bottle of water, then he certainly shouldn't unleash 60 Active Points of Side Effects on his surroundings. Side Effects are proportional to the power level in use. Lifting the aforementioned bottle of water should only result in a swirl of dust under the bottle as it rises in the air. Crushing a car, on the other hand, could cause the pavement around the car to buckle, crack, and sink downward into the street.

The esper's state of mind will also determine the nature of his power's side effects. A calm or relaxed esper will demonstrate less severe side effects than one who is angry, emotionally disturbed, or involved in strenuous activity (such as combat). Espers who are Enraged (or worse yet, Berserk) will often manifest Side Effects one level higher than normal.

ESPER SIDE EFFECTS TABLE

Game Masters shouldn't translate the Active Points listings directly into damage. For example, 15 Active Points of Trivial *Esper Side Effects* would probably be expressed as 5 STR of Telekinesis with the Advantage *Area Of Affect* (5m Radius; +1/2), with the TK either pushing small objects away or pulling them in. All side effects are centered on the esper himself, but for the most part he shouldn't be affected by them (unless they do something like cause the building he's standing in or on to collapse).

When implementing the *Esper Side Effects* Limitation, GMs should also consider more than just raw damage. For example, if an esper uses his TK to pull a weapon from a foe's hands, the GM could ask other characters (both friend and foe) to make STR Rolls to hold on to their weapons. Or, if an esper uses Telepathy on one character, he may overhear the thoughts of others, including his friends as well as innocent passersby. Broken pipes may spew steam or water, obscuring vision or making footing treacherous. Shattered windows will cover the ground in broken glass, and so on. The use of telepathic powers may cause damage to the target — such as extreme headaches, nausea, and bursting blood vessels, causing bleeding from the eyes, ears, and nose. Even worse, an attempt to read another person's mind might inadvertently end up erasing memories or learned skills.

For the most part, the *Esper Side Effects* Limitation should provide dramatic examples of esper powers in action. It shouldn't be considered an easy way for an esper to inflict damage on his foes, although if the esper doesn't care what happens to his surroundings, the GM should allow him to make as much of a mess as desired. At best, the Side Effects might help add some dice to a Presence Attack; at worst, they may severely hinder or even threaten the esper himself (See the aforementioned comment about dropping a building on yourself.)

Trivial (15 Active Points): Small objects, such as errant sheets of paper or other litter, are pulled toward (or pushed away from) the esper. Fragile items might develop faint cracks, while thin sheet metal may bend or dent.

Minor (30 Active Points): Large amounts of loose debris and other objects are lifted into the air around the esper. Fragile items show obvious cracks and might shatter. Window panes fracture, thin metal bends, while thicker metal dents.

Major (60 Active Points): Large and/or heavy objects (such as vending machines, newspaper boxes, and the like) are pulled/pushed over or away. Fragile items explode. Windows break, metal objects (such as lamp posts) bend, the ground fractures and either is depressed or is uplifted.

Extreme (120 Active Points): Cars, dumpsters, and similar objects are smashed and pushed away from the esper. All the windows in the surrounding block explode out of their frames, lamp posts bend in two and collapse, the ground depresses into a deep crater under the esper's feet (if in a building the walls and ceiling do the same).

Catastrophic (GM's Option): Entire buildings and bridges collapse. If in a vehicle, it shreds. Any unsecured objects around the esper are blasted outwards at high velocity. The ground doesn't depress but instead explodes away from the esper.

Finally, *Esper Side Effects* are synergistic, meaning the more espers present, the more severe the side effects. Two espers are sufficient to push severity up one level, four espers will push it up two levels, eight three levels, and so on. To keep things within reason this pushing should only occur when the espers are of roughly equal power. For example, Shion Nys (page 230) has numerous powers around 90 Active Points. This is more than twice the power level of anything Ryder is capable of, meaning if the two were to ever fight, his contribution to her inherent Extreme Side Effects would be negligible. Now, Shion fighting Ran (page 259) is a completely different story....

Handling Esper Side Effects

Game Masters and players shouldn't look upon *Esper Side Effects* as a way to do more damage. They are meant to represent the barely-in-control nature of esper powers, which tend to warp the natural world through unnatural forces. Most of the time, the side effects should simply provide a little descriptive color. For example, if an esper character leaps or flies into the air, then small objects should follow him. If he uses his telekinesis, he might pull other items toward him (or other PCs might feel a tug on their equipment). Actual destructive Side

Effects (things breaking, the ground collapsing, and so on) should only occur a few times a session, and only when a character's esper powers are used for session-important events (such as needing to lift a heavy object or break down a barrier). A character should never feel overshadowed by his side effects and should never feel his side effects make his powers more trouble to use than they are worth.

Conversely, if the focus of a game session (or the campaign) is purely on espers, then the GM should consider making the side effects more central to the action. In addition, some characters are almost defined by the nature of their side effects. For example, if Ran and Shion were to engage in some sort of confrontation (either with each other or against a multinational corporate strike team), then the GM should make their side effects integral to the combat. Characters of this power level are meant to be frightening, both to espers and non-espers alike, and their side effects can help illustrate this.

FREQUENCY OF ESPER POWERS

This table gives a rough idea of the frequency of various esper powers. Game Masters should feel free to modify (or even ignore) this chart to suit their own campaign settings. In addition, this list doesn't try to present all possible esper powers.

Telekinetic Powers

Very Common:

Barrier, Blast, Leaping, Telekinesis

Common: Flight, Hand Attack, HKA, RKA

Uncommon:

Damage Reduction (versus other esper powers), Deflection, Reflection, Running, Telekinesis with Fine Work

Rare: Life Support, Teleportation

Very Rare: Damage Negation, Healing, Regeneration

Telepathic Powers

As a rule, telepathic espers are much rarer than telekinetics. This list would start at around "Rare" on the Telekinetic Powers list.

Very Common:

Mind Scanning, Telepathy

Common: Mental Blast

Uncommon: Mental Illusions

Rare: Mind Control

Very Rare: Precognition

"I used to think I was somebody on the esper scene, you know? I had the Power, I had the control, I had that nice corporate contract. Then I met the Empress... and she dropped a building on me. That's when I found out firsthand what real Power was."
— David Lowder, corporate esper weapon

ESPER POWERS

This section lists a variety of basic esper powers. It is by no means an exhaustive list but is only meant to be a sampling of the most common esper abilities. Additional ideas for esper powers can be found in *The Ultimate Energy Projector*, *The Ultimate Mentalist*, or the *UNTIL Superpowers Database I and II*.

Offensive Powers

FORCE BOLT

Effect: Blast 8d6 (physical); Cannot Be Bounced

Target: One character

Duration: Instant

Range: 400m

END Cost: 4

Description: The esper can produce bolts of pure telekinetic force with which to pummel his foes. These bolts tend to furrow the ground along their path and are direct-line attacks; the esper can't "bounce" the bolt off of other surfaces before striking his target. The bolt can be spread, however, often resulting in an arcing line of destruction across the affected target hexes.

Game Information: Blast 8d6 (40 Active Points); Cannot Be Bounced (-1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4). Total cost: 27 points.

Options:

1) Strong Force Bolt: Increase to Blast 12d6. Total cost: 40 points.

2) Weak Force Bolt: Decrease to Blast 6d6. Total cost: 20 points.

3) Force Ram: The esper sacrifices the potential to do greater damage for the ability to use his telekinesis to push his target away. Decrease to Blast 6d6, add Double Knockback (+3/4), and change Cannot Be Bounced to Cannot Be Bounced Or Spread. 52 Active Points; total cost 35 points.

4) Force Spear: The esper produces a narrow and sharply pointed bolt of force, allowing him to punch through a foe's defenses with ease. Add Armor Piercing (+1/4) and change Cannot Be Bounced to Cannot Be Bounced Or Spread. 50 Active Points; total cost 40 points.

5) Force Bomb: The esper unleashes a burst of pure telekinetic force. Add Explosion (18m Radius Explosion; +1/2). 50 Active Points; total cost 33 points.

6) Force Implosion: The reverse of a Force Bomb, a Force Implosion directs the telekinetic energy inward. This power tends to suck small objects into the target area. Add Area Of Effect (4m Radius; +1/4); Extra Time (Delayed Phase; -1/4), and No Knockback (-1/4). 50 Active Points; total cost 25 points.

7) Telekinetic Missiles: Instead of producing a bolt of telekinetic force, the esper uses his telekinesis to pick up and hurl objects around him. In extreme cases, the esper pulls up hunks of asphalt, concrete, and the like and hurls that! Add OIF (objects of opportunity; -1/2). Total cost: 20 points.

8) Bolt Barrage: Instead of firing just one Force Bolt, the esper unleashes a burst of less-powerful bolts, firing them at one or more targets. Reduce to EB 6d6 and add Autofire (5 shots; +1/2). 45 Active Points; total cost 30 points.

INVERSE TELEKINESIS

Effect: Drain (Suppress) Esper/Telekinetic Powers 4d6

Target: One character

Duration: Instant

Range: 600m

END Cost: 5

Description: The esper uses his own telekinetic powers to hamper his foe's ability to use their telekinetic powers. As all espers use the same special effects for their telekinesis, characters are not allowed to buy the *Limited Special Effect* Limitation. Telepaths can buy this power as well; simply change the effect to Suppress Esper (Telepathic) Powers.

Game Information: Suppress Esper/Telekinetic powers 4d6, Variable Effect (+1/2) (60 Active Points); Costs Endurance (to maintain; -1/2), Esper Side Effects (-1/4). Total cost: 34 points.

Options:

1) Strong Inverse Telekinesis: Increase to Suppress 6d6. Total cost: 60 points.

2) Weak Inverse Telekinesis: Decrease to Suppress 2d6. Total cost: 30 points.

3) Mirror, Mirror: The esper can only suppress the powers he shares in common with his target. In other words, if the esper's target has a Resistant Protection, but the esper himself doesn't, he can't suppress it. Advantages and Limitations don't apply to determine common powers, just the base power itself (*i.e.* Blast, Resistant Protection, Flight, and so on). Add "Can Only Be Used To Suppress Powers Esper Has In Common With Target" (-1/2). Total cost: 27 points. As an option, GM's may allow a -1 version of this Limitation, which requires the common powers to be virtually identical. In other words, if the esper has an Blast then he can only suppress his target's Blast. If the target has an Blast with the Armor Piercing Advantage and the attacking character doesn't, he can't affect that particular Blast power.

TELEKINESIS

Effect: Telekinesis (30 STR); Cannot Punch (-1/4)

Target: One character or object

Duration: Constant

Range: 450m

END Cost: 4

Description: The esper can manipulate objects without coming into physical contact with them. He can lift, throw, and even crush objects using just the power of his mind. However, he can't punch (use the *Force Bolt* Power instead.) Use of this power often results in small objects in the area being lifted into the air along with the target.

Game Information: *Telekinesis (30 STR) (45 Active Points); Cannot Punch (-1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4). Total cost: 30 points.*

Options:

- 1) Strong Telekinesis:** Increase to Telekinesis (40 STR). Total cost: 40 points.
- 2) Stronger Telekinesis:** Increase to Telekinesis (60 STR). Total cost: 60 points.
- 3) Weaker Telekinesis:** Decrease to Telekinesis (20 STR). Total cost: 20 points.
- 4) Area Telekinesis I:** The esper can lift up and manipulate groups of objects in a set area. However, he must perform the same action with all objects in the group he's manipulating — *i.e.* if he decides to move an object 4 meters to the right, all of the other objects must move along with it. Add Area Of Effect (8m Radius; +1/2). 67 Active Points; total cost 45 points.
- 5) Area Telekinesis II:** With this form of Area Telekinesis, the esper can choose which objects he wants to pick up. He must still perform the same action with all of the objects. Add Selective (+1/4). 79 Active Points; total cost 53 points.
- 6) Expanded Telekinesis I:** The esper's telekinetic control is such he can manipulate liquids. Add Effects Porous. 55 Active Points; total cost 37 points.
- 7) Expanded Telekinesis II:** The esper can manipulate fog, gases, mist, and smoke. Decrease to Telekinesis (20 STR), an add Effects Porous and Area Of Effect (Radius 8m; +1/2). 60 Active Points; total cost 40 points.

TELEKINETIC FIST

Effect: HA +6d6

Target: One character

Duration: Instant

Range: Touch

END Cost: 3

Description: The esper forms layers of telekinetic force around his hand and uses it to smash his foes. When active, the *Telekinetic Fist* will sometimes pick up small objects and trap them in the field around the character's hand.

Game Information: *HA +6d6 (30 Active Points); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4). Total cost: 20 points.*

Options:

- 1) Stronger Fist:** Increase to HA +8d6. Total cost: 27 points.
- 2) Weaker Fist:** Decrease to HA +4d6. Total cost: 13 points.
- 3) Spiked Fist:** The esper can form the telekinetic field into a sharp point and use it to punch through armor. Add Armor Piercing (+1/4). 37 Active Points; total cost 25 points.

TELEKINETIC KNIFE

Effect: HKA 2d6

Target: One character

Duration: Instant

Range: Touch

END Cost: 3

Description: Using the same technique as the *Telekinetic Fist*, the esper forms the layers into a sharply-edged "blade." When active, a *Telekinetic Knife* has the same characteristics as a *Telekinetic Fist*.

Game Information: *HKA 2d6 (up to 4d6 with STR) (30 Active Points); Esper Side Effects (-1/4). Total cost: 24 points.*

Options:

- 1) Stronger Knife:** Increase to HKA 3d6 (up to 6d6 with STR). Total cost: 36 points.
- 2) Weaker Knife:** Decrease to HKA 1d6 (up to 2d6 with STR). Total cost: 12 points.
- 3) Extra Sharp Knife:** The esper's knife can easily cut through armor. Add Armor Piercing (+1/4). 37 Active Points; total cost 30 points.

TELEKINETIC RENDING

Effect: RKA 2d6

Target: One character

Duration: Instant

Range: 300m

END Cost: 3

Description: The esper causes his target to tear apart. The ground under the target usually follows suit, cracking and shattering in a broad circular area.

Game Information: *RKA 2d6 (30 Active Points); Esper Side Effects (-1/4), No Knockback (-1/4). Total cost: 20 points.*

Options:

- 1) Stronger Rending:** Increase to RKA 3d6. Total cost: 30 points.
- 2) Weaker Rending:** Decrease to RKA 1d6. Total cost: 10 points.
- 3) Telekinetic Lance:** Instead of rending the target where it stands, the esper projects a potentially lethal pulse of telekinetic force. Remove No Knockback. Total cost: 24 points.
- 4) Extra Sharp Telekinetic Lance:** This form of *Telekinetic Lance* can punch through a target's defenses with ease. Add Armor Piercing (+1/4). 37 Active Points; total cost 30 points.

- 5) Telekinetic Darts:** The esper can unleash multiple lances, firing them at one or more targets. Add Autofire (5 shots; +1/2). 45 Active Points; total cost 36 points.

TELEKINETIC STRENGTH

Effect: +10 STR
Target: Self
Duration: Constant
Range: Self
END Cost: 1

Description: The esper's control of his telekinetic abilities is such that it is almost second nature to him. He can use some of this telekinesis to augment his normal physical strength, allowing him to lift greater weights, punch with greater force, and carry heavier weapons. Due to the ease and comfort with which the esper uses his augmented strength, there are almost no Esper Side Effects. However, the esper's use of his strength will be apparent to anyone with *Esper Awareness* (see page 61) and may result in Minor Side Effects if the esper Pushes or Haymakers with his augmented strength.

Game Information: +10 STR. Total cost: 10 points.

Options:

- 1) Stronger Telekinetic Strength:** Increase to +20 STR. Total cost: 20 points.
2) Weaker Telekinetic Strength: Decrease to +5 STR. Total cost: 5 points.

TELEKINETIC WRAP-UP

Effect: Entangle 6d6, 6 PD/6 ED
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 600m
END Cost: 7

Description: Using his telekinetic powers, the esper rips communications cables, chain-link fences, water pipes, electrical wires, and so on, out of the ground or the walls of a building and wraps his target securely. How effective this technique is depends greatly on the materials the esper has access to. In addition, use of this power is rather destructive, as it tears apart walls and the ground in order to pull forth the needed pipes, cables, and the like.

Game Information: Entangle 6d6, 6 DEF, Indirect (attack originates at the target's feet [or back]; +1/4) (75 Active Points); OIF (appropriate materials of opportunity; -1/2), Defense Depends On Materials Used (-1/2), Esper Side Effects (-1/4). Total cost: 33 points.

Options:

- 1) Stronger Wrap-Up:** Increase to Entangle 8d6, 8 PD/8 ED. Total cost: 44 points.
2) Weaker Wrap-Up: Decrease to Entangle 4d6, 4 PD/4 ED. Total cost: 20 points.
3) Group Wrap-up I: The esper can wrap up a small group of targets provided he has access to sufficient materials and the targets are close together. Decrease

to Entangle 4d6, 4 PD/4 ED and add Area Of Effect (10m Radius; +3/4). 80 Active Points; total cost 32 points.

- 4) Group Wrap-up II:** As above, but the esper has far less control over how well targets are wrapped up they further they are from the center of the attack. Add Area Of Effect (12m Radius Explosion; +1/4). 90 Active Points; total cost 36 points.

Defensive Powers

ESPER SHIELDS

Effect: Mental Defense (10 points)
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: The esper can create strong mental shields, making it harder to affect him with telepathic and psionic powers.

Game Information: Mental Defense (10 points). Total cost: 10 points.

Options:

- 1) Strong Shields:** Increase to Mental Defense (20 points). Total cost: 20 points.
2) Stronger Shields: Increase to Mental Defense (30 points). Total cost: 30 points.
3) Weak Shields: Decrease to Mental Defense (5 points). Total cost: 5 points.
4) Tiring Shields: The esper must concentrate on maintaining his shields to keep them active. Add Costs Endurance (-1/2). Total cost: 7 points.
4) Group Shields: The esper can extend his shields to protect his friends and allies. Add Usable By Nearby (+1) and Costs Endurance (-1/2). 20 Active Points; total cost 13 points.

ESPER TOUGHNESS

Effect: Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%; Character Must Be Aware Of Attack
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: The esper's telekinetic powers make him innately resistant to attacks he's aware of. If caught by surprise, the esper won't be able to prepare his telekinetic defenses in time and will take full damage.

Game Information: Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50% (60 Active Points); Character Must Be Aware Of Attack (-1/4). Total cost: 48 points.

Options:

- 1) Increased Toughness:** Increase to Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 75%. 120 Active Points; total cost 96 points.
2) Decreased Toughness: Decrease to Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25%. 30 Active Points; total cost 24 points.

3) Restricted Esper Toughness: The esper is still vulnerable to physical damage (*i.e.* BODY), but can deflect some of the STUN damage. Add STUN Damage Only (-1/2). Total cost: 34 points.

4) Truly Innate Esper Toughness: Remove Character Must Be Aware Of Attack. Total cost: 60 points.

5) Conditional Esper Toughness: The esper's ability to deflect the damage from attacks depends on his having erected a proper Resistant Protection to start with. Remove Character Must Be Aware Of Attack, and add Linked (to Resistant Protection; -1/2). Total cost: 40 points.

6) Tiring Conditional Esper Toughness: Add Costs Endurance (-1/2). Total cost: 30 points.

TELEKINETIC BLOCKING

Effect: Deflection; Only Works Against Physical Attacks

Target: Target's OCV

Duration: Instant

Range: Self

END Cost: 3

Description: The esper can use his telekinetic powers to block, misdirect, or outright stop physical attacks such as arrows, bullets, shuriken, and even cannon shells. It has no effect on laser beams, ion cannons, or other forms of high-energy Blasts.

Game Information: *Deflection, No Range Modifier (+1/2) (30 Active Points); Only Works Against Physical Attacks (-1/2), Esper Side Effects (-1/4) Total cost: 9 points.*

Options:

1) Improved Telekinetic Blocking: Add +4 OCV Deflection. Total cost: +8 points.

TELEKINETIC SHIELD

Effect: Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED); Protect Carried Items

Target: Self

Duration: Constant

Range: Self

END Cost: 4

Description: The esper can wrap a protective telekinetic envelope around himself as a defense against attacks of all sorts. Creating the shield often results in loose or small objects being pulled up into the air around the esper.

Game Information: *Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED), Protect Carried Items. (40 Active Points); Costs Endurance (-1/2), Esper Side Effects (-1/4), Perceivable (-0). Total cost: 23 points.*

Options:

1) Strong Telekinetic Shield: Increase to Resistant Protection (20 PD/20 ED). Total cost: 40 points.

2) Stronger Telekinetic Shield: Increase to Resistant Protection (30 PD/30 ED). Total cost: 57 points.

3) Weaker Telekinetic Shield: Decrease to Resistant Protection (5 PD/5 ED). Total cost: 14 points.

4) Personal Telekinetic Shield: Remove Protect Carried Items. 30 Active Points, total cost 16 points.

5) Bullets Are Easy, Lasers Are Hard: Espers often can't handle energy-based attacks as well as kinetic ones. Reduce the Resistant Protection's ED by 5 to 10 points.

TELEKINETIC WALL

Effect: Barrier (10 PD/10 ED; 4m long and 2m high)

Target: Self

Duration: Constant

Range: No Range

END Cost: 5

Description: Similar to a *Telekinetic Shield*, this ability allows the esper to create a sturdy telekinetic barrier between himself and incoming attacks. He can also use it to protect others as well, provided they are standing next to him. The wall will often crack and shatter the ground in a ring around the esper. It will also be readily apparent if created in a misty, cloudy, or foggy area, or if created outside on a rainy day. Energy weapons tend to curve around a Telekinetic Wall and may impact targets behind the esper (usually only for dramatic effect, unless someone has Unluck...).

As telekinetic constructs, an esper-created Barrier can be created anywhere and doesn't need an anchor point. However, once created they are usually fixed in place and can't be moved by simply picking them up (either with esper Telekinesis or sheer Strength). An esper who creates a Barrier about him in mid-air must remain where he is, unless he also has bought the *Mobile Advantage*.

Game Information: *Barrier 10 PD/10 ED, 0 BODY (up to 4m long and 2m high), Non-Anchored (47 Active Points); Costs Endurance (-1/2), No Range (-1/2), Restricted Shape (ring; -1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4). Total cost: 19 points.*

Options:

1) Strong Wall: Increase to Barrier 15 PD/15 ED, 0 BODY (up to 4m long and 2m high). Total cost: 25 points.

2) Weaker Wall: Decrease to Barrier 5 PD/5 ED, 0 BODY (up to 4m long and 2m high). Total cost: 18 points.

3) Larger Wall: Add +4m length and +2m height. Total cost: 21 points.

4) Personal Wall: Add Feedback (-1). Total cost: 13 points.

5) Ranged Walls: As virtually all anime espers center their Barriers on themselves, GMs should consider the listed power construction to be the standard form of Barrier in most *Kazei 5* campaigns. This means PCs *must* buy the *No Range* Limitation, and can't create Barriers around other characters. If the esper wants to protect an ally with his Barrier, then he'll need to move to the person he wants to protect and *then* create the Barrier.

- 6) Bullets Are Easy, Lasers Are Hard:** Espers often can't handle energy-based attacks as well as kinetic ones. Reduce the Barrier's ED by 3 to 5 points.

Movement Powers

TELEKINETIC FLIGHT

Effect: Flight 20m
Target: Self
Duration: Constant
Range: Self
END Cost: 2

Description: Using his telekinesis, the esper can lift himself up into the air and fly. A flying esper tends to pick up and carry along small objects, while an esper hovering close to the ground will usually be surrounded by a faint swirling cloud of dust and lightweight debris.

Game Information: *Flight 20m (20 Active Points); Esper Side Effects (-1/4). Total cost: 16 points.*

Options:

- 1) Faster Flight:** Increase to Flight 40m. Total cost: 32 points.
- 2) Even Faster Flight:** Increase to Flight 60m. Total cost: 48 points.
- 3) Slower Flight:** Decrease to Flight 16m. Total cost: 13 points.
- 4) Express Flight:** The esper is capable of extremely high speeds once he takes to the air. Add x4 Improved Noncombat Movement (or more if desired). Total cost: 20 points.
- 5) Nimble Flight:** The esper is so at home in the air he can reorient himself with ease. Add Position Shift. Total cost: 20 points.
- 6) At Home In The Air I:** The esper can change direction at the speed of thought. Add No Turn Mode (+1/4). Total cost: 20 points.
- 6) At Home In The Air II:** Mind over matter means you can easily ignore gravity. Add No Gravity Penalty (+1/2). Total cost: 24 points.
- 8) Group Flight:** The esper can extend his telekinetic field in order to bring others with him. Buy as a naked Advantage Usable Nearby (+1) (20 Active Points); Esper Side Effects (-1/4). Total cost: 16 points.

TELEKINETIC MATTER TRANSMISSION

Effect: Teleportation 20m
Target: Self
Duration: Instant
Range: Self
END Cost: 2

Description: The esper is capable of instantly transporting himself vast distances without passing through the intervening space. This is a fairly rare ability, possessed only by the most powerful of espers. It is also destructive — an incoming esper produces

a shockwave of physical energy and psychic noise. It is not uncommon for an arriving esper to produce a telekinetic explosion upon arrival, with objects blasted outwards with destructive force. Smart espers try to arrive at external locations (such as a point in the air), as arriving inside a building can fracture the floor, crack and buckle walls, and blow out windows. In addition, teleportation is very audible. Espers departing via teleportation should simply fade out or vanish with a minimum of noise (sometimes sucking small objects into the space they just vacated), but arrive with a loud "bang" of displaced air.

Game Masters should almost always treat the *Esper Side Effects* for Teleportation as a Blast with the Advantage *Area Of Effect (Radius Explosion)*. In addition, any esper in the local area receives a +10 bonus to their Esper Awareness Roll (see below) to detect the incoming teleporter before he arrives.

Game Information: *Teleportation 20m (20 Active Points); Esper Side Effects (-1/4). Total cost: 16 points.*

Options:

- 1) Strong Teleportation:** Increase to Teleportation 40m. Total cost: 32 points.
- 2) Stronger Teleportation:** Increase to Teleportation 60m. Total cost: 48 points.
- 3) Strongest Teleportation:** Increase to Teleportation 120m. Total cost: 96 points.
- 4) Over The Hills And Far Away:** The esper is capable of teleporting vast distances. Game Masters may want to express the *Esper Side Effects* as 1d6 of Explosive Blast for every kilometer traveled (the esper isn't affected by the explosion as it is emanating from him). This Side Effect should top out at around 12d6, regardless of how far the esper has traveled. Add a naked Advantage of Megascale (1m = 1 km; +1) (20 Active Points); Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -1/2), Esper Side Effects (-1/4). Total cost: 11 points.
- 5) Come Along For The Ride:** The esper can carry one or more allies with him when he teleports. Anyone so teleported should make a CON Roll at -3 (or more) to avoid feelings of dizziness, nausea, and vomiting. Characters who are used to being teleported should suffer a lesser penalty (or none at all). Add x4 Mass. Total cost: 24 points.
- 6) You Can Always Go Home:** The teleporter can transport himself to anywhere he has recently been or has a strong connection to, provided it's within his range. This option negates the need for the esper to buy either *Safe Blind Teleport* or *Fixed/Floating Locations*. The esper must still obey any other rules (such as Extra Time) for Teleportation. On the other hand, if the esper tries to teleport to a location he *can't* see, has never been to, or hasn't visited in some time, then the rules for teleporting blind should be used. This option is the default setting for Kazei 5.

TELEKINETIC PUSH-OFF

Effect: Leaping 20m (Accurate)
Target: Self
Duration: Constant
Range: Self
END Cost: 1

Description: The esper can use his telekinesis to “throw” himself from one place to another.

Game Information: *Leaping 20m (Accurate) (15 Active Points); Esper Side Effects (-1/4). Total cost: 12 points.*

Options:

- 1) Strong Push-Off:** Increase to Leaping 30m. Total cost: 16 points.
- 2) Stronger Push-Off:** Increase to Leaping 40m. Total cost: 20 points.
- 3) Weak Push-Off:** Decrease to Leaping 10m. Total cost: 8 points.

Sensory Powers**ESPER ALERTNESS**

Effect: Danger Sense (self only, in combat, sense)
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: The esper knows when he is about to be threatened and can act accordingly.

Game Information: *Danger Sense (self only, in combat, Function as a Sense) (INT Roll). Total cost: 17 points.*

Options:

- 1) Greater Alertness I:** The esper's senses are such he doesn't need the stress of combat to alert him to danger. Add Out Of Combat. Total cost: 22 points.
- 2) Greater Alertness II:** The esper can perceive danger not only to himself, but others as well. Add Immediate Vicinity. Total cost: 22 points.
- 3) Greater Alertness III:** The esper can perceive danger in his general location. Add General Area. Total cost: 27 points.

ESPER AWARENESS

Effect: Detect Telepathic/Telekinetic Powers, Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees)
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: All espers, regardless of power level, can detect another esper's presence (*i.e.* signature) or use of powers. The more powerful the esper, the easier he is to detect, even if he isn't doing anything (see Distinctive Features, page 52). In addition, any esper using *Esper Awareness* to detect another esper's powers while they are in use receives a bonus of +1 to

his PER Roll for every 10 Active Points in the power being used (and as stated under *Telekinetic Matter Transmission*, any use of teleportation is a flat +10 bonus to the PER Roll). There are no modifiers for barriers, as nothing seems to block an esper's ability to perceive another esper (however, a sufficiently powerful esper might obscure the esper signature of another esper of far lesser capability).

Game Information: *Detect Telepathic/Telekinetic Powers, Sense, Passive, Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees). Total cost: 10 points.*

Options:

- 1) Increased Esper Awareness:** The esper can not only detect esper powers being used, he can tell what type of power is being used and how strong it is. This also allows him to accurately pinpoint the source of the powers. Add Discriminatory and Targeting. Total cost: 25 points.

Miscellaneous Powers**ESPER PHYSIOLOGY**

Effect: Life Support (Longevity: 200 Years)
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: It's not only the esper's brain that's different, but his body as well. The esper ages at a far slower rate than most other humans, and can expect to live at least twice as long as the global average. The power should only be bought by the most powerful of espers (such as Ran or Shion Nys [see the Characters section starting on page 210]). In addition, as the typical *Kazei 5* campaign is set circa 2030, the existence of this power should be relatively unknown, and only suspected by a select few (such as Mayumi Arakawa [see page 234], who was born in 1987 and looks to be half her age).

Game Information: *LS (Longevity: 200 Years). Total cost: 1 point.*

MIND OVER MATTER

Effect: Regeneration (1 BODY per Hour)
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END Cost: 0

Description: The esper can telekinetically knit his wounds back together. This ability is innate and doesn't require conscious thought from the esper. Although the esper can't re-grow lost limbs, he can recover from almost any other sort of damage, and will often look totally normal just a few hours after being injured or wounded.

Game Information: *Regeneration (1 BODY per Hour). Total cost: 8 points.*

Options:

- 1) Faster Healing:** Increase to Regeneration (2 BODY per Hour). Total cost: 16 points.

ESPER AWARENESS

The ability of espers to detect other espers when the other espers use their powers is a fairly common effect in anime. It's seen repeatedly in *Akira*, *Domu*, and to a lesser extent in *Harmageddon*. In *Kazei 5*, this effect is used to put a check on the nature of esper powers as a whole. The ability to detect teleporting espers before they arrive, for example, helps balance the teleporter's ability to go almost anywhere he pleases.

Suitable Esper Talents

Due to the nature of the esper mind and the way it works, there are a number of additional Talents you can use to simulate minor esper powers. The suggested Talents are: *Absolute Time Sense*, *Ambidexterity*, *Bump Of Direction*, *Combat Sense*, *Eidetic Memory*, *Lightning Calculator*, *Lightsleep*, and *Simulate Death*. In addition, GMs might allow espers to buy the *Skill Defense Maneuver* (using the same rationale as *Speed Of Esper Thought*) or the *Skill Enhancer Linguist* (the esper's brain is such he can pick up new languages with ease).

2) Restrictive Healing: Use the *Rapid Healing* Talent instead. The cost is the same, but the character must actually rest one hour to regain one BODY.

3) The Healing Touch: The esper can heal others as well as himself. While it allows for faster healing than *Mind Over Matter*, it's more tiring. The *Esper Side Effects* of this ability usually manifest as the esper suffering some of the damage he is healing in others. Change to Simplified Healing 3d6 (30 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Turn; -1 1/4), Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -1/2), Esper Side Effects (-1/4). Total cost: 10 points.

SPEED OF ESPER THOUGHT

Effect: Lightning Reflexes (+5 to act first with All Actions)

Target: Self

Duration: Persistent

Range: Self

END Cost: 0

Description: The esper's reactions depend more on his mind than his body. He reacts to situations far more swiftly as a result.

Game Information: *Lightning Reflexes*: +5 DEX to act first with All Actions. Total cost: 5 points.

Options:

1) Increased Speed: Increase to +10 DEX. Total cost: 10 points.

2) Decreased Speed: Decrease to +3 DEX. Total cost: 3 points.

TELEKINETIC BODY CONTROL

Effect: Life Support (Self-Contained Breathing)

Target: Self

Duration: Persistent

Range: Self

END Cost: 0

Description: Using principles similar to the *Mind Over Matter* Power, the esper can remove his need to breathe at will. He can keep this ability up for periods of an hour or more, but will need to breathe eventually. This isn't bought as a Limitation to the power, as it seems unlikely any esper will be in a situation where he can't breathe all that often or for all that long.

Game Information: *Life Support (Self-Contained Breathing)*. Total cost: 10 points.

Options:

1) Difficult Body Control: The esper needs to retain a certain degree of concentration to keep from breathing. Add Stops Working If Character Speaks, Is Stunned, Or Knocked Out (-1/2). Total cost: 7 points.

2) Expanded Body Control: Game Masters should allow powerful espers to purchase Life Support for various environments, such extreme heat, cold, high pressure, or vacuum. The most powerful of espers have this as an innate ability. For espers of lesser ability, you could apply the *Costs Endurance* Limitation or use *Linked* to connect the Life Support Power to an esper's Resistant Protection.

Telepathic Powers

MIND READING

Effect: Telepathy 8d6

Target: One character

Duration: Instant

Range: LOS

END Cost: 4

Description: The esper has the rare ability to read (and only read) another person's mind. He can probe as deep as he desires into his target's thoughts and memories, but the further he goes the more likely he is to fail to find what he's looking for. When using this power, the esper will tend to pick up surface thoughts and impressions from the people around him and may require an EGO Roll to ignore unwanted information.

Game Information: *Telepathy 8d6* (40 Active Points); *Receive Only* (-1/2), *Esper Side Effects* (-1/4). Total cost: 23 points.

Options:

1) Stronger Mind Reading: Increase to Telepathy 12d6. Total cost: 34 points.

2) Weaker Mind Reading: Decrease to Telepathy 6d6. Total cost: 17 points.

3) True Telepathy: Remove *Receive Only*. Total cost: 32 points.

4) Communicative Telepathy: Replace *Receive Only* with *Communication Only* (-1/4). Total cost: 27 points.

5) Projecting Telepathy: Replace *Receive Only* with *Broadcast Only* (-1/2). Total cost: 23 points.

6) Esper Calling Plan: The esper can only contact another esper. Add Only With Another Esper (-1) to any of the options listed here.

7) Great Minds Think Alike: The telepathic esper can only contact another telepathic esper. Add Only With Another Telepathic Esper (-2) to any of the options listed here.

8) You Think This Is Easy?: Telepathy isn't the easiest of esper powers to control and use. You can simulate this by adding any combination of the following Limitations: *Extra Time (Full Phase)*; -1/2, *Concentration* (1/2 DCV as long as power remains in use; -1/2), and *Increased Endurance Cost*.

VISIONS OF THE FUTURE

Effect: Clairsentience (Sight And Hearing Groups), Precognition Only

Target: Self

Duration: Constant

Range: 500m

END Cost: 5

Description: The esper has the ability to look into the future, although the further he looks the less clear his visions are. In many cases the events he sees are ambiguous and open to interpretation; there is the constant question of “Are these events that *will* happen or *might* happen?”. In addition use of this power often shows the esper (and others) fragments of various possible futures and past events.

Game Masters should chose descriptions of an esper's visions with care and decide what they really mean. Precognitive Clairsentience is one of those powers that can cause game balance issues and it's highly recommended you select one of the options below to achieve the proper genre feel.

Game Information: *Precognitive Clairsentience (Sight And Hearing Groups) (50 Active Points); Precognition Only (-1), Time Modifiers (-1/2), Vague and Unclear (-1/2), Esper Side Effects (-1/4). Total cost: 15 points.*

Options:

- 1) **Uncontrolled Visions:** The esper only receives random flashes of the future. He can't call upon his power at will. Add No Conscious Control (-2). Total cost: 9 points.
- 2) **Dreams Of The Future:** The esper's visions come to him while he sleeps. He can't control his power to look for a specific event, but instead tends to see only the most important of upcoming events. Add Only While Sleeping/Dreaming (-1). Total cost: 12 points.
- 3) **Lengthy Visions:** The esper requires some time to view the future properly. Add the *Extra Time* Limitation. At minimum it should take a Full Phase, with a full Turn more likely. The total cost of the power will depend on the value of the Limitation chosen.
- 4) **Attentive Visions:** The esper must concentrate on his power. Add the *Concentrate* Limitation at either 1/2 or 0 DCV. For a really attentive vision, also add the Limitation *Blackout* (-1/2). You can then add these Limitations to the *Extra Time* Limitation to simulate the esper needing to enter a trace-like state in order to properly view future events.



MECHA IN ANIME

In Japan, the term 'mecha' means anything mechanical. Thus, cars, boats, planes, spaceships, and other vehicles are all considered mecha; as well as androids, computers, firearms, and even household appliances. In the West the word is almost exclusively used to describe large anthropomorphic human-piloted vehicles (a.k.a. "giant robots.") Within the world of *Kazei 5*, mecha is used to refer to three specific forms of technology: form-fitting suits of powered armor, large humanoid-shaped exoskeletons, and semi-autonomous robots.

Various anime examples of mecha common to the *Kazei 5* setting are as follows:

Powered Armor:

The hardsuits from *Bubblegum Crisis* and *Bubblegum Crash* are the best examples, as well as similar suits seen in the anime version of *Dominion*, *Genocyber*, *Iria the Animation*, *Silent Möbius*, and *Zeram*.

Humanoid-Shaped Exoskeletons: The Landmates found in *Appleseed* pretty much define this concept, along with the *Madox-01* from *Madox-01*: *Metal Skin Panic*, some of the heavier armored suits seen in *Silent Möbius* and the combat armor from *Sakura Taisen*. An excellent non-humanoid example of this sort of mecha is the small and highly-mobile *fuchikoma* found in *Ghost In The Shell*.

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MECHA

The desire to create suits able to assist humans in lifting and moving great weights has been around as long as man has had access to portable power sources. Early exoskeleton concepts, often found in science magazines or Pulp-era adventure stories, used impractical power supplies, such as tiny steam engines or unrealistically small electrical batteries. Some of the earliest examples of military powered armor appeared in E.E. "Doc" Smith's *Lensman* stories, with Robert A. Heinlein's 1959 novel *Starship Troopers* virtually setting the standard for how powered combat armor would operate and be used.

In the real world, the first serious work on powered exoskeletons came in 1986 when Monty Reed designed the LIFESUIT. Meant to enable injured individuals walk again, it led to such designs as HAL (Hybrid Assistive Limb), LOKOMAT, and LOPES. However, the primary problem with all of these suits was one of power. Most were hooked to external sources by cables and unable to operate away from their power supplies.

The breakthrough in separating an exoskeleton from a stationary power supply came in 1989 when Martin Fleischmann and Stanley Pons were able to produce heat through a low-energy nuclear reaction, better known as "cold fusion." When coupled with developments in high-yield electrical batteries and fuel cells, man had found the energy source he needed to make self-powered exoskeletons possible and practical.

Several of the world's militaries were quick to adapt the nascent exoskeleton concepts of simply helping people walk to enabling them to walk faster, jump further, and lift more. Working in conjunction with developments in cyberware and cyborgs, the idea was to create a better-equipped and more capable soldier without going through the expense of a full-body cybernetic replacement.

When these first suits of so-called "powered armor" appeared, it quickly led to an developmental arms race as various countries and multinational corporations strived to be the first to field an even more effective model. Some suits became larger, stronger, and capable of mounting heavier weapons, others were made more streamlined and formfitting, presenting a smaller and faster target.

At the same time these suits were being introduced, other companies were incorporating ideas gleaned from cyborg development and advances in remote computer system access to develop a whole new form of technology — the cyberdroid. Derived from full-body cybergraft upgrades, cyberdroids were initially envisioned as a form of mobile industrial robot. However, any robot capable of wielding a rivet gun can carry a firearm just as easily.

"I originally was thinking of trying for the Gunkoku Shishi but ended up getting the Jinsei X-11. While I like the Shishi's multi-layered armor, it's hard to say no to 20mm shoulder-mounted machine-cannons."

— Staff Sergeant Joshua Tora, explaining his choice of Exo-Suit.

Mecha And Society

For the most part, people accept mecha without a second thought. Personal powered armor and Exo-Suits are used in such civilian industries

as construction, hazardous material management, and the exploration of extreme environments (such as the deep ocean, arid deserts, or frigid wastes). Military and security models are used both by elite strike forces and for crowd control, urban warfare, and riot suppression. Viewed simply as machines, they are treated no differently than one would treat a large piece of construction equipment, or military vehicles such as aircraft or tanks. There are websites dedicated to discussing the merits of each model, films and games often feature the newest suits prominently, and hobbyists can buy and build an assortment of scale models.

Cyberdroids are a different matter. People are still coming to grips with the concept of cyborgs and are far less accepting of humanoid robots. In fact, unlike a cyborg, the more human a cyberdroid appears, the less people like or trust it. Thus, contrary to the 1950s predictions of "robot maids," most domestic needs are handled by replicated humans (see page 75), with cyberdroids used mainly for industrial, security, and military purposes. Appearance-wise, industrial cyberdroids tend to be rather bland looking with only the most basic semblance of human features. Military cyberdroids, on the other hand, are made to look as intimidating as possible, with ghastly "faces" designed to house various sensory input devices.

Acquiring Mecha

As many forms of mecha are commercially available, characters can easily purchase them on the open market. However, having the financial wherewithal to buy a mecha is only part of the issue, with the other being one of licenses. Pilotable mecha can only be sold to properly certified operators (a 1-point Perk). Characters without such certifications will need to acquire a desired mecha through underhanded means — such as theft or through the black market. Military-capable mecha are normally only sold to governments and multinational corporations, although some models can be found in the hands of independent security contractors.

Industrial cyberdroids are readily available to anyone who has sufficient funds to purchase one. Military-grade cyberdroids are only found in the hands of corporate security forces and national armed forces. Of course, this hasn't prevented a brisk business in stolen, altered, and black market cybernetic combat machines. Many of these cyberdroids are used in terrorist attacks, as their remote-piloting capabilities allow for maximum impact on the target at minimal risk to the operator.

Owning a mecha and operating one are often two different things. Non-military APEX Suits are usually meant for hazardous environments — one can't simply walk down a city street wearing one. Commercial Exo-Suits are normally considered construction equipment and are trucked to and from a specific site; they are in no way, shape, or form meant for regular road traffic. Cyberdroids are often designed for a specific function — such as waste management, road repair, and so on, and aren't allowed to wander around freely. Unless it's a remotely piloted police model (in which case it will be prominently marked as such), an unattended cyberdroid found walking a city's streets will be considered a rogue unit and dealt with accordingly.

CREATING MECHA

Mecha are built one of three ways; APEX Suits are a form of Focus, Exo-Suits are built as Vehicles, and Cyberdroids are Automaton. Each is given a thorough examination of design parameters in the sections to follow.

APEX Suit Design And Construction

A typical APEX Suit is approximately human-sized and relatively formfitting on the inside. The outer shell consists of a metal matrix, armored ceramics, and a durable plastic coating layered over a system of synthetic muscles or electronically controlled servos. Power is supplied from either high-yield electrical batteries or cold fusion. As can be expected, these suits are usually very heavy, weighing from 100 to 200 kilograms.

APEX Suits are normally stored upright in a charging cradle, with the torso and upper legs opened slightly for easy access. A character puts on an APEX Suit by climbing inside and sealing the shell around him. The suit locks together along the outside of the upper legs and breastplate, while the joints constrict slightly, making for a perfect fit. The arms are usually solid pieces and connect directly to the backplate. Helmets attach separately and are usually the last piece of equipment to be put on, since they can obstruct the range of head motion needed while suiting up. Properly configured, one does not pilot an APEX Suit, one merely wears it.

STRENGTH, DURABILITY, AND STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY

An APEX Suit augments the wearer's physical capabilities. This includes the character's STR, DEX, CON, and SPD. As APEX Suits tend to be designed to look durable and imposing, increased PRE is possible as well. Other Characteristics should be unaffected. Extra defenses should be bought as Resistant Protection.

The recommended ranges for APEX Suit characteristics are as follows:

STR: 15-38 (40 for more cinematic games)

DEX: 13-26

CON: 15-25 (30 for more cinematic games)

SPD: 2-6 (typically 4)

The Characteristic bonuses provided by an APEX Suit are set at suit creation and represent a maximum plateau the suit can't exceed. In addition, suit characteristics don't "stack" and can't be combined with any cybernetic augmentations possessed by the character. Thus, Cyber Limbs, Muscle Augmentations, Reflex Enhancements, Synaptic Accelerators, and War Glands cannot and will not add to any characteristic modifications provided by an APEX Suit. For more information see the *Powered Armor Limitation* on page 66.

BODY CONSTRUCTION, DEFENSIVE SYSTEMS, AND MASS

As stated, APEX Suits combine multiple layers of metal alloy, impact-resistant ceramics, and armored plastics into a protective shell. This is purchased as Resistant Protection, with a minimum value of 6 DEF for civilian models. Military suits have better protection, with 9-12 DEF typical. The heaviest APEX Suits have 15-18 DEF. The Limitation Powered Armor is applied to any Resistant Protection purchased for an APEX Suit. Characters can also apply the Ablative Limitation, but only at the -1/2 level. In addition, any Resistant Protection Required Rolls resulting from the Ablative Limitation don't affect the suit as a whole, only the Hit Locations penetrated by attacks.

Unlike cyborgs, APEX Suits don't normally have tactile receptors. They can feel resistance to pressure (or else they wouldn't be able to pick anything up without breaking it), but sensations such as hot, cold, wet, dry, sticky, and so on are muted to non-existent. Normally, this is considered an advantage of the suit, as it allows the pilot to operate in adverse environmental conditions without hindrance. In addition, the pilot can still feel the "inside" of the suit. As APEX Suits aren't worn for extended periods of time (usually six to eight hours maximum), this isn't worth points as a Physical Complication (unlike cyborgs, who must live in their artificial bodies). Game

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Semi-autonomous Robots: The boomers from *ADPolice*, *Bubblegum Crisis*, and *Bubblegum Crash*; the M-66 Antipersonnel Automatic Infantry Robot from *Black Magic*, and various humanoid robots found in different incarnations of *Ghost in the Shell*.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Terminology associated with mecha.

APEX: Acronym for "Armored Personal Exoskeleton." APEX Suits tend to be streamlined and formfitting as opposed to the larger and bulkier Exo-Suits (see below). In most militaries APEX Suits are nicknamed "ape suits."

Battle Walker: Any Exo-Suit designed for combat. Also known as a "Battle Frame."

Cyberdroid: Short for "cybernetic android." Cyberdroids can either be controlled remotely by a trained pilot, or programmed to operate independently, depending on need and function.

Exo-Suit: Derived from the word exoskeleton, it refers to any form of powered armor larger than an APEX Suit. Also known as an "XO Suit."

Killer Doll: Military slang for any cyberdroid designed for infiltration and covert operations. Derived from the tendency for such cyberdroids to look very human.

Mannikin: General term for any domestic-use cyberdroid.

Patrol Walker: Autonomous cyberdroids designed to operate without constant human supervision. Their name comes from their first usage — patrolling the Republic of Texas border with Mexico. Individual patrol walkers are often called "Papa Whiskey" by the troops they are assigned to.

PPA: Short for "Personal Powered Armor." Another term for an APEX Suit.

PaPA Suit: An APEX Suit designed for use in hazardous environments.

Skinsuit: An extremely formfitting full-body sensory suit worn while piloting many types of APEX and Exo-Suits.

Tin Woodsman: Slang for industrial-use cyberdroids.

UTV: Military acronym for "Unmanned Terrestrial Vehicle." Used to refer to remotely-piloted cyberdroids.

CHARACTERISTIC MAXES FOR MECHA

As with Cyberware and Cyborgs, Mecha have certain limits to their Characteristics in the interests of realism and game balance. APEX Suits aren't as strong as cyborgs due to the limitations of compressing strength-augmentation technology into an outer shell, while cyborgs completely replace their bodies with artificial muscles and bones. Exo-Suits are stronger than APEX Suits due to their sheer size and mass, which allows for larger actuators and hydraulic systems. Cyberdroids are stronger yet, as they are built along the same lines as cyborgs, just with a larger frame. Although *Kazei 5* is an anime setting, and thus tends toward a cinematic degree of realism, GMs may still want to enforce real-world limits on a character's lifting capabilities. See pages 114-115 of *The Ultimate Brick* for more information on realistic applications of superhuman strength. If used, these rules should only apply to cyborgs, cyberdroids, and mecha. Espers are immune, due to the 'mind over matter' aspect of their powers.

Masters may allow Players to purchase limited forms of STUN Only Damage Reduction for their APEX Suits, to represent increased resistance to certain environmental effects.

APEX Suits are normally fully-sealed against a wide variety of adverse environmental conditions. Normally the suits cycle air in from the outside, but can switch to an internal air supply if needed. Players should purchase Life Support (Self-Contained Breathing) for their character's suit. More durable suits (such as a PaPA Suit) can have Safe Environment: High Pressure, High Radiation, Intense Cold, Intense Heat, and Low Pressure/Vacuum. While the various Safe Environments are part of an APEX Suit's construction, the Self-Contained Breathing should be bought with the *Fuel Charges* Limitation.

An APEX Suit weighs anywhere from 100 to 200 kilos on its own — not counting the pilot or any other gear carried along. Players can represent this by giving their suits two to four meters of Knockback Resistance. Unlike cyborgs, APEX Suits don't use the *Heavy Physical Complication*, as that is already considered part of the *Powered Armor* Limitation.

OFFENSIVE SYSTEMS

Most APEX Suits utilize hand-carried weaponry, such as battle rifles, light machine guns, and the like. However, one can modify a suit to accept integrated weapons systems. Typical weapons systems include projectile weapons (similar to Cyber Guns), energy weapons (such as lasers, electron beams, or ion "blasters"), grenade and rocket launchers, and extendable blades (akin to Cyber Blades).

Offensive systems are normally mounted along or within the forearm (depending on the type and size of weapon), with the muzzle either replacing the suit's hand or firing through the palm. In the latter case, the forearm is often substantially longer than one without a weapon. In addition, the muzzle is normally surrounded by a set of "fingers" remotely activated by the character's own hand. Heavier weapons, such as large lasers, particle beams, rocket launchers, and grenade launchers are mounted on the back, firing over the shoulder. Energy weapons usually draw on the suit's own power supply, while projectile weapons have ports in the armor for exchanging magazines.

Extremely advanced suits may contain unusual or distinctive weapons systems, such as Cyber Gun-type weapons in the finger or hand, finger-mounted micro-lasers, monofilament whips, microwave emitters, sonic projectors, tasers, or rapid-fire weaponry based off of the MetalStorm electric firing system.

The helmet of an APEX normally contains some form of HUD (heads-up display) for targeting these weapons systems. Both Combat Skill Levels with Ranged Combat and Penalty Skill Levels with Range Modifiers are possible, as are systems akin to a Smartgun Link. Additional helmet systems usually include High Range Radio Perception, Infrared Perception (Sight Group), Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group), and several levels of Telescopic Sense (Sight Group).

MOVEMENT SYSTEMS

Due to the strength enhancements inherent in an APEX Suit, they can leap farther and run faster than a normal human. These extra meters of Leaping and Running are often bought with the *Reduced Endurance Advantage*, since the suit is doing most of the work. APEX Suits with jump jets can purchase additional meters of Leaping with the *Accurate Adder* (defined as internal targeting systems) Characters can also purchase Clinging for their APEX Suit using the same design constraints as the Magnetic Pad cybersystem.

Few APEX Suits are capable of true flight. Most combat models have lift packs, which are larger and more powerful jump jets (*i.e.* they have extra meters of Leaping with one or more levels of Improved Noncombat Movement). Those suits capable of fully independent flight normally have a rather obvious mix of engines and control surfaces mounted on the back, with air intakes along the shoulders and an exhaust system near the waist and hips. Capable of high speeds (*i.e.* upwards of 60 meters of Flight), these suits have only a limited fuel supply (use the *Fuel Charges* Limitation with a maximum duration of 1 Hour). Those GMs wishing for a realistic treatment of the reduced control surfaces could require characters to purchase Limited Maneuverability at the -1/4 level, while those wanting a more anime feel can ignore this.

Some APEX Suits can only use their flight packs to hover, and must remain close to the ground. You can represent this with the Limitation of *Limited Altitude* (-1/4). This allows the APEX Suit to skim the ground, reduce the effects of Knockback, recover from falls and so on, but it can't cross extended open spaces, chase after a high-altitude airplane, or fly straight up the side of a building.

LIMITATIONS AND COMPLICATIONS

APEX Suits don't utilize the *Focus* Limitation. Instead, the *Kazei 5* setting uses *Powered Armor* (-1/2) instead. While nominally similar to OIF in some respects, in that both Limitations represent a physical object, *Powered Armor* treats the concept in a manner more in line with the anime medium and the cyberpunk genre. The *Powered Armor* Limitation works as follows:

- 1) It combines the Limitations of *Real Weapon* and *Real Armor* to represent the nature of the APEX Suit's offensive and defensive capabilities.
- 2) It represents the extra weight of an APEX Suit (100-200 kilograms), without requiring a separate Physical Complication.
- 3) An APEX Suit's characteristic bonuses are a set value. In other words, if a 10 STR character wears an APEX Suit that grants him +25 STR (for a total of 35 STR), a 20 STR character donning the same suit will also have a STR of 35 instead of the 45 STR he'd normally be entitled to. The reverse is also true. If an 8 STR character donned the same armor, he'd only have a STR of 33, since he's not able to exert the full force necessary to capitalize on the suit's enhancement capabilities.

4) An APEX Suit takes time to put on and take off. Normally, it takes a character 8 Full Phase Actions to put on and button up an APEX Suit. A character can reduce this time with the use of an appropriate Skill, such as PS: APEX Pilot, however, it's doubtful even the most skilled operator can reduce the time needed to less than 4 Full Phase Actions.

5) Conversely, you cannot remove an APEX Suit from a character by spending 1 Turn out combat to do so, since APEX Suits lock into place around the body. Civilian suits have easily accessible latches (in case of emergencies), but military and security suits normally have coded locks that either need to be opened from inside or with specific keys. Otherwise, the suit will need to be cut off of the character.

6) An APEX Suit can be targeted by ranged attacks with the intent of damaging and disabling specific suit functions. Examples include flight and jump packs, external antenna, and integrated weapon systems.

7) An APEX Suit loses powers based on the location hit, not by Active Point values. Random choice should only be used if the location in question contains multiple suit functions (see Damaging An APEX Suit below).

APEX Suits may have other Limitations. Those marked belonging to a certain organization (either military or multinational) can have Distinctive Features. Suits with poor maintenance records can have the Physical Complication of *Constant Malfunctions* (as seen in *The Ultimate Vehicle*). Some suits might have a Reputation, although in most cases this will be a Positive one (especially if the suit is known for its mobility, defensive systems, or weapons). Negative Reputations are usually more along the lines of performance issues with the suit's operational capabilities. Game Masters can also allow characters to use the Susceptibility and Vulnerability options seen in the Cyborg chapter for certain APEX Suits.

DAMAGING AN APEX SUIT

APEX Suits don't randomly lose powers when damaged (*i.e.* the suit takes more BODY than it has in Defenses). Instead, suit damage is assessed according to the location hit. Damage to the back might destroy a jump pack, or power supply, damage to the hand will affect arm-mounted weapons, damage to the limbs will affect the suit's Characteristic bonuses, and so on. When designing an APEX Suit, the location of all powers housed within the suit should be specified.

If you're unsure of how to damage an APEX Suit once it takes BODY, you can refer to the following chart:

For each BODY taken, lose (roll 1d6, or choose based upon location):

- 1) Either lose 10 Active Points from a specific Power or the entire Power.
- 2) 5 Points of STR.
- 3) 3 Points of DEX.
- 4) 1 Point of SPD.
- 5) 10m of Movement, or a 2x Non-Combat Movement multiple.
- 6) 20 Points of END from an END Reserve, or 5 Points of REC.

If a result no longer applies, then either re-roll, or choose the next most likely result. The recommended result is to reduce the suit's DEX, representing system damage interfering with the suit's ability to operate efficiently.

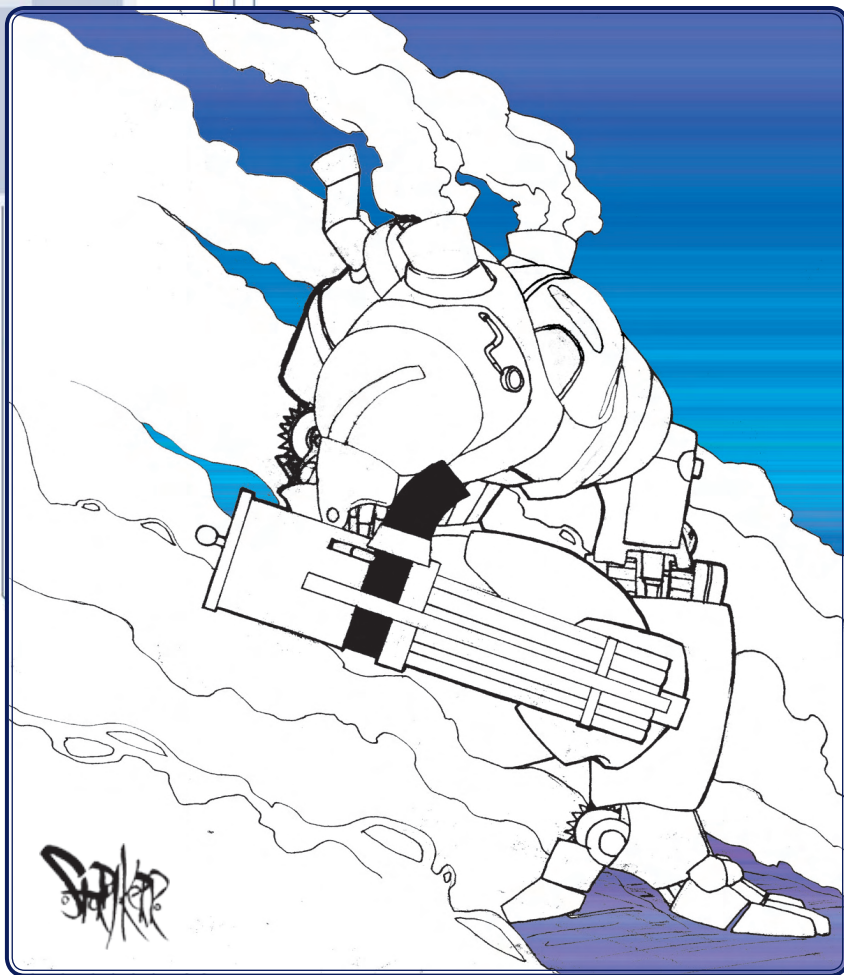
HEARING PERCEPTION MODIFIERS FOR MECHA

Modern twenty-first century mecha are anything but quiet. Here are some suggested modifiers:

Mecha	Mod
APEX Suit	+2
EXO-Suit	+3
Cyberdroid	+3
Mecha Flight Pack	+4
Mecha Energy Weapons	+4

WEAPONS IN ANIME

In anime, certain weapons often seem to obey specific visual conventions. Rockets and missiles are launched in swarms, detonating on and around the target. Machine guns and automatic cannon fire continuous streams of glowing tracers while spewing copious amounts of spent shell casings. Lasers are truly devastating weapons, usually being capable of cutting through just about anything and slicing apart buildings, vehicles, and people with ease. Although *Kazei 5* treats its weaponry a bit more realistically, you should keep these conventions in mind when describing the action during combat.



MECHA COMBAT RESULTS

The durability of mecha in anime varies wildly. The mecha used by major characters (both heroes and villains) can absorb a great deal of punishment, while those used by minor characters and faceless agents can be destroyed with minimal effort. Game Masters who wish to simulate this effect can do so by having any BODY that gets past the defenses of mecha piloted by a nameless minion disable/destroy the location hit (thus, a torso hit will immediately put the mecha out of action).

Exo-Suit Design And Construction

Most Exo-Suits are humanoid in appearance, with two legs, two primary arms, two “slave” arms (used to control the primary arms), and a sensory array for a “head.” Size varies, with most Exo-Suits standing between two and three meters in height and weighing 1.5 to 2 tons. The exterior of an Exo-Suit consists of an armored shell similar to an APEX Suit mounted over a system of hydraulic actuators. Motivational power is normally supplied via cold fusion, although some Exo-Suits (specifically ones used for construction) use bio-fuel-capable internal combustion engines.

Access to an Exo-Suit is usually through the front. The torso splits open into three sections (bottom, left, and right). The pilot then climbs into the vehicle, positions his limbs, and closes the suit. Inside, the suit is quite snug, with a saddle for the pilot, a view screen linked to the sensory array, and various status indicators. His legs extend down into the suit’s legs, while his arms go into the slave arms. This arrangement allows the pilot to “wear” an Exo-Suit in the same manner as an APEX Suit. To move he simply starts walking; if he wishes to lift something, he makes the proper movements with the slave arms and the primary arms duplicate his actions. To look around, he moves his head, and the sensory array follows. While this set-up does take some getting used to, it also means a novice pilot can be up and moving around within hours.

“I tangled with the Black Company once. Four APEX Suits backed by an Exo. My ‘graft is good, but not that good. I hope I never run across them again.”

— Lora Doubet, combat cybergraft upgrade

Non-humanoid Exo-Suits tend to have a crab or spider-like appearance. The pilot usually lies within the vehicle instead of sitting, operating it via a Vehicle Control Link. While not as easy to operate as a conventional Exo-Suit, their low silhouette makes them popular with covert forces.

STRENGTH, DURABILITY, AND STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY

Exo-Suits are bought as vehicles. Length should be read as height for humanoid ‘Suits, while crab and spider-shaped mecha read the chart as written. Humanoid ‘Suits are Size Category 1 or 2, spider-shaped ‘Suits can be as large as Size Category 3. To simulate the suit’s weight, buy sufficient additional Knockback Resistance to give the suit -8m (which is equal to 1.6 tons of mass).

In many respects an Exo-Suit acts like an APEX Suit, just on a larger and heavier scale. Exo-Suits are stronger, more massive, and tougher, but aren’t as maneuverable. See the chart below for recommended Characteristic ranges (broken down by weight class).

Exo-Suit Weigh Class	Light	Medium	Heavy
Size	1	1-2	2
STR	25-33	33-40	40-55
DEX	18-20	15-18	13-15
BODY	14-15	16-20	20-23
DEF	12-15	15-18	18-23
SPD	4	3	2-3

As with APEX Suits, an Exo-Suits Characteristics are set and can’t be exceeded through the use of Cyber Limbs, Muscle Augmentation, Reflex Enhancements, and so on.

BODY CONSTRUCTION, DEFENSIVE SYSTEMS, AND MASS

Exo-Suits are built much like cyborgs. They start out as a metal frame (skeleton), to which are added hydraulic actuators (muscles), and then covered with armored plating (skin). To this is added sensory, movement, and weapons systems (if needed). The finished Exo-Suit is then assigned to one of three weight classes, depending on the suit’s size and intended purpose.

Exo-Suit weight classes are light, medium, and heavy. Light Exo-Suits are usually civilian models, used for light construction and operations in hazardous environments. Medium Exo-Suits tend to be military models, outfitted with various weapons and communications systems. Heavy ‘Suits are normally found in construction, although there are several military designs of this size.

Due to their armored shell, Exo-Suits suffer the same issues as APEX Suits with regards to tactile reception and the like. They also can apply the Ablative Limitation to their DEF in the same manner as an APEX Suit.

Exo-Suits can be sealed against hostile environments just like an APEX Suit. See page 66 for more.

An Exo-Suit weighs between 1.5 and 2 tons. This is simulated by buying up the base Knockback Resistance from the mecha's Size Category to -8m. Like APEX Suits they don't take the Heavy Physical Complication.

OFFENSIVE SYSTEMS

A humanoid Exo-Suit can utilize either hand-held weaponry (scaled up to its size) or integrated weapons systems. Hand-held weapons include large anti-materiel rifles, light autocannons, and heavy machine guns. Integrated weapons are usually fixed to fire over the shoulder or are mounted on the shoulder itself, although some weapons may be mounted along or under the forearm. Such systems can include energy weapons, flame-throwers, machine guns, rocket launchers, and recoilless rifles. Exo-Suits can even use specially-designed melee weapons. Additional weapons systems are possible; see the Offensive Systems section for APEX Suits.

Spider and crab-like Exo-Suits usually mount their weaponry in small pods on the front of the mecha or in a forward-facing set of arms. The choice of weapons is the same as for humanoid Exo-Suits, with machine guns and rocket launchers being common choices.

It's possible for a character to use his Martial Arts with a humanoid Exo-Suit. In order to do so he needs to buy the Use Art With Mecha Weapon Element. However, some maneuvers may not be usable with a mecha (such as Choke Holds and Nerve Strikes).

An Exo-Suit has the same HUD as an APEX Suit (see page 66). In addition, Exo-Suits come with onboard computer systems capable of tracking ammunition usage, monitoring physical integrity and status, performing supplemental navigation, and so on. See the Cranial Computer on page 15 for recommended Characteristics and Skills.

MOVEMENT SYSTEMS

Virtually all Exo-Suits move by walking, although spider-shaped suits might have retractable wheels built into their legs. Due to their size and weight, Exo-Suits normally are unable to swim unless specifically designed for underwater operations. An Exo-Suit can fly (or jump), but only if fitted with a flight harness (or jump pack). Consisting of assorted control surfaces and jet engines, flight harnesses are commonly used by security patrols and scout mecha. See page 66 for more information on designing these.

LIMITATIONS AND COMPLICATIONS

See the Limitations and Complications section for APEX Suits on page 66 for suggestions on possible Exo-Suit Limitations and Complications. Exo-Suits don't use the Powered Armor Limitation, but are built using the standard Vehicle rules. Exo-Suit specific Physical Complications are as follows:

Cannot Punch (Frequently, Slightly Impairing; 10 Points). This Limitation only applies to spider-shaped Exo-Suits. While these mecha have manipulatory limbs, but they are either too short or too weak to be used for fighting.

Clumsy Fingers, No Fine Work Possible (Frequently, Greatly Impairing; 15 Points). The Exo-Suit's primary arm fingers are too thick for any sort of complex or delicate operations. It can't pick up small objects, disarm a bomb, pick a lock, or use a computer keypad.

Requires Linked Operator (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing; 10 Points). The mecha can only be operated via direct neural interface (such as a Vehicle Control Link). If the potential pilot lacks the proper cyberware, he can't operate the Exo-Suit.

DAMAGING AN EXO-SUIT

Exo-Suits are treated as Vehicles in combat. The suit does not take STUN damage from attacks unless involved in a collision (see *The Ultimate Vehicle* page 186). Characters attacking an Exo-Suit can target specific parts of the suit (such as the sensory array, an arm, or a leg), or use the Hit Location chart used below.

Roll	Location	BODYx	To Hit
3-5	Head/Sensory Array	x1 ^{1/2}	-8 OCV
6	Hands	x ^{1/2}	-6 OCV
7-8	Arms	x1	-5 OCV
9	Shoulders	x1	-5 OCV
10-12	Torso/Cockpit	x1	-3 OCV
13	Engines	x1 ^{1/2}	-6 OCV
14	Upper Legs	x1	-4 OCV
15-16	Lower Legs	x1	-6 ocv
17-18	Feet	x ^{1/2}	-8 OCV

*Roll 1d6, 1-4 Primary Arm is hit, 5-6 Slave Arm is hit.

The pilot will be hit if any BODY damage penetrates Locations 6-8 or 10-14. If the mecha takes BODY damage you can either use the damage chart on this page or the Mech Hit Location Optional Effects table on page 199 of *The Ultimate Vehicle*.

"The report was of enemy action along the Geer. We thought it might be recon or maybe a probe to test defenses. Instead they snuck over a couple of killer-dolls. Once across they started eliminating anyone they found. We trapped 'em near a bridge and lit 'em up with everything we had. Grenades, heavy machine-guns, lasers — Someone even tried an APC-mounted ion cannon. Nothing worked. The damn things were too fast and too smart. We tagged one with a lucky RPG hit and it blew apart. The other vanished. By the time reinforcements arrived, nearly three-quarters of my unit was dead or wounded."

— Corporal Michael "Chewie" Chu, recounting the aftermath of an encounter between human troops and two hunter-killer cyberdroids.

Cyberdroid Design And Construction

A cyberdroid is built along the same lines as a full-conversion cyborg, with a computer brain instead of a human one. Nominally humanoid in appearance, cyberdroids come in a wide variety of sizes and styles, ranging from commercial models roughly the same size as an average human, to hulking military units as large as an Exo-Suit, covered in armored plate and bristling with integrated weaponry. Powered by either high-yield electrical batteries that require nightly recharging (typical of commercial designs) or cold-fusion reactors (the standard option for military-use cyberdroids), most cyberdroids are capable of extended independent operations. Due to their construction, cyberdroids are extremely heavy, weighing at minimum 200 kilograms with the largest ones massing several tons.

The computer brain found in every cyberdroid is the end result of years of research into artificial intelligence and machine learning. Using the expert system model, cyberdroid brains utilize extensive logic trees and knowledgebase algorithms to arrive at a decision. While this often gives the impression of true artificial intelligence, cyberdroids are *not* self-aware (unlike replicated humans). In addition, many cyberdroids are capable of being operated remotely, via satellite uplinks. This option is often used when a human presence and/or decision making is needed in an otherwise hostile environment.

STRENGTH, DURABILITY, AND STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY

Cyberdroids are bought as Automaton. Despite their extensive processing powers, they aren't capable of independent thought and don't have an EGO score. Otherwise, cyberdroids are virtually identical in design and construction to a cyborg or Exo-Suit.

As they are designed for manual labor, even the most basic of cyberdroids is significantly stronger than an unmodified human. The starting STR score for a domestic cyberdroid is 15, with 20-25 typical for commercial models. Construction and military cyberdroids can be even stronger, with STR scores ranging from 40-50. The strongest cyberdroids are the massive units used for mining and other forms of heavy industry, with STR scores of 55-60. However, few cyberdroids are faster than a normal human. Commercial models tend to have DEX scores of 13-15; only military designs have scores of 18 or better.

With regards to structural integrity, cyberdroids are usually sturdily built (they need to be, considering their use), with BODY scores ranging from 15-20 or better. This also means the cyberdroid is rather heavy, with many having extra meters of Knockback Resistance.

BODY CONSTRUCTION

All cyberdroids, even domestic models, have an armored outer layer. This is bought using the Advantage Resistant, with values similar to a cyborg's (*i.e.* DEF 3 for the most basic model, 6-9 for commercial/construction units, and 12-15 for military units). As they are Automaton, cyberdroids should purchase the Powers *Does Not Bleed* and *Takes No STUN* (at the 45-point level) as well as 30 points of Life Support (all but Immunity to Aging — cyberdroids still require regular maintenance).

OFFENSIVE SYSTEMS

Commercial cyberdroids don't have combat programming, although those with integral construction tools can inflict serious harm if directed to do so by a remote pilot. Military models have extensive hardwired combat skills, used with built-in weaponry, carried weapons, or unarmed combat. A military cyberdroid can be armed with a wide assortment of weaponry, most of it similar to what's normally mounted on an Exo-Suit (see page 66). A common tactic is to build one or more weapons into one arm, leaving the other free for manipulating objects. In addition, many combat-class cyberdroids have energy weapons (such as ion cannons) mounted where the mouth should be, the idea being that all a remote operator has to do is look at a target in order to hit it. Cyberdroids are also capable of carrying hand-held weaponry, usually of the same types of firearms used by Exo-Suit pilots.

Recently, in order to combat espers, microwave emitters have been installed in the chest area of certain experimental cyberdroids. In order to properly utilize this weapon, the cyberdroid needs to "unfold" its chest, a visual effect likened to the opening of a flower (albeit a very lethal one).

MOVEMENT SYSTEMS

The majority of cyberdroids move by walking, just like APEX and Exo-Suits. Military models are often equipped with directional thrusters. These enable the cyberdroid to make jet-assisted jumps or even fly short distances. However, this flight is normally akin to an APEX Suit's hover pack as opposed to true flight (see page 66 for more). As many cyberdroids are meant to operate in a wide variety of environments, they are normally water-tight. Those specifically designed for aquatic operations are equipped with shrouded micro-propellers for propulsion and steering.

COMPLICATIONS

Typical cyberdroid Complications are as follows:

Dependence: must recharge every 6-8 Hours or suffer Weakness, and eventually total shutdown (Very Common; 0 points) (Used only for commercial cyberdroids.)

Distinctive Features: Commercial Cyberdroid (Concealable With Effort; Noticed And Recognizable; 10 points)

Distinctive Features: Military Cyberdroid (Not Concealable; Causes Extreme Reaction [fear]; 25 points)

Physical Complication: Size or Weight (Varies depending on the specific cyberdroid. The largest cyberdroids are roughly 12' in height, while even a human-sized cyberdroid weighs 200 kilograms or more.)

Psychological Limitation: Must Obey Programmer's/Owner's Commands (Very Common, Total; 25 points)

BASIC CYBERDROID TEMPLATE

Cost Ability

- 45 Cyberdroid Body:** Automaton (Takes No STUN (loses abilities when takes BODY))
- 15 Cyberdroid Body:** Does Not Bleed
- 20 Advanced Cyberbrain:** +15 EGO; Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 40 Attack Barrier:** Mental Defense (20 points total); Software (-1/2)
- var Internal Power Supply:** Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) applied to STR
- var Internal Power Supply:** Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) applied to Leaping
- var Internal Power Supply:** Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) applied to Running
- var Armoreded Frame:** Resistant ([amount will vary, minimum of 3] PD/[amount will vary, minimum of 3] ED; +1/2)
- var Heavy:** Knockback Resistance (amount will vary, minimum of 2m)
- 30 Cyberdroid Body:** LS: Total
- 2 Heavy:** Swimming -4m
- 5 Visual Sensors:** IR Perception (Sight Group)
- 5 Visual Sensors:** UV Perception (Sight Group)
- 5 Visual Sensors:** Microscopic (x10) with Sight Group
- 6 Visual Sensors:** +4 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group
- 3 Audio Sensors:** Ultrasonic Perception (Hearing Group)
- 12 Remote Pilot Link:** HRRP (Radio Group)
- 3 Internal Range Finder:** Absolute Range Sense
- 3 Internal Clock:** Absolute Time Sense
- 3 Full Coordination:** Ambidexterity (no Off Hand penalty)
- 3 Internal Compass:** Bump Of Direction
- 3 Internal Processor:** Lightning Calculator
- 2 Language:** (choice — for verbal input only) (fluent conversation)
- 2 PS:** Commercial/Domestic Operations 11-

Total Cost Of Package Abilities: var

DAMAGING A CYBERDROID

Cyberdroids take damage in the same way as APEX and Exo-Suits. In other words, GMs should decide on an appropriate result depending on the location hit by the attack. For example: arm hits should reduce STR or eliminate a weapon; hits the legs will reduce DEX or Movement; hits to the torso will reduce STR or SPD, and so on.

Cyberdroids are also subject to cyberhacking and utilize a Cyberbrain to run all systems. Due to the danger inherent in cyberhacked 'droid running amok, even the most basic of cyberdroids have Advanced Cyberbrains, often with an Attack Barrier. Military cyberdroids add an Encrypted Cyberbrain.

Complications

Value Complication

- 0 Dependence: must recharge every 6-8 Hours or suffer Weakness, and eventually total shut-down Weakness: -3 To Characteristic Rolls and related rolls per time increment (Very Common, 6-8 Hours)
- 10 Distinctive Features: Commercial Cyberdroid (Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 5 Physical Complication: Heavy, approximately 200 kilograms (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
- 0 Physical Complication: Human Size
- 25 Psychological Limitation: Must Obey Programmer's/Owner's Commands (Very Common, Total)

Total Cost Of Package Complications: 45

Options For Military Cyberdroids

Cost Ability

- 20 Internal Radar:** Radar (Radio Group), Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees)
- +5 Improved Visual Sensors:** Microscopic (x100) with Sight Group
- +6 Improved Visual Sensors:** +8 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group
- 20 +2 with All Combat
- 3 Climbing 11-
- 3 Stealth 11-
- 2 Remove PS: Commercial/Domestic Operations
- 3 Tactics 11-
- 7 WF: Small Arms, Anti-Materiel Rifles, Flame-throwers, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons
- +0 Remove Dependence

PART THREE:

**CYBORGs, ESPER WEAPONS,
& REPLICATES:**

**CHARACTERS IN
KAZEI 5**

Background Templates

For the most part, characters in a *Kazei 5* campaign will be normal humans. However, players can also choose to be genetically upgraded humans, cyborgs, espers, or even replicated humans. It all depends on what type of game the GM wants to run and what choices he will allow.

NORMAL HUMAN

Normal humans form the bulk of Earth's population in 2030. They're the people you meet each and every day, and can range from the CEOs of multinational corporations to Zero Zone gangers. Normal humans pilot Exo-Suits, implant and repair cyberware, surf the Net, police the streets, staff sales counters, and otherwise do all the things needed to keep the world turning.

Normal humans come in a wide variety of heights, weights, and body types. Hair and skin color follows the patterns typical for the (real) world's ethnicities. Unusual (i.e. "anime") hair colors are normally the result of dye jobs, while colored contacts can allow anyone to change their eye color (of course, cybereyes can be of any color). There is no template for a normal human, as they are the base from which all other Background Templates are derived from. Normal humans are subject to the suggested *Characteristic Maxima* for Heroic campaigns found on page 50 of 6E1.

GENETICALLY UPGRADED HUMAN

A genetic upgrade, or "Genner," is a formerly normal human who underwent gene therapy while a child. Selected from any number of pre-designed packages (or "programs"), then specifically tailored to the recipient's needs (or the parent's desires), a genetic upgrade supplements the growth process during puberty. The result is an individual with augmented physical abilities — he's faster, stronger, and more durable.

Genetic upgrades are commonly found only among the corporate elite, as the process is expensive. It must be applied before the recipient reaches puberty in order to achieve the best results. This means characters must start play as genetic upgrades; they can't decide to undergo the process at a later date.

UNEXPECTED SIDE EFFECTS

The extended lifespan genetic upgrades enjoy wasn't part of the initial research process, and instead seems to be a benign side-effect. Currently, few — if any — geneticists (or the upgrades themselves), are fully aware of this effect. Curiously, there are a number of esper weapons who also have extended life-spans, and only one of them has any idea anything unusual is going on (see Mayumi Kishiyama on page 234).

"Borgs with their brains in boxes, espers blowin' stuff up, gene freaks runnin' around everywhere, skinjobs replacing normal people... it's gotten so I don't know who's real anymore."

— Carlos Jagger, former NYPD, Inc. police officer and partial-conversion cyborg

The upgrade process normally results in an idealized athletic body type, with clear skin and a symmetrical and balanced face and figure. Men tend to have broad shoulders and narrow hips, while women are noted for voluptuous figures. Hair, eye, and skin color should follow normal human patterns, although recent advances in gene selection allow for a degree of customized appearance. However, it's yet to be seen if the ability to give a genetic upgrade blue hair (for example) will catch on, as such non-natural hair colors are usually found only in replicated humans.

There are numerous pre-designed upgrade programs available, although for game-play purposes they all use the same template. Game Masters can alter the basic template to create specific upgrade packages if they so wish. Genetic upgrades are not subject to the *Characteristic Maxima* rules. However, in the interests of cinematic realism, their physical characteristics shouldn't exceed 30.

GENETIC UPGRADE TEMPLATE

Abilities

Cost Ability

5	+5 STR
6	+3 DEX
3	+3 CON
2	+2 PD
2	+2 ED
1	+1 REC
1	+5 END
1	+1 BODY
2	+4 STUN
1	<i>Improved Longevity:</i> LS (Longevity: 200 Years)
3	<i>Hyper Immune System:</i> LS (Immunity: All terrestrial diseases and biowarfare agents); Not Versus Bioweapons (-1/2)
5	Bioware Compatible
3	Striking Appearance

Total Cost Of Package Abilities: 35

Complications

Value Complication

5	Distinctive Features: Genetic Upgrade Markers In DNA (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Technology Or Major Effort)
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Total Cost Of Package Complications: 5

Options

Value Ability

var	<i>Tireless:</i> Reduced Endurance (1/2 END; +1/4 on STR)
var	<i>Tireless:</i> Reduced Endurance (1/2 END; +1/4 on Running)
1	<i>Tireless:</i> LS (Sleeping: Character only has to sleep 8 hours per week)
2	<i>Swift Of Foot:</i> Running +2m (14m total)

COMBINING BACK- GROUND S

Can characters combine Background Templates? Can you have a genetically upgraded esper, for example? The answer is "yes." Templates can be combined, but within reason. Normal humans, genetic upgrades, and espers can become cyborgs, but the esper is almost certain to lose most, if not all of his powers. A genetically upgraded cyborg is possible, but odds are, his upgrade won't make much difference once most of his body has been replaced with cyberware. Replicates can't become espers (at least, not yet), and no one would bother with the expense of making a replicate cyborg — a cyberdroid is much cheaper.

CYBORG

Cyborgs are normal humans (or genetic upgrades) who've had a significant portion of their bodies replaced with cybernetic parts. See the Cyborg section starting on page 34 for more information. For ease of use, the Basic Cyborg Template has been repeated here.

Most cyborgs are partial-conversion models and retain their original faces and features. Full-conversion cyborgs tend to be of the soft-shell variety, and can come in any hair/skin/eye color combination the character wishes. On the other hand, hard-shell full-conversion cyborgs can look pretty much like anything. Typically, humanoid cyborgs have athletic/idealized figures (think about it — who'd ask for an unattractive body?).

Cyborgs are not subject to *Characteristic Maxima*.

BASIC CYBORG TEMPLATE

Abilities

Cost Ability

- 5 *Cybernetic Strength Enhancements*: +5 STR
- 10 *Cybergraft Toughness*: +5 CON, +6 STUN
- 2 *Cybergraft Durability*: +1 PD, +1 ED
- 9 *Cybergraft Shell*: Resistant Protection (3 PD/3 ED)
- 2 *Heavy*: Knockback Resistance -2m
- 4 *Cybernetic Legs*: Leaping +8m, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); No Noncombat Leaping (-1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 2 *Cyborg Body*: Swimming -4m

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 30

Complications

Value Complication

- 10 Distinctive Features: Synthskin/Cyborg Body (skin doesn't quite feel right to the touch, the cyborg doesn't sweat, the cyborg's mass is much greater than his size indicates, the cyborg's skin degrades if he is hit by an attack) (Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 10 Physical Complication: Cyborg (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 5 Physical Complication: Heavy (weighs roughly 200 kg) (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)

Total Cost Of Template Complications: 25

ESPER

Espers are humans who possess various telekinetic/telepathic abilities. While rare, their numbers are slowly growing. This fact, coupled with the nature of their powers makes them objects of apprehension, if not downright fear, among normal humans. See the chapter on espers (starting on page 50) for more information.

An esper can be of any ethnicity and is equally likely to be male or female. A minor side effect of their powers seems to be a high-metabolism, thus most espers have reasonably athletic figures. Otherwise they appear much like normal humans (Shion Nys's pure-white hair seems to be a quirk of nature, not a result of her powers).

Espers do not suffer from *Characteristic Maxima*. Many espers are significantly faster than normal humans (and even some cyber-enhanced individuals).

BASIC ESPER TEMPLATE

Abilities

Cost Ability

- 10 *Quicker Than Normal*: +5 DEX
- 10 *Faster Than Expected*: +1 SPD
- 32 *Esper Powers*: Multipower, 40-point reserve, all slots Esper Side Effects (-1/4)
- 5v 1) *Force Bolt*: Blast 8d6; Cannot be Bounced (-1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)
- 5v 2) *Telekinesis*: Telekinesis (26 STR); Cannot Punch (-1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)
- 1f 3) *Telekinetic Wall*: Barrier 8 PD/6 ED, 0 BODY (up to 4m long and 2m high), Non-Anchored; Costs Endurance (-1/2), No Range (-1/2), Restricted Shape (ring; -1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)
- 2v 4) *Telekinetic Push-Off*: Leaping 20m (Accurate); Esper Side Effects (-1/4)

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 65

Complications

Value Complication

- 5 Distinctive Features: Esper (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
- 10 Social Complication: Esper (Frequently, Minor)

Total Cost Of Template Complications: 15

REPLICATED HUMAN

Replicated humans are mass-produced “clones” based off of a genetically engineered DNA pattern. Grown in nanofactory vats, replicated humans are usually designed for a specific purpose, such as combat, domestic chores, physical pleasure, and so on. As they are deemed to be organic robots, most countries deny replicated humans any form of civil rights, considering them simply to be property.

The typical replicated human appears to be a very fit and attractive normal human. Domestic and pleasure models tend to be of average size, while combat and security models are normally taller and heavier. In order to make it harder for a rogue replicate to blend in with regular humanity, unusual hair colors (such as blue, green, pink, and the like) are common. Some replicate manufacturers combine animal DNA into their product patterns, resulting in replicates with canine/feline ears and/or tails (the most popular example being the Puma Class Security Synthetic). Buyers can custom order body types, eye, hair, and skin colors, and to a limited extent, personalities.

The template represents a basic all-purpose replicated human. Character sheets for specific models can be found starting on page 205. Also see page 182 for more on the origins and types of replicated humans.

Replicated humans are not subject to *Characteristic Maxima*. While many replicates are only slightly physically superior to a normal human, combat and security models tend to be significantly stronger, faster, and tougher. However, as with genetic upgrades, their physical characteristics shouldn't exceed 30.

“Our replicates come in a wide variety of styles, colors, and flavors.”

— James Howland, sales representative for R. Scott Biotechnology.

REPLICATED HUMAN TEMPLATE

Abilities

Cost Ability

3	+3 STR
6	+3 DEX
3	+3 CON
-2	-2 EGO
2	+2 PD
2	+2 ED
1	+1 REC
1	+5 END
1	+2 STUN
5	<i>Hyper Immune System</i> : LS (Immunity: All terrestrial diseases and biowarefare agents); Not Versus Bioweapons (-1/2)
5	Bioware Compatible
3	Striking Appearance

Total Cost Of Package Abilities: 30

Complications

ValueComplication

5	Distinctive Features: Replicated Human Markers In DNA (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Technology Or Major Effort)
25	Psychological Complication: Must Obey Owner's Commands (Very Common, Total)
20	Social Complication: Replicated Human (Very Frequently, Major)

Total Cost Of Package Complications: 50



The Humanity Scale

A central theme of *Kazei 5* is the question of “What does it mean to be human?” When faced with genetically upgraded humans, cybernetically augmented humans, full-conversion cyborgs, and replicated humans built to customer specifications, one has to wonder who the “real” humans are. Is humanity a matter of birth? Of outlook and belief? Or is it something deeper and more intangible, hidden not in the mind but the soul? And what of espers? Are they still human, or have they become something more?

The following “scale” gives a rough idea of how people in *Kazei 5* are treated based on their physical makeup and extent of alteration. This scale, written from the point of view of a “normal” unaltered human is only meant as a rough guide. That said, it does help establish an idea of how different forms of humanity may be treated in a social situation.

NORMAL HUMAN

A normal human is just that — a normal, everyday, biologically-sired human with no genetic or cybernetic alteration. Normal humans form the majority of the people on the planet, although this perception is often colored by where one lives. In Neo York, for example, most everyone has some sort of cyberware implant, even if it's just a Datalink. On the other hand, you can go for days, or even months, in places like Africa and China and never see any cybernetic augmentation.

Most normal humans are too busy living their lives to worry about any possible “status” they may have due to being unaltered. Some people are proud of their lack of augmentation and look down on those who must resort to artificial means in order to compete. Others feel that if their forefathers were able to get by without cyberware, so can they. Finally, there are those who take the opposite view, and must contend with feelings of insecurity and inferiority in the face of increased genetic and cybernetic advancements.

GENETIC UPGRADE

For all intents and purposes, a genetic upgrade is a normal human, albeit with one major difference — augmented DNA. There's no social stigma attached to being an upgrade, and the process is very much in vogue among the wealthy as a way to guarantee physically and mentally superior children. Some people question the need for, and the wisdom behind, the genetic upgrading process and wonder what sort of self-esteem issues would force a person to undergo the process (conveniently ignoring the fact many upgrades were altered as embryos at the request of their parents). As for the upgrades themselves, a pecking order has developed as the qualities of different upgrade packages become apparent. There is also a tendency (usually among corporate youth) for upgrades to feel somewhat superior to unaltered humans.

Testing shows genetic upgrades breed true, passing along the bulk of their improved genetic code. What this means for the future can only be speculated, but given sufficient time, it's highly likely there will be no more “normal” humans. However, that potential future is still quite some ways off.

NORMAL HUMAN/GENETIC UPGRADE WITH MINOR CYBERNETIC IMPLANTS

In much of the industrialized world, simple cybernetic augmentation has become commonplace. The most common form of implant is the Datalink, which allows an individual to hook up to various electronic devices. Other common forms of cyberware include Datajacks, Skilljacks, optical augmentation (removing the need for glasses), and audio augmentation (removing the need for hearing aids). As most of these cybernetic implants are seen as requirements for working in the corporate world, especially among rank-and-file salarimen, there is little to no social stigma attached to having them.

CLONE

As clones are very rarely encountered, there's no over-all public opinion as to their social status. Most clones alive today are the children of certain super-rich individuals, born before genetic upgrades became common. Legally, a clone is considered to be a separate and unique individual, although those who know of a clone's origins may consider him an inferior copy of the original donor. On the other hand, if no one knows the clone's origins, then they are considered just another normal human.

REPLICATED HUMAN

The public at large considers replicated humans (or “replicates”) to be organic robots, which makes them property, not individuals (a viewpoint encouraged by many multinationals). While most people recognize a replicate as a biological organism, they don't regard them as “human.” Replicates are grown in tanks, not born, and thus are not “real” people. On the other hand, a replicate's organic origins often make them more acceptable to some people than a full-conversion cyborg or cyberdroid.

ESPER

Espers push the envelope on what most people consider to be human. To many, they are something more than human, possibly the next stage of humanity, and this scares them. They wonder not if, but when, normal humanity will become obsolete, and who will be able to stop the espers when this happens. Even worse are espers such as Raven, Shion Nys, or Ran, who are thought of as power made flesh, transcending any definition of humanity to become something else entirely.

Because of their power, some multinational corporations look at espers as a resource to be exploited and not as individuals. An esper is an asset, much like a replicate, or a cyborg. Thus, by the nature of their power, an esper loses his humanity and becomes another corporate tool or weapon.



Espers themselves are too individualistic to have much of a generalized reaction to the rest of the world. Some, like Shion Nys, feel fairly superior to non-espers, while others wish to blend in and be “just another person.” In addition, espers, for all their power, are vastly outnumbered by the rest of humanity, and have no power base from which to mount any sort of dominance campaign, presuming they ever cared to.

NORMAL HUMAN/GENETIC UPGRADE WITH MAJOR CYBERNETIC IMPLANTS

At some point (no one is sure when), an individual's cyber implants go from “minor” to “major.” It's hard to say what the dividing line is, although most people agree that any implants that go beyond the needs of day-to-day living are “major.” This includes Muscle Augmentation, Reflex Enhancement, Sub-Dermal Plates, and the like. A major implant usually involves alteration to most, if not all, of the body, and is usually something the average person would never need in his life. This makes the heavily cybered suspect in the eyes of many “normal” humans, as the thought process is “Why do you need so much?” followed by “Anyone who needs that much cyberware is just looking for trouble.” Thus, the common social stigma for the heavily cybered is that they are involved in violent occupations and probably work beyond the law.

CYBORG

For the most part, cyborgs are accepted by society, especially since cyborgs are common in many governmental military and corporate security forces. However, much like those with major cybernetic implants, the average citizen usually figures any cyborg must either be a combat operative or have been the victim of a terrible accident. Most people simply can't picture anyone voluntarily discarding their original body for a cybernetic one. Thus, when dealing with a known cyborg, especially one with extensive combat modifications, the average person may wonder if they are dealing with a person or a machine. This goes doubly so for those who have chosen to abandon any pretense of normal human form when choosing a cyborg body.

CYBERDROID

A cyberdroid is a machine with mostly human form. The typical cyberdroid has a complex neural net allowing it to “think,” but even the most progressive of individuals won't try and argue this makes the cyberdroid self-aware (well, most won't). To most people, even a non-humanoid cyborg is more human than a cyberdroid.

PROFESSIONAL TEMPLATES FROM OTHER SOURCES

The following Package Deals from *Dark Champions* can be used in the *Kazei 5* setting with only minimal modifications needed: Analyst, Assassin, Cat Burglar, Field Agent, Gangster, Grifter, Hacker, Private Investigator, Terrorist.

PROFESSIONAL TEMPLATES

The following templates represent professions common to a *Kazei 5* campaign.

CORPORATE ESPER WEAPON

A corporate esper weapon has been recruited by a multinational company to defend company assets from other espers and other multinationals. Many corporate espers are the children of company employees, trained from an early age to devote themselves to the company's best interests. Others have been hired with promises of excellent pay and benefits, while some have simply been kidnapped — usually as young children — from Zero Zones or other places where they won't be missed.

Once brought into the company fold, the corporate esper weapon is carefully molded to be a good “salariman.” Normally a variant of the “carrot and stick” approach is used, where the esper has perks given or taken away until he understands what's expected from him. An esper weapon usually becomes too attached to his perks — such as spacious living quarters, plenty of spending money, decent food, and frequent visits from pleasure replicates — to consider leaving the company.

Since a corporate esper weapon's primary job is to deal with other espers and similar threats, they receive extensive training with their powers, as well general security-related skills. Although they can't accept cyberware, corporate esper weapons are often well-equipped with body armor, a side arm, commlink, flashlight, handcuffs, and so on.

Examples: Kiyoko, Masaru, and Takashi (*Akira*), Sonnet Barjie (*Blue Sonnet*), Paula MacArthur Laurs (page 224), Raven Clark (page 227).

CORPORATE ESPER WEAPON TEMPLATE

Abilities

Cost Ability

10	+2 with Esper Powers
3	Bureaucratics
2	KS: The Corporate World 11-
2	KS: [Corporation] History And Customs 11-
10	<i>Self Defense Training</i> : Martial Arts (minimum of 10 points worth)
3	Stealth
2	WF: Small Arms
1	Fringe Benefit: Corporate ID Card
6	6 points of abilities from the following list: Computer Programming, Climbing, Combat Driving, Combat Skill Levels, Lockpicking, Paramedics, Security Systems, Shadowing, Skill Levels, Tactics, Weapon Familiarity, Contacts

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 39

Complications

Value Complication

10	Hunted: corporation the character works for 8- (MoPow, NCI, Watching)
15	Psychological Complication: Company Loyalty (Common, Strong)

Total Cost Of Template Complications: 25

CORPORATE OFFICIAL

Corporate officials are an integral part of any multinational corporation. They live and work in a world dominated by constant bids for power, as executives jockey for secure positions in the company power structure. The driving ambition behind almost any corporate official is to get ahead. Power — be it wealth, material goods, personal prestige, or the ability to control others — is what every corporate executive seems to desire. For those on top in a corporation, the primary goal is to stay there, while those further down the company ladder seek to replace them.

Most corporate officials are humans, but the current trend toward genetic upgrading is starting to change that. The esper involvement in corporate operations is usually as a corporate esper weapon (see the separate template), while cyborgs are virtually non-existent. Replicates are considered a perk for those who do well.

Most, if not all, corporate officials have cyberware these days — usually a Datalink, with Cranial Computers, Cranial Cellphones, Datajacks, and Skilljacks quite common.

Examples: Lord Alexander Chung-Sik Finkle-McGraw (*The Diamond Age*), Kageyama (*Black Lagoon*), Brian J Mason (*Bubblegum Crisis*), Bob Morton (*Robocop*), Chairman Quincy (*Bubblegum Crisis*), Doctor Eldon Tyrell (*Blade Runner*), Richard Jones (*Robocop*), Lady 3Jane Marie-France Tessier-Ashpool (*Neruomancer*), William “Hard” Case (page 242), Matthew Shirow (page 222).

CORPORATE OFFICIAL TEMPLATE

Abilities

Cost Ability

- | | |
|---|---|
| 5 | Bureaucratics (PRE+1) |
| 3 | High Society |
| 2 | KS: The Corporate World 11- |
| 2 | KS: [Corporation] History And Customs 11- |
| 2 | PS: Occupation with the corporation (<i>i.e.</i> Accounting, Buisness Administration, Project Management, and so on) 11- |
| 1 | Computer Link: Corporate Database |
| 6 | Contacts (6 points worth) |
| 1 | Fringe Benefit: Corporate ID Card |
| 6 | 6 points of abilities from the following list: Bribery, Computer Programming, Conversation, Gambling, Interrogation, Language, Oratory, Persuasion, Research, Trading |

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 28

Complications

Value Complication

- | | |
|----|---|
| 10 | Hunted: [corporation the character works for] 8- (MoPow, NCI, Watching) |
|----|---|

Total Cost Of Template Complications: 10

Options

Value Ability

- | | |
|-----|---|
| var | <i>Higher Ranking Official:</i> Increase value of Computer Link to represent expanded access. |
| var | <i>Higher Ranking Official:</i> Increase value of Corporate ID Card to represent expanded access. |
| var | <i>Elite Executive:</i> Follower (replicated human administrative assistant of the character's choice). |
| 5 | <i>Wealthy Executive:</i> Money: Well Off (higher for higher-ranking officials). |
| -15 | <i>Dedicated Executive:</i> Add Psychological Complication: Company Loyalty (Common, Strong) |
| -15 | <i>Gordon Gekko School Of Business Ethics:</i> Add Psychological Complication: Greed Is Good (Common, Strong) |
| -15 | <i>Corporate Raider:</i> Add Reputation: Ruthless Backstabber, 14- (Extreme; Known Only To A Small Group) |

"A little advice — the Net is not a friendly place. Every link you click, every file you download, every message you send — someone is watching you. Forget that, and you can be in for a world of hurt."

— Asagiri

DATA SECURITY SPECIALIST

The data security specialist does his best to keep a network, be it corporate or government, commercial or private, safe from prying hackers. He wages a constant war against malware, *otaku*, script kiddies, spam bots, spy bots, trojans, worms, and virii of all types. Just one mistake in these daily battles can result in the theft of names, account numbers, financial information, project data, or electronic funds — any of which could cost a corporation untold millions of dollars.

Having grown up with the Net, data security specialists are intimately familiar with the ins and outs of cyberspace. They could have chosen to be freelance hackers, stealing and selling data to the highest bidder, but instead have decided to work for the corporations instead of against them. Then again, in many cases their job is as much attacking as defending as the average multinational is just as interested in the contents of another corporation's databases as they are in keeping their own secure.

Although a data security specialist could be just about anyone, most of them are normal or genetically-upgraded humans. They tend to utilize a lot of headware, with Cranial Computers, Datajacks, Datalinks, and Skilljacks the most common. Their Cyberbrains are top-of-the-line, with Encryption and Multi-layered Attack Barriers almost a requirement.

A subset of the data security specialist is the data mule. Instead of working to defend a static data site, he carries the information in his headware, moving it physically instead of virtually. Normally, he has no idea what the data he's carrying is about, or even if he's actually carrying any.

Data mules can be corporate agents, or work freelance. Normally the data is encrypted and then uploaded to the mule's Cranial Computer. Once the mule arrives at his destination, the data is downloaded, decrypted, and the mule is sent on his way.

Examples: Henry Dorsett Case (*Neuromancer*), Lebia Mavelick (*Silent Möbius*), Johnny Mnemonic (*Johnny Mnemonic*), Nene Romanova (*Bubblegum Crisis*), Michael Erica de Normandy (page 223).

DATA SECURITY SPECIALIST TEMPLATE

Abilities

Cost Ability

- 2 AK: The Net 11-
- 3 Bureaucratics
- 10 Computer Programming (Computer Networks, Hacking and Computer Security, Personal Computers) (INT+2)
- 3 Cryptography
- 2 Electronics (Computer Systems)
- 2 KS: The Corporate World 11-
- 2 KS: [Corporation] History And Customs 11-
- 2 SS: Computer Science 11-
- 2 Security Systems; Only Versus Computer Security Systems (-1/2)
- 2 Systems Operation (Communications Systems)
- 3 Computer Link: Corporate Database(s)
- 3 Fringe Benefit: Corporate ID Card

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 36

Complications

Value Complication

- 10 Hunted: corporation the character works for 8- (MoPow, NCI, Watching)

Total Cost Of Template Complications: 10

Options

Value Ability

- var *Headware:* Character's choice of Cyberbrain and associated cyberware.
- var *Cyberspace Security:* Character's choice of cyberhacking programs.
- var *Data Mule:* All a data mule really needs is a Cyberbrain and a Cranial Computer, he doesn't have to use the Data Security Specialist Template. You can build a corporate data mule from the Corporate Official Template, while a freelance data mule can easily be modeled off of the Retriever Template (see page 88).
- 15 *I Am Invincible!* Add Psychological Complication: Can't Resist A Challenge (Common, Strong)
- 5 *Gunslinger Mentality:* Add Rivalry: Professional (other data security specialists; Rival is As Powerful; Seek to Outdo, Embarrass, or Humiliate Rival; Rival Aware of Rivalry)

DOCTOR

Although the typical cybernetic implant features numerous technological marvels, it can't install itself. This is where the doctor comes in. They are found the world over, in all levels of society, from the well-equipped sterile confines of a multinational laboratory, to simple street clinics with questionable sanitation. They can be helpful street docs who assist the poor and needy, money-hungry businessmen who only accept the most prestigious and well-off of clients, combat medics attached to a military unit, or the disreputable operators of a back-alley chop-shop.

The rise of cyberware usage has seen the creation of a new medical specialty — the cyber doc. These individuals are experts on cybernetics and how it interacts with the human body. They are in great demand to install, maintain, and repair cybersystems, combining elements of traditional medicine with those of an electrician or mechanic. A subset of the cyber doc is the cyborg doctor, who treats only cyborgs.

Just about anyone can be a doctor, even replicates. Cyborg doctors tend to treat only cyborgs, while replicate doctors are normally only found with all-replicate combat units and are only trained to treat other replicates. On the other hand, replicate nurses are often used in corporate medical facilities, assisting human doctors with human patients.

Doctors often opt for the same sort of cyberware as corporate officials. Surgeons tend to have various optical implants installed, including Ocular Flashlights, Ultra-violet Filters, and Vision Enhancements.

Examples: Ido Diasuke (*Battle Angel*), Doctor Gerlach the Mad (page 176), Kenwood Muldowney (page 251).

"I've seen worse."

— Doctor Kenwood Muldowney's standard response to battlefield injuries.

DOCTOR TEMPLATE

Abilities

Cost Ability

- 3 Bureaucratics
- 5 Paramedics (INT+1)
- 3 PS: Doctor (INT)
- 3 Research
- 3 SS: Biology (INT)
- 1 SS: Cyber Technology 8-
- 3 SS: Medicine (INT)
- 3 SS: Surgery (INT)
- 2 Systems Operation (Medical Systems)
- 1 Fringe Benefit: License To Practice Medicine
- 3 3 points of abilities from the following list: Computer Programming, Conversation, Deduction, Forensic Medicine, High Society, Instructor, Language, Persuasion, SS: Pharmacology

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 30

Options

Value Ability

- var *Corporate Doctor:* Combine this template with the Corporate Official template
- var *Combat Medic:* Combine this template with the Soldier template
- +4 *Cyber doc:* Add Electronics (Computer Systems) and increase SS: Cyber Technology to an INT Roll
- +6 *Street Doc:* Add Streetwise and Trading, Fringe Benefit is optional
- 20 *Ethical Doctor:* Add Psychological Complication: Hippocratic Oath (Common, Total)
- 20 *Stereotypical Brain Surgeon:* Psychological Complication: Arrogant/Overconfident In Surgical Skills (Common, Total)

Raven Clark hesitated. "Um... and the ears?"

"Old boyfriend," Zhen Zhen replied.

"Ah. Sorry."

"No need, they're an asset in my line of work."

"Really? How come?"

Zhen Zhen gave Raven a sly grin, "They make me even more mysterious and inscrutable."

"Aaah..." Raven grinned back. "I see. And what line of work are you in?"

"Being mysterious and inscrutable."

— Corporate esper weapon Raven Clark inquires about fixer Zhen Zhen Li's cosmetically altered elf-like ears.

FIXER

Fixers are the people you go to when you need something. Dealers in information, equipment, and people, a good fixer makes sure his client gets what he needs to accomplish a specific mission. Fixers often work both sides of the law, buying and selling goods and information freely to whomever can pay, regardless of the legalities of the transaction.

Fixers can be just about anyone, but tend to be humans or genetic upgrades; espers and cyborgs usually buy from fixers. A replicate could be a fixer, but only somewhere the replicate's origin wouldn't be an issue, such as a Zero Zone.



FIXER TEMPLATE

Abilities

Cost Ability

- | | |
|---|--|
| 3 | Bribery |
| 2 | CK: [city of the character's choice] 11- |
| 2 | KS: Current Trends In Technology 11- |
| 2 | KS: The [City Name] Underworld 11- |
| 2 | KS: The Corporate World 11- |
| 2 | KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11- |
| 3 | Streetwise |
| 5 | Trading (PRE+1) |
| 4 | Contacts (4 points' worth) |
| 2 | Favors (2 points worth) |
| 6 | 6 points of abilities from the following list: Acting, Bureaucratics, Computer Programming, Concealment, Conversation, Forgery, Gambling, High Society, Language, Oratory, Persuasion, Research, Seduction, Skill Levels, +1 with Streetwise, Weapon Familiarity, any Background Skill, additional Contacts, additional Favors |

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 33

Options

Value Ability

- | | |
|---|---|
| 3 | People Who Know People: Well Connected |
| 5 | Arms Dealer: Fringe Benefit: Improved Equipment Availability Military Equipment |

Fixers tend to have the same sort of cyberware as corporate officials. Datalinks, Datajacks, and Cranial Computers are all common, as they allow the fixer to access needed information quickly.

Examples: Fargo (*Bubblegum Crisis*), The Finn (*Neuromancer*), Mr. Vector (*Battle Angel*), Zhen Zhen Li (page 282).

GANG MEMBER

Outside of the protective confines of corporate enclaves and gated communities is where the gangs tend to dwell. Although some gangers have real homes to return to (which might just be in the aforementioned corporate enclave or gated community), others live directly on the streets, squatting in abandoned buildings and derelict apartments. While a pedestrian in downtown Neo York will almost certainly never see a gang member (much less interact with one) Zero Zones are rife with them, and Zone dwellers who aren't part of a gang probably pay protection to one.

Gangs, specifically street gangs, come in an almost infinite variety. There are gangs divided along ethnic lines, or by sex, or even by genetics. (Yes, there are all-esper or all-replicate gangs.) Each gang runs its own section of the city (*i.e.* "turf"), where it normally controls an assortment of vice crimes, such as drugs, prostitution, gun smuggling and so on. Others, such as motorcycle-based "go-gangs," are more of the "smash-and-grab" variety, reveling in mindless mayhem and destruction.

Gang members tend to be from poor neighborhoods, thus there are few genetic upgrades or cyborgs in the typical street gang. However, Zero Zone gangs are a different story. There, one may find gangs comprised of replicates, espers, the heavily cybered, and so on. Zone gangs are also noted for going beyond simple gang colors, and adopting highly distinctive clothing, mannerisms, and personalities.

Just about all gangers have Datalinks, but after that their ability to get quality cyberware is sketchy. Those who can afford it like to get such items as Cyber Razors, Low-Light Filters, Thermographic Filters, and so on. Large and/or successful gangs may have sufficient funds for Reflex Enhancements, Synaptic Accelerators, or Vehicle Control Links. Zone gangs may have just about anything in the way of cyberware, with most of it being *Poor Quality* due to lack of proper upkeep. Few, if any, gangers will have bioware or highly invasive cyberware (such as Skeletal Reinforcement).

Examples: Joker (*Akira*), Kaneda Shotaro (*Akira*), Lupus Yonderboy (*Neuromancer*), Blade (page 243).

GANG MEMBER TEMPLATE

Abilities

Cost Ability

- 2 AK: Home Turf
- 2 CK: city of the character's choice 11-
- 2 KS: Gang Colors And Customs 11-
- 3 Streetwise
- 2 WF: Small Arms
- 1 Fringe Benefit: Criminal Rank (gang member)
- 6 6 points of abilities from the following list: Breakfall, Climbing, Combat Skill Levels, Concealment, Electronics, Gambling, Lockpicking, Mechanics, Shadowing, Stealth, Tactics, any Background Skill, Contacts

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 18

Complications

ValueComplication

- 5 Distinctive Features: Gang Colors
- 0 Hunted: Other Gang Members 8- (Mo Pow, Limited Geographical Area, Watching)

Total Cost Of Template Complications: 5

Options

Value Ability

- 10 Knows How To Fight: Martial Arts (minimum of 10 points worth)
- var Signature Weapon: Aside from their colors, some gangs sport distinctive weaponry. For example, one gang may use baseball bats, another may specialize in chain-based weaponry, while a third requires all members to have a revolver.



"It is very simple. Victory means life. The more I win, the more I am worth to my owners, and the longer they will keep me active. Once I start to repeatedly lose they will no longer have need of me and I will be disposed of."

— Chrysine the Winter Fox explains her combat philosophy.

LACE & STEEL FIGHTER

There are numerous gladiatorial-themed shows to be found on the Net (such as Combat Football and *Smash TV*), but none are more popular than *Lace & Steel*. Combining elements of mixed-martial arts, professional wrestling, and the Ultimate Fighting Championship, *Lace & Steel* seeks to emulate the sort of combat normally seen only in Net-based video fighting games.

The show features only female contestants, each of whom has a specific "persona." This persona helps decide her ring name, costume, weapons (if any), and in some cases, her martial arts style. Anyone can attempt to join *Lace & Steel*, but as sex-appeal (a.k.a. "fan-service") is a major element of the show, only those contestants who are both attractive and physically fit are given contracts.

Once accepted all *Lace & Steel* competitors undergo extensive physical conditioning, including training in one or more martial arts styles and the use of weapons. Cybernetic augmentation is also common, although in keeping with the desired aesthetic external or obvious physical modifications are disallowed, as are implanted communications systems and certain forms of bioware. On the other hand, Muscle Augmentation, Reflex Enhancement, and Synaptic Accelerators are very popular.

Contracts signed by *Lace & Steel* fighters are usually one to five years in length. While on one hand they guarantee full medical coverage and the like, on the other the fighter is considered to be in debt to the sponsor for her fitness training, cyberware, and so on. Thus, she has to fight when and where her sponsor tells her, and if severely injured, may find her contract extended to cover expenses. Retired *Lace & Steel* fighters are often in great demand as bodyguards and the like.

Lace & Steel fighters can be normal humans, genetic upgrades, or replicates — espers and cyborgs are not allowed to participate. As stated, they all tend to be very fit and very attractive. Replicate participants are known for having secondary animal characteristics (such as ears and tails) to make them more distinctive and marketable. An ex-fighter might be heavily scarred or maimed in some fashion.

LACE & STEEL TEMPLATE

Abilities

Cost Ability

3	+3 STR
10	+5 DEX
2	+2 CON
10	+1 SPD
4	+4 PD
1	+1 ED
1	+1 REC
1	+5 END
2	+2 STUN
20	+4 with Martial Maneuvers
3	Acrobatics
3	Breakfall
2	KS: Who's Who In Lace & Steel 11-
20	Lace & Steel Training: Martial Arts (minimum of 20 points worth)
2	WF: Common Melee Weapons
1	Fringe Benefit: Lace & Steel ID Card
15	15 points of abilities from the following list: Acting, Analyze (Style), Bureacratics, Combat Skill Levels, Defense Maneuver, Fast Draw, Feint, Gambling, Paramedics, Penalty Skill Levels, Rapid Attack, Sleight Of Hand, Streetwise, Tactics, Teamwork, Two-Weapon Fighting (HTH), Weapon Familiarity, any Background Skill

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 100

Complications

Value Complication

10	Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Large Group)
15	Hunted: [sponsor] 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, PC has a Public ID or is otherwise very easy to find, Watching)
20	Social Complication: Under Contract (Very Frequently, Major)

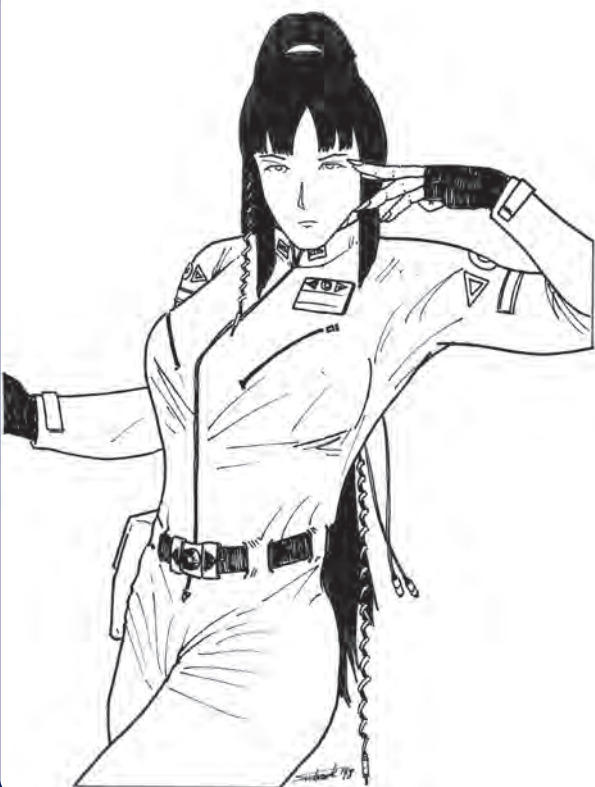
Total Cost Of Template Complications: 45

OPERATOR

As the name suggests, operators operate vehicles of various sorts. The term is a general one, and covers a wide variety of drivers, mecha jocks, pilots, and riggers, using everything from cars to Exo-Suits, planes, UAVs, and UTVs. Some operators may own their own vehicles and work on a per-hire basis, while others are employed by a company and utilize company assets. In either case, the vehicles the operator uses may range from a simple ground car to a state-of-the-art armored fighting vehicle.

The profession of operator is an equal opportunity one, open to almost anyone with a knack for vehicle operations. While most operators are normal humans and genetic upgrades, it's not unheard of to have cyborg, replicate, and even esper operators, due to their inherently accelerated reflexes.

Just about any operator worthy of the name has a Vehicle Control Link. Cyborgs may go a step further and almost physically merge with their vehicles via an elaborate array of data plug-ins. (GMs might want to treat this as a form of Multiform.) Additional cyberware popular among operators includes Cranial Computers (used to link into the vehicle's computer and run secondary systems), Flare Filters, Low-Light Filters, Noise Filters, Thermographic Filters, and Ultraviolet Filters. Skilljacks are also common, as they allow the operator to easily load pertinent data about a new model of vehicle as well as diagnostic and repair schematics.



OPERATOR TEMPLATE

Abilities

Cost Ability

- 7 Combat Driving (DEX+2)
- 2 Electronics (Computer Systems)
- 2 KS: (vehicle type of the character's choice) 11-
- 3 Mechanics
- 2 Navigation (Land)
- 2 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles
- 6 6 points of abilities from the following list: Computer Programming, Concealment, Lock-picking [specifically vehicle locks], Paramedics, Security Systems [specifically vehicle systems], Streetwise, Systems Operation, Tactics, Transport Familiarity, Weapon Familiarity, any Background Skill

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 24

Options

ValueAbility

- 0 Combat Operator: Choose Weapon Familiarity ([character's vehicle] weapons)
- var Corporate Operator: Combine this template with the Corporate Official template
- var Military Operator: Combine this template with the Soldier template
- 0 Pilot: Exchange Combat Driving for Combat Piloting and Navigation (Land) for Navigation (Air)
- var Operator's Transportation: one Vehicle
- 0 UAV/UTV Operator: Choose Systems Operation and Weapon Familiarity ([UAV or UTV] weapons)

Examples: Bean Bandit (*Gunsmith Cats*), Cowboy (*Hardwired*), Dutch (*Black Lagoon*), Max Rockatansky (*Mad Max 2: The Road Warrior*), Hell Tanner (*Damnation Alley*).

ADDITIONAL COP TEMPLATES

Dark Champions contains package deals for Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Agents, Drug Enforcement Administration Agents, Federal Bureau of Investigation Agents, and generic police officers. All come with listed options for simulating specific types of agents and officers. *Champions Of The North* includes a package deal for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Although the unification of the portions of the United States and Canada into United North America means these various agencies no longer exist (at least, under these names), the package deals are still useful for building various government operatives.

Alan Davies was having an incredibly profitable night. One of the response room officers on the night shift had called in sick, and Alan had been asked to fill his spot. In theory, the officers in the response room took calls and then assigned officers to deal with them. But in practice, some officers (such as Alan) screened calls in order to cherry pick the ones mostly likely to make them some money.

For some calls, Alan would sell the information to various third parties he was in contact with, getting a finder's fee for his help. Others went to officers who hadn't paid him to NOT get bad calls. A friendly reminder, if you will, to encourage them to chip into Alan's "retirement" fund. And the rest.... Well, he was a master at waiting just long enough to get them to pay just a little more for prompt service, but not so long that they'd complain to a supervisor.

— NYPD, Inc, Lieutenant Alan Davies beating the system

POLICE OFFICER

(Neo York Police Department Incorporated)

When New York recreated itself as "Neo" York, one of the major changes was the privatization of the New York Police Department. No longer would police protection be a public service, now it was a for-profit enterprise provided only to those with the ability to pay. Unsurprisingly, this led to a great deal of dissent among NYPD officers, with many quitting in disgust over what they felt was a betrayal of the public trust. In turn, the new NYPD, Inc. hired replacements who, for the most part, were more interested in supporting the company line than enforcing the law. This has led to the NYPD, Inc. (better known as "Nip-dink" on the streets) to develop a well-deserved reputation for corruption and profiteering. For more on the origins and make-up of the NYPD, Inc. see page 168.

The bulk of the NYPD, Inc. are normal humans, with a scattering of genetic upgrades, cyborgs, and a precious few espers. Replicates have been considered for Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT), but nothing has come of it. Cybernetic enhancements are common among officers, with the choice of systems limited only by what the individual can afford. Plainclothes detectives tend toward covert systems, while officers involved in SWAT, riot control, armed response, and the like tend to opt for Reflex Enhancement, Smartgun Links, and Muscle Augmentation.



POLICE OFFICER TEMPLATE

Abilities

Cost Ability

- 2 Observant: +1 PER with Sight Group
- 2 AK: [specific NYC borough or neighborhood] 11-
- 2 CK: Neo York City 11-
- 1 Combat Driving 8-
- 3 Criminology
- 2 KS: Criminal Law And Procedure 11-
- 2 KS: NYPD, Inc. History And Customs 11-
- 1 KS: The Corporate World 8-
- 2 KS: The Law-enforcement World 11-
- 2 PS: Police Officer 11-
- 3 Streetwise
- 2 WF: Small Arms, Clubs [nightstick]
- 1 Contacts: (4 points' worth)
- 2 Fringe Benefit: Local Police Powers
- 1 Fringe Benefit: Police officer
- 1 Fringe Benefit: Weapon Permit (where appropriate)
- 9 9 points of abilities from the following list: Acting, Animal Handler (Canine), Bribery, Bugging, Bureaucrats, Climbing, Combat Driving, Combat Skill Levels, Computer Programming, Concealment, Conversation, Deduction, Demolitions, Disguise, Electronics, Fast Draw, Forensics, Gambling, Interrogation, Lockpicking, Martial Arts, Paramedics, Persuasion, Security Systems, Shadowing, Skill Levels, Stealth, Tactics, Weapon Familiarity, Weaponsmith, any Background Skill, Contacts, Deep Cover

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 38

Complications

ValueComplication

- 5 Distinctive Features: uniform and/or badge (Easily Concealed; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 10 Hunted: NYPD, Inc. 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 20 Social Complication: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)

Total Cost Of Template Complications: 35

Options

ValueAbility

- var Cybercrime Division: Combine this Template with the Data Security Specialist.

Examples: Angel (*Angel Cop*), Jeena Maslo (*AD Police*), Jennifer Government (*Jennifer Government*), Leon McNichol (*Bubblegum Crisis*), Leona Ozaki (*Dominion*), Rick Deckard (*Blade Runner*), Roy De-Vice (*Silent Möbius*), Sandra Blackmore (page 265), Carlos Jagger (210).

REPORTER

With the demise of the printed newspaper, reporters have moved to broadcast media, videozines, and online news to tell their stories. Of course, these days, the definition of “reporter” is an open one, considering that anyone with a cellphone camera and a Datalink can upload video of the latest event as it happens. In addition, bloggers are also popular sources of news, although most of them simply collate information related to a subject, or group of subjects, from multiple online sources.

These days the typical reporter is as much camera-man as writer. A video recorder can easily fit in the palm of the hand, and some reporters go so far as to opt for Video and Audio Recorder implants, turning themselves into living cameras. This ability to record (and broadcast) news as it happens has led many reporters to concentrate upon titillation and entertainment, rather than actually news-gathering. Still, there are reporters of the “old school,” who are always on the lookout for the big story and have a reputation for muckraking journalism.

Most reporters are humans, as the typical genetic upgrade or cyborg can easily get a better paying job in another line of work, and no one is going to hire a replicate. On the other hand, bloggers can be virtually anyone, and there are blogs dedicated to what’s new with espers, replicates, cyberware, cyborgs, and so on. Mailing lists are also popular news sources, in which subscribers share information, images, video, and the like about a specific subject. Shion Nys, for example, is the subject of several mailing lists and blogs.

Examples: Corey Everson (*Dirty Pair*), Edison Carter (*Max Headroom*), Lisa Vanette (*Bubblegum Crisis*), Sybel (*Black Magic M-66*).

REPORTER TEMPLATE

Abilities

Cost Ability

- | | |
|---|--|
| 3 | Conversation |
| 2 | KS: Current Events 11- |
| 2 | KS: Who’s Who In [choice of location] 11- |
| 3 | Oratory |
| 3 | PS: Journalist (INT) |
| 3 | Research |
| 3 | Streetwise |
| 6 | Contacts (6 points’ worth) |
| 1 | Fringe Benefit: Press Pass |
| 9 | 9 points of abilities from the following list:
Bribery, Bureaucratics, Concealment, Cram-
ming, Deduction, Gambling, High Society,
Language, Lockpicking, Persuasion, Security
Systems, Seduction, Skill Levels, Systems Op-
eration, Weapon Familiarity, any Background
Skill, Contacts |

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 35

Options

ValueAbility

- | | |
|---|--|
| 3 | People Who Knows People: Well Connected |
| 0 | Blogger: Exchange Streetwise for KS: [subject of blog] (INT) |

RETRIEVER

As the name implies, a retriever's job is to find and retrieve others. The people he pursues may be criminals (in which case he's known as skip-tracer), or runaways (either corporate or replicate). A select few (known as extractors), help employees of one multinational corporation escape from their current employers to find a home with another multinational corporation. Depending on the client's desires, the retriever may or may not need to bring his target back alive.

Humans and genetic upgrades comprise the bulk of retrievers, with a few cyborgs and esper weapons as well. Some corporations use replicates to hunt down their rogue brethren. Retrievers usually specialize in quiet extractions, where stealth and guile are used instead of brute force. But, if things go bad, they're usually quite capable of taking care of themselves in a fight.



Figure by Urban Mammoth Ltd

RETRIEVER TEMPLATE

Abilities

Cost Ability

- | | |
|---|--|
| 3 | AK or CK of the character's choice (INT) |
| 2 | KS: The Corporate World 11- |
| 2 | KS: The Law-enforcement World 11- |
| 3 | Lockpicking |
| 3 | Shadowing |
| 5 | Streetwise (PRE+1) |
| 2 | WF: Small Arms |
| 4 | Contacts (4 points' worth) |
| 1 | Fringe Benefit: License (bounty hunter) |
| 1 | Fringe Benefit: Passport |
| 1 | Fringe Benefit: Weapon Permit |
| 9 | 9 points of abilities from the following list:
Bribery, Bureaucratics, Climbing, Combat
Driving, Combat Skill Levels, Computer
Programming, Concealment, Criminology,
Deduction, Fast Draw, Gambling, Martial
Arts (10 points' worth), Paramedics, Persua-
sion, Security Systems, Skill Levels, Stealth,
Weapon Familiarity, Weaponsmith, additional
Contacts |

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 36

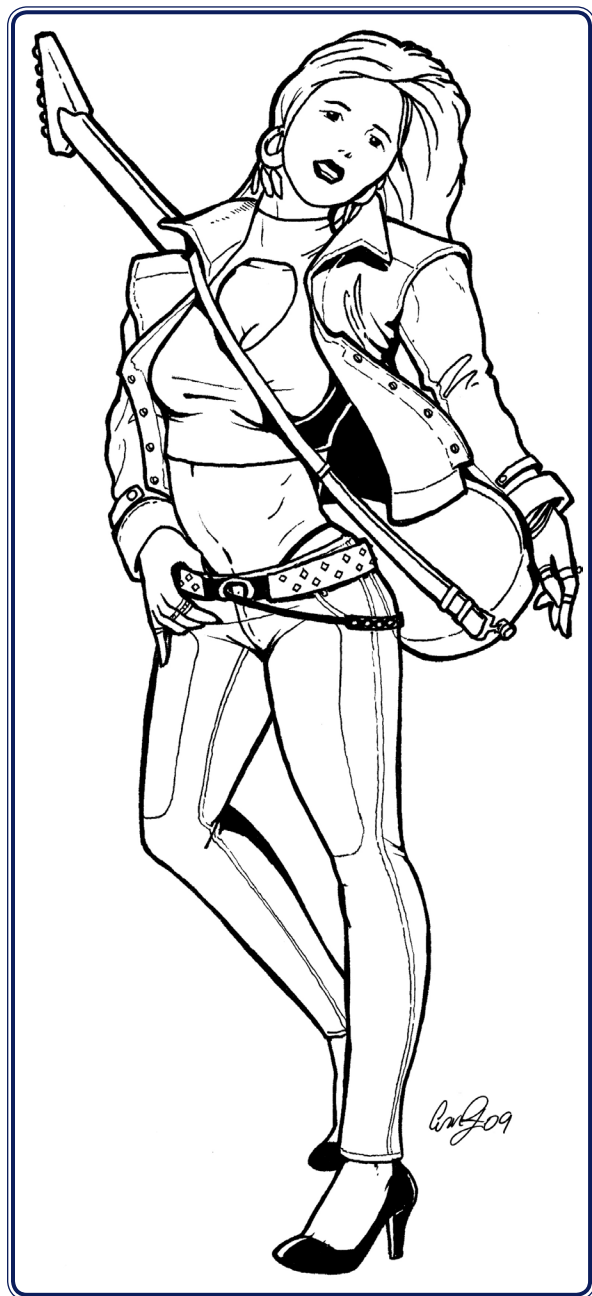
The cyberware a retriever has implanted usually depends on the nature of his work. Headware is common, especially optical and audio systems. Bodyware often centers around boosting the retriever's physical capabilities. For example, anyone going after replicates is going to want a Reflex Enhancement and a Synaptic Accelerator. Smartgun Links are popular with just about everyone, while those retrievers who wish to work as covertly as possible might opt for a Sub-Dermal Taser.

Examples: Alita (*Battle Angel*), Jet Black (*Cowboy Bebop*), Rick Deckard (*Blade Runner*), Iria (*Iria the Animation, Zeram*), Lucius Warbaby (*Virtual Light*), Rally Vincent (*Gunsmith Cats*), Kitten (page 285), Tetsutenshi (page 273).

ROCKER

Rockers can range from a small-time musician traveling from gig to gig trying to make ends meet, to a corporate owned and managed superstar whose every move is carefully considered for its impact on the fanbase. A rocker just starting out may consider himself a social revolutionary trying to change the world with his music, while an established and successful rocker may pander to whatever trend is currently popular in an effort to stay in the spotlight.

Just about anyone with musical skill can try to be a rocker, but only a precious few find the fame and fortune of stardom. Even fewer are those able to dictate the course of their career, as most rockers brought into the corporate fold will find their slightest move micro-managed in an effort to maximize the potential profits from their popularity. On the other hand, there are rockers who prefer to work on the fringes of popular music, placing personal integrity and dedication to their music over the chance to break into the lavish world of the corporate-controlled music industry.



ROCKER TEMPLATE

Abilities

Cost Ability

- 2 CK: [city of the character's choice] 11-
- 2 KS: Local Music Scene 11-
- 3 KS: [character's choice of music genre] (INT)
- 5 PS: [play musical instrument of choice] (DEX+2)
- 3 Streetwise
- 6 6 points of abilities from the following list: Acting, Computer Programming, Conversation, High Society, Mimicry, Oratory, Seduction, Skill Levels, Systems Operation, Ventriloquism, Weapon Familiarity, any Background Skill, Contacts

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 21

Options

ValueAbility

- 3 Stage Presence: PRE +3
- 3 Guitar God: Reputation: skilled musician (world-wide) 14-, +1/+1d6
- 3 Excellent Singing Voice: Perfect Pitch
- 10 Corporate Contract: Hunted: [corporation the sponsoring the character] 8- (MoPow, NCI, Watching)
- 5 Lives From Gig To Gig: Poor
- 10 Famous Rock Star: Social Complication: Famous (Frequently, Minor)

Rockers tend to be normal humans or genetic upgrades, mainly because they're more "fan friendly" than cyborgs and the like. However, there are a few replicate rockers, created by the multinationals to capitalize on certain fads and memes. By the same token, there has been a rise in virtual rockers and actors— computer-created individuals who exist only within the Net. While not true artificial intelligences, most virtual personalities are backed by processors akin to those that drive cyberdroids and are usually indistinguishable from a real person to most of the general public.

Just about any rocker worthy of the name has a Synthesizer Link implanted. Many will add a Datalink, while those musicians concerned about their future will consider Noise Filters to prevent hearing loss.

Examples: Angie Mitchell (*Mona Lisa Overdrive*), Priss Asagiri (*Bubblegum Crisis*), Rei Toei (*Idoru*), Vision/Reika Chang (*Bubblegum Crisis*), Vitaly Chernobyl (*Snow Crash*), Dawn (page 246).

SCIENTIST

Probably a multinational corporation's most important resource, any research performed by a scientist is invariably scrutinized for its commercial applications. Currently, the fields of cybertechnology, espers, and genetics are the most common fields of research with the continuing development of nanotechnologies close behind. In most cases, with the goal of improving or expanding on existing technologies, precious few scientists are allowed the luxury of pure theoretical research.

The bulk of scientists are normal humans and genetic upgrades, although there are some cyborgs and espers engaged in scientific research, usually on subjects related to themselves. There are no replicate scientists, although some gifted (and profitable) researchers have been awarded with replicate lab assistants.

Scientists tend to have the same sort of implants as Corporate Officials — Cranial Computers, Datalinks, Datajacks, and Skilljacks.

Examples: Desty Nova (*Battle Angel*), Doctor Onishi (*Akira*), John Percival Hackworth (*The Diamond Age*).

SCIENTIST TEMPLATE

Abilities

Cost Ability

- | | |
|---|--|
| 2 | Computer Programming (Personal Computers) |
| 2 | KS: The Academic/Scientific World 11- |
| 2 | KS: [area of study] (<i>i.e.</i> Cybertechnology, The Esper World, Military Technology, Replicates, and so on) 11- |
| 3 | Research |
| 3 | Scientist |
| 3 | SS: [primary area of study] (INT+2) |
| 8 | 8 points of additional science skills (secondary areas of study) |
| 6 | 6 points of abilities from the following list: Computer Programming, Deduction, Electronics, Forensic Medicine, Mechanics, Paramedics, Security Systems, Systems Operation, any Background Skill, Contacts |

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 26

Options

Value Ability

- | | |
|-----|--|
| var | Corporate Researcher: Combine this template with the Corporate Official template. |
| 3 | Quick On The Uptake: +3 INT |
| -6 | Doesn't Get Out Much: -2 STR, -2 CON, -2 BODY |
| var | Getting On In Years: Reduce the character's physical Characteristics (STR, DEX, CON and so on) to between 4-6. |
| 3 | Bookworm: Add the Scholar Skill Enhancer |
| -5 | Add Rivalry: Professional (other scientists and researchers; Rival is As Powerful; Seek to Outdo, Embarrass, or Humiliate Rival; Rival Aware of Rivalry) |

SOLDIER

Soldiers can be found the world over, serving in government military forces, paramilitary mercenary units, and multinational corporate security services. They come from all walks of life and can range from normal humans to cyborgs. Soldiers serve for any number of reasons, such as a love of country, a desire for excitement, the money, the chance to harm others, and so on. For many people, soldiering is the only option they have in life, unless they want to spend their time on the streets or behind bars.

All soldiers receive the same basic training (from a game standpoint), although corporate security forces will also be indoctrinated into the desired company mindset, and mercenaries may concentrate on a more limited set of skills specifically related to combat operations. Further training is possible; see *Dark Champions* for various special forces packages.

The use of cyberware really depends on the military unit in question. It's not cost effective to give every soldier cyberware, so most soldiers make do with advanced equipment (such as body armor, firearms, and communications gear). Still, Datalinks are quite common, and corporate security or mercenary units may have more advanced cybernetics. Experienced soldiers and special forces operatives will almost certainly have some cyberware, usually systems designed to assist them in combat operations.

Cyborgs are almost always found in special forces and mercenary units, while replicate soldiers are often used as corporate security. Espers can be soldiers as well, although any esper powerful enough to be labeled as an "esper weapon" quickly ends up as some form of special operative.

Examples: Dutch (*Black Lagoon*), Kei and Yuri (*The Dirty Pair*), the Knight Sabers (*Bubblegum Crisis*), Major Motoko Kusanagi (*Ghost in the Shell*), Colonel MacDougal (*Striker*), Ensign Ichiro Ogami (*Sakura Taisen*), Colonel Shikishima (*Akira*), Turner (*Count Zero*), Kenwood Muldowney (page 251).

SOLDIER TEMPLATE

Abilities

Cost Ability

- | | |
|---|---|
| 2 | Movie Soldier!: Running +2m (14m total) |
| 2 | KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11- |
| 2 | KS: [Unit] History And Customs 11- |
| 2 | PS: [member of military] 11- |
| 3 | Tactics |
| 3 | WF: Small Arms, Blades (knives) |
| 4 | Contacts (4 points worth) |
| 0 | Fringe Benefit: Military Rank |
| 9 | 9 points of abilities from the following list: Autofire Skills, Bureaucraticcs, Climbing, Combat Driving, Combat Piloting, Combat Skill Levels, Computer Programming, Concealment, Cryptography, Demolitions, Electronics, Fast Draw, Interrogation, Martial Arts, Mechanics, Navigation, Paramedics, Persuasion, Security Systems, Skill Levels, Stealth, Survival, Systems Operation, Weapons Familiarity, Weaponsmith, any Background Skill, additional Contacts |

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 27

Complications

Value Complication

- | | |
|----|--|
| 5 | Distinctive Features: uniform (Easily Concealed; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses) |
| 10 | Hunted: [military the character belongs to] 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching) |
| 20 | Social Complication: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major) |

Total Cost Of Template Complications: 35

Options

Value Ability

- | | |
|-----|---|
| var | Combat Medic: Combine this template with the Doctor template. |
| var | Corporate Security: Combine this template with the Corporate Official template. |
| var | Cyberspace Warrior: Combine this Template with the Data Security Specialist. |

"So what do you do for a living?" David asked.

"Couldn't you guess by my little performance against the gang back there?" Sandra looked puzzled. "The razors didn't give it away? I'm a street sam."

"A..." David thought for a minute. "A street sam? You mean, like in the sims?"

"Sims?" She had to think about that for a moment. Of course. There were a trillion or so street samurai sim games out there. Almost all of them would have a stupidly handsome guy or overendowed gorgeous girl running around with their shirt open fighting zillions of nebulous "baddies." Poor guy had probably been thrown by the fact that she wasn't stupidly beautiful with perfect hair and makeup. Oh, and her top was zipped up.

"Yeah, something like that. A hired gun. A razorgirl. A sam. You know... off people, do dirty deeds, kidnappings, blow stuff up for money. That's what I do."

— Street samurai Sandra Blackmore explains things to computer programmer David Lam.

STREET SAMURAI

Street samurai are urban warriors who sell their combat skills to anyone with the means to pay. They are found the world over, from Neo York to Hong Kong (where they are known as *wuxia*), acting as bodyguards, enforcers, hired killers, or simply "muscle." Many, although not all, attempt to emulate a certain code of honor, loosely derived from the *bushido* code of feudal Japan. In most cases, this code requires the street sam to remain loyal to his current employer and complete any tasks requested of him to the best of his ability.

Just about anyone can be a street samurai. All it takes is a willingness to put yourself in danger for pay. In most places normal humans and genetic upgrades make up the bulk of freelance muscle, with the occasional cyborg added to the mix. In a Zero Zone however, anything goes, with espers and replicates not unusual.

The typical street samurai is heavily enhanced with cyberware. The Smartgun Link is the most common implant, along with Muscle Augmentation, Reflex Enhancement, and Synaptic Accelerators. In truth, the average street sam will try and pack in as much cyberware as he can afford.

Examples: John Gaunt (*Grimjack*), Hideo (*Neuromancer*), Aubry Knight (*Street Lethal*), Konrad (*All Tomorrow's Parties*), Molly Millions (*Neuromancer*), Sandra Blackmore (page 265), Marta Nys (page 276).

STREET SAMURAI TEMPLATE

Abilities

Cost Ability

5	+5 STR
10	+5 DEX
5	+5 CON
5	+5 PRE
1	+1 PD
1	+1 ED
1	+1 REC
1	+5 END
3	+6 STUN
10	+1 with All Combat
10	10 points worth of Combat Skill Levels
10	Martial Arts (minimum of 10 points worth)
5	Streetwise (PRE+1)
4	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Small Arms
18	18 points of abilities from the following list: Acrobatics, Analyze (Style), Autofire Skills, Breakfall, Climbing, Combat Driving, Combat Skill Levels, Concealment, Defense Maneuver, Demolitions, Electronics, Fast Draw, Feint, Gambling, Martial Arts, Mechanics, Paramedics, Penalty Skill Levels, Rapid Attack, Security Systems, Shadowing, Sleight Of Hand, Stealth, Tactics, Transport Familiarity, Teamwork, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Familiarity, Weaponsmith, any Background Skill, Contacts

Total Cost Of Template Abilities: 89

Options

Value Ability

var	Corporate Operative: Combine this template with the Corporate Official template.
20	Something's Not Right...: Danger Sense (immediate vicinity, out of combat, intuition) (INT Roll)
var	Hunted (by law-enforcement or a multinational corporation)
-15	Add Psychological Complication: Code Of Honor (Common, Strong)
-5	Add Rivalry: Professional (another street samurai; Rival is As Powerful; Seek to Outdo, Embarrass, or Humiliate Rival; Rival Aware of Rivalry)

GAME ELEMENTS

"My skin is a pale blue color, although some areas are much darker. My hair, which is straight and cropped short, is a deep blue shade, and when it gets wet it turns virtually black. My head is, in fact, the only place I have any hair, which makes me wonder about my designers. Personally, I'm convinced the people behind replicate design are all closet perverts who program their current fantasies into next year's model. If given the chance I'd sure like to slap a few of them around."
— Replicate human Sarah J. Ferrari, manager of Mandarin Towers, Hong Kong, comments on her physical appearance.

This section details how various *HERO System* game elements are to be applied in a *Kazei 5* campaign.

CHARACTER CREATION

There is no set style for a *Kazei 5* campaign. The setting is flexible enough to allow for a wide variety of power levels and play styles. It's up each individual GM to select a power level that suits his campaign concept and go from there. The recommended minimum for a *Kazei 5* campaign is Low-Powered Superheroic; *i.e.* 300 point characters with 60 points of Matching Complications. However, there is nothing stopping you from running a street-level game with Heroic power levels, or bumping the default point totals up to Standard or even High-Powered Superheroic (These latter power levels work better for campaigns featuring full-conversion cyborgs or extremely powerful espers.)

Although the setting is technically a "superheroic" one, *Kazei 5* characters don't need to pay for regular equipment — they use Resource Points for that (see page 93). Characters who wish to own specific items of personal gear (such as a fairly rare or unique handgun) must pay Character Points for such items. Characters who acquire new gear during the course of play will need to pay for it with Character Points at some point, unless the GM says otherwise. In some *Kazei 5* campaigns, the characters may not need to pay for any gear, as it's all supplied by an outside agency. Obviously, "innate" powers, such as cybernetics, esper powers, and cyberhacking programs must be bought with Character Points. Mecha and vehicles can be bought either way (using Character Points or Resource Points), depending on the campaign style and the GM's wishes.

CHARACTERISTICS

Since many anime heroes are larger-than-life, it's recommended Player Characters and notable NPCs start with 10s in all Primary Characteristics. Other NPCs (especially nameless minions and the like) should use all 8s, although GMs setting a campaign within the confines of a Zero Zone may want to have all PCs start of with 8s as well. All of the Background Templates presume a base

of 10 in Characteristics.

The *Characteristic Maxima* rules apply only to normal humans in a *Kazei 5* campaign. The other character types (such as genetic upgrades, espers, replicated humans, and so on) aren't subject to *Characteristic Maxima* and/or have distinct limits on how high they can purchase their Characteristics.

SKILLS

As *Kazei 5* takes place in a technologically-advanced near-future setting, some Skills (such as Animal Handler) may be of limited use. In addition, there are some new Skills to consider.

COMPUTER PROGRAMMING

All characters have this Skill on an 8-. This allows them to utilize the basic functions of a personal computer, such as answer email, surf the Net, and so on. If the character wishes to do anything more advanced they not only need to buy their Computer Programming Skill up to a full Characteristic Roll, but they also need to purchase a specific category, or categories, to represent their expertise. Use the Expanded Computer Programming table on page 131 of *The Ultimate Skill*.

CRIMINOLOGY

Genetic upgrades and replicated humans have markers in their DNA which can easily be detected by forensics. In both cases, the markers will reveal what sort of upgrade package the character has, or what sort of replicated human the character is. The markers can't be removed and are nearly impossible to disguise, as they are encoded directly into the character's DNA.

Esper powers tend to be so destructive to the esper's surroundings there's usually no question to an investigator as to what happened. In addition, esper "blades" (such as *Telekinetic Knife*) don't leave any of the traces usually associated with regular knife blades. The same goes for such powers as *Telekinetic Lance* or *Telekinetic Darts*. In fact, the lack of physical evidence is often a clue in and of itself, revealing the presence of esper activity in what might appear to be an otherwise normal crime scene.

THE BENEFIT OF PAYING POINTS

The GM should treat any equipment specifically bought with Character Points as "part" of the character. In other words, unlike equipment acquired through Resource Points (which is fairly expendable from a game mechanics stand point), GMs shouldn't take away, break, or otherwise permanently prevent a character from using something he's paid for with Character Points. Thus, if Shoko pays the points to have a Remington Storm-breaker, then the GM shouldn't have Ran out-and-out destroy it, unless he (the GM) plans on giving her a replacement soon after. Of course, it's one thing to wreck the PC's gear beyond repair, and another to simply damage it. And naturally, getting a piece of equipment repaired can be an adventure in itself in some campaigns.

EVERYMAN SKILLS

The Everyman Skills for *Kazei 5* are as follows:

- ⊖ Acting 8-
- ⊖ AK/CK: (local area/home city) or AK: The Net 8-
- ⊖ Climbing 8-
- ⊖ Computer Programming (Personal Computers) 8-
- ⊖ Concealment 8-
- ⊖ Deduction 8-
- ⊖ KS: (character's choice) 11-
- ⊖ KS: (character's choice) 8-
- ⊖ Language (4 points worth, includes Literacy)
- ⊖ Paramedics 8-
- ⊖ Persuasion 8-
- ⊖ PS: (choice) 11-
- ⊖ Shadowing 8-
- ⊖ Stealth 8-
- ⊖ Systems Operation (Cellular and Digital) 8-
- ⊖ TF: (usually Small Motorized Ground Vehicles, but city dwellers may have Two Wheeled Muscle-Powered Vehicles or Two-Wheeled Motorized Vehicles instead)

ELECTRONICS

Characters must by their Electronics Skill by categories (see *The Ultimate Skill* page 329). Cyberware is a 1-point subcategory located under Computer Systems.

HIGH SOCIETY

The primary use of High Society in a *Kazei 5* campaign is to allow a character to properly interact with top-ranked corporate executives. However, this skill is somewhat culture specific, as dealing with a corporate official from a Western-based multinational is a far different experience than dealing with one from an Asian corporation. Game Masters may require PCs to purchase an applicable Culture Knowledge Skill to use as a Complementary Skill. In addition, you can also use High Society when dealing with the upper echelons of certain organized crime groups, such as the Mafia or the Yakuza.

LOCKPICKING

Mechanical key-based locks are fairly rare in *Kazei 5*, having been replaced by a wide variety of electronic and magnetic locks. While Lockpicking can be used to bypass these sorts of locks, PCs will need to buy various Complementary Skills, such as Mechanics (for combination locks) and Electronics (for electronic and magnetic locks).

MARTIAL ARTS

All of the martial arts styles found in *The Ultimate Martial Artist* are available for PCs to purchase in a *Kazei 5* campaign. As of yet, there are no cyborg-specific martial arts. Most cyborgs who learn a martial art ignore such techniques as choke holds and nerve strikes, since they tend to be rather ineffective against other cyborgs, and concentrate more on grabs, joint locks, kicks, and punches.

Among the street samurai of North America a new form of martial art has appeared, a synthesis of several widespread styles into something commonly called "Street Fighting" or "Street Fu." Combining elements of judo, karate, kung fu, and tae kwon do, it concentrates on direct combat applications, effective and proven techniques, and tends to ignore a lot of the philosophical elements of classical martial arts styles. Obviously influenced by the tenets of Jeet Kune Do, it has become popular enough to be taught through formal instruction, going by such names as Combat-Do, Jute Kung Do, Street-Jutsu, and the like.

STREET FIGHTING

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Block	1/2	4	+2	+2	Block, Abort
Disarm	1/2	4	-1	+1	Disarm, +10 STR to Disarm Roll
Dodge	1/2	4	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
Elbow/Knee					
Smash	1/2	4	+2	+0	STR +2d6 Strike
Escape	var	4	+0	+0	+15 STR versus Grabs
Legsweep	1/2	3	+2	+1	STR +1d6 Strike; Target Falls
Punch/Snap Kick	1/2	4	+0	+2	STR +2d6 Strike
Side/Roundhouse					
Kick	1/2	5	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike
Throw	1/2	3	+0	+1	STR +v/5; Target Falls

Skills

Breakfall
 Combat Skill Levels
 Streetwise
 WF: Common Melee Weapons
 WF: Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons
 WF: Off Hand
 WF: Small Arms

Elements

+1 Use Art With Blades
 +1 Use Art With Chain Weapons
 +1 Use Art With Clubs
 +1 Use Art With Cyber Blades
 +1 Use Art With Karate Weapons

Optional Rules: The Elbow Smash and Punch take Hit Location Rolls of 2d6+1. The Knee Smash and Snap Kick take Hit Location Rolls of 2d6+7. The Side Kick and Roundhouse Kick take Hit Locations Rolls of 3d6. None of the other maneuvers require Hit Location Rolls.

Marta slashed an unlucky Triad soldier, the blades in her fingers cutting the side of his face to shreds. Screaming incoherently, he stumbled backwards, firing his pistol blindly. Spinning out of his line of fire, Marta grabbed a second gunman's outstretched arm, twisting him around in front of her just as a third opened up with his PN90. The impromptu shield's sudden scream collapsed into a bubbling, bloody gasp as the barrage tore through his lightly armored jacket. Tossing the now dead man aside, Marta struck the submachine gun to the floor with a blinding snap kick. Leaping forward, her foe launched his own kick, a high circling strike that seemed painfully slow to Marta's cyber-enhanced reflexes. She dodged by throwing herself straight back, falling flat on the floor as her attacker's foot passed harmlessly overhead. Twisting around, Marta swung her own leg in a tight arc, catching her target just behind the knee. There was a satisfying crash as he fell through a nearby table.

— Marta Nys demonstrates why she's one of the best in the business.

STREETWISE

It's recommended Game Masters treat Streetwise like High Society and require characters to purchase the appropriate Culture Knowledge Skill in order to use Streetwise without penalty in cultures foreign to the PC's own.

SYSTEMS OPERATION

As with Electronics, a character must buy Systems Operation using the categories found on page 329 of *The Ultimate Skill*.

TRANSPORT FAMILIARITY

Characters in a *Kazei 5* campaign only need to buy Mecha for 1 point in order to pilot any of the Exo-Suits found in the setting. Characters do not need to buy a TF in order to use an APEX Suit. Vectored-Thrust vehicles (a form of volantor) fall under the Small Planes category.

WEAPON FAMILIARITY

Kazei 5 characters can purchase *WF: Anti-Materiel Rifle*, a 1-point subcategory under Uncommon Modern Weapons.

Also known as Anti-Cyborg Rifles, AMRs are large, heavy, semi-automatic rifles that fire rounds rang-

"The term 'general purpose machine gun' is rather redundant. The purpose of a machine gun is actually well-defined."

— Sandra Blackmore's guide to life

ing from 12.5 mm to 25 mm. They also can purchase *Mecha Weapons* for 2-points, which allows a character to utilize any weapons system on an Exo-Suit (since the firing systems are all basically the same from model to model). This also covers APEX Suit weaponry. Finally, the following *Star Hero* Weapon Familiarities are used in the *Kazei 5* setting: Stun Rods, Rocket Pistols, Rocket Rifles, Tranquilizer Dart Guns, Laser Rifles, Electron Beam Weapons, and Ion Blasters. Game Masters should also add Cyber Blades to the Uncommon Melee Weapon category, and Cyber Guns to the Small Arms category.

NEW SKILLS

Kazei 5 uses the following new skills from *The Ultimate Skill*: Feint, Hoist, Instructor, Parachuting, and Research.

PERKS

For the most part, Perks are used in the *Kazei 5* setting as is. A few minor changes are listed below.

CORPORATE ID CARD

Characters who are corporate employees receive ID cards. These cards allow the character access to his worksite, restricted areas within his worksite (such as data storage centers), and company-maintained recreational facilities (such as an employee fitness center). The value of this Perk depends on the character's actual rank within the company, with higher-ranking employees granted more benefits. See the sidebar for costs.

Any character who purchases this Perk should also consider the Money Perk.

COMPUTER LINK

Game Masters can use this Perk to represent a character's access to invitation-only chat rooms, databases, or servers. As sites such as these often deal in illicit data, goods, and programs, they should cost a character 4-6 Character Points.

MONEY

Kazei 5 uses the Optional Money System listed on pages 105 of *Hero System 6th Edition, Volume 1*. Characters in Zero Zones tend to be either Poor or Destitute, but as Zero Zones are normally barter economies, this often isn't much of a problem. Game Masters should consider having characters spend Character Points at the time of creation on the Money Perk as a way of explaining how the character was able to afford all of his cyberware and other gear. These points do not represent an annual income, and are only used to justify Character Points spent on cybernetics, arms, armor, a vehicle, and so on.

SINLESS

The character in question doesn't have a System Identification Number (or "SIN"), and thus isn't in a corporate, government, or military database. While this means the character can be nearly impossible to trace via computer records, he is also unable to access governmental services. Only those characters who have been born in a Zero Zone can purchase this Perk for 3 Character Points. Much like the Perk Anonymity, this Perk can be nullified, and if it ever is, it can't be regained (unless someone does some extensive data erasures).

CORPORATE ID CARD

Val Rank

- 1 Corporate Employee Of A Minor Business
- 2 Low-Level Executive Of A Minor Business/Corporate Employee Of A Major Business
- 3 Mid-Level Executive Of A Minor Business/Low-Level Executive Of A Major Business
- 4 High-Level Executive Of A Minor Business/Mid-Level Executive Of A Major Business
- 5 CEO, CFO or Chairman Of The Board Of A Minor Business/High-Level Executive Of A Major Business
- 6 CEO, CFO or Chairman Of The Board Of A Major Business

FREE OR NOT?

Not all replicates in *Kazei 5* are property. In Australia (and those countries recognizing replicates as legal Australian citizens) characters can be free replicates. A free replicate has the Social Limitation Free Replicated Human (Very Frequently, Minor; 15 points). Free replicates are required to carry identification proving they are free and independent citizens or face imprisonment until they can be turned over to their owners (or in some countries, terminated).

Alta California and Cascadia offer limited freedoms for replicated humans freed by their owners (but not escaped replicates who enter the country) and recognize the rights of Australian replicated humans as free and citizens.

STUDIO ACCESS

This 1-point Perk allows a character access to a professional recording or video studio, along with all of the appropriate editing and mixing equipment. While he may not own the equipment in question and only has access during off-hours, he also doesn't have to pay for the privilege either.

TALENTS

As mentioned in the chapter on espers, a number of Talents (such as *Absolute Time Sense*, *Ambidexterity*, *Bump Of Direction*, and so on), can be bought by esper characters as low-end esper abilities. Of course, characters who aren't espers can also buy these abilities, either as natural "talents" or as a form of cyberware. As for other Talents, the GM should carefully look at the ones the player wishes to buy and judge how they will fit into his campaign. Naturally, many Talents (such as the ones found in *Fantasy Hero*) have no place in a *Kazei 5* game, but what about things like *Evasive* (*Dark Champions*) or *Weaponmaster* (6E1)? In these cases, the GM needs to decide if this is the feel he wants for his game. The "default" setting for *Kazei 5* takes a very conservative view of Talents. Only those capable of being acquired through intensive training should be allowed for most characters (for example, Combat Shooting, Combat-Ready, or Skill Master). Otherwise, characters may buy Talents duplicating the abilities granted by certain forms of cyberware, which sort of defeats the purpose of having cyberware, as well as narrowing the gap between normal humans, genetic upgrades, espers, and the rest.

BIOWARE COMPATIBLE

This 5-point Talent allows a character to use off-the-shelf bioware products. See page 11 for more.

LATENT ESPER

This Talent allows a character to activate his esper powers after initial character creation. See page 51 for information on cost and usage.

POWERS

The ability to buy various innate Powers depends on the nature of the character in question. A simple breakdown is as follows:

Normal Humans: Normal humans can't buy innate Powers aside from extra meters of Running, Swimming, and levels with various Sensory Groups. They can buy Powers defined as cyberware or be made into a cyborg.

Genetic Upgrades: Genetic upgrades already have two innate abilities (their longevity and resistance to disease), but otherwise are as limited as normal humans. As with normal humans, they can purchase cybernetics or become cyborgs.

Espers: Espers can purchase the same powers as normal humans, in addition to the numerous abilities found in the Espers section. While espers can use cyberware or be made into a cyborg, the process almost invariably destroys their esper talents.

Replicated Humans: Aside from their innate resistance to disease, replicated humans usually have various sensory-related Powers, such as Enhanced Perception, Infrared Perception, or Tracking Scent. Replicated humans can use cyberware as well, but are rarely made into cyborgs.

SUPER-SKILLS

Many Super-Skills found in *Dark Champions* and *Pulp Hero* grant characters abilities similar to some forms of cybernetics (and in some cases, better than cyberware), with none of the possible drawbacks. Game Masters should consider what type of game he wants to run, and how cinematic he wants it to be. While anime is notable for over-the-top action sequences, most cyberpunk-related anime and manga often tries for a more down-to-earth approach. Thus, *Kazei 5* takes the same attitude with Super-Skills as it does with Talents — only those easily explainable as intense training or raw physical skill are allowed.

Acceptable Offensive Super-Skills include *Accurate*, *Brawler*, *Covering Fire*, *Double Tap*, *Machine Gunner From Hell*, *Pistolero*, *Two-Gun Kid*, and so on. Very few of the Defensive Super-Skills would fit in a standard *Kazei 5* game, although *Active Defense*, *Moving Defense*, *Rapid Snap Shot*, *Take Cover*, and *Unimpressed* are all valid options. Of the Movement Super-Skills, only *Disappearing Act* and *Sky-High* don't really fit (*Combat Running* is perfect for simulating the rapid action of even "realistic" anime and manga). Sensory Super-Skills tend toward the cinematic, with only *He's Packing* and *Observant* falling under the intense training requirement. That said, *Something's Not Right* should also be allowed, if only because many anime and manga heroes seem to have an uncanny sense for knowing when things have gone wrong. Almost none of the Miscellaneous Super-Skills would fit into a standard *Kazei 5* game. Game Masters could allow *Contortionist's Feet*, *Dislocatable Joints*, and perhaps *Master Of Mimicry*.

Naturally, there is nothing stopping you from running a highly cinematic *Kazei 5* campaign, and allowing characters to freely purchase any of the Talents or Super Skills from *Dark Champions*, *Pulp Hero*, and other sources. However, doing so runs the risk of losing some of the grittiness inherent in the setting.

COMPLICATIONS

Virtually all of the Complications found in The *HERO System 6th Edition, Volume 1* rulebook are suitable for a *Kazei 5* campaign. This section lists several Complications unique to the setting. For completeness sake, the various cybernetic, cyborg, and esper-specific Complications are mentioned here as well.

DEPENDENCE

Simsense Addiction (must link into a simsense program at least once per day or suffer Incompetence) (Very Common, Addiction; 0 points): The character is addicted to simulated sensory environment (a.k.a. simsense) programs and must periodically link into one. While there are many legal simsense and virtual reality programs on the open market, the real danger comes when the character's addiction extends to such things as Blue Beetles (highly-erotic simsense programs) or even Black Beetles (which allow the user to experience death firsthand). The former are usually restricted and the latter are highly illegal.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

Cyborg Body (Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses; 10 points): Required Disadvantage for full-conversion cyborgs. See page 37 for more information.

Esper Signature (Varies): Required Disadvantage for all esper characters. See page 52 for a complete description.

Extensive Cyberware (Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses; 10 points): Characters with obvious cyberware augmentation can purchase this Limitation. See page 11 for more information.

PHYSICAL COMPLICATION

Cyber-Rejection (Infrequently, Fully; 15 points): Characters with cyber-rejection are unable to receive cyberware implants. They can use bioware systems, but only if the artificial organs are grown from the character's own cells. This Limitation is very common among espers, and even those who can use cyberware almost never do, as such implants invariably have a detrimental effect on their powers.

Cyborg (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing; 10 points): Required Disadvantage for all cyborgs. See page 37 for more information.

Heavy (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing): Required Disadvantage for all cyborgs. See page 37 for more information.

Powers Are Occasionally Out Of Control (Infrequently, Greatly; 10 points): Required Disadvantage for all esper characters. See page 53 for a complete description of effects.

PSYCHOLOGICAL COMPLICATION

Cyber-Induced Psychosis (Very Common, Total; 25 points): As initially described on page 9, the character has lost most, if not all of his sense of self and now considers himself to be a machine. Often prone to acts of extreme violence, the character can't be reasoned with, at least from a human standpoint, and is a threat not only to himself, but anyone who comes in contact with him.

At a lesser value (such as Common, Strong), the character still has some of his humanity left, and may carefully hide his urges, only letting his "machine" side free at certain times and places.

Simsense Fugue (Common, Total; 20 points): The character is so heavily addicted to simsense he has great difficulty separating his simsense-induced fantasies from reality. In times of great stress he'll assume the persona and mannerisms of his favorite simsense characters and may assign additional roles to people around him. While under the effects of the fugue (which can last for only a few minutes up to a few hours), the character will attempt to act like his assumed persona instead of his normal personality. This can have potentially harmful consequences if the simsense personality possesses skills and abilities the character doesn't.

SOCIAL COMPLICATION

Cyber Prejudice (Occasionally, Minor; 5 points): Optional Disadvantage for characters who spend a lot of time interacting with cultures that don't approve of cyberware. See page 12 for more.

Esper (Frequently, Minor; 10 points): Required Disadvantage for esper characters. See page 53 for more information.

Replicated Human (Varies): In most parts of the world, replicated humans are thought of as little more than organic robots. They have no civil rights and can suffer from extreme mistreatment by their owners with no legal repercussions. Killing a replicate is usually considered destruction of property, as opposed to murder. A replicate who manages to "go rogue" will find himself the target of retrievers who will hunt him down and return him to his rightful owners, assuming they intend to capture him alive and not have their "defective property" destroyed. Needless to say, many rogue replicates try to escape to the nearest Zero Zone (if possible), where their status is often more of an asset than a liability.

The value for this Limitation depends on the replicate's intended use. A combat model, who has no say over the nature, number, or type of missions he is sent on would have (Very Frequently, Severe) for 25 points, while a corporate office replicate has (Frequently, Major) for 15 points. The default value is (Very Frequently, Major) for 20 points.

O-POINT COMPLICATIONS

Player Characters may end up with more Complications than they need, especially if they use Background and Professional Templates to build their character. The GM should require the player to keep all required Complications (*i.e.* any Complications listed in a Template), even if this means the PC ends up with several 0-point Complications on his character sheet. Many of the NPCs have 0-point Complications due to this very reason.

武器と防具

Hong smiled and nodded, "Of course. You don't want computer cards, you want gun." On cue Toy, Hong's replicated human assistant (who looked exactly like you'd expect a replicated human named "Toy" to look) appeared, setting a shiny black case of armored plastic on the counter, then turned it so the latch faced Kaelyn.

With a small smile, Kaelyn reached for the case, wiping her thumb across the words 'Pflager-Katsumata,' engraved in silver along the top. "Pflager-Katsumata Series D revolver," she breathed, feeling a touch of excitement. "Just what I've always wanted." She touched the latch and the top obligingly flipped up, revealing the bulky outline of a rather large handgun.

Reaching over, Hong used a long wooden chopstick to point out various features. "Six-shot, 44 caliber revolver. Single-shot 12.5 millimeter derringer. Twin triggers, front for revolver, back for derringer. Battery pack and laser sight. Oh, and genuine synthetic amber grips. You like?"

— Kaelyn Harrison purchases a new asset useful for someone in her line of work.

No matter how fast your cyberware makes you, or how tough your cybergraft is, or how powerful an esper you are, you'll inevitably need tools to get the job done. This section describes an assortment of weapons, armor, and vehicles for players and GMs to select from.

Resource Points

Kazei 5 uses the *Resource Points* rules (found on pages 150-154 of *Dark Champions*) in order to allow characters to have access to an assortment of weapons, armor, and other gear. All of the example characters found in Part 5 use this system, with the following starting Resource Points:

- 60 Equipment Points
- 10 Vehicle/Base Points
- 5 Follower/Contact Points
- 0 Miscellaneous Points

These point totals may be increased at the time of creation using the costs listed on page 151 of *Dark Champions*. However, characters who live in a Zero Zone may have reduced Resource Points (such as 0 Vehicle/Base Points, since vehicles are uncommon in the Zone), and in many cases should only have access to equipment they've specifically purchased with Character Points. As stated in the Game Elements sections, all characters are free to spend Character Points on unique or signature items.

In some campaigns, the Resource Points system might not be needed. For example, if the characters belong to an elite police force, then all of their gear would be issued to them, and they won't have to pay any points for it. On the other hand, if the characters are special operatives for the United North America government, then they should use Resource Points in order to define what sorts of equipment they've accumulated (or hidden away) in the course of their careers.

All characters start out with Standard Equipment Availability. They can improve their access to more advanced gear by purchasing the appropriate Perk (Street Level for 3 points, Military for 5 points, and Advanced Military for 10 points).

Characters may use the "5 points doubling rule" in order to acquire multiple copies of one item. The GM should approve all items bought this way, and has the right to forbid or scale back purchases he feels are unbalanced or capable of causing problems for the campaign.

KAZEI 5 AND DARK CHAMPIONS

All of the firearms, firearms options, and special ammunition types found in *Dark Champions* are available in *Kazei 5* (although some items may be hard to find). The weapons listed in this section are either real world weapons that have appeared since the publication of *Dark Champions*, fictional variants of actual weapons, or wholly fictional weapons unique to the *Kazei 5* setting.

Game Masters can easily modify any of the weapons listed in *Dark Champions* in order to create something more modern or "cyberpunk." For starters, simply change the model number. The AKS-74 becomes the AKS-101, the M16A1 becomes the M16A3, the H&K MP2000 becomes the H&K MP2030, and so on. Another option is to consider the weapon's construction — such as ergonomic plastic stocks instead simple wooden ones. And then there's all of the modifications such as barrel coatings, clear grips or magazines, electronic triggers, enlarged magazines, Smartgun Links, and so on (not to mention all of the options found on page 239 of *Dark Champions*). Finally, just about any modern military firearm for 2030 is going to come with a host of accessories — such as vertical forward grips (useful for keeping the weapon steady when using Autofire), various scopes (optical, IR, night-sight, and so on), and underbarrel mounts for laser sights, flashlights, and grenade launchers.

WEAPONS

The world of 2030 seems to prove the old adage "The more things change, the more things stay the same." Despite such developments as man-portable lasers, ion cannons, and particle beams, people still carry slugthrowers, knives, and even swords. It all boils down to personal preference, skill, and what one can afford.

Then she heard it. The oily hiss of hydraulics and the metallic scrape of armor plate on concrete. The sound of something heavy moving out there in the gloom. She froze, raising the Steyr to her shoulder and sighting down its six-foot length. Somewhere out there was a cyberdroid, a big one, the perfect subject for testing the IWS 2020's stopping power.

A sudden roar and a blue-white flare announced the ignition of a combat cyberdroid's flight jets. A moment later its gorilla-like bulk blasted out of the shadows. Shion caught a brief glimpse of gleaming armor plate, red eyes, and a skull virtually split in two to reveal the bristling array of the mouth cannon. Diving to one side, she pulled the trigger on the 2020, the weapon's recoil actually pushing her to one side and sending her sliding back. And then the 'droid's ion cannon hit home....

For a moment all Shion could see was white spots. She blinked her eyes and shook her head, only to find herself amid a tangle of smashed crates and equipment carts with the cyberdroid bearing right down on her, its mouth cannon audibly warming up for a second shot. Raising the Steyr, Shion braced the weapon firmly, tracking the 'droid with the barrel. A moment later she pulled the trigger.

The APFSDS round virtually vaporized the cyberdroid's chest, sending the shattered remains flying backwards to land sparking amid the wreckage of an assembly-line robot. Well, she thought to herself. That was certainly impressive. Standing up, Shion brushed errant strands of hair from her face and went in search of her true target.

— Shion Nys uses a Steyr IWS 2020 25mm Anti-Materiel Rifle to deal with the opposition.

KAZEI 5 RANGED WEAPONS TABLE

Weapon	Caliber	OCV	RMod	Damage	STUNx	Shots	STR Min	PER Mod	A/R Cost	Notes
REVOLVERS										
Hudson TC-2	.45 ACP	+1	+0	2d6-1	+1	2	9	+2	33/8	
Mateba Model 2020	.357 M	+1	+0	1 1/2d6	+0	6	10	+2	28/9	RC1
Mateba Model 2020	.44 M	+1	+0	2d6	+1	6	11	+2	40/12	RC1
Pflager/Katsumata Series D	.44 M	+0	+0	2d6	+1	6	12	+3	64/24	Laser
	12.5mm Ca	+0	+0	2d6+1	+1	1	12	+3	—	IPE, Laser
Remington Stormbreaker	15mm	+1	+0	3d6+1	+1	3	15	+4	64/16	
S&W Model 2019	.357 M	+1	+0	1 1/2d6	+1	6	10	+2	27/8	
SEMI-AUTOMATIC PISTOLS										
Colt MKVI	10mm	+1	+0	1 1/2d6	+0	16	9	+2	28/11	RC1
H&K P29	9mm Ca	+1	+1	2d6-1	+0	14	9	+3	16/24	IPE, Laser, Sil
Jinsei Hoshoku	.44 M	+1	+0	2d6	+1	10	13	+3	39/13	
Jinsei Hoshoku Zeta	.44 M	+1	+1	2d6	+1	15	13	+3	40/15	
SIG/SAUER P240	9x19mm	+1	+0	1d6+1	+0	15	8	+2	22/8	
S&W AP	13x40mm Gy	+2	+1	2d6-1	+0	8	8	+4	49/16	IPE, IMR
S&W AP (APEX)	13x40mm Gy	+2	+1	2d6	+1	8	8	+4	72/24	AP, IPE, IMR
S&W AP (Baton)	13x40mm Gy	+2	+1	5d6N	—	8	8	+4	36/12	IPE, LR(40m)
S&W AP (Flechette)	13x40mm Gy	+2	+1	2d6	+0	8	8	+4	57/19	AP, IPE, IMR
Styer GB-100	9x19mm	+1	+0	1d6+1	+0	18	9	+3	27/10	
SUBMACHINE GUNS										
KAC PDW	6x35mm	+1	+2	2d6	+0	30	12	+4	69/25	AF5, FS, LR(200m)
KPB IDB PP-2000	9x19mm	+0	+0	1d6+1	+0	20	11	+2	35/12	AF5, LR(100m)
Seburo C-25A	4.6 x30mm	+1	+1	2d6	+0	50	12	+4	63/24	AF5
RIFLES										
Beretta Cx4 Storm	9x19mm	+1	+1	1d6+1	+0	15	12	+5	23/9	2H
Beretta Cx4 Storm	.40 S&W	+1	+2	1d6+1	+0	11	12	+5	24/9	2H
Beretta Cx4 Storm	.45 ACP	+1	+2	2d6-1	+1	8	13	+5	35/11	2H
Beretta Rx4 Storm	5.56x45mm	+1	+2	2d6	+1	30	13	+5	49/18	2H
KelTec RFB	7.62x51mm	+1	+2	2d6+1	+1	20	15	+5	56/21	2H
ASSAULT RIFLES										
Bushmaster ACR	5.56x45mm	+1	+2	2d6	+1	30	12	+5	79/31	2H, AF5, FS
Bushmaster ACR	7.62x51mm	+1	+2	2d6+1	+1	30	13	+5	91/34	2H, AF5, FS
FN SCAR-L	5.56x45mm	+1	+2	2d6	+1	30	13	+5 7	9/31	2H, AF5, FS
FN SCAR-H	7.62x51mm	+1	+2	2d6+1	+1	20	14	+5	91/34	2H, AF5, FS
H&K 416	5.56x45mm	+1	+2	2d6	+1	30	14	+6	79/31	2H, AF5, FS
H&K 417	7.62x51mm	+1	+2	2d6+1	+1	20	15	+6	108/41	2H, AF5, FS, Sil
Jinsei M-60	10mm Ca	+2	+1	2d6+1	+1	60	15	+5	104/40	2H, AF5, Laser
Jinsei M-100	10mm Ca	+2	+1	2d6	+1	100	16	+6	102/46	2H, AF5, AP, IMR
Seburo MN-23	5.56x45mm	+2	+1	2d6	+1	25	12	+5	97/35	2H, AF5

KAZEI 5 RANGED WEAPONS TABLE (CONT)

Weapon	Caliber	OCV	RMod	Damage	STUNx	Shots	STR Min	PER Mod	A/R Cost	Notes
SHOTGUNS										
Monolith Arms P-12	12 ga	+0	+0	2d6+1	+1	20	11	+4	61/19 2	H, AE1, LR RR, RP, clear mag
Neostead	12 ga	+0	+0	2 1/2d6	+1	6/6	12	+4	60/20	2H, AE1, LR RR, RP
SRM Arms Model 1216	12 ga	+0	+0	2 1/2d6	+1	16	12	+4	60/18	2H, AE1, LR RR, RP
GRENADE LAUNCHERS										
FN40GL	40mm	+0	+1	(135STR)	—	1	8	+6	203/31	MR(30m), IMR, Underslung
GD M307 ACSW	25x59mm	+1	+2	2d6+1X	+1	37	13	+8	147/43	AF3, Crew2, IMR, MGL, RC3, TC
Jinsei M-100GL	20x42mm	+2	+1	2d6X	+1	6	16	+6	45/13	MR(20m), Underslung
H&K M320	40mm	+0	+1	(135STR)	—	1	8	+6	113/17	MR(30m), IMR, Underslung
Neopup PAW-20	20x42mm	+1	+2	2d6X	+1	7	13	+6	76/27	Coll, IMR
Anti-Materiel RifleS										
Barrett XM109	25x59mm	+1	+4	4d6+1	+1	5	25	+8	177/60	2H, AP, FS, IMR, RC2, TC
Denel NTW-20	14.5x114mm	+1	+3	3d6+1	+1	3	16	+8	94/25	2H, IMR, RC2
Denel NTW-20	20x83.5mm	+1	+3	4d6+1	+1	3	23	+8	97/25	2H, IMR, RC2
Denel NTW-20	20x110mm	+1	+3	4d6+1	+1	3	23	+8	97/25	2H, IMR, RC2
Steyr IWS 2020	25mm Fle	+1	+4	4 1/2d6	+1	5	25	+8	201/59	2H, AP, IPE, IMR, RC3
ENERGY WEAPONS										
Otomo MPEW Mark I	—	+1	+2	8d6 N E	—	30	12	+7	64/29	Boostable Charges
	—	+1	+2	4d6 NND	—	30	12	+7	—	Boostable Charges
Otomo MPEW Mark II	—	+1	+2	10d6 N E	—	20	12	+7	79/36	Boostable Charges
	—	+1	+2	5d6 NND	—	20	12	+7	—	Boostable Charges
Otomo MPIW Mark I	—	+2	+2	10d6 N E	—	30	12	+7	68/25	
Otomo MPIW Mark II	—	+2	+2	12d6 N E	—	15	12	+7	66/25	
Otomo MPLW Mark I	—	+2	+4	3d6+1E	-1	20	8	+7	95/31	AP, IMR
Otomo MPLW Mark II	—	+2	+4	4d6E	-1	10	8	+7	98/30	AP, IMR
TI Taser XREP Pistol 1	3mm	+0	+0	5d6 N+8d6 NND	—	6	5	+3	81/21	IPE, LR(20m)

KEY

AE1: Area Of Effect (1m Radius)

ACP: Automatic Colt Pistol

ACR: Adaptive Combat Rifle

ACWS: Advanced Crew-Served Weapon

AF: Autofire (number indicates total shots per burst)

AP: 1) Armor Piercing, 2) Assault Pistol

APEX: Resistant Protection Piercing Explosive

Ca: Caseless

Coll: Collimating/reflex sight

Crew: Crew-served weapon (number indicates required size of crew)

E: Energy

FN: Fabrique Nationale

FS: Flash Suppressor

Ga: Gauge

GD: General Dynamics

GL: Grenade launcher

Gy: Gyrojet

H&K: Heckler and Koch

IDB: Instrument Design Bureau

IMR: Increased Maximum Range

IPE: Invisible Power Effects

IWS: Infantry Weapon System

Laser: Indicates the weapon has a laser sight

LR: Limited Range (number indicates maximum range)

M: Magnum

MGL: Mounted Grenade Launcher. Weapon must be tripod or vehicle mounted.

mm: millimeter

MPIW: Man-Portable Ion Weapon

MPEW: Man-Portable Electron Weapon

MPLW: Man-Portable Laser Weapon

MR: Minimum Range (the number indicates the minimum range to a target before the weapon will be effective)

N: Normal Damage

NND: No Normal Defense

PAW: Personal Assault Weapon

PDW: Personal Defense Weapon

RC: Recoil Compensator; the number indicates the type

RFB: Rifle, Forward-Ejection, Bullpup

RP: Reduced Penetration

RR: Reduced by Range

S&W: Smith and Wesson

SCAR: Special Forces Combat Assault Rifle

Sil: Silencer

TI: Taser International

TC: Targeting Computer

Underslung: Weapon is meant to be attached under the barrel of an assault rifle. It normally can't be used as a stand-alone weapon.

X: Explosion

XREP: eXtended Range Electronic Projectile

Revolvers

HUDSON TC-2

Effect: RKA 2d6-1, +1 STUN
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 250m
Charges: 2
STR Min: 9

Description: Designed as a backup, or hold-out pistol, the Japanese-produced TC-2 is an unusual weapon. It has two barrels, arranged in an over-and-under pattern, and uses a break-action for reloading, thus making jams and misfires almost impossible.

Game Information: RKA 2d6-1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4) (31 Active points); 2 Charges (-1 1/2), OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 7 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 8 points.

MATEBA MODEL 2020 AUTOREVOLVER

Effect: RKA 2d6, +1 STUN
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 300m
Charges: 6
STR Min: 11

Description: The Mateba is what's known as an "automatic revolver," which uses the recoil from firing a round to cock the hammer and rotate the cylinder. In addition the Model 2020 is known for its light recoil, accuracy, and interchangeable barrels of different lengths, which allow the pistol to be configured for specific uses. About the only disadvantage to the Mateba is the complexity of the firing mechanism and the limited number of rounds in the cylinder.

Mateba Autorevolvers can also be chambered in a .357 Magnum configuration.

Game Information: RKA 2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4) (37 Active points); OAF (-1), 6 Charges (-3/4), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 10 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) **plus** +1 versus Recoil Modifiers with RKA (1 Active point); OAF (-1), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (+1 to firearm's Hearing PER Roll modifier; -1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 12 points.

Options:

- 1) .357 Magnum Chambering:** Decrease to RKA 1 1/2d6 and remove +1 Increased STUN Multiplier. Total Cost: 7 + 1 + 1 = 10 points.
- 2) Mateba Grifone:** The carbine starts with the Model 2020's frame and action, then adds an 18" barrel and a fore and butt stock. Add +2 versus Range Modifier; OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4). 2 Active Points; 1 total point.

PFLAGER/KATSUMATA SERIES D REVOLVER

Effect: RKA 2d6, +1 STUN/RKA 2d6+1, +1 STUN
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 300m
Charges: 6/1
STR Min: 12

Description: Developed for police officers and retrievers, the P/K Series D combines a six-round .44 revolver with a 12.5mm caseless single-shot bolt-action "derringer" in an over-and-under configuration. The idea is for the user to disable his target with rounds from the revolver, and then use the derringer to finish the job. For accuracy, a laser sight is mounted under the revolver barrel, while two triggers operate the firearm itself. While the weapon packs plenty of punch as-is, many retrievers opt for explosive-tipped caseless rounds similar to what's used in the Jinsel M-100 battle rifle.

Game Information:

Cost Power

19 Pflager/Katsumata Series D Revolver:

Multipower, 52-point reserve; all slots OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)

If 1) .44 Magnum Revolver:

RKA 2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4); OAF (-1), 6 Charges (-3/4), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)

If 2) 12.5mm Derringer:

RKA 2d6+1, Invisible to Sight Group (no shell casings as evidence; +1/4), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4); 1 Charge (-2), OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)

3 Laser Sight: +2 OCV (4 Active points); OAF (-1), Only +1 OCV Unless User Braces Or Sets (-1/2), Limited Range (128m; -1/4), Not In Adverse Conditions (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) **plus** +8 versus Range Modifiers (8 Active points); OAF (-1), Only +4 Versus Range Modifiers Unless User Braces Or Sets (-1/2), Limited Range (128m; -1/4), Not In Adverse Conditions (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 2 points)

Total Cost: 24 points.

CREATING RANGED WEAPONS FOR KAZEI 5

Firearms for *Kazei 5* use the following standard Limitations: *Beam* (-1/4), *Charges* (value varies), *OAF* (-1), *Real Weapon* (-1/4), *STR Minimum* (-1/4).

For simplicities' sake, the STR Minimum Limitation is a flat value and assumes characters with STR scores above or below the listed STR Minimum don't affect the damage results (since one can't use STR to affect Blast or RKA damage anyway). However, characters still suffer -1 OCV for every 5 STR theirs is below the STR Min and take 1d6 Normal Damage (this damage is taken directly, and ignores the character's defenses).

The *Real Weapon* Limitation works as described on page 200 of *HERO System, 6th Edition, Volume 2*, but also allows the GMs to declare that certain weapons are unable to affect a given target, regardless of a character's ammunition type, Skill Levels, or even dice of Weaponsmaster. Simply put, characters shouldn't be able to disable main battle tanks with handguns! It also allows espers (both PC and NPC) to simply ignore certain forms of small arms fire (provided they have a sufficient Resistant Protection and the GM decides it's cinematically appropriate). This prevents espers (and some cyborgs) from being Stunned due to a "lucky shot" from an otherwise underpowered weapon.

REMINGTON STORMBREAKER

Effect: RKA 3d6+1, +1 STUN
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 500m
Charges: 3
STR Min: 15

Description: The largest caliber handgun available today, the Stormbreaker is aptly named. Capable of stopping even combat cybroids, this weapon is not for the faint of heart. It's sheer size renders a conventional swing-out cylinder impractical, so the Stormbreaker utilizes a break-action for reloading.

Game Information: RKA 3d6+1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4) (62 Active points); 3 Charges (-1 1/4), OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 15 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point). Total Cost: 16 points.

SMITH & WESSON MODEL 2019

Effect: RKA 1 1/2d6, +1 STUN
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 250m
Charges: 6
STR Min: 10

Description: Popular with police departments across North America for its ruggedness and reliability, the 2019 is the latest refinement in Smith & Wesson's long line of combat handguns.

Game Information: RKA 1 1/2d6 (25 Active points); OAF (-1), 6 Charges (-3/4), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 7 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 8 points.

Semi-Automatic Pistols**COLT MARK VI**

Effect: RKA 1 1/2d6
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 250m
Charges: 16
STR Min: 9

Description: The Colt Mark VI is very popular with United North America law-enforcement officers and is the standard issue sidearm for NYPD, Inc.

Game Information: RKA 1 1/2d6, 16 Charges (+0) (25 Active points); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 9 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) **plus** +1 versus Recoil Modifiers with RKA (1 Active point); OAF (-1), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (+1 to firearm's Hearing PER Roll modifier; -1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 11 points.

HECKLER & KOCH P29

Effect: RKA 2d6-1
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 250m
Charges: 14
STR Min: 9

Description: The world's first pistol to use case-less ammunition, the P29 fires specially designed high-pressure rounds and can hold its own even when compared to magnum-caliber pistols. Features include a clear magazine, an optional silencer, and an integrated under-barrel laser sight. Although an expensive weapon, it's fairly popular, mainly due to its status as the preferred sidearm of Shion Nys.

Game Information:

B Heckler & Koch P29: RKA 2d6-1, 14 Charges (+0), Invisible to Sight Group (no shell casings as evidence); +1/4 (31 Active Points); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4 points) (total cost: 11 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4 points) (total cost: 1 point) **plus** +1 versus Range Modifiers (1 Active point); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point)

3 Laser Sight: +2 OCV (4 Active points); OAF (-1), Only +1 OCV Unless User Braces Or Sets (-1/2), Limited Range (128m; -1/4), Not In Adverse Conditions (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) **plus** +8 versus Range Modifiers (8 Active points); OAF (-1), Only +4 Versus Range Modifiers Unless User Braces Or Sets (-1/2), Limited Range (128m; -1/4), Not In Adverse Conditions (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 2 points)

Total cost: 16 points.

Options:

I) Silencer: Add naked Advantage Invisible Power Effects (Invisible to Hearing Group; +1/2); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4). 15 Active Points; total cost: 7 points.

JINSEI HOSHOKU

Effect: RKA 2d6, +1 STUN
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 300m
Charges: 10
STR Min: 13

Description: Possibly Jinsei's most popular product (and apparently the *de rigueur* sidearm for street samurai), the Hoshoku is one of the more powerful handguns available on the open market. Well-made and durable, the Hoshoku is available in a variety of finishes, ranging from chrome to stainless steel, to matte black.

Game Information: RKA 2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4) (37 Active points); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), 10 Charges (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 12 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 13 points.

Options:

I) Jinsei Hoshoku Zeta: Jinsei also makes the Hoshoku Zeta, which features an extended magazine along with modifications to the barrel to increase accuracy.

Jinsei Hoshoku Zeta: RKA 2d6, 15 Charges (+0), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4) (37 Active points); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 13 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) **plus** +1 versus Range Modifiers (1 Active point); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 15 points.

SIG/SAUER P240

Effect: RKA 1d6+1
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 200m
Charges: 15
STR Min: 8

Description: This Swiss handgun is noted for its extremely high production values. Crafted from quality materials, it features a close-fitting action to minimize jamming from dirt and abuse (although it still requires constant cleaning and service). Possibly the most accurate handgun made today, the SIG/SAUER series is also very expensive.

Game Information: RKA 1d6+1, 15 Charges (+0) (20 Active points); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 7 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 8 points.

SMITH & WESSON ASSAULT PISTOL

Effect: RKA 2d6-1
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 1000m
Charges: 8
STR Min: 8

Description: This massive pistol appears more like a cut-down shotgun or assault rifle than a handgun. While it uses a pistol grip, the magazine mounts ahead of the trigger guard, a forestock runs the length of the barrel, and there's a mounting bracket for a butt stock.

The Assault Pistol (or AP) uses gyrojet rounds, and can fire various types of ammunition, including armor-piercing explosive (APEX), baton, flechette, and incendiary. The AP is very popular with retrievers, who tend to refer to it as an "anti-personnel" or "artificial person" pistol.

Game Information: RKA 2d6-1, Invisible to Sight Group (no shell casings as evidence; +1/4), Increased Maximum Range (x4 or 1000m; +1/2) (44 Active points); OAF (-1), 8 Charges (-1/2), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 13 points) **plus** +2 OCV (4 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 2 points) **plus** +1 versus Range Modifiers (1 Active point); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 16 points.

Options:

I) Butt Stock: Add +1 versus Range Modifier; OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4). 1 Active Point; total cost 1 point.

2) APEX Rounds: Increase to RKA 2d6 and add Armor Piercing and +1 Increased STUN Multiplier. 67+4+1 Active Points; total cost 21+2+1 = 24 points.

3) Baton Rounds: Replace the RKA with the following: Blast 5d6, Invisible to Sight Group, Source Only (no shell casings as evidence; +1/4); OAF (-1), 8 Charges (-1/2), Beam (-1/4), Limited Range (40m; -1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4). 31 +4 +1 Active Points; total cost 9 +2 +1 = 12 points.

4) Flechette Rounds: Increase to RKA 2d6 and add Armor Piercing. 52+4+1 Active Points; total cost 16+2+1 = 19 points.

5) Incendiary: See page 206 of *Dark Champions*.

STYER GB100

Effect: 1d6+1 RKA
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 200m
Charges: 18
STR Min: 9

Description: Considered by many to be the best pistol available today, the Styer GB100 utilizes a number of advanced features in its design, resulting in a reliable, accurate weapon that is very comfortable to use. About the only drawback to the weapon is its relatively large size. This pistol is standard issue for MegaTokyo ESWAT officers.

Game Information: RKA 1d6+1, 18 Charges (+1/4) (25 Active points); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 9 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 10 points.

Submachine Guns

KNIGHTS ARMAMENT COMPANY PERSONAL DEFENSE WEAPON

Effect: RKA 2d6, Autofire (5 shots)
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 200m
Charges: 30
STR Min: 12

Description: Designed to have the size and weight of a submachine gun with the range and power of an assault rifle, the KAC PDW is popular with corporate security, street samurai, and military support troops (such as artillery crews, truck drivers, tank crews, and so on). In addition to its side-folding stock and 30-round box magazine, the KAC PDW uses a new 6mm round capable of muzzle velocities equal to the standard military 5.56mm cartridge, while optimized for the PDW's shorter barrel length. This grants the PDW excellent accuracy at longer ranges.

Game Information:

19 Knights Armament Personal Defense Weapon: RKA 2d6, 30 Charges (+1/4), Autofire (5 shots; +1/2) (52 Active points); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4), Limited Range (200m; -1/4) (total cost: 17 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) **plus** +2 versus Range Modifiers (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point).

6 Flash Suppressor: Invisible Power Effects (Invisible To Sight Group, muzzle-flash only; +1/4) for up to 52 Active Points of RKA (13 Active Points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 10 points).

Total cost: 25 points.

KBP INSTRUMENT DESIGN BUREAU PP-2000

Effect: RKA 1d6+1, Autofire (5 shots)
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 100m
Charges: 20
STR Min: 11

Description: This compact design is more machine pistol than submachine gun. Meant as a personal defense and close-quarters combat firearm, the Russian-made PP-2000 is popular with security and military forces around the world. In addition, it has been made specifically for use with the Russian 7N31 +P+ armor-piercing rounds, thus combining excellent armor penetration and stopping power. While it comes with a folding stock, the PP-2000 can also store a spare 44-round magazine in the gun butt, allowing it to function as a rigid shoulder stock.

Game Information: RKA 1d6+1, 20 Charges (+1/4), Autofire (5 shots; +1/2) (35 Active points); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4), Limited Range (100m; -1/4). Total cost: 12 points.

Options:

1) 7N31 +P+ Ammunition: Add Armor Piercing. 40 Active Points; total cost 13 points.

2) 44-Round Extended Magazine: Increase Charges to 44. 40 Active Points; total cost; 13 points.

3) 44-Round Extended Magazine Used As A Stock: Increase the Charges to two Clips of 44 Charges each, and add the following: +1 versus Range Modifiers (1 Active point); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4). 46 Active Points; total cost 16 points.

SEBURO C-25A

Effect: RKA 2d6, Autofire (5 shots)
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 300m
Charges: 50
STR Min: 12

Description: Sebuero, based in Japan, is noted for their unique, unconventional, and almost organic weapon designs, and the C-25A is no exception. Easily recognizable by its smooth curves and bottom-mounted helical feed magazine, its used by certain sections of the Japanese special forces, and is rapidly becoming the SMG of choice for multinational security teams around the world.

Game Information: RKA 2d6, 50 Charges (+1/2), Autofire (5 shots; +1/2) (60 Active points); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 22 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) **plus** +1 versus Range Modifiers (1 Active point); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 24 points.

Rifles

BERETTA CX4 STORM

Effect: RKA 1d6+1
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 200m
Charges: 15
STR Min: 12

Description: Meant for the law-enforcement, personal defense, and sporting markets, the Cx4 Storm series of carbines features a compact and ergonomic design. Chambered for various forms of pistol-caliber ammunition, the Cx4 accepts many of Beretta's pistol magazines, thus allowing for a smaller loadout and more ammunition for all of the user's weaponry. The standard cartridge for the Cx4 is 9mm, but it can also use .40 S&W and .45 ACP rounds. When using 9mm ammunition, magazines of ten or fifteen rounds are possible. Use of .40 S&W limits the shooter to eleven rounds, while .45 ACP allows only eight.

Game Information: RKA 1d6+1, 15 Charges (+0) (20 Active points); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 7 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) **plus** +1 versus Range Modifiers (1 Active point); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 9 points.

Options:

1) .40 S&W Ammunition: Use the following:

Beretta Cx4 Storm (.40 S&W): RKA 1d6+1 (20 Active points); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), 11 Charges (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 7 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) **plus** +2 versus Range Modifiers (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 9 points.

2) .45 ACP Ammunition: Use the following:

Beretta Cx4 Storm (.45 ACP): RKA 2d6-1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4) (31 Active points); OAF (-1), 8 Charges (-1/2), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 9 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) **plus** +2 versus Range Modifiers (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 11 points.

BERETTA RX4 STORM

Effect: RKA 2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 300m
Charges: 30
STR Min: 13

Description: Part of Beretta's "Storm" family of firearms (which includes the Px4 pistol and the Cx4 carbine), the Rx4 rifle uses 5.56mm cartridges. As its semi-automatic design precludes any serious military use, the Rx4 target market is law-enforcement agencies and private security firms in need of a hard-hitting and accurate firearm.

Game Information: RKA 2d6, 30 Charges (+1/4), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4) (45 Active points); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 16 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) **plus** +2 versus Range Modifiers (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 18 points.

Options:

1) Civilian Model: Reduce the number of Charges to 5. 41 Active Points; total cost 12 points.

KEL-TEC RIFLE, FORWARD-EJECTION, BULLPUP

Effect: RKA 2d6+1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 350m
Charges: 20
STR Min: 15

Description: Produced by Kel-Tec Industries, this semi-automatic rifle is primarily meant for the target-shooting and sportsmen markets. However, the powerful punch of the 7.62mm round has led to its adoption in some law-enforcement units. The weapon itself comes in variety of styles, with three different barrel lengths (18, 24, and 32 inches), two magazine sizes (ten and twenty rounds), and even multiple calibers (including 5.56x45mm, 6.8x43mm, and 7.62x39mm).

As its name implies, the RFB ejects spent cartridges to the front of the weapon, allowing it to be easily used by either right- or left-handed shooters.

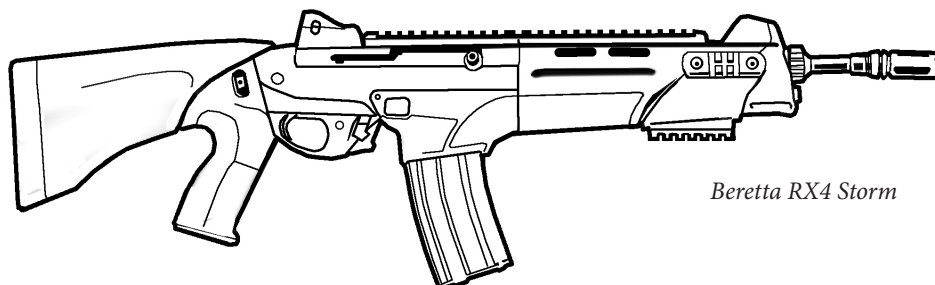
Game Information: RKA 2d6+1, 20 Charges (+1/4), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4) (52 Active points); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 19 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) **plus** +2 versus Range Modifiers (2 Active Points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 21 points.

Options:

- 1) 10 Round Magazine:** Reduce Charges to 10. 48 Active Points; total cost 17 points.
- 2) 18" Barrel:** Reduce to +1 versus Range Modifiers. 55 Active Points; total cost 21 points.
- 3) 32" Barrel:** Increase to +2 OCV. 58 Active Points; total cost 22 points.
- 4) 5.56x45mm Ammunition:** Reduce to 2d6 RKA. 49 Active Points; total cost 18 points.
- 5) 6.8x43mm Ammunition:** Reduce to 2d6 RKA and remove +1 Increased STUN Multiplier. 48 Active Points; total cost 18 points.
- 6) 7.62x39mm Ammunition:** Reduce to 2d6 RKA. 41 Active Points; total cost 15 points.

BERETTA PX4 STORM

For the Px4 Storm, use the stats for the Beretta Model 8000 found on page 242 of *Dark Champions*. The Px4 comes in 9x19mm, .40 S&W, and .45 ACP. The 9mm model has 17 shots, the .40 has 14, and the .45 has either 9 or 10.



Beretta RX4 Storm

Assault Rifles

BUSHMASTER ADAPTIVE COMBAT RIFLE

Effect: RKA 2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier, Autofire (5 shots)
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 300m
Charges: 30
STR Min: 12

Description: An amalgamation of various modern rifle designs, the Bushmaster ACR combines elements from such diverse sources as the AR-18, the FN SCAR, the H&K G36, and the M16 into one complete package. This, combined with the ACR's durability, ease of breakdown/reassembly, and ambidextrous operating capabilities has led to the rifle becoming quite popular with many mercenary and security units.

Game Information:

24 Bushmaster Adaptive Combat Rifle: RKA 2d6, 30 Charges (+1/4), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Autofire (5 shots; +1/2) (60 Active points); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 22 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) **plus** +2 versus Range Modifiers (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point)

7 Flash Suppressor: Invisible Power Effects (Invisible To Sight Group, muzzle-flash only; +1/4) for up to 60 Active Points of RKA (15 Active Points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4)

Total cost: 31 points.

Options:

- 1) 7.62mm Ammunition:** Increase to RKA 2d6+1. 91 Active Points, total cost 34 points.
- 2) 5.56mm Civilian/Law-Enforcement Model:** Remove Autofire. 60 Active Points, total cost 27 points.
- 2) 7.62mm Civilian/Law-Enforcement Model:** Remove Autofire. 69 Active Points, total cost 31 points.

FABRIQUE NATIONALE SPECIAL FORCES COMBAT ASSAULT RIFLE

Effect: RKA 2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier, Autofire (5 shots)
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 300m
Charges: 30
STR Min: 14

Description: Designed specifically for military special forces, the Special Forces Combat Assault Rifle, or SCAR, comes in two calibers, the 5.56mm SCAR-L and 7.62mm SCAR-H. Both models utilize polymers in the construction of the stock, pistol grip, and lower

receiver housing, as well as multiple attachment rails for sights, flashlights, forward vertical grips, and similar accessories. In addition, both the SCAR-L and the SCAR-H can accept the FN40GL grenade launcher module (see page 109).

Game Information:

27 Fabrique Nationale Special Forces Combat

Assault Rifle: RKA 2d6, 30 Charges (+1/4), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Autofire (5 shots; +1/2) (60 Active points); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 22 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) **plus** +2 versus Range Modifiers (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point)

7 Flash Suppressor: Invisible Power Effects (Invisible To Sight Group, muzzle-flash only; +1/4) for up to 60 Active Points of RKA (15 Active Points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4)

Total cost: 31 points.

Options:

- 1) FN SCAR-H:** Increase to RKA 2d6+1, reduce to 20 Charges. 91 Active Points, total cost 34 points.
- 2) FN I6S:** Civilian/law-enforcement version of the SCAR-L. Remove Autofire. 60 Active Points, total cost 27 points.
- 3) FN I7S:** Civilian/law-enforcement version of the SCAR-H. Remove Autofire. 69 Active Points, total cost 31 points.

HECKLER & KOCH 416

Effect: RKA 2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier, Autofire (5 shots)
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 300m
Charges: 30
STR Min: 14

Description: The H&K 416 carbine was designed as a replacement for the M4, utilizing various components from H&K's other firearms (such as the G36). Known for its reliability, the 416 is currently in use with numerous military special forces and corporate security units around the world.

Mounting rails allow for numerous accessories to be fitted to the body of the 416, such as the M320 grenade launcher (see page 109).

Game Information:

27 Heckler & Koch 416: RKA 2d6, 30 Charges (+1/4), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Autofire (5 shots; +1/2) (60 Active points); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 22 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) **plus** +2 versus Range Modifiers (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point)

7 Flash Suppressor: *Invisible Power Effects (Invisible To Sight Group, muzzle-flash only; +1/4) for up to 60 Active Points of RKA (15 Active Points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4)*

Total cost: 31 points.

Options:

1) Heckler & Koch 417: The 417 is a heavier, battle rifle version of the 416, using the 7.62mm cartridge. It has a smaller magazine, but adds an integrated silencer with a selector switch allowing it to be turned off when not needed.

2) Heckler & Koch 417: RKA 2d6+1, 20 Charges (+1/4), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Autofire (5 shots; +1/2) (70 Active points); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 25 points) plus +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) plus +2 versus Range Modifiers (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point)

7 Flash Suppressor: *Invisible Power Effects (Invisible To Sight Group, muzzle-flash only; +1/4) for up to 70 Active Points of RKA (17 Active Points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4)*

7 Selectable Silencer: *Invisible Power Effects (Inobvious to Hearing Group; +1/4) for up to 70 Active Points of RKA (17 Active Points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4)*

Total cost: 41 points.

2) MR223: Civilian/law-enforcement version of the 416. Remove Autofire. 60 Active Points, total cost 27 points.

3) MR308: Civilian/law-enforcement version of the 417. Remove Autofire and Invisible to Hearing Group. 73 Active Points, total cost 28 points.

JINSEI M-60 PULSE RIFLE

Effect: RKA 2d6+1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier, Autofire (5 shots)

Target: One character

Duration: Instant

Range: 350m

Charges: 60

STR Min: 15

Description: Slightly smaller and lighter than its more famous brother, the M-100 (see below), Jinsei's M-60 sports an integral laser sight and an impressive sixty-round magazine. The M-60 is standard armament for MegaTokyo SWAT teams.

Game Information:

35 Jinsei M-60 Pulse Rifle: RKA 2d6+1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Invisible to Sight Group, Source Only (no shell casings as evidence; +1/4), 60 Charges (+1/2), Autofire (5 shots; +1/2) (87 Active points); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 32 points) plus +2 OCV (4 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 2 points) plus +1 versus Range Modifiers (1 Active point); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point)

3 Laser Sight: +2 OCV (4 Active points); OAF (-1), Only +1 OCV Unless User Braces Or Sets (-1/2), Limited Range (128m; -1/4), Not In Adverse Conditions (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) plus +8 versus Range Modifiers (8 Active points); OAF (-1), Only +4 Versus Range Modifiers Unless User Braces Or Sets (-1/2), Limited Range (128m; -1/4), Not In Adverse Conditions (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 2 points)

Total cost: 40 points.

JINSEI M-100 PULSE RIFLE

Effect: RKA 2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier, Armor Piercing, Autofire (5 shots)

Target: One character

Duration: Instant

Range: 600m

Charges: 100

STR Min: 16

Description: This massive battle rifle is unarguably the most advanced of its kind. Utilizing specially designed explosive-tipped caseless rounds, the M-100 carries twice as much ammunition as its chief rival, the G11. It features a pump-action over-and-under grenade launcher, using specially designed, high-yield 20mm grenades. Rumor has it this was the rifle Mitsumi had in mind when they designed their Puma Class Security Synthetic.

Game Information:

39 Jinsei M-100: Multipower, 97-point reserve; all slots OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)

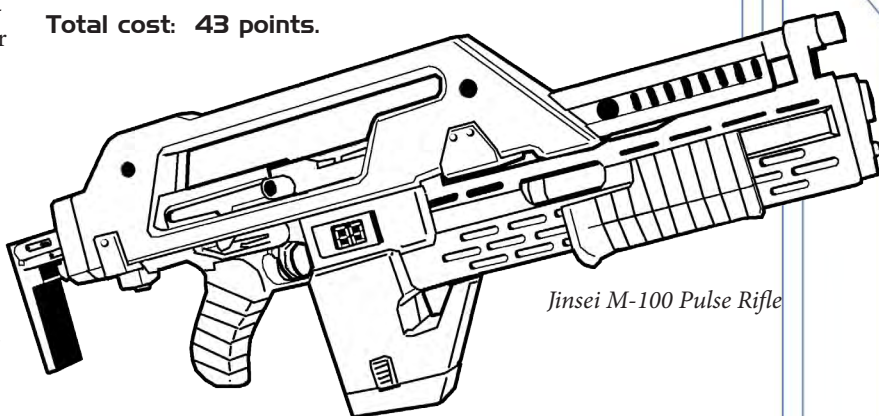
3f 1) 10mm Caseless Explosive Tipped: RKA 2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Invisible to Sight Group (no shell casings as evidence; +1/4), Armor Piercing (+1/4), Autofire (5 shots; +1/2), Increased Maximum Range (x2 or 600m; +1/4), 100 Charges (+3/4); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)

If 2) 20mm High-Yield Grenade Launcher: RKA 2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Area of Effect (14m Radius Explosion; +1/4); OAF (-1), 6 Charges (-3/4), Minimum Range (20m; -1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)

2 Inherent Accuracy: +2 OCV (4 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4)

1 Inherent Accuracy: +1 versus Range Modifiers (1 Active point); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4)

Total cost: 43 points.



Jinsei M-100 Pulse Rifle

SEBURO MN-23

Effect: RKA 2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier, Autofire (5 shots)

Target: One character

Duration: Instant

Range: 300m

Charges: 25

STR Min: 12

Description: One of the most advanced and modern assault rifles produced today, the MN-23 was designed specifically for use by MegaTokyo SWAT teams and has since spread to many other law-enforcement and security units. While it features a slightly smaller than normal magazine (25 rounds), it makes up for it with accuracy. In addition, the MN-23 has a number of standard features, including a sight-mounted camera, under-barrel flashlight, and attachment points for a silencer, scopes, and lanyard. The MN-23 is also designed to accept a wide variety of ammunition types, such as electric and rubber bullets.

Game Information:

- 27 Sebuero MN-23:** RKA 2d6, 25 Charges (+1/4), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Autofire (5 shots; +1/2) (60 Active points); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 22 points) **plus** +2 OCV (4 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 2 points) **plus** +1 versus Range Modifiers (1 Active point); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point)
- 2 Camera:** Adjacent (Sight Group) (5 Active points); 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (battery pack, easy to obtain, 1 Hour (-0), OAF (-1) [1 cc]
- 6 Flashlight:** Sight Group Images, +4 to PER Rolls, Area of Effect (2m radius; +1/4) (27 Active points); 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (battery pack, easy to obtain, 1 Hour (-0), OAF (-1), Only To Create Light (-1), Limited Range (20m"; -1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4)

Total cost: 35 points.

Shotguns**MONOLITH ARMS P-12**

Effect: RKA 2 1/2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier, Reduced Penetration, Reduced By Range

Target: One character

Duration: Instant

Range: 40m

Charges: 20

STR Min: 11

Description: This pump-action shotgun features a transparent in-line magazine that lies along the barrel. While the feed system limits the size of shell the P-12 can accept, the sheer quantity of shots more than makes up for it. As a bonus, spent shells are ejected from the bottom of the weapon, allowing it to be easily used by either right- or left-handed shooters.

Game Information: RKA 2d6+1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), 20 Charges (+1/4), Area Of Effect (1m Radius; +1/4) (61 Active points); OAF (-1), Limited Range (40m; -1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), Reduced By Range (-1/4), Reduced Penetration (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4). Total cost: 19 points.

NEOSTEAD 2000

Effect: RKA 2 1/2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier, Reduced Penetration, Reduced By Range/RKA 2 1/2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier, Reduced Penetration, Reduced By Range

Target: One character

Duration: Instant

Range: 40m

Charges: 6/6

STR Min: 12

Description: The Neostead utilizes a revolutionary feed system that sets two six-round magazines side-by-side. A simple flick of a lever and the user can switch from one magazine to another!

Game Information:

- 18 Neostead 2000:** Multipower, 60-point reserve; all slots OAF (-1), Limited Range (40m; -1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), Reduced By Range (-1/4), Reduced Penetration (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)
- If 1) Magazine 1:** RKA 2 1/2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Area Of Effect (1m Radius; +1/4); OAF (-1), 6 Charges (-3/4), Limited Range (40m; -1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), Reduced By Range (-1/4), Reduced Penetration (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)
- If 2) Magazine 2:** RKA 2 1/2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Area Of Effect (1m Radius; +1/4); OAF (-1), 6 Charges (-3/4), Limited Range (40m; -1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), Reduced By Range (-1/4), Reduced Penetration (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)

Total cost: 20 points.

Options

- 1) Variable Ammunition:** See *Dark Champions* pages 210-214 for information on various forms of shotgun ammunition. The Neostead can load each magazine with a different ammunition type; switching between the two would be a Zero Phase Action.

SRM ARMS MODEL 1216

Effect: RKA 2 1/2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier, Reduced Penetration, Reduced By Range

Target: One character

Duration: Instant

Range: 40m

Charges: 16

STR Min: 12

Description: The Model 1216 is a semi-automatic shotgun with a unique in-line under-barrel magazine. The magazine itself has four tubes, each holding four rounds. When a tube empties, it automatically rotates to the next tube. This allows for a large supply of am-

munition without the need for a bulky box magazine. Shorter-barreled variants of the Model 1216 offer twelve and eight round magazines with three and two rounds per tube respectively.

Game Information: *RKA 2 1/2d6, 16 Charges (+0), Charges Broken Up Into Four Tubes, With A Limited Number Of Charges Per Tube (see Description; +0), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Area Of Effect (1m Radius; +1/4) (60 Active points); OAF (-1), Limited Range (40m; -1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), Reduced By Range (-1/4), Reduced Penetration (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4). Total cost: 18 points.*

Options:

- 1) **12 Round Magazine:** Reduce the number of Charges to 12. 60 Active Points; total cost: 17 points.
- 2) **8 Round Magazine:** Reduce the number of Charges to 8. 60 Active Points; total cost: 16 points.

Grenade Launchers

FN4OGL

Effect: 135 STR; Only To Make Standing Or Prone Throws Of Grenades
Target: Hex
Duration: Instant
Range: 400m
Charges: 1
STR Min: 8

Description: The FN40GL is a 40mm grenade launcher designed to be used with the FN SCAR series of rifles. The chamber opens to the side of the rifle, allowing for automatic ejection of a grenade casing as well as the use of longer than normal grenades. In addition, the FN40GL's trigger is set right below the trigger for the FN SCAR, allowing the user to fire a grenade without needing to move his hand off of the rifle's pistol grip.

Game Information: *135 STR, Increased Maximum Range (x4 or 400m; +1/2) (202 Active points); 1 Charge (-2), Only To Make Standing Or Prone Throws Of Grenades (-2), OAF (-1), Minimum Range (30m) (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 30 points) plus +1 versus Range Modifiers (1 Active point); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1). Total cost: 31 points.*

GENERAL DYNAMICS M307 ADVANCED CREW-SERVED WEAPON

Effect: RKA 2d6+1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier, Explosive
Target: Hex
Duration: Instant
Range: 2,000m
Charges: 37
STR Min: 13

Description: Created as a replacement for the venerable Mark 19 automatic grenade launcher, the M307 is tripod-mounted, requires only a two-man crew, and can launch high-yield, air-bursting 25mm am-

munition at targets up to 2,000 meters away. Not surprisingly, it's a popular option for Exo-Suit pilots involved in urban pacification.

The M307 uses the targeting computer described on pages 236-237 of *Dark Champions*.

Game Information: *RKA 2d6+1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Area Of Effect (16m Radius Explosion; +1/4), Autofire (3 shots; +1/4), Non-Standard Attack Power (+1), Increased Maximum Range (x6 or 2,000m; +3/4), 37 Charges (+1/2), (140 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1 1/2), Crew-Served (2 people; -1/4), Minimum Range (50m; -1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 40 points) plus +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF Bulky (-1 1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) plus +2 versus Range Modifiers (2 Active points); OAF Bulky (-1 1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) plus +3 versus Recoil Modifiers with RKA (3 Active points); OAF (-1), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (+1 to firearm's Hearing PER Roll modifier; -1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 43 points.*

JINSEI M-100 GRENADE LAUNCHER

Effect: RKA 2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier, Explosive
Target: Hex
Duration: Instant
Range: 300m
Charges: 6
STR Min: 16

Description: The Jinsei M-100 grenade launcher uses proprietary high-yield 20mm munitions to achieve impressive results. They are fed into a tube magazine set under the barrel and loaded via pump-action. The trigger is located next to the M-100's rifle trigger, allowing for rapid access and no need to change hand position.

Game Information: *RKA 2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Area Of Effect (14m Radius Explosion; +1/4) (45 Active points); OAF (-1), 6 Charges (-3/4), Minimum Range (20m; -1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4). Total cost: 13 points.*

HECKLER & KOCH M320

Effect: 135 STR; Only To Make Standing Or Prone Throws Of Grenades
Target: Hex
Duration: Instant
Range: 400m
Charges: 1
STR Min: 8

Description: The M320 is a single-shot 40mm grenade launcher that can be mounted to any number of assault rifles (such as the H&K 416 or 417 series), or can be used as a stand-alone weapon with the addition of an optional buttstock. It features a sideways opening chamber allowing for the use of modern 40mm grenades rounds, many of which are longer than late twentieth century designs.

WHERE ARE THE STATS FOR 40MM GRENADES?

See pages 250-251 of
Dark Champions.

Game Information: 135 STR, Increased Maximum Range (x4 or 400m; +1/2) (202 Active points); 1 Charge (-2), Only To Make Standing Or Prone Throws Of Grenades (-2), OAF (-1), Minimum Range (30m) (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 30 points) **plus** +1 versus Range Modifiers (1 Active point); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1). Total cost: 31 points.

NEOPUP PERSONAL ASSAULT WEAPON-20

Effect: RKA 2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier, Explosive

Target: One character

Duration: Instant

Range: 1000m

Charges: 7

STR Min: 13

Description: The PAW-20 is a hand-held semi-automatic grenade launcher. It uses a seven-round box magazine, and is notable for having the pistol grip and trigger mechanism mounted alongside the weapon, rather than under it. It normally uses high explosive rounds that detonate on impact, but can be loaded with a variety of ammunition types, including incendiary and rubber. The weapon is normally equipped with a collimating sight, but can accept targeting **options**, such as a laser sight, telescopic scope, or targeting computer.

Game Information:

22 Neopup Personal Assault Weapon-20: RKA 2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Area of Effect (14m Radius Explosion; +1/4), Increased Maximum Range (x4 or 1000m; +1/2) (60 Active Points); OAF (-1), 7 Charges (-1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 20 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) **plus** +2 versus Range Modifiers (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point)

5 Collimating Sight: +2 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Only When Shooter Braces And/Or Sets (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4), Limited Range (250m; -1/4) (total cost: 1 point) **plus** +10 versus Range Modifiers (10 Active points); OAF (-1), Only When Shooter Braces And/Or Sets (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4), Limited Range (250m; -1/4) (total cost: 3 points) **plus** +2 PER with Sight Group (4 Active Points); OAF (-1), Only When Shooter Braces And/Or Sets (-1), Only To Counteract Darkness Penalties (-1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point)

Total cost: 27 points.

Anti-Materiel Rifles

BARRETT XM109

Effect: RKA 4d6+1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier, Increased Maximum Range, Armor Piercing

Target: One character

Duration: Instant

Range: 3,600m

Charges: 5

STR Min: 25

Description: The Barrett XM109 is considered by some to be the pinnacle of Anti-Materiel Rifle evolution. Chambered for 25 x 59mm cartridges, with an effective range of two kilometers, the XM109 is the weapon of choice for those who want or need to engage lightly-armored vehicles, cyberdroids, APEX Suits, and Exo-Suits at long ranges. In addition, while a heavy weapon (the rifle itself weighs in at fifteen kilos), the XM109 is compact enough to be shoulder-fired by any cyborg with a sufficiently reinforced frame. About the only drawback to the XM109 is the size of the magazine.

The XM109 uses the targeting computer described on pages 236-237 of *Dark Champions*.

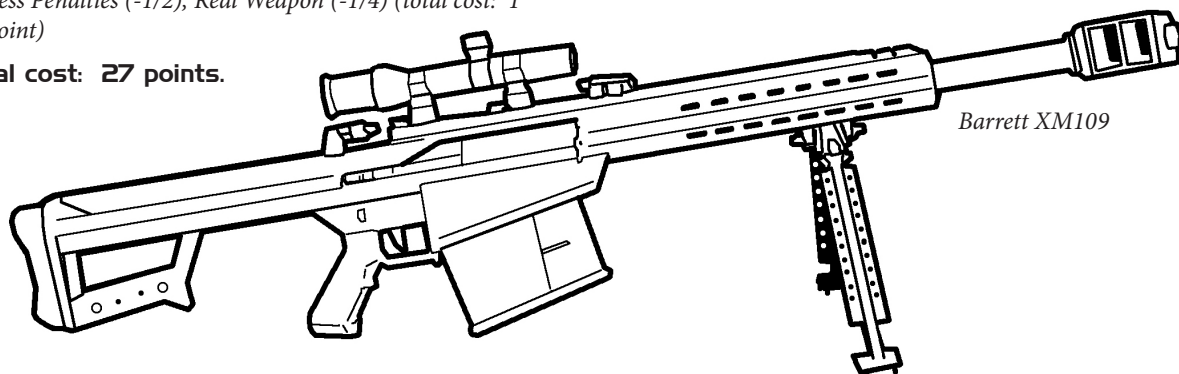
Game Information:

44 Barrett XM109: RKA 4d6+1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Increased Maximum Range (x6 or 3,600m; +3/4), Armor Piercing (+1/4) (135 Active points); OAF (-1), 5 Charges (-3/4), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 39 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) **plus** +4 versus Range Modifiers (4 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 2 points)

15 Flash Suppressor: Invisible Power Effects (Invisible To Sight Group, muzzle-flash only; +1/4) for up to 130 Active Points of RKA (34 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4)

1 Muzzle Brake: +2 versus Recoil Modifiers with RKA (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (+1 to firearm's Hearing PER Roll modifier; -1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4)

Total cost: 60 points.



Barrett XM109

DENEL NTW-20

Effect: RKA 3d6+1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier, Increased Maximum Range

Target: One character

Duration: Instant

Range: 2,000m

Charges: 3

STR Min: 16

Description: This South African bolt-action weapon is longer, heavier, and has fewer shots than the XM109, but it does have one major advantage: it's far cheaper. This has granted the Denel a certain degree of popularity throughout portions of Africa, the Middle East, and South America, where it sees use as a long range sniper rifle.

The Denel NTW-20 normally comes with x8 Telescopic Sight, found on page 234 of *Dark Champions*.

Game Information:

24 Denel NTW-20: RKA 3d6+1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Increased Maximum Range (x4 or 2,000m; +1/2) (87 Active points); 3 Charges (-1 1/4), OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 22 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) **plus** +3 versus Range Modifiers (3 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point)

I Muzzle Brake: +2 versus Recoil Modifiers with RKA (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (+1 to firearm's Hearing PER Roll modifier; -1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4)

Total cost: 25 points.

Options:

I) 20x83.5mm/20x110mm Ammunition: Increase to RKA 4d6+1. Decrease range to 1,500m. 110 Active Points; total cost: 30 points.

STEYR INFANTRY WEAPON SYSTEM 2020

Effect: RKA 4 1/2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier, Increased Maximum Range, Armor Piercing

Target: One character

Duration: Instant

Range: 5,000m

Charges: 5

STR Min: 25

Description: An updated version of the Steyr IWS 2000, the 2020 fires a massive 25 mm Armor-Piercing Fin-Stabilized Discarding Sabot round. The actual penetrator is made from self-sharpening metallic glass laced with tungsten wires, resulting in superior armor penetration at all ranges.

While primarily designed to be a cyborg-portable weapon, the IWS 2020 can be used by unmodified humans, provided they brace the weapon with the

included bipod and buttstock-mounted leg. Attempting to fire the ISW 2020 from the shoulder is not recommended.

The Steyr IWS-2020 normally comes with x10 Telescopic Sight, found on page 234 of *Dark Champions*.

Game Information:

58 Steyr Infantry Weapon System: RKA 4 1/2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Armor Piercing (+1/4), Invisible Power Effects (Invisible to Sight Group, no rifling marks on bullet; +1/4), Increased Maximum Range (x8 or 5,000m; +1) (192 Active points); OAF (-1), 5 Charges (-3/4), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 50 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) **plus** +4 versus Range Modifiers (4 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 2 points)

I Muzzle Brake: +3 versus Recoil Modifiers with RKA (3 Active points); OAF (-1), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (+1 to firearm's Hearing PER Roll modifier; -1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4)

Total cost: 59 points.

Energy Weapons**OTOMO MAN-PORTABLE ELECTRON WEAPON**

Effect: Blast 8d6/Blast 4d6 NND

Target: One character

Duration: Instant

Range: 400m

Charges: 30 Boostable

STR Min: 12

Description: Similar in concept to Otomo's MPLW (see page 112), the MPEW consists of a large (and heavy) rifle and backpack-mounted power supply. These weapons fire stream of electrons along a laser "carrier" beam, damaging targets through various heat and electrical effects. They have two settings; the standard setting delivers a potentially lethal energy discharge, while 'stun' incapacitates via a strong shock. While the weapons are of limited use against espers, APEX Suits, and Exo-Suits, they have proven to be effective as crowd control weaponry, especially when scaled up for an Exo-Suit.

Game Information:

24Otomo MPEW Mark I: Multipower, 40-point reserve, all slots 30 Boostable Charges (+1/2); all slots OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)

If I) Standard Setting: Blast 8d6; OAF (-1), Does Not Work In Vacuum, In Water, In Magentic Fields, Or Against Targets Encased In Metal (-1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)

2f2) Stun Setting: Blast 4d6, NND (defense is being in a vacuum, under water, within a magnetic field, inside a metal casing, or having ED Resistant Protection that Costs Endurance; +1); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)

OTOMO DIRECT ENERGY FIREARMS, INC.

Based in Japan, with research and manufacturing centers in Hong Kong, Alta California, United North America, the United States of America, and Germany (in the European Union), Otomo Direct Energy Firearms (a.k.a. ODEF, Inc.) is the leader in advanced energy weapon design and production. Although their products are highly innovative, they are also quite expensive and, in some cases, less effective than traditional projectile weapons. However, their undeniable effectiveness against espers has resulted in a certain degree of popularity for the company's products.

2 Laser Pilot Beam: +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) plus +2 versus Range Modifiers (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point)

Total cost: 29 points.

Options

I) Otomo MPEW Mark II: Increase each slot to 50 Active Points, decrease to 20 Charges. Total cost: 39 points.

OTOMO MAN-PORTABLE ION WEAPON

Effect: Blast 10d6
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 500m
Charges: 30
STR Min: 12

Description: A popular anti-esper weapon, ion weapons fire bolts of super-heated ionized gas, inflicting damage through kinetic and heat energy transfer to the target. Known colloquially as “blasters,” the MPIW produces a brightly-glowing beam when fired, with a highly-distinctive ‘crack’ sound. This has resulted in their popularity as a weapon of intimidation, especially against crowds, mobs, and rioters. As with other Otomo energy weapons, the MPIW requires a backpack power supply.

Game Information: *Blast 10d6, 30 Charges (+1/4) (62 Active points); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 22 points) plus +2 OCV (4 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 2 points) plus +2 versus Range Modifiers (2 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 25 points.*

Options

I) Otomo MPIW Mark II: Increase to Blast 12d6, decrease to 15 Charges. 60+4+2 Active Points; total cost 22+2+1 = 25 points.

OTOMO MAN-PORTABLE LASER WEAPON

Effect: RKA 3d6+1, Armor Piercing, -1 STUN
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 1,000m
Charges: 20
STR Min: 8

Description: The Otomo MPLW is the world’s first man-portable, battlefield-capable laser weapon. Designed to be fired from the shoulder, the MPLW includes a foldout targeting scope and a battery pack that can either be slung over the shoulder or hooked into a soldier’s support harness. Extremely accurate and capable of defeating all known personal body armors, the MPLW’s extremely high cost has prevented it from becoming a common component of many corporate arsenals

Game Information: *RKA 3d6+1, Armor Piercing (+1/4) Increased Maximum Range (x2 or 1,000m; +1/4), 20 Charges (+1/4) (87 Active points); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4), -1 Decreased STUN Multiplier (-1/4), No Knockback (-1/4) (total cost: 27 points) plus +2 OCV (4 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 2 points) plus +4 versus Range Modifiers (4 Active points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 2 points). Total cost: 31 points.*

Options

I) Otomo MPLW Mark II: Increase to RKA 4d6, decrease to 10 Charges. 90+4+4 Active Points; total cost 26+2+2 = 30 points.

TASER INTERNATIONAL TASER XREP PISTOL

Effect: Blast 5d6 + Blast 8d6 NND
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 20m
Charges: 6
STR Min: 5

Description: Meant primarily as a self-defense weapon, the TI XREP (eXtended Range Electronic Projectile) Pistol fires self-contained electrical-discharge payloads, each capable of disabling a would-be attacker. The pistol itself is primarily made from polymers, making it lightweight, durable, and corrosion resistant. Pulling the trigger releases a cocked spring, which propels the XREP round twenty meters. Loading a new round simply requires the user to pull the barrel housing back, which will bring up a fresh round and cock the spring.

Game Information: *Blast 5d6, Invisible to Sight Group (no shell casings as evidence; +1/4) (31 Active Points); OAF (-1), 6 Charges (-3/4), Beam (-1/4), Limited Range (20m; -1/4), No Knockback (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 8 points) plus Blast 8d6, Invisible to Sight Group (no shell casings as evidence; +1/4), NND (any form of Resistant ED or fully insulated target; +0) (50 Active Points); OAF (-1), 6 Charges (-3/4), Beam (-1/4), Limited Range (20m; -1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) (total cost: 13 points). Total cost: 21 points.*

KAZEI 5 MELEE WEAPONS TABLE

Weapon	OCV	Damage	STUNx	STR MIN	A/R Cost	Length	Notes
Shock Glove	0	2d6 N	—	5	34/11	S	plus Blast 3d6 NND
Shock Stick	0	3d6 N	—	8	5	9/28	Spplus Blast 6d6 NND

For a full explanation of the columns and notation on this table, please see page 163-166 of *Fantasy Hero*.

Melee Weapons

Characters can carry any of the melee weapons described on pages 257 of *Dark Champions* or pages 168-172 of *The Ultimate Martial Artist* if they so desire.

SHOCK GLOVE

Effect: HA 2d6/Blast 3d6 NND
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: Touch
END Cost/Charges: 0/6
STR Min: 5

Description: Shock gloves are heavily reinforced and allow the wearer to deliver punishing blows. They also project a taser-like electrical shock each time a target is struck, allowing one to easily overpower an opponent. Shock gloves and shock sticks (see the next entry) are commonly found among corporate security forces, as they allow for the non-lethal capture of intruders.

Game Information: HA +2d6, *Reduced Endurance* (0 END; +1/2) (15 Active Points); *Hand-To-Hand Attack* (-1/4), OIF (-1/2), STR Minimum (-1/2), *Real Weapon* (-1/4) (total cost: 6 points) **plus** Blast 3d6, NND (defense is insulated ED; +1/4) (19 Active Points); 6 Charges (-3/4), OIF (-1/2), No Range (-1/2), STR Minimum (-1/2), *Real Weapon* (-1/4) (total cost: 5 points). Total cost: 11 points.

SHOCK STICK

Effect: HA 3d6/Blast 6d6 NND
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: Touch
END Cost/Charges: 0/12
STR Min: 8

Description: Also known as a shock baton, shock sticks are meter-long clubs often used for riot control. Aside from the ability to render an unmodified human unconscious with a single blow, shock sticks have been known to short out certain forms of cyberware.

Game Information: HA +3d6, *Reduced Endurance* (0 END; +1/2) (22 Active Points); *Hand-To-Hand Attack* (-1/4), OIF (-1/2), STR Minimum (-1/2), *Real Weapon* (-1/4) (total cost: 9 points) **plus** Blast 6d6, NND (defense is insulated ED; +1/4) (37 Active Points); OIF (-1/2), No Range (-1/2), STR Minimum (-1/2), 12 Charges (-1/4), *Real Weapon* (-1/4) (total cost: 12 points). Total cost: 28 points.

Options

I) Stronger Shock Baton: Increase to Blast 8d6 NND. 72 Active Points; total cost: 26 points.

“Katana are very popular among street samurai, probably due to the name and thematic connections. Cyber blades are equally popular, to the point of being considered a trademark of the profession. Many learn martial arts, and often will become quite the devastating expert in unarmed combat. Of course, this all means squat when you put a bullet in them from across the room.”

— Sandra Blackmore’s guide to life

CREATING MELEE WEAPONS FOR KAZEI 5

Melee weapons for *Kazei 5* use the following standard Limitations: OAF (-1), *Real Weapon* (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/2).

As with ranged weapons, the STR Minimum Limitation is a flat value, but otherwise behaves as described on pages 478-479 of *Hero System 6th Edition, Volume 2*. The *Real Weapon* Limitation works as described on page 480 of the same book.

CREATING EXO-SUIT WEAPONS FOR KAZEI 5

Exo-Suit weapons for Kazei 5 use the following standard Limitations: *Charges* (value varies), *OAF* (-1), *Real Weapon* (-1/4).

As Exo-Suit weaponry is scaled for use by Exo-Suits, the STR Minimum Limitation doesn't apply. However, due to the size, weight, and output of most Exo-Suit weapons, an Exo-Suit needs at least a 30 STR to effectively use them (this can be considered part of the Limitation Real Weapon).

"When outfitting your Exo-Suit keep in mind your operating environment. Gunpods are great versus infantry, but less so against other Exo-Suits or heavier armor. On the other hand, a recoilless rifle is good for hunting armor, but not so good against ground troops."

— Staff Sergeant Joshua Tora

Exo-Suit Weapons

Virtually all of the heavy weapons listed on page 252 of *Dark Champions* are suitable as Exo-Suit weaponry. Additional Exo-Suit specific weapons are presented here.

7.62 GUNPOD

Effect: RKA 2d6+1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier, Autofire (5 shots)
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 1,400m
Charges: 1,500

Description: Gunpods are modular units containing a heavy machinegun and an extended ammunition belt. They can be fixed to the back of an Exo-Suit or attached to the forearm (sometimes with the ammo feed running to a back-mounted bin). They are popular with pilots operating in urban areas and are often shoulder-mounted in pairs. A common option is to have a twin-mount 7.62 gunpod on one shoulder and a similar 12.7 twin-mount on the other.

Game Information: RKA 2d6+1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Autofire (10 shots; +1), Increased Maximum Range (x4 or 1,400 m; +1/2), 1500 Charges (+1), (131 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), Limited Arc Of Fire (180 Degrees forward; -1/4) (total cost: 51 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) total cost: 1 point **plus** +4 versus Range Modifier (4 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 2 points). Total cost: 51 points.

Options:

- 1) **7.62 Anti-Armor Gunpod:** Reduce RKA to 2d6, add Armor Piercing. 126 Active Cost; total cost 47 points.
- 2) **12.7 Heavy Gunpod:** Increase RKA to 3d6, decrease Charges to 750. 175 Active Cost; total cost 64 points.
- 3) **12.7 Anti-Armor Heavy Gunpod:** Reduced RKA to 3d6-1, add Armor Piercing. 166 Active Cost; total cost 61 points.

AVMFT-105

Effect: RKA 4d6, Armor Piercing, Continuous, Sticky; RKA 4d6 Armor Piercing, Continuous, Sticky
Target: 120m Line/62m Cone
Duration: Instant/Instant
Range: No Range
Charges: 12

Description: An immense flamethrower, the AVMFT is too large to be carried by an Exo-Suit and must be either shoulder-mounted or (as is more often the case), the fuel tank is placed on the back of the suit with a fuel feed running to a forearm-mounted nozzle. Common in urban pacification campaigns, the AVMFT is normally used to clear buildings or to incinerate wide areas of mixed cover. A pilot can continue to project flames as long as the fuel holds out (hence the Continuous Advantage), but care must be taken on the choice of targets. If firing at a target within 6 meters or if firing into the wind, there's an 11- chance the fuel will be blown or splash back onto the Exo-Suit, doing 2d6 Killing Damage.

Game Information:

72 AVMFT-105: Multipower, 180-point reserve, all slots OIF Bulky (-1), 12 Charges (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4)

6f1) Firebolt: RKA 4d6, Armor Piercing (+1/4), Area Of Effect (120m Line; +1), Constant (+1/2) (165 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Limited Arc Of Fire (180 Degrees forward; -1/4), No Range (-1/2), No Knockback (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), Side Effects (see text; +0) **plus** RKA 1 point, Constant (+1/2), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2), Sticky (anyone or anything flammable touching the target also catches on fire; +1/2), Uncontrolled (lasts until flammable material affected by RKA 4d6 is consumed or a Full Phase is spent putting out the flames; +1/2) (15 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4)

6f2) Wide-Angle Firebolt: RKA 4d6, Armor Piercing (+1/4), Area Of Effect (62m Cone; +1), Constant (+1/2) (165 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Limited Arc Of Fire (180 Degrees forward; -1/4), No Range (-1/2), No Knockback (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), Side Effects (see text; +0) **plus** RKA 1 point, Constant (+1/2), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2), Sticky (anyone or anything flammable touching the target also catches on fire; +1/2), Uncontrolled (lasts until flammable material affected by RKA 4d6 is consumed or a Full Phase is spent putting out the flames; +1/2) (15 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4)

Total cost: 84 points.

KAZEI 5 EXO-SUIT WEAPONS TABLE

Weapon	Caliber	OCV	RMod	Damage	STUNx	Shots	A/R Cost	Notes
SHOTGUNS								
7.62 Gunpod	7.62x51mm	+1	+4	2d6+1	+1	1500	120/44	AF10, IMR, LAOF
7.62 Anti-Armor Gunpod	7.62x51mm	+1	+4	2d6	+1	1500	126/47	AF10, AP, IMR, LAOF
12.7 Heavy Gunpod	12.7x99mm	+1	+4	3d6	+1	750	175/64	AF10, IMR, LAOF
12.7 Anti-Armor Heavy Gunpod	12.7x99mm	+1	+4 3	d6-1	+1	750	166/61	AF10, AP, IMR, LAOF
AVMFT-105	—	+0	+0	4d6E	+0	12	180/84	See text
LM-12 Autocannon	12.7x99mm	+1	+4	3d6	+1	100	163/59	AF10, IMR
LM-20 Autocannon	20x83.5mm	+1	+4	4d6	+1	75	186/67	AF5, IMR
LM-25 Autocannon	25x59mm	+1	+4	4d6+1	+1	50	168/61	AF3, IMR
Otomo ESEW	—	+1	+2	15d6 N E	—	60	79/63	Boostable Charges, LAOF
	—	+1	+2	10d6 N E	—	60 -	-	AF5, Boostable Charges, LAOF
	—	+1	+2 7	d6 NND	—	60	—	Boostable Charges, LAOF
Otomo ESIW	—	+1	+4	16d6 N	—	40	126/47	LAOF
RCL-90 Recoilless Rifle	90mm	+1	+3	7d6+1	+1	5	197/61	AP, IMR, LAOF
RPM-6 Rocket Pod	2.5"	+0	+0	2d6X	+0	6	120/30	AF6, AP, IMR
XM-297 Carbine	30mm	+1	+3	4 1/2d6	+1	30	110/37	
XM-298 Assault Rifle	30mm	+1	+2	3 1/2d6	+1	40	128/43	AF3, AP

KEY

AF: Autofire (number indicates number of shots per burst)

AP: Armor Piercing

E: Energy

ESIW: Man-Portable Ion Weapon

ESEW: Man-Portable Electron Weapon

IMR: Increased Maximum Range

LAOF: Limited Arc Of Fire

mm: millimeter

N: Normal Damage

NND: No Normal Defense

X: Explosion

LM-12 AUTOCANNON

Effect: RKA 3d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier, Autofire (10 shots)

Target: One character

Duration: Instant

Range: 1,800m

Charges: 100

Description: The LM series of autocannons are the Exo-Suit equivalent of an assault rifle. They come with a shoulder stock, pistol grip, and ammunition bin standard. Other options include under-barrel spotlights, flash suppressors, and recoil compensators. The LM-12, using 12.7mm ammunition, is the most common model and popular among pilots facing infantry. The LM-20 and LM-25 tend to be used to destroy lightly armored vehicles and other Exo-Suits.

Game Masters may wish to allow some cyborgs to use the LM series of weapons as well. Said cyborg would have to be a full-conversion model with a STR of at least 30 (with 35 recommended).

Game Information: RKA 3d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Autofire (10 shots; +1), Increased Maximum Range (x4 or 1,800m; +1/2), 100 Charges (+3/4) (157 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1 1/2), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 57 points) **plus** +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF Bulky (-1 1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4) total cost: 1 points) **plus** +4 versus Range Modifier (4 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1 1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 59 points.

Options:

1) LM-20: Increase to RKA 4d6, decrease Autofire to 5 Shots, decrease Charges to 75. 186 Active Cost; total cost 67 points.

2) LM-25: Increase to RKA 4d6+1, decrease Autofire to 3 Shots, decrease Charges to 50. 168 Active Cost; total cost 61 points.

OTOMO EXO-SUIT ELECTRON WEAPON

Effect: Blast 15d6/EB 10d6, Autofire (5 shots)/EB 7d6 NND

Target: One character

Duration: Instant

Range: 750m

Charges: 60

Description: A scaled-up version of the Otomo MPEW, it's commonly used versus espers, although the stun setting has made it popular for crowd and riot control. It is only available in a shoulder-fired model, although Otomo is working on a hand-held rifle version.

Game Information:

52 Otomo ESEW: Multipower, 75-point reserve, all slots 60 Boostable Charges (+3/4) (131 Active Points); all slots OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4), Limited Arc Of Fire (180 Degrees forward; -1/4)

3f 1) Standard Setting: Blast 15d6 (75 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Does Not Work In Vacuum, In Water, In Magnetic Fields, Or Against Targets Encased In Metal (-1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4)

3f 2) Burst Setting: Blast 10d6, Autofire (5 shots; +1/2) (75 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Does Not Work In Vacuum, In Water, In Magentic Fields, Or Against Targets Encased In Metal (-1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4)

3f 3) Stun Setting: Blast 7d6, NND (defense is being in a vacuum, under water, within a magnetic field, inside a metal casing, or having ED Resistant Protection that Costs Endurance; +1) (70 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4), Limited Arc Of Fire (180 Degrees forward; -1/4)

2 Laser Pilot Beam: +1 OCV (2 Active points); OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) plus +2 versus Range Modifier (2 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point)

Total cost: 63 points.

OTOMO EXO-SUIT ION WEAPON

Effect: Blast 16d6
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 800m
Charges: 40

Description: Another popular anti-esper weapon, the ESIW is also used to drop cyberdroids, shred lightly-armored vehicles, and smash down building walls. It hasn't seen a great deal of military use, mainly due to its lack of penetrating power and the highly distinctive "crack" made by the bolts of ionized gas. As with the ESEW, the ESIW can only be shoulder-mounted, although Otomo is working on a more portable version.

Game Information: Blast 16d6, 40 Charges (+1/2) (120 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), Limited Arc Of Fire (180 Degrees forward; -1/4) (total cost: 44 points) plus +1 OCV (2 Active points); OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) plus +4 versus Range Modifier (4 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 2 points). Total cost: 47 points.

RCL-90 RECOILLESS RIFLE

Effect: RKA 7d6+1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier, Armor Piercing
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 2,200m
Charges: 5

Description: This shoulder-mounted weapon uses a rotating cylinder to store additional rounds of ammunition. Primarily used to destroy other Exo-Suits, there are a wide variety of other payloads possible, including HE (high explosive), HEAP (high-explosive armor piercing), incendiary, smoke, and so on.

As the RCL-90 stores rounds in a rotatable cylinder, GMs may want to consider allowing a character to purchase his RCL-90 as a Multipower, with each slot a different type of shell.

Game Information: RKA 7d6+1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Armor Piercing (+1/4), Increased Maximum Range (x2 or 2,200m; +1/4) (192 Active

Points); OIF Bulky (-1), 5 Charges (-3/4), Limited Arc Of Fire (180 Degrees forward; -1/4) Real Weapon (-1/4), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (Side Effect only affects the environment near the character; has a backblast of an RKA 1d6, Area of Effect (8m Cone) behind it; +0) (total cost: 59 points) plus +1 OCV (2 Active points); OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) plus +3 versus Range Modifier (3 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 points). Total cost: 61 points.

RPM-6 ROCKET POD

Effect: RKA 2d6, Increased Maximum Range, Armor Piercing, Autofire (6 shots)
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 2,625m
Charges: 6

Description: The RPM-6 is a shoulder-mounted missile launcher. It fires clusters of 2.5" rockets, and is often used to saturate an open area with shrapnel, destroy lightly-armored vehicles, or blow apart small structures.

Game Information: RKA 2d6, Increased Maximum Range (x8 or 2,400m; +1), Armor Piercing (+1/4), Area of Effect (14m Radius Explosion; +1/4), Autofire (5 shots; can fire all 6 rockets in one burst; +1 1/2) (120 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), 6 Charges (-3/4), Extra Time (Extra Segment, travels at a rate of 400m per Segment, taking a minimum of one Extra Segment to reach its target; -1/2), Limited Arc Of Fire (180 Degrees forward; -1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), Minimum Range (10m; -1/4). Total cost: 30 points.

XM-297 CARBINE

Effect: RKA 4 1/2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 700m
Charges: 30

Description: This heavy, short-barreled weapon is popular with Exo-Suit pilots the world over. The XM-297's small size makes it highly suitable for use in an urban environment, and it's commonly found among police and corporate security forces. There are numerous variations of the XM-297 available, including the fully automatic XM-298. In addition, the 30mm round is well-suited to various alternative ammunition types, such as air bomb, armor piercing, baton/beanbag, explosive, and so on (see pages 210-212 of *Dark Champions* for more).

Game Information: RKA 4 1/2d6, 30 Charges (+1/4), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4) (105 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1 1/2), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 41 points) plus +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF Bulky (-1 1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) plus +3 versus Range Modifier (3 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1 1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 37 points.

Options:

- I) XM-298 Assault Rifle:** *RKA 3 1/2d6, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Armor Piercing (+1/4), Autofire (3 shots; +1/4), 40 Charges (+1/2) (124 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1 1/2), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 41 points) plus +1 OCV (2 Active points); OAF Bulky (-1 1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point) plus +2 versus Range Modifier (2 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-1 1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 43 points.*

PROTECTIVE GEAR

Advances in plastics, composites, and nanotechnology have allowed for the development of several forms of flexible and lightweight soft body armor, collectively known as “ballistic cloth.” Kevlar, once the most common form of body armor, has given way to newer, more advanced materials, such as Spectracloth and Vectran. Both fabrics are lighter and stronger than Kevlar, and are used to make various forms of armored coats, vests, and long coats. Biosteel, produced in the same nanofactories that make replicated humans, is twice as strong as Spectracloth or Vectran, yet still supple enough to be made into fully covering bodysuits. Finally, carbon nanotube plates can be inserted into many vests and coats for added protection.

Heavier, or “hard,” armors use a mixture of carbon nanotubes, boron carbide, and graphite ceramics, usually sandwiched together with polyethylene. Formed into a series of articulated plates, it’s normally worn over a biosteel bodyglove. The most basic form of hard armor is the clamshell vest, which covers from the shoulders to the groin. Full suits are also available and offer the best protection modern technology has to offer, short of opting for an APEX Suit.

On the other end of the scale is synthleather, a replicated leather grown in sheets. Used to make clothing such as jackets, pants, boots, and dusters, it’s tough enough to withstand most everyday abuses. However, it offers no protection versus firearms.

Noticing a dull ache in her left side, Shoko looked down to find two round chips, like tiny craters, in her CBA. Bullet impact points, she realized with a shock. She’d been hit twice during the firefight and hardly even noticed! The ceramic polymer that made up her CBA was sure something. She hated to think what would have happened to her without it...

— Shoko’s given a firsthand demonstration of the value of good body armor.

Synthleather

SYNTHLEATHER CLOTHING

Effect: Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED) on various locations, 0 DEF Versus Firearms
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END: 0

Description: Typically worn by street gangs (or street gang wannabes), synthleather is also the clothing of choice for motorcyclists and those who want to project an outlaw image while still remaining fashionable. Capable of being made into boots, jackets, duster-like long coats, and pants, synthleather can be dyed a variety of colors, engraved with various patterns, and is commonly decorated with a variety of chains and zippers.

The Game Information below is for synthleather boots, see options for other articles of clothing.

Game Information: *Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED) (6 Active Points); Required Roll 9- (locations 16-18; -1 1/2), OIF (-1/2), Limited Power (0 DEF Versus Firearms; -1/2), Real Armor (-1/4). Total cost: 2 points.*

Options:

- I) Jacket:** Change to Requires A Roll 11- (locations 7-12; -1). 6 Active Cost; total cost 2 points.
2) Long Coat: Change to Requires A Roll 12- (locations 7-16; -3/4). 6 Active Cost; total cost 2 points.
3) Pants: Change to Requires A Roll 10- (locations 13-16; -1 1/4). 6 Active Cost; total cost 2 points.

Spectracloth/Vectran/Biosteel

SPECTRACLOTH BOOTS

Effect: Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED)
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END: 0

Description: Made from sheets of Spectracloth with a thin synthleather outer shell and a reinforced sole, these boots are popular among bikers due to their durability. For those wishing even greater protection, these boots can also be made with a biosteel core.

Game Information: *Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED) (12 Active Points); Required Roll 9- (locations 16-18; -1 1/2), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4). Total cost: 4 points.*

Options:

- I) Biosteel Boots:** Increase the DEF to 5. 15 Active Cost; total cost 5 points.

CREATING PROTECTIVE GEAR FOR KAZEI 5

Body armor in Kazei 5 uses the following standard Limitations: *Requires A Roll* (value varies), *Focus* (value varies), *Real Armor* (-1/4).

In order to capture the flavor of most anime, the use of mass and encumbrance rules for armor is not recommended. However, the Real Armor Limitation does mean personal body armor takes more than a Phase to put on or take off, can be uncomfortable to wear in warm weather for extended periods, can interfere with swimming, and so on.

KAZEI 5 ARMOR TABLE

SYNTHLEATHER

Name	DEF	Location	A/R	Notes
Boots	2	16-18	6/2	OIF, 0 DEF Versus Firearms (-1/2)
Jacket	2	7-12	6/2	OIF, 0 DEF Versus Firearms (-1/2)
Long Coat	2	7-16	6/2	OIF, 0 DEF Versus Firearms (-1/2)
Pants	2	13-16	6/2	OIF, 0 DEF Versus Firearms (-1/2)

SPECTRACLOTH/VELTRAN

Boots	4	16-18	12/4	OIF
Jacket, Level I	4	7-12	12/4	OIF
Jacket, Level II	7	7-12	21/8	OIF
Jacket, Level III	9	7-12	27/10	OIF
Jacket, Lined	+3	10-12	9/3	OIF, Rigid Inserts
Long Coat, Level I	4	7-16	12/5	OIF
Long Coat, Level II	7	7-16	21/8	OIF
Long Coat, Level III	9	7-16	27/11	OIF
Long Coat, Lined	+3	10-13	9/3	OIF, Rigid Inserts
Pants, Level I	4	13-16	12/4	OIF
Pants, Level II	7	13-16	21/7	OIF
Pants, Level III	9	13-16	27/9	OIF
Vest, Level I	4	9-12	12/4	IIF
Vest, Level II	7	9-12	21/8	IIF
Vest, Level III	9	9-12	27/10	IIF
Vest, Lined	+3	10-12	9/3	IIF, Rigid Inserts

BIOSTEEL

Bodysuit, Level I	5	7-17	15/7	IIF
Bodysuit, Level II	8	7-17	24/11	IIF
Bodysuit, Level III	10	7-17	30/13	IIF
Boots	5	16-18	15/5	OIF
Jacket, Level I	5	7-12	15/5	OIF
Jacket, Level II	8	7-12	24/9	OIF
Jacket, Level III	10	7-12	30/11	OIF
Jacket, Lined	+3	10-12	9/3	OIF, Rigid Inserts
Long Coat, Level I	5	7-16	15/6	OIF
Long Coat, Level II	8	7-16	24/10	OIF
Long Coat, Level III	10	7-16	30/12	OIF
Long Coat, Lined	+3	10-13	9/2	OIF, Rigid Inserts
Pants, Level I	5	13-16	15/5	OIF
Pants, Level II	8	13-16	24/8	OIF
Pants, Level III	10	13-16	30/10	OIF
Vest, Level I	5	9-12	15/5	IIF
Vest, Level II	8	9-12	24/9	IIF
Vest, Level III	10	9-12	30/11	IIF
Vest, Lined	+3	10-11	9/3	IIF, Rigid Inserts

LEVEL I SPECTRACLOTH JACKET

Effect:	Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED)
Target:	Self
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END:	0

Description: Spectracloth clothing is an extremely popular fashion choice among all walks of life, mainly due to the perceived security inherent in wearing the clothing, as well as the implied connotations as to why someone would need to wear a ballistic cloth jacket. Reasonably flexible, Spectracloth and Vectran clothing comes in all shapes, styles, and sizes, from short waist-length jackets to long dusters that come down past the knees.

Virtually all forms of Spectracloth clothing can be had in biosteel. Although more expensive, it offers greater protection and is more supple, and thus not as obvious. For those who require additional defensive measures, carbon nanotube panels can be inserted into the fabric to protect the wearer's torso and groin.

Game Information: *Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED) (12 Active Points); Required Roll 11- (locations 7-12; -1), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4). Total cost: 4 points.*

Options:

- 1) Level II Spectracloth Jacket:** Increase the DEF to 7. 21 Active Cost; total cost 8 points.
- 2) Level III Spectracloth Jacket:** Increase the DEF to 9. 27 Active Cost; total cost 10 points.
- 3) Level I Biosteel Jacket:** Increase the DEF to 5. 15 Active Cost; total cost 5 points.
- 4) Level II Biosteel Jacket:** Increase the DEF to 8. 24 Active Cost; total cost 9 points.
- 5) Level III Biosteel Jacket:** Increase the DEF to 10. 30 Active Cost; total cost 11 points.
- 6) Level I Spectracloth Long Coat:** Change to Requires A Roll 12- (locations 7-16; -3/4). 12 Active Cost; total cost 5 points.
- 7) Level II Spectracloth Long Coat:** Change to Requires A Roll 12- (locations 7-16; -3/4), increase the DEF to 7. 21 Active Cost; total cost 8 points.
- 8) Level III Spectracloth Long Coat:** Change to Requires A Roll 12- (locations 7-16; -3/4), increase the DEF to 9. 27 Active Cost; total cost 11 points.
- 9) Level I Biosteel Long Coat:** Change to Requires A Roll 12- (locations 7-16; -3/4), increase the DEF to 5. 15 Active Cost; total cost 6 points.
- 10) Level II Biosteel Long Coat:** Change to Requires A Roll 12- (locations 7-16; -3/4), increase the DEF to 8. 24 Active Cost; total cost 10 points.
- 11) Level III Biosteel Long Coat:** Change to Requires A Roll 12- (locations 7-16; -3/4), increase the DEF to 10. 30 Active Cost; total cost 12 points.
- 12) Carbon Nanotube Inserts:** *Resistant Protection (3 PD/3 ED) (9 Active Points); Required Roll 10- (locations 10-13; -1 1/4), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4). Total cost: 3 points.*

KAZEI 5 ARMOR TABLE (CONT)

HARD ARMOR

Name	DEF	Location	A/R	Notes
Ceramic Clamshell Vest, Level I	10	9-12	30/11	OIF
Ceramic Clamshell Vest, Level II	11	9-12	33/12	OIF
Ceramic Clamshell Vest, Level III	12	9-12	36/13	OIF
Ceramic Clamshell Vest, Level IV	12	9-12	45/16	OIF, Hardened (+1/4)
Light Ballistic Armor	12	6-18	36/18	OIF
Complete Ballistic Armor	13	6-18	49/24	OIF, Hardened (+1/4)
Security Armor, Level I	9	6-18	27/13	OIF
Security Armor, Level II	10	6-18	30/15	OIF
Security Armor, Level III	11	6-18	33/18	OIF

HELMETS

Helmet, Light	6	4-5	18/5	OIF
Helmet, Standard	8	4-5	24/7	OIF
Helmet, Riot	8	4-5	33/9	OIF, DEF 3 Faceplate
Helmet, Full	13	3-5	49/15	OIF, Hardened (+1/4)

LEVEL I SPECTRACLOTH PANTS

Effect: Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED)
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END: 0

Description: Similar in design and concept to ballistic cloth jackets, Spectracloth pants offer complete protection for the lower legs. They are thicker than regular trousers, and when combined with a matching jacket may draw the attention of police and security forces, who tend to suspect anyone wearing that much armored clothing of expecting or looking for trouble. For those who desire more subtlety, biosteel is recommended instead.

Game Information: *Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED) (12 Active Points); Requires A Roll 10- (locations 13-16; -1 1/4), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4). Total cost: 4 points.*

Options:

- 1) **Level II Spectracloth Pants:** Increase the DEF to 7. 21 Active Cost; total cost 7 points.
- 2) **Level III Spectracloth Pants:** Increase the DEF to 9. 27 Active Cost; total cost 9 points.
- 3) **Level I Biosteel Pants:** Increase the DEF to 5. 15 Active Cost; total cost 5 points.
- 4) **Level II Biosteel Pants:** Increase the DEF to 8. 24 Active Cost; total cost 8 points.
- 5) **Level III Biosteel Pants:** Increase the DEF to 10. 30 Active Cost; total cost 10 points.

LEVEL I SPECTRACLOTH VEST

Effect: Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED)
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END: 0

Description: Armored vests are a popular choice among corporate officials, bodyguards, retrievers, and the like, as they offer personal protection without being obvious about it. Designed to be worn under other forms of armored clothing, most vests can accept carbon nanotube inserts for additional protection.

Game Information: *Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED) (12 Active Points); Requires A Roll 11- (locations 9-12; -1), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4). Total cost: 4 points.*

Options:

- 1) **Level II Spectracloth Vest:** Increase the DEF to 7. 21 Active Cost; total cost 8 points.
- 2) **Level III Spectracloth Vest:** Increase the DEF to 9. 27 Active Cost; total cost 10 points.
- 3) **Level I Biosteel Vest:** Increase the DEF to 5. 15 Active Cost; total cost 5 points.
- 4) **Level II Biosteel Vest:** Increase the DEF to 8. 24 Active Cost; total cost 9 points.
- 5) **Level III Biosteel Vest:** Increase the DEF to 10. 30 Active Cost; total cost 11 points.
- 12) **Carbon Nanotube Inserts:** These are rigid plates covering the character's torso. They are bought as follows:
Carbon Nanotube Inserts: *Resistant Protection (3 PD/3 ED) (9 Active Points); Requires A Roll 9- (locations 10-12; -1 1/2), IIF (-1/4), Real Armor (-1/4). Total cost: 3 points.*

ARMOR AND PC INVULNERABILITY

Sufficiently armored PCs may come across as nearly invulnerable to any sort of conventional damage. Game Masters who wish to avoid this issue in their campaign should consider the following:

1) Unless already listed in the Game Information section, none of the protective gear listed here can have the *Hardened* Advantage added. Cyborgs shouldn't have *Hardened* defenses either, unless they're fairly large and bulky full-conversion combat models. The same goes for mecha.

2) Don't be afraid to use the different forms of ammunition on pages 201-208 of *Dark Champions*. Many of these variant types of ammunition grant the *Armor Piercing* Advantage or increase the basic round's Damage Classes (or both).

3) Take a look at the 1 BODY for 20 STUN rule on page 295.

LAYERING ARMOR

It is possible for characters to layer some types of armor on top of others. Jackets, for example, can go over an armored vest, while a ceramic clamshell vest can easily be worn over a biosteel bodysuit. Other forms of armor, such as the Ballistic and Security Armor, include a biosteel body suit, and can't be layered.

For simplicity's sake, characters should only count the highest DEF value or any overlapping armor. However, GMs may want to use the following optional rule: In order to derive any benefit from layered armor, the outer layer of armor must have a DEF value equal to or higher than the inner layer. If this is the case, then the character can apply 1/2 of the DEF of the inner layer of armor to the DEF of the outer layer or armor.

Example: Shion Nys's normal combat dress is a Level IV Ceramic Clamshell Vest (DEF 12, Hit Locations 9-13) worn over a Level II Biosteel Bodysuit (DEF 8, Hit Locations 7-17). Since the Clamshell Vest's DEF is higher than Bodysuit's, she can add 1/2 of the Bodysuit's 8 DEF to the Clamshell's 12 DEF, giving her a total of 16 DEF in Hit Locations 9-13.

Game Masters should pay careful attention to how much armor characters are trying to layer. The Real Armor Limitation allows you to disallow certain

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LEVEL I BIOSTEEL BODYSUIT

Effect: Resistant Protection (5 PD/5 ED)
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END: 0

Description: Made only from biosteel as Spectracloth isn't flexible enough, the bodysuit (or bodyglove) is designed to be formfitting and capable of being worn under regular clothing. It's also the base for many heavier armors, such as Ballistic and Security Armor (see below). Bodysuits are popular with bodyguards, undercover operatives, and street samurai.

Game Information: *Resistant Protection (5 PD/5 ED) (15 Active Points); Requires A Roll 12- (locations 7-17; -3/4), IIF (-1/4), Real Armor (-1/4). Total cost: 7 points.*

Options:

- 1) **Level II Biosteel Bodysuit:** Increase the DEF to 8. 24 Active Cost; total cost 11 points.
- 2) **Level III Biosteel Bodysuit:** Increase the DEF to 10. 30 Active Cost; total cost 13 points.

Hard Armor

LEVEL I CERAMIC CLAMSHELL VEST

Effect: Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED)
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END: 0

Description: Made from close-fitting graphite ceramics over a carbon nanotube and biosteel core, Clamshell Vests hinge over the shoulders and lock on the sides. They offer excellent protection for the entire torso and are used extensively by mercenary and security forces.

Game Information: *Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED) (30 Active Points); Required Roll 11- (locations 9-12; -1), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4). Total cost: 11 points.*

Options:

- 1) **Level II Ceramic Clamshell Vest:** Increase the DEF to 11. 33 Active Cost; total cost 12 points.
- 2) **Level III Ceramic Clamshell Vest:** Increase the DEF to 12. 36 Active Cost; total cost 13 points.
- 3) **Level IV Ceramic Clamshell Vest:** Increase the DEF to 12, add Hardened (+1/4). 45 Active Cost; total cost 16 points.

LIGHT BALLISTIC ARMOR

Effect: Resistant Protection (12 PD/12 ED)
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END: 0

Description: Light Ballistic Armor, also known as LBA, is a full suit of articulated armor, including boots and gloves. Comprised of formed armored ceramics over a biosteel bodyglove, it's some of the heaviest non-powered armor available. The next step up is Complete Ballistic Armor or CBA. Use of LBA and CBA is normally restricted to police SWAT units, corporate counter-intrusion squads, or military special forces.

Game Information: *Resistant Protection (12 PD/12 ED) (36 Active Points); Requires A Roll 14- (locations 6-18; -1/4), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4). Total cost: 18 points.*

Options:

- 1) **Complete Ballistic Armor:** Increase the DEF to 13, add Hardened (+1/4). 49 Active Cost; total cost 24 points.

LEVEL I SECURITY ARMOR

Effect: Resistant Protection (9 PD/9 ED)
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END: 0

Description: Security Armor, made from a mixture of armored plastics, ballistic cloth, and ceramics, is normally found in the hands of corporate security forces and police riot squads.

Game Information: *Resistant Protection (9 PD/9 ED) (27 Active Points); Required Roll 14- (locations 6-18; -1/4), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4). Total cost: 13 points.*

Options:

- 1) **Level II Security Armor:** Increase the DEF to 10. 30 Active Cost; total cost 15 points.
- 2) **Level III Security Armor:** Increase the DEF to 11. 33 Active Cost; total cost 18 points.

Helmets

STANDARD HELMET

Effect: Resistant Protection (8 PD/8 ED)
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
END: 0

Description: A helmet can be worn with any armor. The typical helmet is layered Kevlar, Spectacloth, and armored plastics, providing excellent protecting without excessive weight. Lighter helmets are available and are often used by security forces who aren't expected to engage in heavy combat. A riot helmet adds a transparent face shield and is normally worn with Security Armor. A full helmet is designed for use with LBA and CBA and may come with additional enhancements, such as built in low-light or thermal vision imaging.

Game Information: *Resistant Protection (8 PD/8 ED) (24 Active Points); Required Roll 8- (locations 4-5; -1 3/4), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4). Total cost: 7 points.*

Options:

- 1) Light Helmet:** Decrease the DEF to 6. 18 Active Cost; total cost 5 points.
- 2) Riot Helmet:** Add a transparent face shield. Resistant Protection (3 PD/3 ED) (9 Active Points); Required Roll 7- (locations 3; -2), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4). Total cost: 2 points.
- 3) Full Helmet:** Increase the DEF to 13, add Hardened (+1/4), change to Requires A Roll 9- (locations 3-5; -1 1/2). 49 Active Cost; total cost 15 points.

COMPUTERS AND ELECTRONICS

Just about all of the electrical headware found in the Cyberware section is available as a stand-alone device. For characters who wish to purchase such items, simply replace the *Cybersystem* and *Restrained* Limitations with the appropriate *Focus* Limitation (usually OAF, but exceptionally small or disguised gadgets might be an IAF or even IIF).

PALMTOP COMPUTER/PERSONAL DATA ASSISTANT

Just about everyone carries a small pocket computer with them at all times. Combining aspects of a cell-phone, camera, music and video player, and Net browser, the palmtop is an invaluable tool for those who wish to remain connected in the modern world. For additional palmtop options see the Cranial Computer on page 15 or the Cyberspace section. For more information on *Kazei* 5 computers, see page 180.

Palmtops are subject to cyberhacking. Simply substitute INT for EGO.

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combinations of armor as being either impracticable or simply to bulky to work effectively. You can also apply DEX and CV modifiers if, for example, someone decides to wear a DEF 10 Lined Long Coat over a DEF 10 Lined Vest. In addition, Long Coats don't fully protect the legs so attacks from certain angles might have an 11- Requires A Roll or bypass the Long Coat entirely.

Cyborgs can wear armor as well, provided they have a sufficiently normal human build (or have armored clothing custom-made for their bodies). However, GM's should carefully consider the effect of cyborgs with high DEF bodies wearing additional armor — it may make them nearly invulnerable.

PALMTOP COMPUTER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
15	DEX	10	12-	
3	OCV	0		
3	DCV	0		
5	MCV	6		
5	DMCV	6		
3	SPD	20		Phases: 4, 8, 12
Total Characteristic Cost: 50				

Cost Powers

- 10 *Intrusion Firewall:* Mental Defense (10 points total)
 10 *Cellphone:* Radio Perception/Transmission (Radio Group)

Talents

- 3 *Time Display:* Absolute Time Sense
 3 *GPS Uplink:* Bump Of Direction
 5 *Audio/Video Recorder:* Eidetic Memory
 3 *Calculator:* Lightning Calculator
 3 *Instant On:* Lightsleep

Programs

- 1 Program: Alert Owner To Scheduled Appointments
 1 Program: Connect To Wireless Network
 1 Program: Prioritize Incoming Calls/Email According To Owner Preferences
 1 Program: Search Reference Materials For Information On A Topic
 1 Program: Synchronize To External Computer (palmtop/laptop/desktop/vehicle)

Skills

- 8 AK: Local Area Information Database 18-
 2 KS: Archived Recent News 11-
 3 KS: Contacts Database 13-
 5 KS: Current News 15-
 3 KS: E-Book Database 13-
 3 KS: Movies/Video Database 13-
 3 KS: Music Database 13-
 3 PS: Personal Data Assistant 13-
 2 Systems Operation (Cellular and Digital) 13-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 74

Total Cost: 124/5 = 25/OAF (-1) = 12 points.

MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT

Characters can use any of the equipment found on pages 274-288 of *Dark Champions* or pages 385-388 of *The Ultimate Skill*. Game Masters may also consider some of the equipment found in *Gadgets And Gear* and *The Spacer's Toolkit* for inclusion in their Kazei 5 campaigns. In order to best represent the advanced nature of 2030 electronics, any gadgets taken from these sources should use the listing for "Strong" (or its equivalent) under options, if there are any for the gadget in question.

A sampling of additional campaign-specific equipment is listed below. For additional gadgets, see the Twenty-First Century Soldier character sheet on page 184.

BIOMONITOR

Effect: Detect Vital Signs, Discriminatory, Analyze
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
Charges: 1 Continuing Fuel Charge

Description: A Bioimonitor is a small computer attached to the user's belt, although some newer units are small enough to be worn on the wrist. It monitors the user's vital signs and general state of health and can perform a wireless datadump to an outside observer as needed. Biomonitorers are commonly worn by combat troops and security forces, allowing the unit's medic to quickly determine if an individual is in need of immediate medical attention. It's possible to purchase medical kits with diagnostic computers linkable to a specific Biomonitor (or monitors). See the listing below for more.

Game Information: *Detect Vital Signs 16- (Radio Group), Discriminatory, Analyze, Transmit, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (battery pack, easy to obtain, 1 Week; +0) (22 Active Points); IIF (-1/4). Total cost: 18 points.*

CUFFTAPE

Effect: Entangle 3d6, 4 DEF, Takes No Damage From Attacks
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: No Range
Charges: 30 Charges

Description: Cufftape is commonly found with riot police and those involved in crowd control. It's a small hand-held dispenser containing fifteen meters of reinforced plastic "tape." Extremely durable, the tape is difficult to cut with a knife, and is normally removed with a heated cutting tool specifically made for that purpose. One Charge is equal to .5 meters of tape and is sufficient to bind the average person's wrists. Each additional Charge used adds +1 BODY to the Entangle. Binding a target's ankles counts as a separate Entangle, and requires its own Break Out Roll.

Game Information: *Entangle 3d6 (standard effect: 3 BODY), 6 PD/4 ED, 30 Charges (+1/4), Takes No Damage From Attacks (+1/2) (70 Active Points); OAF (-1), Set Effect (Hands Only/Feet Only) (-1), Does Not Prevent The Use Of Accessible Foci (-1), No Range (-1/2), Must Follow Grab Or Target Must Be Willing (-1/2), Extra Time (Full Phase, Only to Activate, -1/4). Total cost: 13 points.*

CYBORG RESTRAINTS

Effect: Entangle 4d6, 8 DEF, Takes No Damage From Attacks
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: No Range
Charges: 1 Recoverable Charge

Description: These restraints appear as normal handcuffs, except they have three sets of cuffs linked to a central bar. They are designed to hold a combat-class replicated human or a full-conversion cyborg.

Game Information: *Entangle 4d6 (standard effect: 4 BODY), 8 PD/8 ED, Takes No Damage From Attacks (+1/2) (90 Active Points); 1 Recoverable Charge (-1 1/4), OAF (-1), Set Effect (Hands Only/Feet Only) (-1), Does Not Prevent The Use Of Accessible Foci (-1), No Range (-1/2), Must Follow Grab Or Target Must Be Willing (-1/2), Can Be Escaped Automatically With Modified Lockpicking Or Contortionist Roll (-1/2). Total cost: 13 points.*

CYBERWARE SCANNER

Effect: Detect Implanted Cyberware, Discriminatory
Target: Self
Duration: Persistent
Range: Self
Charges: 1 Continuing Charge

Description: This hand-held device looks like a narrow wand or paddle and is connected to a small data display. The user passes the wand over an individual, and a listing of any implanted cybernetics will appear on the display screen. More advanced models will ping the RF transmitter located in all cyberware, allowing the user to know not only what has been implanted, but the make and model of the cyberware. Larger models also exist; they appear as a simple arch and require the individual to walk through them. These forms of scanners are more accurate and are often combined with a weight sensor to detect cyborgs.

Game Information: *Detect Implanted Cybernetics 14- (Radio Group), Discriminatory, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (easily rechargeable or replaceable battery pack, 6 Hours; -0) (13 Active Points); OAF (scanner and wand; -1), Limited Range (1m; -1/4), Sense Affected As Sight Group As Well As Radio Group (-1/2). Total cost: 5 points.*

Options:

I) Advanced Model: Add Analyze. 18 Active Points; total cost 6 points.

2) Walk Through Model: The walk through model (normally found in the lobbies of corporate and federal buildings and in airports) looks like this:

Walkthrough Cyberware Scanner: *Detect Implanted Cybernetics* 18- (Radio Group), *Discriminatory*, *Analyze*, (21 Active Points); OIF Immobility (-1 1/2), No Range (-1/2), Sense Affected As Sight Group As Well As Radio Group (-1/2) (total cost: 6 points) plus *Detect Weight* 18- (Touch Group), *Discriminatory* (14 Active Points); OIF Immobility (-1 1/2), Sense Affected As Sight Group As Well As Radio Group (-1/2) (total cost: 5 points). Total cost: 11 points.

CYBERWARE SUPPRESSOR

Effect: Dispel 12d6, all powers with an electric cyberware special effect
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 810m
Charges: 12 Charges

Description: This device appears as a large, blocky pistol. It fires an electromagnetic pulse designed to shut down electric cybernetic systems (static systems and bioware are unaffected). Individuals who've had their kill-switches removed (defined as not having the Restrained Limitation on their cyberware) are unaffected. Rifle-like versions exist; they have larger batteries (*i.e.* more Charges) and don't suffer the signal spread of the pistol-sized models. Even larger Exo-Suit-sized suppressors are rumored to exist. They're supposed to be able to activate kill-switches over a wide area and are meant to be used in case of riots and the like.

Reactivating cyberware hit with a suppressor requires a reboot of the Cyberbrain and all systems. This takes anywhere from one to five minutes, and may require external assistance via an RF activation code.

Cyberware Suppressors can incorporate various scopes, Smartgun Links, and so on. Due to their expense, these items are fairly uncommon, and normally only found in the hands of governmental agencies or the larger multinational corporations. Care must be taken when using these items, as the pulse may have unwanted side effects on unshielded computer equipment and electronic devices.

Game Information: *Dispel* 12d6, all cyberware powers simultaneously (+4), *Area Of Effect* (2m Radius; +1/4), *Invisible Power Effects* (Invisible To Sight Group; +1/2) (207 Active Points); OAF (-1), 12 Charges (-1/4), *Real Weapon* (-1/4), *Reduced By Range* (-1/4) STR Minimum (-1/4). Total cost: 69 points.

Options:

1) Rifle-Sized Cyberware Suppressor: Increase the Charges to 24 (+1/4), remove *Reduced By Range* (-1/4). 216 Active Points; total cost 78 points.

2) Stronger Suppressor: Increase to *Dispel* 16d6. Pistol: 276 Active Points; total cost 92 points, Rifle: 288 Active Points; total cost 105 points.

3) Exo-Suit-Sized Cyberware Suppressor:

Dispel 16d6, all cyberware powers simultaneously (+4), *Area Of Effect* (40m Radius; +1 1/4), *Invisible Power Effects* (Invisible To Sight Group; +1/2), 24 Charges (+1/4) (324 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), *Limited Arc Of Fire* (180 Degrees forward; -1/4), *Real Weapon* (-1/4). Total cost: 130 points.

GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEM RECEIVER

Effect: Varies
Target: One character
Duration: Varies
Range: Self
Charges: 1 Continuing Fuel Charge

Description: An invaluable tool for soldiers, navigators, surveyors, and world travelers, a GPS Receiver links into a multitude of satellites in mid-Earth orbit in order to tell the user his exact location (to within less than a meter), as well as current altitude, facing, velocity, and even the time (including day, month, and year). Tourist models include a database of information keyed to the local area — as the user approaches a notable monument the GPS Receiver will begin to display information about it. Local retailers can pay to have their stores and restaurants included as well.

This sort of receiver can be found in stand-alone hand-held models, as part of a palmtop computer, incorporated into cybernetic headware, and is normally part of most vehicle computers. Lesser receivers will omit certain features, mainly the positional landmarks database, or have lower Skill Rolls or fewer Skill Levels with Navigation. In addition the Navigation specialty can be exchanged for another if needed.

Game Information: *Detect Exact Position On Earth, Including Current Altitude And Velocity* 16- (Radio Group), *Discriminatory*, *Analyze*, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (easily rechargeable or replaceable battery pack, 1 Day; +0) (25 Active Points); OAF (-1), *Sense Affected As Sight Group As Well As Radio Group* (-1/2) (total cost: 10 points) plus *Absolute Time Sense*, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (easily rechargeable or replaceable battery pack, 1 Day; +0) (3 Active Points); OAF (-1) (total cost: 1 point) plus *Bump Of Direction*, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (easily rechargeable or replaceable battery pack, 1 Day; +0) (3 Active Points); OAF (-1) (total cost: 1 point) plus +4 with Navigation (Land), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (easily rechargeable or replaceable battery pack, 1 Day; +0) (10 Active Points); OAF (-1) (total cost: 5 points) plus KS: *Positional Landmarks Database*, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (easily rechargeable or replaceable battery pack, 1 Day; +0) (7 Active Points); OAF (-1) 14- (total cost: 3 points). Total cost: 20 points.

DIAGNOSTIC COMPUTER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
18	DEX	16	13-	
3	OCV	0		
3	DCV	0		
5	MCV	6		
6	DMCV	9		
3	SPD	20		Phases: 4, 8, 12

Total Characteristic Cost: 59

Cost Powers

- 10 *Intrusion Firewall*: Mental Defense (10 points total)
 10 *Vital Signs Monitor*: Detect Detect Vital Signs 16- (Radio Group), Discriminatory, Analyze; No Range (-1/2)

Talents

- 3 *Time Display*: Absolute Time Sense
 3 *System Memory*: Eidetic Memory
 3 *Calculator*: Lightning Calculator
 3 *Instant On*: Lightsleep

Programs

- 1 Program: Diagnose Condition
 1 Program: Monitor Patient's Condition
 1 Program: Suggest Treatment from Database
 1 Program: Synchronize To External Biomonitor

Skills

- 8 KS: Medical Database 11-
 4 KS: Medicine 14-
 3 Paramedics 13-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 74

Total Cost: 107/5 = 21/OAF (-1) = 10 points.

Total Cost Of Medical Kit With Diagnostic Computer: 52 points.

MEDICAL KIT WITH DIAGNOSTIC COMPUTER

Effect: Varies

Target: One character

Duration: Varies

Range: Self

Charges: Varies

Description: This large tool box-sized kit contains a wide variety of supplies for almost any medical emergency. It also features a built-in Diagnostic Computer capable of monitoring a patient directly or linking to a Biomonitor. The Diagnostic Computer has a searchable medical database, or can offer diagnoses and treatments directly, based on Biomonitor input.

Smaller medical kits are available; they normally omit the diagnostic computer.

Game Information:

Cost Powers

2 Basic Medical Kit Supplies: +4 with Paramedics (8 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Turn (Post-Segment 12), -1 1/4), OAF (assorted bandages, tools, and so on; -1)

4 Syntheskin Patch: Paramedics 15- (15 Active Points); OAF (-1), Only To Stop Bleeding (-1), Extra Time (Full Phase, -1/2), 12 Charges (-1/4)

8 Painkillers: Aid STUN 1d6, Delayed Fade Rate (points fade at the rate of 5 per Minute; +1/4) (19 Active Points); OAF (-1), 12 Charges (-1/4)

8 Stimulants: Aid END 1d6, Delayed Fade Rate (points fade at the rate of 5 per Minute; +1/4) (19 Active Points); OAF (-1), 12 Charges (-1/4)

20 Broad Spectrum Poison Antidote: Healing BODY 4d6, Expanded Effect (any four Poison-affected Characteristics simultaneously; +1 1/2), Variable Effect (+1/2) (120 Active Points); Only Counteracts Upcoming Poison Damage (-2), Extra Time (1 Turn (Post-Segment 12), -1 1/4), OAF (-1), 6 Charges (-3/4)

Options:

I) Smaller Medical Kit: There are numerous variants of the medical/first aid kit. Simply remove various kit components as desired. In addition, the Diagnostic Computer and/or the other kit components can all be used as stand-alone items.

OPTICAL CAMOUFLAGE CLOAK

Effect: Invisibility to Sight Group
Target: One character
Duration: Constant
Range: Self
Charges: 1 Continuing Charge

Game Information: *Invisibility to Sight Group, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (easily rechargeable or replaceable battery pack, 6 Hours; +1/4) (25 Active Points); IAF (-1/2), Bright Fringe In Adverse Conditions (dust clouds, fog, mist, rain, smoke; -1/4), Side Effects (user will be unable to see his surroundings unless he is wearing receptor goggles; +0), Total cost: 14 points.*

Description: Used extensively by Japanese ESWAT and government security forces, an optical camouflage cloak (a.k.a. "Opti-Cam") is a sheet of polarized fabric designed to absorb and reflect light. Anyone under the cloak is rendered effectively invisible, as the cloak makes the wearer look to be part of the scenery. However, Opti-Cam isn't a perfect system. The cloak presents a slight, but noticeable fringe even in the best of conditions. In adverse environments, such as fog, mist, smoke, or standing water, the wearer will present an obvious outline. In addition, because Opti-Cam cloaks absorb light, anyone wearing one will be unable to see unless he dons specialized receptor goggles.



vehicles

No sooner had Aoi hit Route 78 than there was a car behind her. A low-slung sleek speed machine in high-gloss black that looked like it could reach orbit if you stood it on its tail. It hovered at the Mercedes Benz SL2028's rear bumper shadowing her every move. Aoi pressed on the gas, hit the clutch, shifted, and then was pushed back into her seat as the car surged forward. The SL2028 simply oozed with barely-restrained power — power she was more than happy to unleash. The only problem was the car behind her didn't seem very impressed.

With I-95 coming up Aoi let the car drift over into the right-hand lanes. She was doing well over 120, but everything was still running smooth. She hit the brake, drifted, hit the brake again, and then whipped onto the onramp, her pursuer right behind her. No matter, she was on 95 now, where she could really cut loose.

A quick glance showed another car coming up quickly on her left. She needed to time this right if she was going to make it. Another glance showed the car closing and... gun!

Without stopping to consider what she was doing, Aoi slammed on the brakes. The car behind her crunched into the back of the SL2028 as a sudden flash marked a weapon being fired. Downshifting, she pushed on the gas, the tires spinning for a moment before catching and shoving the car forward.

The SL2028 surged ahead as Aoi went from third to fourth, turning the wheel slightly so she only just clipped the adjacent car with a crunch of metal. It skidded to one side in a cloud of white smoke as her original pursuer continued after her.

The chance to finally put the 2028 through its paces made Aoi feel almost giddy. The only problem was the car behind her. Correction. Cars. She could see the second one was back in the chase and doing its best to catch up. Great, now what?

Almost as if in answer to her question a motorcycle joined in. A quick glance showed the driver crouched down over what looked to be all engine and streamlined fairings. The rider whipped in and out of traffic at a break-neck pace, closing the gap with dizzying swiftness. And the original car was back glued to her bumper. Tool.

Then the minivan cut in front of her.

Time seemed to slow. At 190 kph the van approached with frightening speed. There was no time to panic... or think really. Clutch. Brake. Shift from fifth to fourth. Turn the wheel, drift to the right. Gas. Clutch. Shift back into fifth.

The van passed in a blur, Aoi only dimly aware of its presence. The SL2028 shuddered slightly, the only indication of the battle being fought between inertia and the vehicle's inherent ground-hugging aerodynamics. Then it was behind her and she was safe... for the moment.

The following car was not so lucky. It tried to duplicate her stunt and almost made it. Almost. Clipping the back corner of the van, it seemed to explode in a spray of parts. The van itself was lifted into the air and spun in a full circle, littering the road with debris as it bounced. The motorcycle leaned this way and that as it blew past the wreckage, followed by the other car.

— Aoi Hari, Shion Nys' sometime chauffeur and valet, does her best to escape in Shion's car from unknown attackers.

The general scarcity and high price of petroleum-based fuels has caused some major changes in vehicle design. While an internal combustion engine is still the most common form of propulsion for air, land, and water vehicles, few run on pure gasoline anymore. Most vehicles have what is known as "flex-fuel" engines, which can run off various forms of fuel — usually gasoline, ethanol, and methanol. The fuel is stored in a common tank, with sensors automatically adjusting various engine components to account for the different blends of fuel in the combustion chamber.

In the inner city all-electric vehicles are common. These are usually small, two or three-seat runabouts, powered by a bank of lithium ion batteries. More advanced models use a hydrogen fuel cell to power the electric motor. Electric cars can be recharged from charging stations or by being literally "plugged in" to an accessible outlet when the driver gets home. Hydrogen fuel cells must be replenished at specific filling stations.

A compromise between flex-fuel and electricity is found in hybrid-electric vehicles. The electric batteries power the car at low speeds, while the internal combustion engine takes over at higher speeds. In addition, the act of braking helps to recharge the battery pack, reducing the need for fueling stops. Hybrid vehicles are popular with suburban commuters, while many inner-city busses and taxis are either hybrid or use compressed natural gas.

Sports cars tend to run off of pure gasoline for maximum performance. Luxury cars are often hybrid models in order to make the ride as smooth and quiet as possible. Motorcycles use electric engines for small one-man scooters, while larger, cruiser models use hydrogen fuel cells powering electric drive motors in each wheel. Sport bikes have flex-fuel engines.

Military vehicles tend to use diesel-electric hybrid engines for transports and the like, with armored combat

vehicles using specially-designed flex-fuel engines capable of burning just about any liquid fuel. Exo-Suits and APEX Suits tend to use high-yield electrical battery packs, hydrogen fuel cells, or cold fusion packs. Cyberdroids are almost exclusively powered by cold fusion.

Propeller- and rotor-driven aircraft use flex-fuel engines designed to work with specialized fuel blends. Some aircraft use biodiesel, while a few use alcohol-based fuels. Jet aircraft (such as scramjets) use specialized blends of petroleum-based fuels, combining over 1,000 chemicals in the process. Lighter-than-air vehicles normally use electric engines with solar panels along the aircraft's upper surface in order to provide supplementary power.

Watercraft use either flex-fuel or biodiesel-electric engines.

Vehicle Computers

A full-sized computer system with linked Cyberbrain is a standard accessory in all modern ground vehicles. Mounted in the vehicle's dashboard the computer features a touchscreen display set in the center of the dash above the gear shift, radio, and central climate control vents (with additional read-outs and alerts projected directly onto the windscreen). The driver can use the touch screen to access a database of music, make cellular phone calls, access local maps and the autonavigator, link a personal data assistant, or access the Net directly. In addition, the computer can be set to alert the driver of

changing weather or traffic conditions, detect potential collisions, monitor road signs (and automatically adjust the car's speed to the current limit), or scan the road for pedestrians and obstacles via an infrared night-vision interface and pattern recognition software.

More expensive cars will have a larger computer, with even more features and options (such as high-definition video display for watching movies). Cheaper cars will omit certain features, such as the cellphone, collision detection, road sign monitoring, and pedestrian detection.

Motorcycles will have much smaller computers, and in some cases omit them altogether. Cruiser or touring bikes will usually have the same sort of system as a car, while sport bikes tend to restrict themselves to small-screen displays for diagnostics, traffic and weather alerts, and map access.

Air and watercraft may have multiple computers, depending on the size of the vehicle in question. Large passenger planes, cabin cruisers, and yachts will usually have one for the crew's use, and one (or more) for passengers. The crew computer contains programs needed for vehicle operations, while the passenger computer (normally a series of terminals linked to a central server) has access to educational, entertainment, and informational programs and databases.

All vehicles have multiple smaller computers designed to control specific parts of the vehicle. These are all linked via the vehicle's Cyberbrain.

ALTERNATE FUEL ENGINES

Vehicles in 2030 can run off of additional fuels, such as compressed air, biodiesel, liquid nitrogen, liquified petroleum gas, and propane. Biodiesel is commonly used to fuel farm vehicles, construction equipment, and long-haul trucks. The other fuel sources tend to be used for small industrial vehicles, such as forklifts.

Most vehicles found in Zero Zones have been modified to use whatever is on hand, including alcohol, cooking oil, and liquid grease. Steam engines are also common. While noisy and inefficient, they have the advantage of an easily accessible fuel supply (water and wood).



VEHICLE COMPUTER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	INT	5	13-	PER Roll 13-
15	DEX	10	13-	

5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
5	MCV	6		
5	DMCV	6		

3	SPD	20		Phases: 4, 8, 12
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Total Characteristic Cost: 67

Cost Powers

15	<i>Advanced Cyberbrain:</i>	15 EGO
13	<i>Intrusion Firewall:</i>	Mental Defense (13 points total)
7	<i>Optical Object Recognition Software I:</i>	Detect Pedestrians And Road Obstacles 14- (Sight Group)
5	<i>Optical Object Recognition Software II:</i>	Detect Potential Collisions 14- (Sight Group)
14	<i>Road Sign RF Receptor:</i>	Detect Road Sign Status And Signals 16- (Radio Group), Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees)
5	<i>Infrared Nightvision Interface:</i>	IR Perception (Sight Group)
10	<i>Cellphone/Wireless Access:</i>	Radio Perception/Transmission (Radio Group)

Programs

1	Program:	Access Map Database
1	Program:	Activate Anti-Theft Program
1	Program:	Alert Driver To Scheduled Appointments
1	Program:	Alert Driver To Traffic Conditions
1	Program:	Alert Driver To Weather Conditions
1	Program:	Connect To Wireless Network
1	Program:	Cruise Control
1	Program:	Detect Pedestrians/Obstacles In/Near Road
1	Program:	Detect Potential Collisions
1	Program:	Detect Road Signs, Adjust Vehicle's Speed If Needed
1	Program:	Monitor Vehicle Status, Report Irregularities
1	Program:	Synchronize With Driver's Personal Data Assistant/Palmtop

Talents

3	<i>Time Display:</i>	Absolute Time Sense
3	<i>GPS Uplink:</i>	Bump Of Direction
5	<i>System Memory:</i>	Eidetic Memory

3	<i>Calculator:</i>	Lightning Calculator
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3	<i>Instant On:</i>	Lightsleep
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Skills

4	<i>Local Atlas:</i>	AK: Local Provinces/States 13-
3	<i>National/Continental Atlas:</i>	AK: North America 12-
6	<i>Street Atlas:</i>	CK: Local Metropolitan Area 15-
3	<i>Internal Diagnostics:</i>	Electronics 12-
3	<i>User-Defined Contacts:</i>	KS: Contacts Database 12-
3	<i>Net-Accessed News:</i>	KS: Current News 12-
3	<i>Net-Accessed Traffic:</i>	KS: Local Traffic Conditions 12-
3	<i>Net-Accessed Weather:</i>	KS: Local Weather Conditions 12-
3	<i>User's Music Collection:</i>	KS: Music Database 12-
2	<i>Driver's Manual:</i>	KS: Vehicle How-To Manuals 11-
3	<i>Internal Diagnostics:</i>	Mechanics 12-
2	<i>Net-based Autonavigator:</i>	Navigation (Land) 12-
1	<i>Basic Security Subroutines:</i>	Security Systems 8-
2	<i>Wireless Net And Cellphone Access:</i>	Systems Operation (Cellular and Digital) 12-
1	<i>Computer-Controlled Engine Functions:</i>	TF: Small Motorized Ground Vehicles

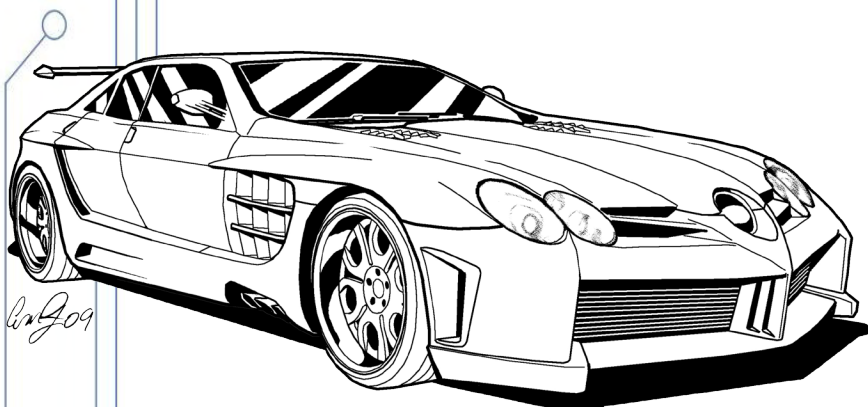
Total Powers & Skill Cost: 140

Total Cost: 207/5 = 41

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

Cost Option

+9	<i>Larger Computer:</i>	Increase DEX and INT to 18.
+10	<i>Sports Car Computer:</i>	Increase SPD to 4.
+2	<i>Entertainment Upgrade:</i>	Increase to High Range Radio Perception.
+8	<i>Autopilot:</i>	Add Combat Driving 12-, increase Navigation to 14-, add Driving Program.
+3	<i>Wetbar:</i>	Add KS: Drink Recipes.
+15	<i>Secure Cyberbrain:</i>	Increase EGO to 20, increase Mental Defense to 23.
-52	<i>Basic Vehicle:</i>	Reduce Cyberbrain to 10 EGO, Mental Defense to 8 DEF. Remove Cellphone, Contacts Database, Optical Object Recognition Software I, Optical Object Recognition Software II, Road Sign RF Receptor: Detect Road Sign Status And Signals, Infrared Nightvision Interface, and associated programs.
var	Game Masters can edit this character sheet to develop a wide variety of vehicle computers. See Police Vehicles, page 137, for a another example of a vehicle computer.	



KEY

For a full explanation of the columns and notation on this table, please see *The Ultimate Vehicle*. The Active and Real cost columns represent what is listed in the stat blocks themselves, and may not take into account such things as internal computers or accessories listed with the descriptions for individual vehicles. Game Masters should feel free to develop these vehicles as needed.

AM: Air Movement

GM: Ground Movement

LM: Limited Maneuverability

SV: Stall Velocity

KAZEI 5 VEHICLES

CARS

Name	Size	OCV+	Mass (KB)	STR	DEF	BODY	DEX	OCV	DCV	SPD	Move	MAX	Cost	Notes
Acura Majestic	6x3x3m	+3	3.2t (-10)	35	8	18	14	5	5	350m	x4	600m	128/26	+1 GM
BMW 851i	5x2.5x2.5m	+2	1.6t (-8)	30	4	16	18	6	6	354m	x4	648m	167/33	
Ford Entrust	4x2x2xm	+2	800kg (-6)	30	3	14	15	5	5	340m	x4	480m	87/17	
Honda Arrow	4x2x2xm	+2	800kg (-6)	25	3	13	23	8	8	458m	x4	928m	158/32	+3 GM
Honda Plex	3.2x1.6x1.6m	+1	400kg (-4)	20	2	11	13	4	4	326m	x4	312m	72/14	
Jinsei Kage	4x2x2xm	+2	800kg (-6)	25	5	14	25	5	5	470m	x4	1120m	178/36	+3 GM
Lexus LS2200	5x2.5x2.5m	+2	1.6t (-8)	30	6	15	16	5	5	344m	x4	528m	103/21	+1 GM
Lincoln Millenium	5x2.5x2.5m		+21.6t (-8)	30	4	14	15	5	5	354m	x4	328m	95/19	
Mercedes-Benz SL2028 AMG	5x2.5x2.5m	+2	1.6t (-8)	33	12	16	24	8	8	470m	x4	1120m	293/59	+3 GM
Nissan 600ZX Turbo	4x2x2xm	+2	800kb (-6)	25	3	13	22	7	7	452m	x4	832m	141/28	+2 GM
Nissan IC Sport	4x2x2xm	+2	800kg (-6)	25	3	13	15	5	5	330m	x4	360m	78/16	
Toyota August	5x2.5x2.5m	+2	1.6t (-8)	30	3	14	14	5	5	334m	x4	408m	82/16	

MOTORCYCLES

BMW E800ST	2.5x1x1m	+0	200kg (-2)	15	4	11	18	6	6	434m	x4	540m	105/18	+2 GM
BMW S1200RT	2.5x1x1m	+0	200kg (-2)	15	4	11	20	7	7	440m	x4	640m	123/22	+2 GM
BMW M1400R	2.5x1x1m	+0	200kg (-2)	15	4	11	21	7	7	444m	x4	704m	127/22	+2 GM
Harley Davidson Century Sportster	2.5x1x1m	+0	200kg (-2)	18	4	12	18	6	6	442m	x4	672m	120/21	+1 GM
Honda CBR1300RR	2.5x1x1m	+0	200kg (-2)	15	4	12	22	7	7	456m	x4	896m	136/24	+2 GM
Jinsei Tanto	2.5x1x1m	+0	200kg (-2)	15	4	11	18	6	6	436m	x4	576m	103/18	+1 GM
Jinsei Wakizashi	2.5x1x1m	+0	200kg (-2)	15	4	11	20	7	7	444m	x4	704m	122/21	+1 GM
Jinsei Katana	2.5x1x1m	+0	200kg (-2)	15	4	11	22	6	6	450m	x4	768m	133/24	+2 GM
Jinsei Nodachi	2.5x1x1m	+0	200kg (-2)	20	4	12	24	8	8	468m	x4	1088m	164/30	+3 GM
Kawasaki Shinobi XS-162	.5x1x1m	+0	200kg (-2)	15	4	11	22	7	7	464m	x4	1024m	170/25	+3 GM
Suzuki GTX2000E	2.5x1x1m	+0	200kg (-2)	20	4	13	21	7	7	460m	x4	960m	140/25	+2 GM
Vespa Hopper	2x1x1m	+0	100kg (-0)	10	3	10	15	5	5	322m	x4	264m	65/12	
Yamaha XTR1000	2.5x1x1m	+0	200kg (-2)	15	4	11	23	8	8	452m	x4	832m	146/26	+2 GM

TRUCKS AND OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

Isuzu Warrior	5x2.5x2.5m	+2	1.6t (-8)	35	4	15	17	5	5	348m	x4	576m	108/22	+3 GM (off-road)
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FIXED-WING PLANES

Boeing Blended Wing Body 848	64x32x32m	+1	03.2kt (-30)	88	5	30	15	5	5	370m	x16	3360m	209/42	SV 34m, +4 AM
Cessna C990	8x4x4m	+4	6.4t (-12)	25	4	16	18	6	6	330m	x8	1440m	142/28	SV 30m
Lear 95	16x8x8m	+6	51.2t (-18)	48	6	20	18	6	6	332m	x32	3072m	169/34S	V 16m

TILTROTOR PLANES

Gunkoku Hachidori	12x6x6m	+5	25.6t (-16)	42	4	18	18	6	6	454m	x8	1728m	178/35	+2 AM
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HELICOPTERS

Bell 530 Twinranger1	2x6x6m	+5	25.6t (-16)	37	9	18	20	7	7	432m	x4	1024m	219/44	+2 AM
Gunkoku Tori	8x4x4m	+4	6.4t (-12)	34	4	16	18	6	6	350m	x4	600m	171/34	

VECTORED-THRUST VEHICLES

Gunkoku A28 Patrol Skimmer	2.5x1x1m	+0	200kg (-2)	15	5	11	20	7	7	442m	x4	672m	219/39	+2 AM
Gunkoku TT220 Transport	3.4x2x2m	+3	3.2t (-10)	35	5	15	15	5	5	332m	x4	384m	115/18	
Moller M200 Skycar	4x2x2m	+2	800kg (-6)	25	4	11	18	6	6	372m	x8	1728m	186/37	+2 AM

POLICE VEHICLES

Ford Patrol Cruiser	5x2.5x2.5m	+2	1.6t (-8)	30	8	15	15	5	5	356m	x4	672m	288/54	+1 GM
Ford Police Pursuit	5x2.5x2.5m	+2	1.6t (-8)	30	6	15	18	6	6	456m	x4	896m	299/56	+2 GM
Ford Police Interceptor	5x2.5x2.5m	+2	1.6t (-8)	30	4	15	20	7	7	460m	x4	960m	303/57	+3 GM
Jinsei Kami (air)	5x2.5x2.5m	+2	1.6t (-8)	33	4	14	18	6	6	488m	x8	2816m	321/60	+2 AM
Jinsei Kami (ground)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	60m	x4	960m	—	+2 GM

Exo-Suits

Gunkoku Kumo	3.2x1.6x1.6m	+1	800kg (-6)	30	9	14	20	7	7	416m	x4	256m	275/51	
MPS Centurion	3.2x1.6x1.6m	+1	1.6t (-8)	40	17	20	15	5	5	320m	x2	120m	262/45	
MPS Decurion (air)	3.2x1.6x1.6m	+1	1.6t (-8)	35	14	16	18	6	6	350m	x2	300m	283/50	LM
MPS Decurion (air)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20m	x2	120m	—	
MPS I-500 Power Loader	4x2x2m	+2	1.6t (-8)	45	10	23	13	4	4	216m	x2	64m	173/32	

PLANES, TRAINS, AND AUTOMOBILES

The vehicles listed here are only a small sampling of the conveyances available in the year 2030. Meant to represent the typical vehicles Player Characters should expect to see in your average *Kazei 5* campaign, the list is by no means exhaustive. Game Masters wanting additional vehicles, such as military ground and aircraft, should look to *The Ultimate Vehicle* and *The Hero System Vehicle Sourcebook*.

Cars

Modern automotive designs seek to strike a balance between practicality, functionality, and efficiency. Aerodynamic streamlining makes cars more fuel efficient, a must in this time of slowly dwindling petroleum supplies. In addition, weight is a constant worry, and many cars feature lightweight alloys and carbon-fiber shells in an effort to simultaneously increase vehicle strength and integrity, while reducing the over-all mass of the vehicle.

ACURA MAJESTIC

Produced by Acura, a subdivision of Honda, the Majestic certainly lives up to its name. Featuring an extended six-wheeled chassis with a lightly armored outer shell, the Majestic is the limousine of choice for the multinational corporate elite. Inside one can find a state-of-the-art computer system, complete with a full telecommunications and entertainment suite, satellite-phone hookup, encrypted Cyberbrain, autopilot, high-quality anti-theft systems, emergency medical kit, and wetbar. A favored option is to replace the rear bench seat with a foldout bed.

The Majestic has become widely imitated since its debut in 2025. Jinsei produces the Tenshi, while Hyundai has the Eudora. Most critics agree the Majestic offers superior quality, although the Tenshi and Eudora are less expensive.

Due to its six-wheeled design, the Majestic has +1 with all Ground Movement.



BMW 851i

The latest in a long line of lavishly appointed sedans, the 8 Series features a 400-hp 4.4 liter twin-turbo V8 flex-fuel engine, along with a full suite of modern electronics to assist the driver. One innovation is the iDrive system, which allows the driver to easily access computer functions from a controller set next to the gear shift. In addition, this year the 851i offers a voice-activation option, allowing the driver to verbally navigate the computer interface. As you might expect, the 851i and its variants are quite popular among up-and-coming corporate executives.

FORD ENTRUST

Considered by many to be a return to Ford's roots, the Entrust has been likened to the Model T of the twenty-first century. With its simple, yet attractively styled lines, roomy interior, and hatchback or wagon options, the Entrust is one of the prime reasons Ford escaped the fate of Chrysler and General Motors. Inexpensive and reliable, the Entrust is a common sight on many city streets.

HONDA ARROW

A two-seat roadster, the Arrow sports a powerful turbo-charged Advanced VTEC engine, allowing for high-performance and fuel efficiency. While not as opulent as some sports cars, the Arrow is popular (especially the convertible model) with those who want speed at a price they can afford.

Due to its airdam and suspension, the Arrow has +3 with all Ground Movement.

HONDA PLEX

A roughly triangular-shaped vehicle, the Plex has three wheels (one in front, two in the back), and can seat three (one driver, with two passengers behind him). Available only with an electric engine, the Plex is specifically designed for the inner-city metroplex driver (hence its name). This has made it quite popular among rank-and-file corporate workers.

The Plex omits most of the options found in other vehicle computer systems. Its primary focus is on the navigation system, which contains highly-detailed street maps for the local market area.

JINSEI KAGE

Low-slung, sleek, and stylish, the Kage (Japanese for "shadow") owes much of its design to companies such as Ferrari, Lamborghini, and Maserati. That said, its speed, design, and handling have currently given it the title of "ultimate sports car," at least among some Net *otaku*. One of the first cars to offer a vehicle control link interface, the Kage is popular among operators as a courier vehicle.

The Kage's suspension gives it +3 with all Ground Movement. It also has a spoiler and airdam similar to the Mercedes Benz SL2028 AMG's (see page 131).

LEXUS LS2200

Another in Lexus' long line of full-sized luxury automobiles, the LS2200 is a richly furnished and well-armored corporate status symbol. It offers many of the same options as the Majestic, omitting only the fold-out bed and wetbar.



MERCEDES-BENZ SL2028 AMG

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
4	Size	20	5x2.5x2.5m; -8m KB; +2 OCV
33	STR	3	Lift 2,400 kg; 6 ½d6 HTH [0]
24	DEX	42	
16	BODY	2	
8/12	PD	9	
8/12	ED	9	
8	OCV	25	
8	DCV	25	
4	SPD	30	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12

Total Characteristic Cost: 165**Movement:**

Ground: 70m/280m

Cost Power

23 *Motorized Wheeled Vehicle:* Ground Movement +58m (70m total), x4 Noncombat [1cc]
 OAF (standard tires; -1 ½), Only On Appropriate Terrain (-¼); 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (easily-obtained fuel, 6 Hours; +0)

-2 *Ground Vehicle:* Swimming -4m

10 *Reinforced Body:* +4 PD/+4ED
 Limited Coverage (not on windshield/windows; -¼)

4 *Standard Alloy Wheels, Puncture-Resistant Tires:* (4 DEF; 4 BODY; see TUV, page 41)

5 *Standard Polarized Windshield:* Sight Group Flash Defense (10 points)

END

Only Protects Versus Exterior Flashes Against Interior Personnel (-1)

5 *Telecommunications And Entertainment Suite:* HRRP (Radio Group)

OIF Bulky (-1), Sense Affected As Sight And Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)

4 *Nightsight Package:* Infrared Perception (Sight Group)
 OIF Bulky (-1) plus Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group);
 OIF Bulky (-1)

Perks

51 Vehicle Computer with all options

Skills

6 *Improved Handling And Suspension:* +3 with Ground Movement

1 *Improved Handling And Suspension:* +2 with Ground Movement
 OAF Bulky (bonus only +1 if either Airdam or Spoiler is destroyed; -1 ½), Only At Speeds Above 65 KPH (-1)

31 *Magnetic Key-Coded Locks:* Lockpicking 23-**Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 138****Total Vehicle Cost: 303****Value Complications**

10 Distinctive Features: Sports Car (Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)

Total Complication Points: 10**Total Cost: 293/5 = 59**

There are many variants of the LS2200 worldwide, from such auto-makers as Audi, Infiniti, Mercedes Benz, and Volvo.

The LS2200 suspension grants it +1 with all Ground Movement.

LINCOLN MILLENNIUM

A full-sized luxury town car, the Millennium is popular with those corporate executives who can't quite afford more expensive status symbols like the 851i or the LS2200. However, its price and reputation for reliability have turned it into a common corporate and limo fleet car in much of North America. It's also available in a stretch model (add one Size class).

Millenniums come with an almost unlimited number of OEM and aftermarket options, including expanded vehicle computers, anti-theft systems, armored body upgrades, reinforced and run-flat tires, polarized windows, nightvision systems, satellite uplinks, and so on.

MERCEDES-BENZ SL2028 AMG

Description: Possibly the pinnacle of Mercedes' luxury sports car design, the SL2028 boasts a massive 36 valve V-12 engine capable of producing 700 horse power and bringing the car to 90 kph in just under four seconds. With a top speed of over 325 kph, the SL2028 is not for the faint-of-heart.

Internally, the SL2028 is luxuriously appointed, with an advanced computer system, magnetic locks, genuine (not synthetic!) leather upholstery, and a state-of-the-art instrument panel. Available in either 5-speed manual or

"I can sum up the Mercedes SL2028 in three words: 'Sex on wheels'."

— Anthony Meng Li, *Fine Driving* webzine

7-speed automatic transmission, the SL2028 is priced at \$500,000 United North American before any options or trim packages are considered.

The SL2028's closest competitor is generally considered to be the BMW 790Li luxury sedan, which also sports a V12 engine.

Currently Mercedes-Benz has an endorsement contract with Shion Nys (she uses an SL2028 as her personal car in and around Neo York). A promotional image of her lying across the hood and windshield of a black SL2028 while dressed all in white is unofficially the most downloaded image from the Net as of January 2030.

NISSAN 600ZX TURBO

The latest in Nissan's Z series of sports cars, the 600ZX is built for speed. Set low to the ground, with an airdam and spoiler formed directly out of the outer shell, the 600ZX is noted for its smooth, aerodynamic lines and gull-wing doors. While not the fastest sports car on the market, it tends to win over buyers on account of its looks and reliability.

The Nissan 600ZX suspension gives it +2 with all Ground Movement. See the Mercedes Benz SL2028 AMG for information on the airdam and spoiler.

STANDARD VEHICLE SYSTEMS

The Ultimate Vehicle gives lists of "Every-vehicle Equipment" for the various vehicle types. For Ground Vehicles, this equipment is as follows:

Battery, Cigarette Lighter, Clock, Ground Vehicle Sensors, Headlights, Heater/Air Conditioner, Internal Lights, Locks (Standard), Radio, Seatbelts, Signal Lights, and Windshield Wipers. In addition, virtually all modern vehicles have Airbags (found on page 141 of *The Ultimate Vehicle*).

Kazei 5 vehicles tend to present cigarette lighters as an option, as smoking is less common than it used to be, while the clock and radio are normally incorporated into the vehicle's primary computer system.

Locks come in several varieties. Standard Locks are bought as Lockingpicking 8- for 1 point. Basic Locks are 11- for 7 points, High Locks are 14- for 13 points, Advanced Locks are 17- for 19 points, Extremely Advanced Locks are 20- for 25 points, and Ultra-Advanced Locks are 23- for 25 points. Most 2030 Ground Vehicles use keyless entry systems, and should be considered to have High to Advanced Locks. Luxury and sports cars usually have Extremely to Ultra-Advanced Locks.

NISSAN IC SPORT

On the other end of the spectrum from the 600ZX is the IC ("inner city") Sport. Likened to a box on wheels (hence its nickname, "the icebox"), the IC normally comes with an electric power supply, although hybrid versions are available. The IC Sport has many advantages, such as price, ease of handling, and general roominess; on the other hand, while capable of holding up to four passengers, the engine is noted for having difficulties with such a heavy payload.

TOYOTA AUGUST

Typical of many mid price-range sedans produced by automakers the world over, the August comes with either a flex-fuel or hybrid power plant. It is available in either two or four-door models, with a hatchback option. Similar in many regards to the Entrust, the August benefits from Toyota's greater experience with alternate-fuel engines.

Motorcycles

Motorcycles are extremely popular for several reasons: they offer excellent fuel economy, they are fairly inexpensive when compared to most cars, and they are small and agile enough to go most anywhere (always a plus in the crowded metropolis).

All motorcycles have the *Two-Wheeled Physical Complication* (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing), while all but the Vespa Hopper have the *Distinctive Features of Valuable Motorcycle* (Concealable; Noticed And Recognizable). See *The Ultimate Vehicle* for more information.

BMW E800ST, S1200RT, M1400R

Having celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2023, BMW Motorrad continues to produce a wide variety of motorcycles for the off-road, sport, and touring markets. The E800ST is typical of BMW's E-series motorcycles, with an 800 cc engine and chain drive. The S1200RT offers a larger 1200 cc engine and shaft drive, and is meant to be a touring bike. The M1400R goes one step further, with a 1400 cc shaft-driven engine, allowing it to compete with the Japanese sport-bike market (to some extent).

All BMW motorcycles have +2 with all Ground Movement due to the excellent design of their forks and suspension.

HARLEY-DAVIDSON CENTURY SPORTSTER

North America's oldest still-surviving motorcycle manufacturer, Harley-Davidson continues to produce durable bikes. The Century Sportster, a new model for the twenty-first century, is a simple, but stylish, no-nonsense design, well-equipped for both inner city and open-road driving. While not exceptionally fast, it can carry more than the typical road bike, and is often used as a patrol bike by police departments across North America.

The Century Sportster has +1 with all Ground Movement.

HONDA CBR1300RR

The latest in Honda's CBR series of Race Replica motorcycles (hence the "RR" in the name), the CBR1300RR falls into the "hyper-sport" bike class. It features a 1300

cc inline engine with shaft drive and clean, stylish lines. While not as fast as some hyper-sport bikes, it's highly maneuverable, well-balanced, and considered fun to drive.

The CBR1300RR has +2 with all Ground Movement.

JINSEI TANTO, WAKIZASHI, KATANA

Jinsei's entry into the bike market is their "Sword" series of motorcycles. Having borrowed the best features from bike-makers around the world, Jinsei spliced them together to produce the Katana and its smaller sisters, the Tanto and Wakizashi. The Tanto is a dual-purpose off-road/road bike, while the Wakizashi is meant to be a sport cruiser model. The Katana, however, is pure sport bike. Jinsei also offers additional "Sword" bikes, such as the Tachi (a simple road bike), and the Odachi, Jinsei's largest motorcycle and meant as a competitor to Honda's successful Goldwing series of cruiser/touring bikes.

The Tanto and Wakizashi have +1 with all Ground Movement, the Katana has +2.

JINSEI NODACHI

Possibly the fastest motorcycle on the road today, the Nodachi hyper-sport can reach speeds over 200 mph. Built for speed, the Nodachi offers a unique design for the field of sport bikes — the front fairing extends around the driver, encasing him in a highly aerodynamic shell. The windscreen wraps around the driver as well, allowing for a wide visual arc. Access to the bike is achieved by undoing the latch behind the driver's seat and opening the top of the bike's fairing and swinging it up and forward, while open slots at the bottom allow the driver to balance the bike with his feet when at rest.

The Nodachi features almost unparalleled handling for a hyper-sport bike and has +3 with all Ground Movement.

KAWASAKI SHINOBI XS-16

Kawasaki's entry into the hyper-sport bike field, the XS-16 features a 1600 cc four-stroke, liquid cooled, inline-four shaft-drive engine. It can reach 95 kph in 2.5 seconds and has a top speed of around 300 kph. The latest incarnation of Kawasaki's well-known Ninja series of sport bikes, the XS-16 is meant as an alternative to those put off by the Jinsei Nodachi's unconventional design. Outside of North America, the Shinobi XS-16 is known as the XXR1600.

The Shinobi XS-16's excellent suspension gives it +3 with all Ground Movement.

SUZUKI GTX2000E

A very fast bike, the GTX2000E uses a high-yield hydrogen fuel cell to power individual motors in each wheel. Capable of reaching 12,000 rpms, the bike's two-wheel drive can bring it up to 290 kph, with deceleration handled by computer-controlled anti-lock brakes. The innovations don't stop with the engine, as the GTX features a feet forward design, allowing the driver and passenger the luxury of recessed bucket seats. It's also one of the few motorcycles with a fully-interactive computer system, thanks to the expanded instrument area due to the feet forward design. It's a very popular bike with those who want to stand out from the crowd.

The GTX2000E's unique configuration gives it +2 with All Ground Movement.

VESPA HOPPER

An all-electric scooter, the Hopper is typical of motorscooters found all around the world. Extremely popular among teens and twenty somethings, Hoppers and their kin often form vast schools of commuters in cities all over Europe and Asia. In North America they're common on the streets of the larger cities, such as Chicago, Neo York, San Francisco, and Toronto, less so elsewhere.

YAMAHA XTR1000

A fairly basic, albeit stylish sport bike, the XTR1000 incorporates extensive use of lightweight metal alloys and composite materials. This keeps the bike's weight down, while allowing excellent responsiveness and acceleration. While 'only' capable of speeds around 250 kph, the XTR1000 is quite popular due to its handling characteristics.

The XTR1000 has +2 with All Ground Movement.

Trucks And Off-Road Vehicles

Most large trucks use bio-diesel engines, while large cargo haulers are often diesel-electric. Some inner-city delivery trucks use hydrogen fuel cell engines to combat air pollution. Sport utility vehicles have merged, for the most part, with the mini-van market, resulting in a spacious all-purpose all-weather cargo and people carrier.

ISUZU WARRIOR

Durable and well designed, the Warrior lives up to Isuzu's reputation as a manufacturer of quality off-road and sport utility vehicles. The Warrior, while a capable all-terrain vehicle, is popular with metropol residents who want to project an image of adventure and daring, even if they never leave a paved street in their lives.

The Warrior's off-road suspension gives +3 Penalty Skill Levels versus off-road driving modifiers.

Fixed-Wing Planes

Modern aircraft feature numerous new innovations in wing, body, and engine design. Canards have become popular, allowing for more efficient lift, as well as winglets, which help reduce fuel consumption. Even the general shape of engine housings has changed, resulting in reduced drag and quieter operations.

Most modern aircraft feature extensive use of composites in their construction. This has resulted in lighter, but stronger, aircraft capable of withstanding greater stresses than earlier models.

Standard aircraft equipment includes vehicle operations sensors, a flight recorder, navigational instrumentation, a radio communications suite, radar, and a pressurized cabin for high-altitude aircraft.

BOEING BLENDED WING BODY 848

Boeing's successor to its 7X7 series of airliners, the 848 blended-wing body combines the traditional fuselage and wing design with flying wing concepts. The result is a very broad but short airfoil-shaped aircraft with high-lift wings. With three turbofan engines mounted above the center fuselage, the 848 can carry 800 passengers in pressurized comfort almost anywhere in the world. Capable of cruising at 10,000 meters and reaching

speeds of 1000 kph, the 848 has an operational range of 22,500 kilometers on a single load of fuel.

The 848 (and similar blended wing designs from companies such as Airbus) are rapidly replacing the jumbo jets of the twentieth century. Some have even entered into military service as cargo haulers.

The 848's fly-by-wire control system gives it +4 with all Air Movement. The 848 also features an advanced radar system, full communications suite, a crew-specific computer system, a secondary client-server system for passengers, and a fully-pressurized cabin.

CESSNA 390

A twin-engined aircraft powered by flex-fuel turboprops, the 390 can carry five people (one pilot and four passengers). Built for the business market, it's popular with corporate executives who need a short-hop aircraft, or who don't want to deal with the expense of a corporate jet.

Market-specific features of the 390 include foldaway work surfaces, a separate power system and outlets specifically designed for portable computing devices, ceiling mounted flatscreen television, and cellular phone access. Standard operational features include full-spectrum radio and commercial-grade radar.

LEARJET 95

Learjet's latest business jet, the 95, is popularly thought of as the aerial equivalent of the Acura Majestic. Luxuriously appointed, the 95 can carry ten passengers and two crew in complete comfort at speeds over 800 kph. The standard internal layout of the 95 consists of two rows of five seats with a center aisle. However, most buyers opt for a different layout, and Learjet offers a whole host of options, including bench seats, foldaway work tables, foldaway bed, expanded computer system, complete entertainment/telecommunications suite with satellite hook-up, wetbar, microkitchen, and so on. As with the Cessna 390, the cockpit includes a full-spectrum radio and commercial-grade aviation radar.

Tiltrotor Planes

The evolution of tiltrotor aircraft can be traced back to 1953 and the Bell XV-3. Bell followed up with the XV-15, and then the V-22 Osprey, which saw extensive use during the Second American Civil War. These days, tiltrotors are common corporate vehicles, as they are faster than helicopters (and less noisy) and still are capable of VTOL operations from rooftop heliports.

A similar design is the tilting, in which the entire wing rotates, not just the rotor housings.

GUNKOKU HACHIDORI

Designed to compete directly with the Bell/Agusta BA644, the Hachidori ("Hummingbird") is a popular corporate shuttle, found all along the Asian Pacific rim, from Tokyo to Singapore. Capable of carrying up to a dozen passengers and crew, the Hachidori is noted for its sleek lines, relatively quiet ride, and a top speed of over 300 mph. Internal furnishings tend to be "business standard" and are very much akin to what one might find in the Cessna 390.

The Hachidori is noted for its agility in the air. It has +2 with all Air Movement.

THE BELL/AGUSTA BA644

A "future" version of the Bell/Agusta BA609 should be commercially available in 2011. Go to www.bellagusta.com to learn more.

Helicopters

Helicopters are a common sight in the sky over any metroplex. News, traffic, and police choppers all share airspace with corporate transports and airbuses. Modern helicopters utilize much of the same technologies found in fixed-wing and tiltrotors, namely composite materials and lightweight alloys. Commercial rotorcraft will use flex-fuel engines, with military choppers using either flex-fuel or petroleum-based fuel (the latter mainly used by attack choppers with high-performance turboshaft engines).

Helicopters have the same standard equipment as fixed-wing aircraft.

BELL 530 TWINRANGER

Considered a successor to Bell's 430 series of helicopters, the 530 is specifically designed for inner-city operations. It features paired intermeshing rotors, granting it highly efficient lift, increased stability (due to an innate tendency to hover), and unparalleled aerial agility. A popular corporate shuttle, the Twinranger's outer shell is comprised of multi-layered armored composites, Bell's acknowledgement of the often contentious nature of multinational corporate relations.

Internally, the 530 is normally set-up to carry ten passengers, although most executive couriers remove several seats, replacing them with foldaway work areas, computer systems, expanded telecommunications, and so on.

The Bell 530 Twinranger is extremely agile, and has +2 with all Air Movement.

GUNKOKU TORI

The Tori is a small, two-man helicopter (with room for two passengers) used extensively in the inner city for traffic and news reporting as well as police surveillance. It's also common as a corporate courier, in which the rear seats are removed to create a cargo area. Internally, the Tori offers only the most basic of amenities.

GUNKOKU A28 PATROL SKIMMER

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
1	Size	5	2.5x1x1m; -2m KB; +0 OCV
15	STR	0	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 HTH [0]
20	DEX	30	
11	BODY	0	
5	PD	6	
5	ED	6	
7	OCV	20	
7	DCV	20	
4	SPD	30	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
Total Characteristic Cost: 117			

Movement:

Ground:	0m/0m
Flight:	42m/168m

Abilities & Equipment

Cost Power

Propulsion Systems

37	<i>Vectored-Thrust Vehicle:</i> Flight 32m, x4 Noncombat [1 cc]
	1 Continuing Fuel Charge (4 Hours; +0), No Turn Mode (+¼), Sideways Maneuverability half velocity (+¼); Maximum Altitude 4m (-½)
-12	<i>Only Flies:</i> Ground Movement -12m
-2	<i>Only Flies:</i> Swimming -4m

Tactical Systems

44	1) <i>5.56mm Minigun:</i> RKA 2d6 [1000] +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼), Autofire (20 shots; +1 ½), 1000 Charges (+1); OIF Bulky (-1), Beam (-¼), Real Weapon (-¼), Limited Arc Of Fire (180 degrees; -¼) plus +1 OCV; OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-¼) plus +4 Versus Range Modifier; OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-¼)
-4	<i>Armored Hull:</i> PD/ED has Limited Coverage (frame/hull only; -½)

Operations Systems

4	<i>Communications System:</i> Radio Perception/Transmission (Radio Group) OIF Bulky (-1), Affected As Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-¼)
---	--

Skills

4	<i>Highly Maneuverable:</i> +2 with Flight
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Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 102

Total Vehicle Cost: 219

Value Complications

25	<i>Distinctive Features:</i> Paramilitary Vectored-Thrust Vehicle (Not Concealable; Extreme Reaction [fear]; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
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Total Complication Points: 25

Total Cost: 194/5 = 39

GUKOKU TT220 TRANSPORT

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
5	Size	25	3.4x2x2xm; -10m KB; +3 OCV
35	STR	0	Lift 3,200 kg; 7d6 HTH [0]
15	DEX	15	
15	BODY	0	
5	PD	6	
5	ED	6	
5	OCV	10	
5	DCV	10	
3	SPD	20	Phases: 4, 8, 12
Total Characteristic Cost: 92			

Movement:

Ground:	0m/0m
Flight:	32m/128m

Abilities & Equipment**Cost Power****Propulsion Systems**

- 37 *Vectored-Thrust Vehicle*: Flight 32m, x4 Noncombat [1 cc]
 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (4 Hours; +0), No Turn Mode (+¼), Sideways Maneuverability half velocity (+¼); Maximum Altitude 4m (-½)

END-12 *Only Flies*: Ground Movement -12m-2 *Only Flies*: Swimming -4m**Tactical Systems**-4 *Reinforced Frame*: PD/ED has Limited Coverage (does not protect occupants; -½)**Operations Systems**

- 4 *Communications System*: Radio Perception/Transmission (Radio Group)
 OIF Bulky (-1), Affected As Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-¼)

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 23**Total Vehicle Cost: 115****Value Complications**

- 25 *Distinctive Features*: Paramilitary Vectored-Thrust Vehicle (Not Concealable; Extreme Reaction [fear]; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)

Total Complication Points: 25**Total Cost: 90/5 = 18****Vectored-Thrust Vehicles**

Also known as “volantors” (meaning “to hop nimbly about”), vectored-thrust (or VT) vehicles combine the speed of fixed wing aircraft with the vertical abilities of helicopters. Most VT vehicles are as easy to operate as a ground car, and volantor taxis are common in places like Hong Kong, MegaTokyo, and Neo York, as they allow easy access to rooftop heliports. Vectored thrust aircraft are also common with many police departments, search-and-rescue units, border patrols, and the military.

Volantors have the same internal equipment as fixed-wing aircraft.

GUNKOKU A28 PATROL SKIMMER

The A28 Patrol Skimmer is best described as a box on skids. Designed to be a fast, one-man patrol and reconnaissance vehicle, the A28 has a lightly armored body and is normally equipped with a rapid-fire rotary machine gun for dealing with various threats. It's popular with corporations in unstable areas, such as Africa and portions of Asia, or those with extensive manufacturing facilities, as the A28's great speed (it can reach 200 kph) allows it to rapidly cover a wide area. About the only major drawback is the Skimmer's armored sides only extend to the pilot's waist, leaving his head and upper body exposed.

The A28 uses a basic radio system for communications. Plug-ins on the control panel allow for the attachment of various visual aids, such as a Smart Gun Link for the minigun. Corporate models in urban areas usually remove the minigun in favor of something far less lethal, such as an electron weapon system. Other options include loudspeakers and spotlights.

GUKOKU TT220 TRANSPORT

The TT220 is an ungainly-looking vehicle, with a central fuselage flanked by a pair of large ducted fans, which are in turn ringed by a series of low seats. Much of the TT220 is open framework, with blended composites used to sheath the fan nacelles and the cockpit. Capable of holding nine people (one pilot and eight passengers), the TT220 is nowhere near as fast as the A28, but it doesn't need to be. The TT220's intended use is as a barebones transport in undeveloped areas where roads are suspect. While capable of mounting one or two machineguns (or similar weapons) on brackets, the TT220 doesn't see much military use. Instead it makes for an excellent observation platform, mobile communications center, or service shuttle for multinational corporations in need of reliable transportation regardless of terrain.

MOLLER M200 SKYCAR

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
3	Size	15	4x2x2xm; -6m KB; +2 OCV
25	STR	0	Lift 800 kg; 5d6 HTH [0]
18	DEX	24	
11	BODY	-2	
4	PD	3	
4	ED	3	
6	OCV	15	
6	DCV	15	
3	SPD	20	Phases: 4, 8, 12
Total Characteristic Cost: 97			

Movement:

Ground: 0m/0m
Flight: 72m/576m

Abilities & Equipment

Cost	Power	END
Propulsion Systems		
82	<i>Vectored-Thrust Vehicle:</i> Flight 72m, x8 Noncombat 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (3 Hours; +0)	[1 cc]
3	<i>Airframe Parachutes:</i> Gliding 12m Trigger (Activating the Trigger requires a Zero Phase Action, Trigger requires a Turn or more to reset; engine failure or the like; +¼); Gliding (-1), OAF Bulky (-1 ½), 1 Recoverable Continuing Charge (lasts until vehicle hits the ground or the parachute is fouled; -¾), Limited Movement (vehicle cannot gain altitude, and must move at least 24m downward for each 2m forward; -½), No Noncombat Movement (-1/4)	[1 rc]

-12 *Only Flies:* Ground Movement -12m

-2 *Only Flies:* Swimming -4m

Operations Systems

- 10 *Radar:* Radar (Radio Group), Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees), Telescopic: +8;
OIF Bulky (-1), Affected As Sight Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)
- 4 *Communications System:* Radio Perception/Transmission (Radio Group)
OIF Bulky (-1), Affected As Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-¼)

Skills

- 4 *Highly Maneuverable:* +2 with Flight

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 89

Total Vehicle Cost: 186

Value Complications

None

Total Complication Points: 0

Total Cost: 186/5 = 37

MOLLER M200 SKYCAR

Moller International is considered the leader in personal-use vectored-thrust vehicles, having been developing them since the 1960s. The M200, which can carry two passengers, is just one of a number of Skycar models, including the M150 (one passenger), the M400 (a four-person model), and the M600, which can carry six people. All Skycars share similar lines; a roughly tear-drop shaped body, a tapered nose, folding wings, and four propulsion pods (which serve to fully enclose the ducted-fan engines). Although expensive (the M150 starts at \$50,000 in UNA dollars), the ease of use (similar to driving a car) and VTOL capabilities of the Skycar line make them popular corporate vehicles.

There really is a Moller Skycar currently undergoing flight testing. You can find a character sheet for the Moller M400 in *The Hero System Vehicle Sourcebook*. For more information you can visit Moller International at www.moller.com.

Police Vehicles

Most police vehicles are civilian cars modified to deal with the stress and abuse of day-in and day-out law-enforcement. While the Ford Patrol Cruiser (see below) is popular in North America, European police cars might be made by BMW, Mercedes, Peugeot, Vauxhall, Volvo, and so on. In Japan and Hong Kong, Honda, Nissan, and Toyota are the typical models. Australia uses Patrol Cruisers made by either Ford Australia or Holden.

Virtually all police departments have additional vehicles besides cruisers. Motorcycles are often used for highway patrol, while bicycles are popular for inner city areas. Traffic police and crime prevention units use helicopters, while harbor police will have assorted watercraft. SWAT teams travel in armored vans and might have an APC on hand for building assaults. Finally, large vans and/or panel trucks (the so called "paddywagon") are used to transport large numbers of arrested suspects to the police station for processing.

The modern police vehicle is almost certainly armored, although the exact degree of protection depends on the type of vehicle in question and the intended patrol area. In addition, all police vehicles are equipped with powerful computers designed to interface with a wide variety of law-enforcement equipment.

POLICE VEHICLE COMPUTER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
18	DEX	16	13-	
6	OCV	15		
6	DCV	15		
6	OMCV	9		
6	DMCV	9		
4	SPD	30		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
Total Characteristic Cost: 102				

Cost Powers

- 20 *Advanced Cyberbrain*: 20 EGO
- 23 *Intrusion Firewall*: Mental Defense (23 points total)
- 7 *Optical Object Recognition Software I*: Detect Pedestrians And Road Obstacles 15- (Sight Group)
- 5 *Optical Object Recognition Software II*: Detect Potential Collisions 15- (Sight Group)
- 14 *Road Sign RF Receptor*: Detect Road Sign Status And Signals 17- (Radio Group), Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees)
- 5 *Infrared Nightvision Interface*: IR Perception (Sight Group)
- 10 *Cellphone/Wireless Access*: Radio Perception/Transmission (Radio Group)

Talents

- 3 *Time Display*: Absolute Time Sense
- 3 *GPS Uplink*: Bump Of Direction
- 5 *System Memory*: Eidetic Memory
- 3 *Calculator*: Lightning Calculator
- 3 *Instant On*: Lightsleep

Programs

- 1 Program: Access Map Database
- 1 Program: Activate Anti-Theft Program
- 1 Program: Alert Driver To Police Dispatcher Request
- 1 Program: Alert Driver To Traffic Conditions
- 1 Program: Alert Driver To Weather Conditions
- 1 Program: Autopilot

- 1 Program: Connect To Wireless Network
- 1 Program: Cruise Control
- 1 Program: Detect Pedestrians/Obstacles In/Near Road
- 1 Program: Detect Potential Collisions
- 1 Program: Detect Road Signs, Adjust Vehicle's Speed If Needed
- 1 Program: Monitor Vehicle Status, Report Irregularities
- 1 Program: Runlock — disengage engine if handbrake disengaged/footbrake activated before key is reinserted
- 1 Program: Synch With DMV Database
- 1 Program: Synch With Police Database

Skills

- 4 *Local Atlas*: AK: Local Provinces/States 14-
- 3 *National/Continental Atlas*: AK: North America 13-
- 6 *Street Atlas*: CK: Local Metropolitan Area 16-
- 3 *Autopilot*: Combat Driving 13-
- 3 *Internal Diagnostics*: Electronics 13-
- 6 *Department Of Motor Vehicle Access*: KS: Local Driving Records 16-
- 6 *Police Database Access*: KS: Criminal Records 16-
- 3 *Net-Accessed News*: KS: Current News 13-
- 6 *Incident Database*: KS: Incident Logs 16-
- 3 *Net-Accessed Traffic*: KS: Local Traffic Conditions 13-
- 3 *Net-Accessed Weather*: KS: Local Weather Conditions 13-
- 2 *Driver's Manual*: KS: Vehicle How-To Manuals 11-
- 1 *Voice Interface*: Language: English (basic conversation)
- 3 *Internal Diagnostics*: Mechanics 13-
- 4 *Net-based Autonavigator*: Navigation (Land) 14-
- 3 *Security Subroutines*: Security Systems 13-
- 2 *Wireless Net And Cellphone Access*: Systems Operation (Cellular and Digital) 13-
- 0 *Computer-Controlled Engine Functions*: TF: Small Motorized Ground Vehicles

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 177**Total Cost: 279/5 = 56 points.****ADDITIONAL POLICE EQUIPMENT**

Here's a short list of additional gear one might find in a police car:

- ☉ Blankets
- ☉ Brethalizer Kit (for detecting alcohol in the bloodstream)
- ☉ Broom (for cleaning up after an accident)
- ☉ Firearms (usually a shotgun)
- ☉ Fire Extinguisher
- ☉ First Aid Kit
- ☉ Flashlight (often a powerful hand-held spotlight)
- ☉ Road Flares
- ☉ Shovel
- ☉ Speed Detection Gun (either laser or radar)
- ☉ Spike Strip (for deflating tires)
- ☉ Traffic Cones (or other reflective device to alert/divert traffic)

Some police cars might have a basic portable Criminology lab in the trunk. Rolls of police tape are also possible, as well as extra handcuffs, reloads for a cufftaper, and Clamshell Vests. A traffic patrol officer might even keep a teddy bear or other toy in his cruiser to console a small child involved in a vehicular accident.

FORD PATROL CRUISER

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
4	Size	20	5x2.5x2.5m; -8 KB; +2 OCV
30	STR	0	Lift 1,600 kg; 6d6 HTH [0]
15	DEX	15	
15	BODY	1	
4/8	PD	3	
4/8	ED	3	
5	OCV	10	
5	DCV	10	
3	SPD	20	Phases: 4, 8, 12
Total Characteristic Cost: 94			

Movement:

Ground: 56m/224m

Cost Power

END

Propulsion Systems

- 18 *Motorized Wheeled Vehicle:* Ground Movement +44m (56m total), x4 Noncombat [1 cc]
 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (easily-obtained fuel, 6 Hours; +0); OAF (standard tires; -1 ½), Only On Appropriate Terrain (-¼)
 -2 *Ground Vehicle:* Swimming -4m

Tactical Systems

- 17 *Pursuit Intervention Technique/Push Bumper:* Hand-To-Hand Attack +4d6
 Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/4), Only With Move-Throughs (-½)
 10 *Armored Outer Shell:* +4 PD/+4 ED
 Limited Coverage (not on windshield/windows; -¼)
 5 *Reinforced Tires:* (5 DEF; 5 BODY; see TUV, page 41)
 5 *Standard Polarized Windshield:* Sight Group Flash Defense (10 points)
 Only Protects Versus Exterior Flashes Against Interior Personnel (-1)

Operations Systems

- 7 *Dash-Mounted Close-Circuit TV:* Clairsentience (Sight And Hearing Groups)
 Fixed Perception Point (camera mounted on vehicle dash; -1), OIF Bulky (-1), Limited Arc Of Fire (60 degrees; camera can be tilted in different directions, but will only capture what's in its forward 60 degrees; -½), No Range (-½)
 6 *Automatic Number Plate Recognition:* Detect A Single Thing 14- (Sight Group), Discriminatory
 OIF Bulky (-1)
 8 *GPS Tracker:* Detect Exact Position On Earth 16- (Radio Group), Discriminatory, Analyze

- OIF Bulky (-1), Sense Affected As Sight Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)
 6 *Speed Recognition Camera:* Detect Speed Of Vehicle Being Followed 14- (Sight Group), Discriminatory
 OIF Bulky (-1)
 9 *Vehicle Tracking System:* Detect Vehicle Transponder 14- (Radio Group), Discriminatory, Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees), Tracking
 OIF Bulky (-1), Sense Affected As Sight Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)
 5 *Communications System:* HRRP (Radio Group)
 OIF Bulky (-1), Sense Affected As Sight And Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)
 10 *Emergency Lights And Siren:* Sight and Hearing Groups, +4 to PER Rolls
 Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF Bulky (-1 ½), Set Effect (-1), No Range (-½)
 12 *Spot Light:* Sight Group Images, +4 to PER Roll
 Area of Effect (8m Radius; +½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF Bulky (-1 ½), Only To Create Light (-1), Limited Arc Of Fire (180 degrees; front/side of car; -¼)
 5 *Public Address System:* Hearing Group Images, +3 to PER Rolls
 Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF Bulky (-1 ½), Set Effect (only amplifies what's said into it; -1), No Range (-½)

Perks

- 56 Police Vehicle Computer

Skills

- 2 *Improved Handling And Suspension:* +1 with Ground Movement
 19 Advanced Locks: Lockpicking 17-

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 194

Total Vehicle Cost: 288

Value Complications

- 20 Distinctive Features: Police Car (Not Concealable; Always Noticed and Causes Major Reaction)

Total Complication Points: 20

Total Cost: 268/5 = 54

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

Cost Option

- +10 *Ford Police Pursuit:* Increase to DEX 18, SPD 4, and +2 with Ground Movement. Decrease PD/ED to 6.
 +14 *Force Police Interceptor:* Increase to DEX 20, SPD 4, Ground Movement +52m, and +3 with Ground Movement. Decrease PD/ED to 4.

FORD PATROL CRUISER

The most popular police car in North America, the Patrol Cruiser is designed specifically for the law-enforcement market. Primarily meant for inner-city use, the Patrol Cruiser is well-armored, with a polarized windshield, reinforced tires, and a beefed up suspension. It's also packed with electronics, ranging from a state-of-the-art computer system to an assortment of radio and visual sensors, allowing the Patrol Cruiser to monitor events via closed-circuit TV, read license plates (and match the numbers against the police database to detect flagged plates), link to the GPS system, pick up

vehicle transponders (which often turn on if the vehicle is declared stolen), and determine the speed of a vehicle the Patrol Cruiser is following.

Ford also makes a fast-response model known as the Pursuit as well as the Interceptor, a high-speed design for patrolling open highways. While faster and offering better handling, these models have far less armor.

By removing systems as needed, Game Masters can create just about any kind of police car they might need.

JINSEI KAMI

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
4	Size	20	5x2.5x2.5m; -8m KB; +2 OCV
33	STR	3	Lift 2,400 kg; 6 ½d6 HTH [0]
18	DEX	24	
15	BODY	1	
3/4	PD	3	
3/4	ED	-	
6	OCV	20	
6	DCV	20	
4	SPD	30	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
Total Characteristic Cost: 121			

Movement:

Ground: 56m/224m

Flight: 66m/528m

Abilities & Equipment**Cost Power** **END****Propulsion Systems**

76 *Vectored-Thrust Vehicle:* Flight 66m, x8 Noncombat [1 cc]
 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (easily-obtained fuel, 3 Hours; +0)

3 *Airframe Parachutes:* Gliding 12m [1 rc]
 Trigger (Activating the Trigger requires a Zero Phase Action, Trigger requires a Turn or more to reset; engine failure or the like; +¼); Gliding (-1), OAF Bulky (-1 ½), 1 Recoverable Continuing Charge (lasts until vehicle hits the ground or the parachute is fouled; -¾), Limited Movement (vehicle cannot gain altitude, and must move at least 24m downward for each 2m forward; -½), No Noncombat Movement (-1/4)

18 *Motorized Wheeled Vehicle:* Ground Movement +44m (56m total), x4 Noncombat [1 cc]
 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (easily-obtained fuel, 6 Hours; +0); OAF (standard tires; -1 ½), Only On Appropriate Terrain (-¼)

-2 *Ground Vehicle:* Swimming -4m

Tactical Systems

10 *Armored Outer Shell:* +4 PD/+4 ED
 Limited Coverage (not on windshield/windows; -¼)
 5 *Reinforced Tires:* (5 DEF; 5 BODY; see TUV, page 41)
 5 *Standard Polarized Windshield:* Sight Group Flash Defense (10 points)
 Only Protects Versus Exterior Flashes Against Interior Personnel (-1)

Operations Systems

- 7 *Dash-Mounted Close-Circuit TV:* Clairsentience (Sight And Hearing Groups)
 Fixed Perception Point (camera mounted on vehicle dash; -1), OIF Bulky (-1), Limited Arc Of Fire (60 degrees; camera can be tilted in different directions, but will only capture what's in its forward 60 degrees; -½), No Range (-½)
 8 *GPS Tracker:* Detect Exact Position On Earth 16- (Radio Group), Discriminatory, Analyze
 OIF Bulky (-1), Sense Affected As Sight Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)
 7 *System Diagnostics:* Detect System Integrity 16- (Radio Group), Discriminatory
 OIF Bulky (-1), Sense Affected As Sight Group And As Radio Group (-½)
 5 *Communications System:* HRRP (Radio Group)
 OIF Bulky (-1), Sense Affected As Sight And Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)
 10 *Navigation Radar:* Radar (Radio Group), Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees), Telescopic: +8
 OIF Bulky (-1), Affected As Sight Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)
 10 *Emergency Lights And Siren:* Sight and Hearing Groups, +4 to PER Rolls
 Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF Bulky (-1 ½), Set Effect (-1), No Range (-½)
 5 *Public Address System:* Hearing Group Images, +3 to PER Rolls
 Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF Bulky (-1 ½), Set Effect (only amplifies what's said into it; -1), No Range (-½)

Personnel Systems

- 5 *Safety Seat:* +6 PD (adds to standard seatbelt's PD)
 Only To Protect Occupants From Damage From Collisions (-2), OIF Bulky (-1) plus Resistnat Protection (6 PD/6 ED); Partial Coverage (one passenger, 180 degrees from behind) (-2), OIF Bulky (-1)
 5 *Safety Seat:* A Second Safety Seat (total of 2)

Skills

- 6 *Vectored-Thrust Nimbleness, Improved Suspension:* +2 with Air and Ground Movement
 25 *Advanced Locks:* Lockpicking 20-

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 200**Total Vehicle Cost: 321****Value Complications**

- 20 *Distinctive Features:* Police Car (Not Concealable; Always Noticed and Causes Major Reaction)

Total Complication Points: 20**Total Cost: 293/5 = 48****JINSEI KAMI**

Possessing a distinctive three-wheeled design, the Jinsei Kami is widely considered a marvel of modern automotive engineering. Combining a powerful vectored-thrust flight system with an equally massive V-12 engine, the Kami is capable of both air and land operations.

The Kami's body is best described as an elongated diamond shape. The vectored-thrust system is set behind the two-man cockpit, while the V-12 is located in the tapered nose. A pair of canards flank the front tire, while the rear of the vehicle sports a series of vertical

stabilizers and short wings. A light bar is mounted over the cockpit, which is accessed by doors that rise up and forward. Behind the twin armored bucket seats is a small cargo area containing various supplies.

A very expensive vehicle (the cost rivals that of some corporate aircraft), Kami are currently used only by MegaTokyo's Enhanced Special Weapons And Tactics units as a fast-response and occasional patrol vehicle. Most Kami are painted in typical Japanese police fashion — a black body with white hood, roof, and so on. The ESWAT badge and name is painted on the door in gold.

Exo-Suits

Exo-Suits are described in great detail starting on page 68. This section presents a few basic models: one for “black ops,” one for police work, and one for the industrial market. Exo-Suits don’t have Everyvehicle Equipment per se, as each Exo-Suit is built for a specific purpose. However, even the most basic Exo-Suit will have an integrated computer system akin to the basic car computer. Most of the standard vehicle features, such as the clock and vehicle sensors, are part of the computer and appear on the pilot’s Heads-Up Display.

GUNKOKU KUMO

As it’s name implies, the Kumo (“spider”) is a multi-legged vaguely arachnid-shaped Exo-Suit. Designed to sit low to the ground, they move either by walking or via recessed wheels set into the legs. Presume any Non-Combat Movement uses the wheels. Kumo are noted for their agility, although their multi-layered composite armor is fairly thin in order to allow this.

Kumo are popular with corporate security and police forces, and are often used for anti-terrorist, infiltration,

GUNKOKU KUMO

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
2	Size	10	3.2x1.6x1.6m; -4m KB; +1 OCV
30	STR	10	Lift 1,600 kg; 6d6 HTH [3]
20	DEX	30	
14	BODY	2	
9	PD	11	
9	ED	10	
7	OCV	20	
7	DCV	20	
4	SPD	30	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
Total Characteristic Cost: 133			

Movement:

Ground: 16m/64m

Abilities & Equipment

Cost Power END

Power Systems

- 12 *Cold-Fusion Reactor:* Endurance Reserve (32 END, 30 REC); OIF Bulky (-1), Only Powers Electrical Devices (-¼)
- 4 *Auxiliary Battery Pack:* Endurance Reserve (32 END, 6 REC) Reserve: OIF Bulky (-1), Only Powers Electrical Devices (-¼); REC: Limited Recovery (must be hooked up to external recharger; -2), OIF Bulky (-1), Only Powers Electrical Devices (-¼)

Propulsion Systems

- 4 *Exo-Suit Limbs:* Extra Limbs (four legs, two manipulators) (4); Limited Manipulation (-¼)
- 6 *Exo-Suit Limbs/Recessed Drive Wheels:* Ground Movement +4m” (16m total), x4 Noncombat; Costs Endurance (-½)
- 4 *Climbing Cable And Winch:* Stretching 16m; OIF Bulky (-1), Cannot Do Damage (-½), Always Direct (-¼), No Noncombat Stretching (-¼), Extra Time (Full Phase, Only to Activate, must be hooked up for each new rappelling attempt; -¼), Limited Body Parts (winch cable only; -¼)4
- 3 *Enhanced Winch Motor:* +10 STR; OIF Bulky (-1), Only Works With Winch (-1)
- 2 *Ground Vehicle:* Swimming -4m

Tactical Systems

- 40 *7.62mm Gunpod:* RKA 2d6+1, +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼), 250 Charges (+1), Autofire (10 shots; +1); OIF Bulky (-1), Limited Arc Of Fire (60 degrees; ½), Beam (-¼), Real Weapon (-¼) plus +1 OCV; OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-¼) plus +3 Versus Range Modifier; OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-¼) [250]

- 5 *Shielded Optics:* Sight Group Flash Defense (10 points); Only Protects Versus Exterior Flashes Versus Interior Personnel (-1)

- 2 *Heavy:* Knockback Resistance -2m

Operations Systems

- 5 *GPS Tracker:* Detect Exact Position On Earth (Radio Group) 16- (Unusual Group); OIF Bulky (-1)
- 5 *Communications Suite:* High Range Radio Perception (Radio Group); OIF Bulky (-1), Sense Affected As Sight and Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group [very common Sense] (-½)
- 4 *Nightsight Package:* Infrared Perception (Sight Group); OIF Bulky (-1) plus Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group); OIF Bulky (-1)
- 4 *Optical Enhancement:* +6 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group; OIF Bulky (-1)
- 4 *Audio Enhancement:* +6 versus Range Modifier for Hearing Group; OIF Bulky (-1)
- 4 *Ultrasound Receiver:* Ultrasonic Perception (Hearing Group), Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees); OIF Bulky (-1)
- 10 *Coded Transmitter:* Mind Link to others on same coded frequency, Human (technically human pilots of other Kumo Exo-Suits) class of minds, Specific Group of Minds, No LOS Needed, Number of Minds (x8); OIF Bulky (-1), Only With Others Who Have Mind Link (-1), Affected as Hearing Sense Group and Radio Sense Group, Not Mental Group (-½)

Personnel Systems

- 10 *Internal Airtank:* LS (Self-Contained Breathing), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (1 Hour ; +0) [1 cc]

Talents

- 3 *Short Distance Laser Range finder:* Absolute Range Sense
- 3 *Onboard Clock:* Absolute Time Sense
- 3 *Onboard Compass:* Bump Of Direction

Skills

- 5 *Heads-Up Display:* +1 with Exo-Suit Weaponry
- 4 *Heads-Up Display:* +2 Versus Range Modifier with Exo-Suit Weaponry

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 142
Total Vehicle Cost: 275

Value Complications

- 10 Physical Complication: Cannot Punch (Frequently, Slightly Impairing)
- 10 Physical Complication: Requires Linked Operator (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing)

Total Complication Points: 20
Total Cost: 255/5 = 51

and espionage work. They come equipped with an extensive sensory package, allowing for full-band radio communication with video display, low-light operations, and shotgun microphones. Offensively, the Kumo normally mounts a heavy belt-fed machine gun in a mobile pod under the "head." This weapon can easily be exchanged for a different system if so desired, or supplemented with a secondary system (grenade launchers are a popular choice).

To assist the Kumo in its intended role as a covert-operations Exo-Suit, a winch and cable system is

mounted on the rear of the vehicle. With a little preparation, the pilot can secure his Exo-Suit to a building and then use the cable and winch to descend (and then ascend) the walls. The winch features an automatic braking system and a powerful retrieval system capable of recovering the paid-out line within a matter of moments.

A Kumo stands little more than one meter in height, is three meters long, and weighs about 500 kilograms. It has four legs and two arms with three-fingered manipulators. Due to the unique piloting systems, the Kumo requires a DNI-equipped pilot.

MECHANIZED PROPULSION SYSTEMS CENTURION

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
2	Size	10	3.2x1.6x1.6m; -4m KB; +1 OCV
40	STR	20	Lift 6,400 kg; 8d6 HTH [4]
15	DEX	15	
20	BODY	8	
17	PD	23	
17	ED	22	
5	OCV	15	
5	DCV	15	
3	SPD	20	Phases: 4, 8, 12
Total Characteristic Cost: 148			

Movement:

Ground: 20m/40m

Abilities & Equipment

Cost Power END

Power Systems

- 16 *Cold-Fusion Reactor*: Endurance Reserve (40 END, 40 REC)
OIF Bulky (-1), Only Powers Electrical Devices (-¼)
- 5 *Auxiliary Battery Pack*: Endurance Reserve (40 END, 6 REC)
OIF Bulky (-1), Only Powers Electrical Devices (-¼); REC: Limited Recovery (must be hooked up to external recharger; -2), OIF Bulky (-1), Only Powers Electrical Devices (-¼)

Propulsion Systems

- 5 *Exo-Suit Limbs*: Extra Limbs (two legs, two arms) (4)
- 5 *Exo-Suit Limbs*: Ground Movement +8m (20m total) 1
Costs Endurance (-½)
- 2 *Ground Vehicle*: Swimming -4m

Tactical Systems

- 5 *Shielded Optics*: Sight Group Flash Defense (10 points)
Only Protects Versus Exterior Flashes Versus Interior Personnel (-1)
- 4 *Heavy*: Knockback Resistance -4m

Operations Systems

- 5 *GPS Tracker*: Detect Exact Position On Earth (Radio Group) 16- (Unusual Group)
OIF Bulky (-1)
- 5 *Communications Suite*: High Range Radio Perception (Radio Group)
OIF Bulky (-1), Sense Affected As Sight and Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group [very common Sense] (-½)
- 4 *Nightsight Package*: Infrared Perception (Sight Group);
OIF Bulky (-1)
plus Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group); OIF Bulky (-1)

- 4 *Optical Enhancement*: +6 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group
OIF Bulky (-1)
- 4 *Audio Enhancement*: +6 versus Range Modifier for Hearing Group
OIF Bulky (-1)
- 7 *Emergency Lights And Siren*: Sight and Hearing Groups, +4 to PER Rolls; 3
OAF Bulky (-1 ½), Set Effect (-1), No Range (-½)
- 2 *Public Address System*: Hearing Group Images, +3 to PER Rolls 1
OAF Bulky (-1 ½), Set Effect (only amplifies what's said into it; -1), No Range (-½)
- 9 *Spot Light*: Sight Group Images, +4 to PER Roll 3
Area of Effect (8m Radius; +½); OAF Bulky (-1 ½), Only To Create Light (-1), Limited Arc Of Fire (180 degrees; front/side of car; -¼)

Personnel Systems

- 10 *Internal Airtank*: LS (Self-Contained Breathing) [1 cc]
1 Continuing Fuel Charge (1 Hour; +0)

Talents

- 3 *Short Distance Laser Range finder*: Absolute Range Sense
- 3 *Onboard Clock*: Absolute Time Sense
- 3 *Onboard Compass*: Bump Of Direction

Skills

- 8 *Heads-Up Display*: +1 with Ranged Combat
- 9 *Heads-Up Display*: +3 Versus Range Modifier with All Attacks

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 114

Total Vehicle Cost: 262

Value Complications

- 20 *Distinctive Features*: Police Car (Not Concealable; Always Noticed and Causes Major Reaction)
- 15 *Physical Complication*: Clumsy Fingers, No Fine Work Possible (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)

Total Complication Points: 35

Total Cost: 227/5 = 45

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

Cost Option

- +5 *MPS Decurion*: The Decurion is meant for aerial reconnaissance and fast response. Designed with agility and speed in mind, the Decurion is far more nimble than the Centurion and weighs in at around 1,000 kilograms. It features all of the same systems as the Centurion, but adds in a flight pack, allowing the Exo-Suit full flight capabilities.

MECHANIZED PROPULSION SYSTEMS CENTURION

Produced by Mechanized Propulsion Systems of Alta California, the Centurion is the primary Exo-Suit of the Neo York Police Department, Inc. It is normally used for dealing with rogue cyberdroids, combating heavy gang activity, quelling civil disturbances (such as riots), and assaulting fortified buildings. Slow-moving, the Centurion depends on its heavy multi-layered armor to survive conflicts. The exact weapons load-out varies depending on the mission and pilot preference. The XM-297 or XM-298 is typically carried in most situations, although for dealing with riots and the like, the Suit will be equipped with a variety of non-lethal systems (such as tear gas, an Exo-Suit Electron Weapon, and so on).

A Centurion stands three meters tall and weighs in at just under 2 tons. They come equipped with standard police systems, such as a light bar, siren, PA system, spotlights, and so on. Individual Centurions may mount any of the systems listed for the Ford Patrol Cruiser as well. The internal computer is virtually identical to the Police Vehicle Computer.

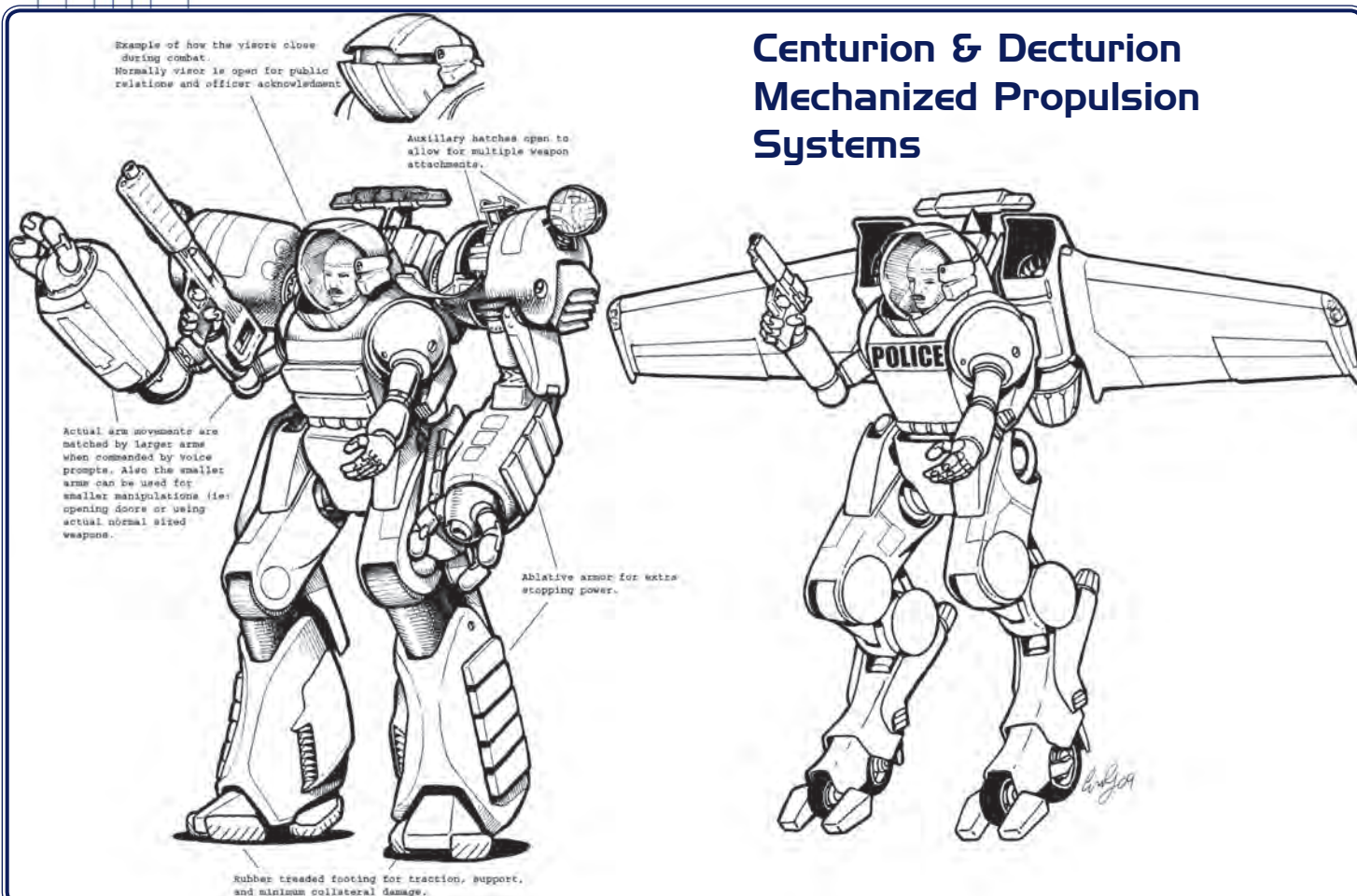
Neo York Police Centurions are normally dark blue with white striping and insignia.

In order to create a Decurion, make the following changes to the Centurion: increase DEX to 18, decrease STR to 35, DEF to 14, and BODY to 16. Add Flight Pack: Flight 50m, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (1 Hour; +0); OIF Bulky (bolt-on flight pack; -1), Limited Maneuverability Only 2 turns per Phase at Combat speed; only 1 turn per Phase at Noncombat speed (-¼).

MECHANIZED PROPULSION SYSTEMS I-500 POWER LOADER

Description: One of the largest and heaviest Exo-Suits available, the I-500 is meant as a multi-purpose construction vehicle. Its primary purpose is a heavy-load lifter and is commonly found on construction sites moving pallets of equipment and raw materials. The standard layout has humanoid hands, allowing the pilot to simply pick up anything he sees. Some I-500s have a forklift-styled mechanism instead, allowing for easy transport of pallets and the like. Additional options are possible, such as extendable load arms (Stretching), or various arm-mounted tools (blow-torch, rivet gun, pneumatic hammer, chainsaw, sawblades, leaf blower, and so on).

The I-500 stands around 3 meters in height and weighs roughly 2,100 kilograms. Most are painted bright yellow and mount halogen spotlights around the pilot compartment. The back of the Exo-Suit has a rotating warning light that activates when the vehicle backs up.



MECHANIZED PROPULSION SYSTEMS I-500 POWER LOADER

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
3	Size	15	4x2x2xm; -6m KB; +2 OCV
45	STR	20	Lift 12.5 tons; 9d6 HTH [4]
13	DEX	9	
23	BODY	10	
10	PD	12	
10	ED	12	
4	OCV	5	
4	DCV	5	
2	SPD	10	Phases: 6, 12
			Total Characteristic Cost: 98

Movement:

Ground: 16m/32m

Abilities & Equipment**Cost Power****END****Power Systems**

- 14 *Standard Internal Combustion Engine:* Endurance Reserve (30 END, 30 REC); OIF Bulky (-1)

Propulsion Systems

- 5 *Exo-Suit Limbs:* Extra Limbs (two legs, two arms) (4)
 3 *Exo-Suit Limbs:* Ground Movement +4m (16m total 1
 Costs Endurance (-½)
 -2 *Ground Vehicle:* Swimming -4m

Tactical Systems

- 4 *Heavy:* Knockback Resistance -4m
 5 *Heavy Lift Braces:* Knockback Resistance -12m
 OIF Bulky (-1), Not Usable On Surfaces With A DEF
 Greater Than 8 (-¼), Extra Time (Full Phase, Only to
 Activate, -¼)

Operations Systems

- 4 *Internal Radio:* Radio Perception/Transmission (Radio Group)
 OIF Bulky (-1), Sense Affected As Hearing Group As Well
 As Radio Group [very common Sense] (-½)
 5 *Emergency Lights:* Sight Group Images, +4 to PER Rol 2
 OAF Bulky (-1 ½), Set Effect (-1), No Range (-½)
 9 *Spot Light:* Sight Group Images, +4 to PER Roll 3
 Area of Effect (8m Radius; +½); OAF Bulky (-1 ½), Only
 To Create Light (-1)

Personnel Systems

- 6 *Rollcage:* +4 PD/+4ED
 Only To Protect Against Damage From Collision, Rollovers,
 And The Like (-1)

Talents

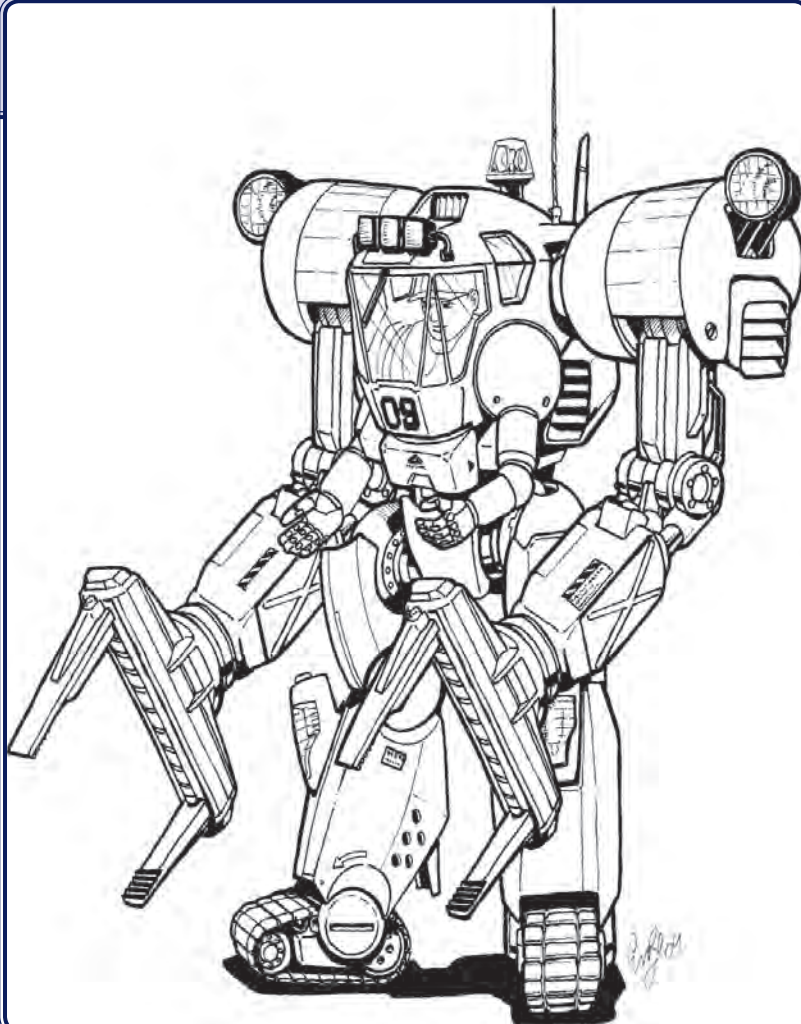
- 3 *Short-Range Laser Range finder:* Absolute Range Sense
 3 *Onboard Clock:* Absolute Time Sense
 3 *Onboard Compass:* Bump Of Direction

Skills

- 13 *Heavy-Lift Database:* Hoist 14-

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 75**Total Vehicle Cost: 173****Value Complications**

- 15 *Physical Complication:* Clumsy Fingers, No Fine Work
 Possible (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)

Total Complication Points: 15**Total Cost: 158/5 = 32***I-500 Power Loader*

PART FOUR:

**ARCOLOGIES, ZERO ZONES,
& MULTINATIONALS:**

**THE WORLD OF
KAZEI 5**

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE WORLD OF KAZEI 5

Marta Nys follows her sister Shion, eyes darting to either side of the street. There are people scattered around the doorways: pushers, runners, hookers, and johns. Dealers in drugs, guns, games, and vice. Gangers, who'll pop a cap in the ass of anyone who disses them. Bums, who ask for handouts to buy a bottle. Burnouts, who tend to talk to themselves as they stagger along. The homeless, who sleep in boxes and on heating grates. And the runaways — like Marta and Shion — who've fled broken homes, broken lives, and in many cases, broken towns from the fighting down south, where what was once the United States has finally stopped tearing at itself in a bloodletting unseen since the first Civil War, well over one hundred years ago.

The street sees cars roll by, most with radios thumping out a bass beat so deep you can feel it in your boots. Engines rumble and roar, except for the hybrids, which tend to be silent. And there's a lot more of those than there used to be. Gas is hellishly expensive, and only the best black market dealers seem to have it. Most everyone these days has to put up with hybrid and electric cars. The bikes are a different matter. They're everywhere, in all shapes and sizes; lightweight rice-burner racers, sleek German Beemers, and heavyweight Harleys. Some are stock, but most are chopped, rebuilt into something more stylish and street lethal. They tear by in groups, weaving in and out of traffic, their riders armored in leather, denim, studs, and chains. Marta ignores them, or tries to. The bikers aren't interested in her anyway. They're jousting among themselves right now, showing off to prove their prowess on the street.

— Marta and Shion Nys make their way through Chicago, circa 2019

The worldview of 2030 is one of uncertainty. Gone are the superpowers of the twentieth century; both the USA and USSR have been replaced with a balkanized collection of smaller nations, while China has dissolved into a chaotic tangle of petty warlords each trying to carve out their own piece of the Middle Kingdom. Africa is devastated, a victim of a whole host of ills: disease, drought, famine, and genocide, all allowed to run unchecked as the rest of the world has its hands full with its own problems. In the Middle East the slow death of the oil industry has left many nations wondering how they'll survive. To make matters worse, climatic change has resulted in rising oceans. While some parts of the world have started to flood, others are beginning to dry out, diminishing water supplies and arable land. Only time will tell if man's technological prowess will allow him to overcome the myriad problems he's faces or if the human race is doomed to slowly decay into a downward death spiral.

What Has Gone Before

"How did all of this happen?" is a question many historians ask themselves when they look at the world around them (and odds are they'll be asking that question for many years to come). Most agree the modern geopolitical landscape is the result of numerous disparate elements combining into what has been called a political "perfect storm" of financial meltdown and military conflict. The question then becomes what caused this "storm" to form.

A few historians point a finger back fifty years to the environmental polices of President Jimmy Carter. Able to win the 1980 election due to his handling of the Iranian Hostage Crisis (in which CIA espers played a vital part of the rescue mission), Carter spent most of his

second term in office attempting to wean America off of foreign oil, engaging in alternate energy research, and reducing pollution. While generally successful, his policies met with stiff resistance from business leaders.

When Ronald Reagan won the presidential election in 1984, he promised to make America great again. He felt Carter had been too soft in foreign affairs and too willing to compromise with other nations. Reagan, on the other hand, took a hardline against communism and communist countries and sympathized with the needs and wants of industrial America. Dedicated himself to undoing much of Carter's environmental work, he's also credited with reducing or removing many government regulations and labor restrictions on big business, especially in the financial sector.

The end result was a very pro-business administration, combining a corporate-friendly foreign policy with an extensive increase in military funding. At the same time, many domestic programs had their budgets slashed or were eliminated entirely. While America's GNP rose, the fortunes of the average worker declined.

THE START OF THE STORM

Despite this, for a time all seemed well with the world. The Soviet Union, driven to bankruptcy in an effort to match Reagan's (and his successors') military spending, collapsed in 1995. The rest of the Eastern Bloc soon followed as the Iron Curtain (and the Berlin Wall) came down. Europe used this event to continue the development of the European Union, including establishing a common currency (the Euro), a developed single market, and a standardized system of laws.

In America, the rise of the personal computer industry allowed almost unprecedented economic growth, especially in the private sector. Known as the Dot-Com

NOT IN KANSAS ANYMORE

Kazei 5's history is functionally identical to our own — to a degree. The primary shift occurs in the 1930s, with Dr. J. B. Rhine's extra-sensory perception experiments (see page 50 for more). From this point on, events slowly diverge until it should be obvious that Kazei 5's 2009 can't be the reader's 2009. Kazei 5 isn't just a dark future, it's an alternate history as well.

PURPOSELY VAGUE

Readers should note the history section doesn't name names when it comes to the Second Civil War. This is a deliberate oversight. The history section is meant to act only as a primer, giving readers just enough background to allow them to understand the campaign setting without involving a lot of unnecessary names, dates, and events. More specific details are up to the GM (if he so desires). This allows for each and every GM to put his own stamp on the campaign and make it his own.

era, it saw immense growth of the internet and internet marketing. Many new companies found it easy to gain venture capital and investors simply by adding an "e-" to the front of their name or ".com" to the end. However, despite pushing Wall Street to record highs, it wasn't to last. By 2001 the bubble had burst and nearly 5 trillion dollars in market value vanished.

The collapse of the dot-com market sent shockwaves through the American job market. Many out of work computer experts discovered little to no demand for their services, mainly due to expanded outsourcing (sending jobs overseas to be performed for less). In a frightening omen of things to come, many of those who invested in the dot-coms transferred their speculative desires to the real estate market, lured in by low down payments and the concept of "flipping" properties for large profits.

For a while, things seemed back to normal, but in truth, all that had happened was investors replaced one house of straw for another.

THE STORM FORMS

Three events are generally considered to be the instigators behind the global financial collapse from which the world is only now starting to fully recover. By coincidence, these events all occurred in 2006, resulting in a situation where any one might have been survivable, but all three together generated an unstable critical situation.

First was the bursting of the American housing bubble. Built up over years of unregulated lending practices, the collapse of the housing market brought down Wall Street with it, in a crash reminiscent of the dot-com bust of 2001. With billions lost in unrecoverable loans, and foreclosures occurring in record numbers, hundreds of financial and insurance institutions went bankrupt, taking with them the savings and retirement investments of millions of Americans.

The second was the "Bird Flu" influenza pandemic of Southeast Asia. Responsible for the deaths of untold millions, the flu, when coupled with the devastation wrought by the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, virtually depopulated whole regions. Hardest hit were China, Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam, where the virus infected close-packed urban residents, killing over 60% of its victims.

The third was the Chinese civil war. Brewing in one form or another since the Tiananmen Square massacre of 1989 (which saw open fighting between units of the Chinese army), the final trigger was a mixture of causes: the government's denial of the dangers of bird flu, the closing of many factories and manufacturing centers due to a lack of demand from the American market, and jealousy over the status of Hong Kong, Macau, and certain other Special Administrative Regions and Economic Zones. With deaths mounting from the influenza pandemic, various ethnic groups rebelled against the government, demanding action. Attempts to suppress the rebels with military means met with mixed success as many members of the army deserted to return home to their families. Within a year, unrest was widespread across China and open fighting was common place.

THE STORM BREAKS

The fall out from these events was a world-wide financial depression. With American banks closing almost daily, the stock market dropped to lows not seen in decades. The dollar soon followed suit, bringing down the fortunes of businesses around the world. When coupled with the violence in China and the vast numbers of flu deaths in Southeast Asia, the result was a total disruption in global trade. Gone was the world's primary reserve currency, with the euro the only replacement. The standard of living for America, Canada, and a host of other countries fell, as unemployment rose to levels surpassing those of the Great Depression. Entire countries (such as Bulgaria and Iceland) went bankrupt and declared functional insolvency. The result could only be described as an unstable powder keg.

"It's simple, really. No country is more than three meals away from a revolution. Once the food runs out, people get ugly."

— Mohammed Mack, economist.

The Second American Civil War

As the world watched in grim apprehension and growing horror the American people, upset with years of government corruption, cronyism, incompetence, and apparent lack of concern for the general populace (as demonstrated by the tepid response to Hurricane Katrina that left New Orleans a flooded wasteland) demonstrated and rioted in vast numbers. Certain metropolitan areas, such as Los Angeles, became virtual war zones as the police, outnumbered and out-gunned, were shown to be unable to restore order.

Calling out the National Guard helped, but wasn't sufficient enough measure to fully pacify the turbulent inner cities, leading the current administration to decide that desperate times called for desperate measures. Urged on by various multinational business interests who didn't want to see their company property destroyed, the President enacted martial law in all cities, counties, and states currently suffering from civil disorder.

While many military units moved out as requested, as least one didn't. The commander of the 3rd Infantry Division in Fort Benning, Georgia, refused the order, declaring it unconstitutional. Accusing the President of acting against the Constitution and people of the United States, he stated the 3rd Infantry wasn't going to enter an American city and murder other Americans.

Branded a traitor to his country and in violation his military oath, the President then called on other military units to suppress this act of rebellion. The response was a brief and chaotic firefight as the various units stationed at Fort Benning struggled amongst themselves. At the same time, the governor of Georgia enacted state-wide martial law, and called upon all military forces and National Guard units located within the state to defend Georgia's borders from the "the corrupt and honor-less lapdogs of an uncaring and ineffectual administration."

Within days the governors of many other states responded in kind. National Guard units were called home, curfews enacted, and violators shot with no warning. Congress quickly adjourned and the 2008 presidential elections were cancelled as interstate commerce and travel ground to a screeching halt. This soon led to massive riots as what little food there was in the cities ran out. All across America, large angry (and hungry) mobs tried to smash their way into warehouses, distribution centers, and shipping hubs, all in search of something to eat.

As the rest of America spiraled down into what could only result in a shooting war, the state of California made a bold decision. Cutting all ties with the federal government, they declared themselves to be the new nation of Alta California, and adopted a modified version of the original United States Constitution as their own. Utah followed soon after, when the members of the Church of Latter Day Saints decided the end times were coming. After sealing the state's borders, they expelled (or simply ignored) all non-Mormons, and only allowed fellow Mormons entry. To the north, North and South Dakota did the same, working with local military units to secure their borders, and in doing so instantly became the world's third-largest nuclear power.

For the rest of America things went from bad to worse. States sought to cajole others into joining their "side" while the federal government ineffectually worked to restore order. With no clear objectives or enemy, fighting was sporadic, confused, and tended to occur as a series of retaliatory strikes. In addition, many federal buildings and institutions were attacked, looted, and burned (IRS offices were popular targets), as well as state buildings, police stations, and businesses.

Eventually people had had enough. The war wound its way down to an inconclusive end with no clear victor. Looking back, it was generally agreed all the Second Civil War managed to do was kill untold thousands (if not millions) and destroy the national infrastructure. However, it did bring about one major change — the United States was no more. Fractured by economic, geographic, and political differences, reunification was impossible. Instead, new nations arose from the ruins of the old.

The Third World War

Technically the third "World War" wasn't a single, concentrated military conflict, but a continuous series of revolutions, rebellions, border clashes, civil wars, and the like. Lasting from just after the start of the American Civil War till just after its end, the major conflicts included the Second Civil War itself, China's civil war (creating what is now known as the Sino Strife Zone), the Indo-Pakistani War of 2009 (and 2011, 2015, and 2017), the Israeli Eradication, and the so-called "tribal wars" of Africa.

Many of these wars were the result of a desire to settle old scores. With no one to interfere (such as NATO, the United States, or the United Nations) rival nations and ethnic groups rose up in force, looking to finally resolve situations that had been simmering for years. In many

cases, the aim wasn't just the eradication of the target, but the acquisition of much-needed resources, such as fresh water, arable land, mineral deposits, oil reserves, and the like. Others fought for religious reasons or due to ages old clan/tribal rivalries.

Few, if any, of these wars accomplished much. The Israeli Eradication ended in the use of nuclear weapons, as Israel launched air strikes at Iraq and Syria, only to receive several short-range nukes in return (thanks to Russian technology acquired on the black market). Pakistan's desperate attempts to regain territory lost to India (and supposedly liberate Kashmir) only resulted in defeat after defeat and the eventual breakup of Pakistan into several smaller nations divided along tribal lines. In Africa, entire countries effectively vanished, existing in name only, with no central government to speak of.

When coupled with the bird flu pandemic and the unchecked spread of AIDS across Africa, Russia, and portions of the Caribbean, the resulting toll was catastrophic. Millions died from fighting, disease, and starvation. Millions more were displaced, and a sea of refugees surged across the globe, looking for assistance. For many, none would be found, as nations closed their borders, unable or unwilling to shelter or support them. It's estimated the world population dropped from roughly 6 billion people in the year 2000 to 5 billion by 2020.

PICKING UP THE PIECES

It is now 2030. The world's population has risen to 5.75 billion people. Most of the world's wars from the previous decades have been resolved, although there is sporadic violence between different tribal regions in Africa while the Sino Strife Zone has yet to settle down. However, despite the horror and violence there have been many miraculous technological advances in the fields of cybernetics, nanotechnology, biotechnology, and genetic engineering. Fusion reactors provide power to many industrialized nations and vast wind farms have sprouted across many arid regions. so events have proven to be mixed blessing. The rise in global temperatures has caused the ice caps to shrink, but it has also opened up vast new growing fields in Canada and Siberia. Rising ocean waters have flooded some parts of the world, but also allowed others to become greener.

There can be no doubt the world has come to a great fork in the road. It can either try and rise above the death and destruction that marked the start of the twenty-first century or it can sink into yet another cycle of violence from which it's doubtful man will emerge. Only time will tell.

SEPARATE WE STAND

Unlike the first Civil War, which ended up a two-sided affair (the Union and the Confederacy), the Second Civil War saw the United States break up into a multitude of small nation states. At the war's height, California, North and South Dakota, Texas, Utah, and Vermont had all declared autonomy in some form or another. When it was all over, the United States had split into Alta California, Cascadia, Deseret, the Republic of Texas, United North America, and a much smaller United States of America. See page 149 for more.

Kazei 5 • North America • 2030 AD



THE WORLD OF 2030

Zhen Zhen Li lit a fresh cigarette and paused a moment to think. A mercenary unit going to Africa wanted information on Anti-Materiel Rifles. They were willing to pay for both the intel and once they'd selected the weapon they liked, the guns themselves. So Zhen Zhen had spent the last few hours gathering data from such diverse locations as South Africa, Germany, and the UNA, eventually coming up with a list a half-dozen strong, in calibers ranging from 15 to 20 millimeter. She'd also supplied them with a run-down of possible ammunition types; APFSDS for anti-armor work, HEAP for wrecking vehicles, and HE for soft targets. Nothing special. Africa itself was a different matter.

During the 1990s the so-called "dark continent" had been ravaged by famine, drought, tribal warfare, and out-and-out genocide. But none of this compared to the havoc wrecked by the AIDS virus. The disease had killed millions, infecting more than 45% of the continent's population. When combined with a lack of food, water, or foreign intervention, parts of Africa had seen death tolls reaching as high as 75%. It'd been like Europe's Black Death. Entire villages had vanished, then entire tribes, and finally, entire countries. Only the animals had prospered, and even then it was the scavengers who'd done best. Such as the multinationals. They'd moved in and simply taken over. The survivors were usually too weak and too desperate to care and gladly accepted what ever aid the corporations offered. Meanwhile, these same companies looted the land of such resources as diamonds, minerals, a little oil, and timber.

But Africa was half a world away and not her concern. She couldn't change the past, and besides, she was only a couple of hundred miles from similar scenes of slaughter and greed. China had been tearing at itself for years, and had a body count almost as bad. After a while the hundreds became thousands, then tens of thousands, then hundreds of thousands, and eventually millions. Reports said the Earth had lost nearly a billion people in the past forty years, most to famine, war, and disease. It was far too much to truly comprehend. One couldn't wrap their mind around such numbers, so you set them aside and got on with your life — which in Zhen Zhen's case meant e-mailing off an infodump on guns and corporate activities in a place where the unburied dead still outnumbered the living.

— Zhen Zhen Li engages in infotrading

The geopolitical map has changed drastically since the start of the new century. This section will give a brief overview of the world as a whole, with greater detail given to those locations PCs will most likely interact with: Neo York, MegaTokyo, and Hong Kong. Game Masters are highly encouraged to expand upon (and even alter) the information given here in order to make the setting their own.

NORTH AMERICA

Once home to three major nations: Canada, Mexico, and the United States, North America now features the countries of Alta California, Cascadia, Deseret, Nunavut, Republic of Quebec, Republic of Texas, United North America, and the United States of America.

"You know what the biggest obstacle to UNA/USA relations is? They each think the other guy lost the war."

— Lisa Wooden, political analyst

United North America

Area: Alberta, Arizona (the eastern half), Colorado, Connecticut, Dakota (North and South), Delaware, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Manitoba, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Brunswick, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ohio, Ontario, Pennsylvania, Prince Edward Island, Rhode Island, Saskatchewan, Vermont, Virginia (includes West Virginia), Wisconsin, Wyoming.

Government: Federal parliamentary democracy

Capital: Toronto

Population: 170,000,000

Language(s): English

Currency: Dollar

Resources: Agriculture, Cattle, Manufacturing, Mining, Natural Gas, Petroleum Products, Ranching, Timber

The largest nation on the North American continent, United North America was formed when remnants of the United States of America joined with what was left of Canada. The reasoning behind this merger was driven almost purely by economics. When the Pacific Coast states seceded to form Alta California and Cascadia, the United States lost several major shipping ports. Canada fared no better, with the loss of British Columbia and Quebec reducing its water access to small ports along the Great Lakes. The Second Civil War left America's highway and rail system in ruins, with the only major

UNITED NORTH AMERICA'S TEN LARGEST CITIES

In order they are: Neo York, Toronto, Chicago, Indianapolis, Columbus, Edmonton, Baltimore, Winnipeg, Milwaukee, and Boston.

UNDER THE SURFACE

Many cities in the UNA look nice in the brochures and on the Net, but the truth is often a lot darker. While the towering arcologies may glitter in the sun, they cast long shadows, and down in the dark things can be very unpleasant. Toronto, known for its cleanliness, is almost an exception to the rest of the UNA, especially cities battered by the Second Civil War. Many metroplexes are marred by extensive slums and so-called "combat zones" where the police go only in great numbers. Gangs and organized crime have a strong presence in many cities, engaging in such age-old crimes as extortion, smuggling, drug running, and prostitution. The new technologies have brought new crimes as well, including trafficking in illegal simsense chips, organlegging (harvesting organs from a designated victim), and black-market cyberware sales and implants.

east-west connections running through Canada. As for Canada itself, while it still possessed extensive natural resources in the form of coal, oil, timber and minerals, it didn't have the capacity to fully exploit (or defend) these assets. The result was several years of extensive negotiations leading to the creation of United North America in 2222. Due to the ruined state of Washington D.C., the capital was relocated to Toronto. The District of Columbia has since been rebuilt, but is now dedicated to various memorials and museums with most of the former capital's territory returned to Maryland.

POLITICS

Dissatisfaction with the excesses of the last few American presidential administrations resulted in the UNA adopting a parliamentary system of government based heavily on the Canadian model. Not only did this reduce the power of the executive branch, it also forced the legislative branch to compromise more, eliminating some of the bipartisan stalemates that had characterized politics in the former United States.

The UNA features multiple political parties, including the Conservative Party (home to many former Republicans), the Democratic Party, the Green Party, the Liberal Party, the New Democrats (who are very socialist), and the Techno Party (who seek equal rights for replicated humans). Usually only two or three of these parties have any real power at one time. Voting is handled through a multiple-choice ranking system, which includes a "none of the above" selection. While this does allow for greater representation of an individual voter's desires, it's an open secret many multinationals have undue influence on how their employees vote.

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

A nation for less than a decade, United North America is in many ways still trying to find itself. Despite the unification, much of the population identifies themselves as either "American" or "Canadian." At the same time, the former Americans have to deal with no longer being the leading player in world affairs, while Canadians are now under greater international scrutiny than ever before. Still, it is hoped that in due time the two societies will merge to form a greater whole.

For the most part, life in the UNA is much the same as it was in Canada and the United States. United North America prides itself on its adherence to traditional freedoms: speech, the press, choice of religion, and so on. People are allowed to own personal firearms, the military is all-volunteer, and people are innocent until proven guilty. Personality wise, the stereotype of the "polite" Canadian seems to have rubbed off on much of the former United States. Perhaps it's due to the United States falling from global prominence, but the reputation of the "ugly American" has greatly diminished in the last few decades.

One thing the unification has brought to the fore is a general "can-do" attitude. People are willing to work, and work hard, to make a better future. This has resulted in a general upswing in the economy, but even the most optimistic agree the UNA has a ways to go.

CITIES AND REGIONS

Much of the Eastern Seaboard was devastated by the riots and fighting that characterized the Second Civil War. Rebuilding these areas is a primary goal of the UNA, and many multinational corporations have been granted large tax breaks in return for guaranteed urban development. This has led to the demolition of entire city blocks, pulled down to make way for immense company arcologies and manufacturing centers.

In some American cities the unrest leading up to the Civil War was so bad whole sections were sealed off and declared "Zero Law-enforcement Zones." Isolated through a combination of walls, checkpoints, and natural terrain features (like rivers), these "Zero Zones" have been left to their own devices. Likened to giant outdoor prisons, they are scenes of complete anarchy. However, since the end of the war, many Zones have been reclaimed, and only a scattered few still exist, with the largest (and most (in)famous) located in Neo York. See page 171 for more Zero Zone information.

Outside of major urban areas are large numbers of gated communities. Walled off from the rest of the surrounding countryside, they tend to feature extensive surveillance systems, private security guards, and a low tolerance for disruption. Permanent entry to any of these communities is nigh impossible, unless one has plenty of money or a friend on the inside (or both).

The unification of the midwestern United States and Canada has served to make United North America the breadbasket of the world. Immense corporate farms extend from Kansas up into Alberta and Saskatchewan, raising corn, wheat, oats, and other grains. Much of the work is automated, performed by cyberdroids, while harvests are handled by DNI-capable harvesters and combines. In some cases, the units are slaved to each other, with only one vehicle having a human operator.

Neo York

Renamed after the unification in 2222, Neo York is the UNA's most populous city, with over 10 million residents. It's a center of finance (due to the Neo York Stock Exchange), and home to many multinational arcologies, including the Jinsei Corporation, Mitsumi Biotechnology, the R. Scott Foundation, and Shikoku-Shin Consumer Products. Neo York is also a major maritime port, and handles an immense volume of ship-borne cargo. Other important businesses include insurance, real estate, media (film, music, television, and theater), and sports entertainment (including the home arena of *Lace & Steel*).

Chicago

The transportation hub of the UNA, Chicago sits at the center of an immense high-speed rail network, boasts one of the busiest airports in the world, and is a major stop for Great Lakes shipping. With a population of over 3 million (and growing), the Windy City is expected to become a leader in economic development over the next decade. Notable arcologies include Jinsei Corporation, Poseidon Interactive Systems, and Telerec Computers. It's also a leader in finance, insurance, printing, publishing, manufacturing, food processing, and medical services.

Toronto

The capital of the UNA, Toronto is a very cosmopolitan city, and is known for its cleanliness, low crime rate, high-standard of living, and diverse outlooks. It's a center for finance, telecommunications, aerospace development, media productions, software, and medical research. The desired destination of many who are down-and-out, Toronto has mostly replaced Neo York and Los Angeles as the place to be if you want to "hit the big time."

"I swear, if the UNA's motto is 'From many one', then the USA's motto is 'God, guns, and guts'."

— Lisa Wooden, political analyst

United States of America

Area: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee.

Government: Federal constitutional republic

Capital: Atlanta

Population: 60,000,000

Language(s): English

Currency: Dollar

Resources: Agriculture, Aquaculture, Livestock, Natural Gas, Petroleum Products

The ragged remainder of the original United States of America, the current United States is marked by a dogged determination to remain true to the spirit of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. There is a certain degree of mistrust between the USA and the UNA, as each sees the other as a traitor to the American ideal. Although open warfare is unlikely (the memories of the Second Civil War are too fresh), there is some animosity along the border, which is well-patrolled by both sides. That said, both the UNA and USA recognize they need each other to survive, and trade has picked up greatly in the last few years.

POLITICS

The first thing the United States did once the Second Civil War ended was convene the Second Constitutional Convention. This assembly of state leaders and lawmakers reexamined the Constitution of the original United States and made several changes. Most were concerned with spelling out in detail the duties of the various branches, as well as the exact meaning behind the assorted amendments, many of which were incorporated directly into the body of the re-written Constitution. The end result was a slightly weaker federal government, with individual states able to trump certain federal laws with their own.

As with the UNA, the USA has become a multi-party system, with the Constitution Party, the Democratic Party, the Republican Party, the Libertarians, and the Greens as some of the major players. Voters select only one candidate per political position, and the president is elected by a combination of popular vote and the Electoral College. The only major change to elections is with the Electoral College, which awards its votes based on the percentage of the popular vote in each state. As with

the UNA, the multinationals put great pressure on their employees to vote for the "right" (*i.e.* corporate-friendly) candidates.

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

For the most part, the United States considers itself a nation of patriots, who feel it is their sworn duty to make the USA great again. Military service, while not mandatory, is expected, and the phrase "Ask what you can do for your country" is almost the national motto. There also has been an upsurge in Southern pride and heritage, with an emphasis on "family values," personal integrity, and honor.

One major difference between the USA and the UNA is the absence of Zero Zones. Unable to simply let whole sections of the urban landscape rot, the United States enacted massive recovery programs in order to rebuild and restore their devastated cities. While much of the work was done by cyberdroids, the USA also used enormous amounts of manual labor. Many of the laborers came from the various state and federal prisons, while the rest were illegal immigrants, vagrants, runaways, and the like. This concept continues to this day — civil and military service is offered as an alternative to prison for minor crimes, and many misdemeanors and traffic violations come with mandatory community service sentences.

CITIES AND REGIONS

Most of the USA is farmland. Agriculture and aquaculture make up the bulk of the nation's exports, with a scattering of natural gas and oil wells in the Gulf of Mexico. Atlanta, Mobile, and Raleigh are major manufacturing centers, while Mobile is one of the USA's busiest ports.

Rising sea levels have flooded some of Florida, Louisiana, and other areas along the Gulf of Mexico. The USA is trying to turn this to its advantage, with extensive aquaculture farms of catfish, shrimp, and shellfish along the Gulf Coast.

Atlanta

The new capitol of the USA, Atlanta is a major transportation hub and an important commerce center. Many companies are headquartered in the city, representing such industries as aerospace, telecommunications, finance, and news media. Both DF Productions and Graves Electronics Corporation have arcologies, while Gunkoku Heavy Industries has its largest North American assembly plant located on the outskirts of the city.

New Orleans

Although the UNA doesn't have Zero Zones, it does have New Orleans. The 2005 hurricane season virtually destroyed the city, with Katrina flooding more than 90% of the city and killing over 16,000 residents. The Federal government's response to the disaster was slow, mismanaged, and insufficient to the task at hand. To make matters worse, a month later Hurricane Rita flooded the city again, undoing what little had been done to repair the shattered levees. The end result was New Orleans being virtually abandoned with any recovery efforts delayed by the Second Civil War. By the time the war was over, New Orleans was a vast swamp and far too gone to save.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA'S TEN LARGEST CITIES

In order they are: Memphis, Jacksonville, Atlanta, Nashville, Kansas City, Miami, Raleigh, St. Louis, Tampa, and St. Petersburg.

ALTA CALIFORNIA'S 10 LARGEST CITIES

In order they are: Greater San Francisco (containing San Francisco, San Jose, Oakland, and Berkeley), Los Angeles, San Diego, San Jose, Las Vegas, Fresno, Long Beach, Sacramento, Santa Ana, and Anaheim.

"Alta California. You don't need to be crazy to live there, but it helps."

— Steve Elliott, humorist

Alta California

Area: Baja California, Baja California Sur, California, Nevada (the western half)
Government: Representative democracy
Capital: Sacramento
Population: 40,000,000
Language(s): English, Spanish
Currency: Dollar
Resources: Agriculture, Aquaculture, High Technology, Manufacturing, Timber

Alta California was the first of the new nations created from the remains of the United States and Canada. With the Second Civil War brewing, the California legislature voted to secede on the grounds the current presidential administration was so corrupt and out-of-touch with the rest of America it was better to go it alone. Attempts by the Federal government to retake California were derailed by the refusal of combat troops from Fort Benning to deploy. While the rest of the United States became embroiled in a shooting war, California concentrated on rebuilding Los Angeles, developing renewable energy sources, and securing its hold on vital water supplies. This dedication to improving the infrastructure and looking to the future prompted Baja California (and later Baja California Sur) to join with the new nation, since Mexico had become little more than a puppet state of multinational interests.

POLITICS

Although Alta California originally adopted the United States Constitution as their own, a number of changes have been made in the last twenty years. Most of the alterations have to do deal with votes, how they are counted, and the requirements to hold office. For example, virtually all government offices in Alta California are decided by instant-runoff voting, which allows voters to rank candidates by preference.

It's generally agreed Alta California has more political parties than any other country in North America. Aside from the "traditional" political parties, such as the Democrats, Greens, Libertarians, and Republicans, Alta California also has to deal with such groups as the Free Love Party, the Marijuana Party, and the Python Party. One of the more serious secondary organizations is the Nexus Rights Party, which seeks improved freedoms for replicated humans.

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Even before the split, California had a reputation for being just a little "off" when compared to the rest of the United States, and Alta California is no different. An initial fascination with fitness, diet, and looking good has become almost a na-

tional obsession. While cosmetic surgery is still popular for those who want to look younger, the current trend is toward genetic upgrading, with a significant portion of children born in Alta California undergoing the process. Cybergrafts are quite common as well, usually of the full-conversion soft-shell variety, allowing individuals to have low-maintenance physically perfect bodies. Alta California is also acknowledged as North America's center of cyberware development and is home to some of the best cyber docs in the world.

Culturally speaking, Greater San Francisco has a strong Asian influence, with Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese settlements. Japan invested heavily in the new nation once it formed, and a number of Japanese corporations have arcologies and industrial centers in the Bay area.

The southern half-of Alta California, from Los Angeles on down, is dominated by Hispanic interests. Baja California and Baja California Sur are almost entirely populated by Mestizos, although there's a large number of people with European ancestry.

CITIES AND REGIONS

Alta California ranges from arid deserts in the south to thick forests in the north. The middle is dominated by the California Central Valley, and serves as the nation's breadbasket, producing agricultural goods in such quantities as to make Alta California a net exporter of foodstuffs. The southern end of the San Francisco Bay Area is the location of Silicon Valley, home to one of the largest concentrations of high-technology businesses in the world.

Greater San Francisco

Comprised of the cities of San Francisco, San Jose, Oakland, and Berkeley, Greater San Francisco is one of the largest metropolitan areas in the world, with a total population of more than 8 million people. It's also home to numerous high-tech industries, with the Jinsei Corporation, Graves Electronics Corporation, Mitsumi Biotechnology, and Synthetic Technology Medical Systems all having arcologies and/or manufacturing centers there. Numerous smaller firms offer computer, software, biotech, and cyberware products, as well as Net-based services. Just north of the Bay Area is Napa Valley, famous for its wines.

San Francisco proper is well-known as a center of liberal ideas and movements, and home to most of Alta California's fringe political parties.

Los Angeles

Los Angeles has come a long way in the last twenty years. In 2009 it was a city on fire, burning from riots that dwarfed the civil disturbances of 1965 and 1992. Angry over a lack of jobs and food, as well as perceived social and racial injustices, violent mobs rampaged over broad swaths of the city, burning and looting. Attempts to restore order only exacerbated the problem, resulting in a virtual war zone. The riots lasted for nearly two weeks, resulting in hundreds of deaths and billions of dollars in damage.

"They say there are two things you should never watch being made: sausages and laws. I'll agree on the sausages part, but there's no better entertainment than the live feed from the Alta California congressional debate room."

— Lisa Wooden, political analyst

Today LA still bears the scars of the riots. Portions of the city have never been rebuilt and are likened to UNA's Zero Zones. Still, it's a vibrant city and a leader in international trade, aerospace development, fashion design, and multimedia entertainment (including simsense, interactive games, motion pictures, and music). DF Productions maintains a production center here, along with the West Coast's *Lace & Steel* arena. North of LA is Mechanized Propulsion Systems, the largest manufacturer of Exo-Suits in North America.

San Diego

The gateway to Alta California's southern extents, San Diego is the country's second-wealthiest metroplex, with an economy driven by agriculture, biotechnology, computer and cyberware development, marine-related industries, software development, and telecommunications. San Diego is also the home of the Alta California Naval Base and Miramar Air Station.

"Cascadia's environmental policies are geared more toward the people than the corporations. Which is why very few multinationals have installations there."

— Craig Kramer, economist

Cascadia

Area: Alaska (south of the 60th parallel), British Columbia, Oregon, Washington
Government: Federal semi-presidential republic
Capital: Olympia
Population: 14,000,000
Language(s): English
Currency: Dollar
Resources: Aquaculture, High Technology, Mining, Natural Gas, Petroleum Products, Timber

Born from the Cascadia independence movement (which traces its roots well back into the 1800s), Cascadia has one of the largest economies in the modern world. It's rich in natural resources and manages to combine environmental conservation with high-tech industry. Currently, Cascadia is second only to Alta California when it comes to renewable energy resources and is a recognized leader in aquaculture farming. It's also home to some of the largest software companies in the world.

POLITICS

Cascadia considers itself a very green nation, both literally and figuratively. Resource management is a top priority, and any political party wishing to attract voters will include ecological concerns in their platform. As it currently stands, Cascadia is a federation of three semi-autonomous states, with a president to look after international affairs of state and a prime minister to handle domestic issues. The Cascadian Constitution is a mixture of the American and Canadian models and carefully spells out the duties of the President, Prime Minister, Cabinet, and Legislature.

As with Alta California, political parties abound. Some of the larger ones include the Cascadian Democratic Party, the Cascadian National Party, the Green Cascadia Party (not to be confused with the Greens of Cascadia), and the Pacifica Party. Many First Nations tribes have a strong political voice in Cascadia as well, with preserving their way of life and heritage a prime concern.

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

For the most part, Cascadia is a nation of environmentalists. Preserving the nation's natural resources is often given as a top priority in many national polls, with recycling a major concern. On the technology side, software development is a huge industry, specifically in Washington. Seattle is considered the capital of the electronic gaming world and is a leading developer of simsense games and entertainment. Biotechnology is also a top line industry, especially when combined with nanotechnology and nanofactories and farms, all of which are normally geared toward aquaculture applications.

Cascadia is also known for its ethnic diversity, with a large Chinese, First Nations, Indian, Japanese, and Latino population. This has led to a varied and notable cuisine much admired by the rest of North America. Cascadia has legalized the use of cannabis, adopting the Netherlands model of regulating its sale by the government. Finally, the area is known for its music traditions, and has produced a number of world-famous folk and rock acts over the years.

CITIES AND REGIONS

Cascadia can easily be characterized by the constant rain that falls along most of the coast, resulting in several temperate rain forests. Further inland, the climate can be far more arid and in some cases, almost desert-like. The bulk of Cascadia's population lives in the Puget Sound metroplex, a "mega city" comprised of Vancouver, Richmond, Surrey, Seattle, Bellevue, Tacoma, Portland and Salem. The population is densest around Seattle.

Seattle

By far Cascadia's most populous city, Seattle is known as the home of Jimi Hendrix, grunge music, and Starbucks. It's also considered the most connected city in North America, with an extensive wireless network throughout all of downtown, allowing free access to the

CASCADIA'S 10 LARGEST CITIES

In order they are: Seattle, Portland, Vancouver (British Columbia), Surrey, Burnaby, Spokane, Tacoma, Richmond, Vancouver (Washington), and Salem.

A BALKANIZED PACIFIC NORTHWEST?

If certain groups had gotten their way, Cascadia could have been joined (or replaced) by the following new nations and/or states: an independent Alaska, the State of Lincoln (eastern Washington and northern Idaho), and the State of Jefferson (southern Oregon and northern California). In addition, Cascadia itself almost comprised the current three states, as well as portions of Alaska, California, Idaho, and the Yukon. Game Masters may want to incorporate these ideas in their campaigns to create an even more fractured United States and Canada.

Net. Seattle is also home to several Net-based companies, as well as those involved in the forestry, aerospace, software, and computer gaming industries.

Recent census reports show Seattle to be the most multicultural city in North America, with significant numbers of Asians, blacks, and First Nations. In addition, more than 10% of the population consider themselves to be of mixed-race. Finally, Seattle's gay and lesbian community is second only to Greater San Francisco's.

Vancouver

An important rail hub and maritime port, Vancouver is almost as cosmopolitan as Seattle. The harbor sees traffic from nearly 100 countries, bringing in billions of dollars in annual revenue. In addition, Northern Forestry Corporation has its headquarters here, along with several other forestry and mining interests. Other industries include biotechnology, multimedia entertainment (primarily film), and software development. It's also a leader in the development of green technologies.

"Contrary to popular belief, Deseret is not populated with frothing-at-the-mouth religious fanatics. The Mormons are a nice and polite people. But a word to the wise — they take a dim view of people trying to flout their beliefs and customs."

— Lisa Wooden, political analyst

Deseret

Area: Arizona (the western half), Nevada (the eastern half), Utah

Government: Mormon Theocracy

Capital: Salt Lake City

Population: 3,000,000

Language(s): English

Currency: Brigham

Resources: Mining, Ranching, Salt

When the Second Civil War broke out, the leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints decided it was highly likely the Second Coming of Jesus was due. They recalled missionaries and families from around the world, asking them to gather in Utah and await the return of Christ and the advent of 1,000 years of peace. When this didn't occur, the President of the church decided the time was ripe to accomplish what the Mormon settlers of 1849 had proposed: the establishment of a Mormon state, to be called Deseret ("honeybee" in the Book of Mormon).

POLITICS

Deseret is a theologically-driven nation, following the laws of the Book of Mormon. Although led by the President of the Church, the true head of the church (and thus the state) is Jesus. The president is assisted by the First Presidency (the equivalent of a presidential cabinet), the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (church leaders second only to the First Presidency), the Presiding Bishopric (the highest-ranking member of the priesthood), and the First and Second Quorums of the Seventy (general church administrators).

Unlike the rest of North America, Deseret doesn't have a congress or parliament. Instead all laws are derived directly from the Book of Mormon and the church code.

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Life in Deseret centers around the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Citizens are expected to adhere to a strong moral code, which includes a law of chastity (which prohibits pre-marital and homosexual sex), attend regular church services, tithe a portion of income (usually 10%) to the church, attend to their church-given "callings," and abstain from alcohol, tobacco, caffeine, and drug use.

The Mormon moral code looks down on replicated humans (especially pleasure models), simsense use, cyborgs, and most forms of cyberware. While not technophobic by any means (the Mormon Tabernacle Choir has one of the most advanced recording studios in the world), the Mormons have very strong ideas as to what constitutes proper behavior in order to reach salvation.

CITIES AND REGIONS

Deseret is mostly a dry, arid place, with little rainfall due to lying in the rain shadow of the Sierra Nevada mountains. In order to prevent itself from being totally boxed in between the UNA and Alta California, Deseret claims a narrow strip of Arizona (mostly north and west of the Grand Canyon), allowing it access to the Sea of Cortez. It also claims the eastern half of Nevada, having split the former state with Alta California. This east-west split cuts to the southeast near the bottom of the state, allowing Alta California to claim Las Vegas, as Mormon doctrine prohibits gambling.

Salt Lake City

The capital and largest city in Deseret, Salt Lake City has become akin to Mecca for people of the Mormon faith, and hundreds of thousands make the pilgrimage to Temple Square every year. It's also a major crossroads for ground-based shipping, and is a central hub for highways all across the western regions. The city is also the home of numerous corporations involved in mining, manufacturing, aerospace, and finance. Tourism is also a lucrative source of income, and Salt Lake is generally regarded as one of the safest cities in North America.

BORDER DISPUTES

Deseret's possession of portions of Arizona is a continuing point of contention between Deseret, the UNA, and Alta California. The UNA has been debating various courses of action to regain the territory, while Alta California has been trying to convince Arizona to join with them. So far, no progress has been made.

"Nunavut's population density is roughly one person per sixty square kilometers. That's a lot of empty land. So try as they might, the Impact Review Board can't be everywhere, and a lot of multinationals try to take advantage of that."

— Craig Kramer, economist

Nunavut

Area: Alaska (north of the 60th parallel), Nunavut, Northwest Territories
Government: Representative democracy
Capital: Yellowknife
Population: 800,000
Language(s): Inuktitut, Inuinnaqtun, English, French
Currency: UNA Dollar
Resources: Mining, Natural Gas, Petroleum Products, Timber

Initially created in 1993 and formally established in 1999, Nunavut ("our land" in Inuktitut) has since grown to include the Northwest Territory, the Yukon, and virtually all of Alaska. Although technically independent (Nunavut makes its own laws and elects its own leaders), the country is little more than a client state of the UNA, using the UNA dollar and falling under the UNA's military umbrella.

POLITICS

Based on traditional First Nations forms of government, the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut is a unicameral body with individually elected members. Nunavut has no political parties and uses a consensus form of government in which all members of the Assembly participate in caucus. The head of the Legislative Assembly is the Premier, who's elected by, and from, the Legislative Assembly.

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Nunavut seeks to retain many of its traditional forms of life, coupled with the benefits of modern technology. Corporations who wish to do business in Nunavut must pass the Impact Review Board and their strict operational requirements. Many companies are owned by the Inuit and the Inuvialuit, often jointly.

Due to Nunavut's sprawling size (it's one of the least densely populated places on Earth), it's become one of the most Net-accessible places on the planet. A series of satellites provide Net access for remote communities across the nation, providing educational content, entertainment, and current news.

CITIES AND REGIONS

Most of Nunavut is Arctic tundra, with minimal agriculture. It's rich in mineral wealth and the western coast of Nunavut has an extensive fishing industry. The largest city in Nunavut is Anchorage, with a population of just over 250,000 persons. The next largest cities have only a tenth of Anchorage's population, with the capital, Yellowknife, scarcely breaking 20,000 residents.

"I swear, Quebec tries to out-French the French... and succeeds for the most part."

— Lisa Wooden, political analyst

Republic Of Quebec

Area: Quebec
Government: Federal parliamentary democracy
Capital: Quebec City
Population: 8,000,000
Language(s): French
Currency: Franc
Resources: Agriculture, High Technology, Textiles, Timber

Capitalizing on a long history of separatist movements as well as the violence tearing the United States apart, the Parti Québécois launched a campaign for national sovereignty in 2009. Encouraged by the success of Alta California, the party managed to push a referendum through the Quebec legislature declaring Quebec to be a separate and independent nation. Canada, its hands full dealing with the Second Civil War, accepted the measure rather than engage in a civil war of its own to dispute it.

POLITICS

The Québécois government is modeled on the original Canadian model, with a House of Commons, Senate, and a Prime Minister. Elections happen every five years or if the current administration loses a vote of confidence in the House. Major political parties include the *Action démocratique du Québec*, the *Parti libéral du Québec*, the *Parti Québécois*, and the *Parti vert du Québec*.

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Quebec society is based around the Three Fundamental Values, established in 2007 and reaffirmed as part of the nascent republic's constitution. They are: Equality between Men and Women, Primacy of the French Language, and Separation of State and Religion. The establishment of a separate and distinct identity from Canada and France is also a major theme in Québécois thought.

Quebec has been said to be more than a little xenophobic, mainly due to the second Fundamental Value. Non-French speakers are treated with a touch of disdain. Using a Skilljack nets only a slightly better reaction. Speaking it directly will get the best response.

CITIES AND REGIONS

Quebec is a sprawling nation, reaching from the Saint Lawrence Seaway along the south to Hudson Bay on the north. The bulk of the population lives in the bottom third of the country. The rest is scarcely populated, resembling Nunavut in many respects. Extensive agricultural resources are found along the St. Lawrence River, while the north is known for its timber, extensive rivers, and hydroelectric facilities.

Montreal

The largest city in Quebec, Montreal is the second largest French-speaking city in the world, after Paris. It is the center of Quebec's culture and economy and is involved in the following industries: aerospace, electronics, entertainment, pharmaceuticals, software, telecom-

INUKTITUT AND INUINNAQTUN

These languages are part of the Inuit family, which is spoken by the indigenous people of eastern Siberia, Alaska, Canada, and Greenland. They are better known to most people as the Eskimo.

munications, and textiles. It's also home to numerous international agencies and organizations, including the International Civil Aviation Organization and the International Air Transport Association.

As Quebec's cultural capital, Montreal produces a wide variety of entertainment media, including film, print, radio, television, theater, and various forms of Net-based multimedia productions. It's also known for its music, ranging from jazz to rock, as well as innumerable summer festivals.

"The joke used to be that Texas was a 'whole 'nother country.' No one's laughing anymore."

— Lisa Wooden, political analyst

REPUBLIC OF TEXAS' 10 LARGEST CITIES

In order they are:

Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, Austin, El Paso, Fort Worth, Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Arlington, and Corpus Christi.

Republic Of Texas

Area: Oklahoma, Texas
Government: Federal constitutional republic
Capital: Houston
Population: 30,000,000
Language(s): English, Spanish
Currency: Dollar
Resources: Agriculture, Cattle, Natural Gas, Petroleum Products, Ranching

Texas tried to remain neutral during the Second Civil War, but nominally sided with its eastern neighbors. When the war ended, the USA asked Texas to remain, but Texas decided it would rather manage its own affairs and became an independent republic. Oklahoma joined the new nation in an effort to combine resources and bolster its economy.

POLITICS

Traditionally conservative, Texas maintains the mostly two-party system of the former United States, although it's generally acknowledged the Republicans have the lion's share of political power. Virtually all of rural Texas is Republican, while Democrats have their strongest supporters in Austin and along the Rio Grande. The northern regions of the republic are heavily mixed politically, due to Oklahoma having such a disparate mixture of ethnicities.

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

A mix of Southern and Southwestern influences, the Republic of Texas can be likened to a cultural potpourri. The south has as strong Mexican influence, while the north is home to over sixty Native American tribes and tribal headquarters. The Republic seems to revel in its cowboy past, with a strong emphasis on independence and self-reliance. This has lead many to assume Texas has returned to the days of the "Wild West" with weapons openly carried on the hips. This isn't the case, although Texas does use the concept of "Castle Doctrine," allowing for the use of lethal force against intruders into a legally owned dwelling.

CITIES AND REGIONS

The Republic is one of North America's largest producers of natural gas and petroleum products. It also has extensive farmlands and immense ranches of genetically modified cattle. The climate tends to be temperate, although the southwest can be fairly arid. Tornadoes are a common summer problem, and the northern end of the nation has one of the highest rates of tornadoes in the world. To the south, hurricanes plague the coasts almost every fall.

The Mexican border is a contentious one, with illegal immigrants, refugees, gang members, and organized crime groups attempting to cross constantly. Texas maintains units of UTVs to patrol by Rio Grande, with "recon by fire" considered standard operating procedure.

Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington

The primary economic center of the Republic, the Dallas metroplex is home to a staggering array of industrial concerns, including cattle, commerce, computers, cotton, finance, petrochemicals, telecommunications, and transportation. It's also the center of a major rail network, while Dallas-Fort Worth Airport is one of the busiest in the world.

Major multinational corporations with a presence in the Dallas area include the Jinsei Corporation, Mechanized Propulsion Systems, and the R. Scott Foundation.

Houston

The largest city in the Republic of Texas (as well as the capital), Houston is home to the Republic of Texas Medical Center — the world's largest collection of biotechnology, healthcare, and medical research institutions (including Synthetic Medical Technology Systems) — and the Texas Air and Space Administration Space Center (formerly the Johnson Space Center). The city is also involved in energy production, manufacturing, and transportation.

Due to Houston's long association with the energy industry, numerous multinational energy companies have a corporate presence in the city.

CENTRAL AMERICA

Portions of Central America suffered greatly during the Third World War, as various rebel groups rose up against perceived oppressive governments. When coupled with a high rate of HIV infection, the resulting death toll was enormous, devastating the region's poor. However, the loss of Southeast Asia as a viable source of cheap labor has turned many multinationals to Central America instead. By making large financial investments (in the form of manufacturing centers and the like), several corporations have managed to all but purchase some of the poorer Latin American countries, turning them into virtual puppet states. The multinationals then use their control of the government to set-up secure asset and data havens located far away from prying eyes.

MEXICO

The Second Civil War almost did Mexico in as the United States and Canada accounted for nearly 90% of the country's exports. With its economy crippled, Mexico underwent a civil war of its own, as the improv-

erished southern states rose up in force, demanding reform. Although Mexico managed to weather the storm fairly intact, it did lose two states (Baja California and Baja California Sur) to the new nation of Alta California.

Currently Mexico is home to a large number of multinational enclaves, who have built manufacturing facilities that employ thousands. While this has helped the economy to a great extent, it has also resulted in a corporate backlash. Terrorists have struck at some of the installations, claiming they're striking out at foreign exploiters of native peoples and resources.

Certain portions of Mexico are known to be fairly lawless and under the control of organized crime syndicates and drug cartels. Attempts to clean up the problem are hampered by the extensive corruption found among the police and military.

THE CARIBBEAN

Many of the island nations of the Caribbean are part of CARICOM, the Caribbean Community. However, this has not prevented the area from descending into extreme poverty. Several nations, notably Haiti and Jamaica are now little more than client states of one or more multinational corporations. A number of smaller islands are owned wholly by a specific corporation and are used as exclusive resorts or highly secure research centers.

Cuba, for its part, remains a communist nation, stubbornly refusing to fold. It is extremely proud that it has survived the fall of China and the Soviet Union and considers itself the only true communist nation left in the world.

SOUTH AMERICA

Although spared most of the fighting that plagued North and Central America, South America made up for it with its own AIDS epidemic. Brazil was the worst hit, with Argentina and Columbia close behind. With the Second Civil War cutting off anti-drug funding, Columbia found itself embroiled in a full-scale civil war of its own. The end result was Columbia coming under control of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the cocaine cartels. Cocaine is now a legal drug in Columbia, and a great deal of Columbia's income comes from tourists who wish to visit the country's infamous cocaine cafés.

Years of mismanagement have ruined Venezuela financially. It's now home to numerous multinational manufacturing plants, which prop up the current government in exchange for lax labor laws and little to no regulation.

BRAZIL

Brazil is the industrial leader of South America. Possessing an economy large enough to survive the tumult of the first few decades of the twenty-first century, it's the recognized leader in flex-fuel engine development. Other major resources include aerospace technology, agriculture, mining, textiles, and vehicles. In addition, Brazil is where many people go for inexpensive bio implants and cyberware upgrades. While the quality of the products might not be as high as in Japan or Alta California, the prices are unbeatable.

EUROPE

The establishment and development of the European Union in the 1990s enabled Europe to successfully weather the fall of the United States and World War III. In fact, these events helped spur even greater cohesiveness between member states of the EU, with the result that it's now the world's economic superpower.

Comprised of over thirty nations, the European Union uses a common currency (the euro), as well as a standardized system of laws governing the "Four Freedoms" (defined as the free movement of capital, goods, persons, and services). Entry to the Union requires a stable democratic government, the respect of human rights, and the rule of law. This has resulted in a fairly peaceful Europe, although there was significant violence and "ethnic cleansing" in the Balkans around the turn of the century.

As one heads into Eastern Europe and the former Commonwealth of Independent States, things start to break down. World War III saw a great deal of fighting among the former Soviet Republics, mainly over natural resources, with a few revolutions thrown into the mix. Many of the current governments are unstable, with guerrilla war between rival factions almost a way of life. Russia, while stable enough, has invaded several of its former client states in an effort to stamp out "terrorist enclaves." Most observers feel this is a cover story for destroying the military infrastructure before that nation can become too much of a threat. However, Russia is unable to do much more than punitive strikes due to instability along the Chinese border.

FRANCE

One of the European Union's "Big Three," France is known for its production of luxury goods, such as fashions, food, and simsense entertainment. It's rejected most forms of genetic enhancement for plants and animals, preferring a more natural take on food production, especially with regards to bread, cheeses, and wine. France is also a major weapons exporter, supplying Eastern Europe and portions of Africa.

GERMANY

If France is the leader in luxury items, then Germany is the king of heavy industry. Long known for mechanical excellence, Germany continues that tradition by producing some of the world's finest cars, Exo-Suits, and firearms. It's also Europe's leader in cybertechnology innovation and a close competitor with Alta California and Japan.

UNITED KINGDOM

The UK remains a major world power and with the collapse of the USA and USSR has regained some of the global dominance it lost in the twentieth Century. Possessing one of the world's largest economies, it produces a wide variety of products, including aircraft, motorcraft, ships, industrial tools and equipment, textiles, and assorted consumer goods. As it is an island nation, the UK has invested heavily in alternative energy sources, as well as the genetic augmentation of livestock and crops in order to maximize production.

MEMBER STATES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

They are: Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Republic of Macedonia, Malta, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, and the United Kingdom.

"African politics are fairly simple — power comes from the barrel of a gun, and he who has the most guns has the most power."

— Hafeez Karim, political commentator

AFRICA

For the most part, political boundaries in Africa are a polite joke. With the primary exceptions of South Africa, Egypt, and Kenya, most of Africa is a lawless wasteland. The reasons are many. AIDS killed such vast numbers of people whole regions were depopulated, while drought, famine, and other diseases did the rest. The resulting political instability allowed many tribes to rise up and attempt to overthrow oppressive governments or simply exterminate a rival tribe. Labeled "tribal warfare" in the West (if they even bother to report it at all), these uprisings quickly turned into acts of genocide as entire tribal groups were wiped out. It's estimated over 10,000 people were being killed each day when the fighting was at its worst.

Northern Africa has become even drier as changes in climate have reduced water levels and dried up entire lakes and rivers. The resulting crop failures forced hundreds of thousands of refugees to head south searching fruitlessly for food. Little foreign aid was offered and what did arrive was quickly commandeered by local warlords or kept by corrupt governments. Food, or the lack thereof, has become another weapon in Africa's wars, with intercepting food shipments and destroying cropland a common tactic.

In some areas the lack of people has allowed the ecosystem to rebound, while in others, attempts at conservation have been cast aside in favor of reaping the profits to be gained from hunting safaris. Replication technology has been both a boon and a curse to conservationists, and the R. Scott Foundation has an African installation dedicated solely to restocking various hunting preserves for the benefit of wealthy and influential clients.

With most nations existing only on paper, there was been little to stop the multinationals from moving in and taking over. Many major corporations have built sprawling "company towns," capitalizing on the cheap labor and total lack of oversight, to create highly profitable manufacturing centers. In almost all cases, these towns are virtual micro-nations, and are beholden to none of the laws of the country within which they've been built. This allows the multinational corporation to do as it pleases and in many company towns the employees are little better than indentured servants, constantly in debt to the company that houses, feeds, and takes care of them. On the other hand, conditions outside of these townships are often so bad, few employees care.

Competition between corporations is fierce in Africa, making it a hotbed of company espionage, sabotage, information theft, personnel extractions, and occasionally out-and-out shooting wars.

MIDDLE EAST

The Third World War hit the Middle East hard. Declining oil reserves resulted in the Second Gulf War, in which a rebuilt Iraq again struck at Kuwait. Unable to count on assistance from the United Nations, Saudi Arabia fought back with the assistance of Iran, who saw a prime opportunity to undermine Iraq's power (and get revenge for the Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s). At the same time, the rest of the Middle East realized there would be no one to intervene in a full-scale assault on Israel. A military alliance composed primarily of Iran, Lebanon, and Syria (with some Iraqi elements) invaded, accompanied by Hamas and Hezbollah resistance fighters. Egypt backed Israel indirectly, supplying military and economic aid, while Jordan tried to negotiate a cease-fire. The war ended in an exchange of nuclear weapons, with Israel striking out at targets in Beirut, Baghdad, and Damascus (an attempt to hit Tehran was unsuccessful.) In turn, Syria managed to destroy Tel Aviv with a nuke of its own, apparently acquired from the Russian black market.

The Israeli Eradication campaign reduced whole swaths of Israel and Palestine to a burned-out wasteland, much of it still radioactive to this day. While the Arab League "won," in the sense that Israel is no more, it was a pyrrhic victory, hurting Syria and Lebanon almost as much as the Israelis. Egyptian forces, working with the U.N., currently control and defend the holy city of Jerusalem. The surviving Jewish people have fled Israel for the most part in what's known as the Second Diaspora.

Much of the Middle East is now under the control of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The destruction of Baghdad ended Iraq's attempts to conquer Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, and allowed Iran to annex the war-torn country. Currently, Iran is slowly building itself up to be the Middle East's sole super-power, and there are fears it may try and absorb other surrounding nations to create an Islamic super-state.

DUBAI

Located in the United Arab Emirates, this coastal city derives almost all of its income from tourism, trade, and financial services. It's home to some of the largest skyscrapers in the world, as well as a number of corporate arcologies. Numerous multinational corporations have capitalized on lax labor laws to create low-cost manufacturing centers, allowing them to produce enormous quantities of goods while paying their workers minimal wages.

Dubai is heavily involved in recycling and "green" efforts, and has one of the smallest carbon footprints of any major city. An off-shore fusion reactor helps, as well as a number of vertical greenhouses used to produce crops for the city's consumption.

All of these elements have combined to make Dubai a diverse multicultural society, with workers and businessmen from all over the world. While an Islamic state, Dubai acknowledges its non-Muslim population and allows the sale of pork and alcohol in specific areas. It also allows non-Muslim places of worship, albeit with government permission.

"There's an old movie I recall where a character states 'Never start a land war in Asia.' One has only to look at the Sino Strife Zone to realize how true that is."

— Hafeez Karim, political commentator

ASIA

CHINA

The bird flu pandemic devastated Southeast Asia and was a major factor in igniting the civil war in China. With millions of dead and dying people to deal with, the rest of Asia could only watch as China tore itself apart into multiple warring states, each headed by military strongmen looking to acquire as much territory and resources as possible. Today, the Sino Strife Zone is still a simmering hotbed of aggression and a popular market area for multinationals looking to field test their newest military technologies in open combat situations.

Within the Sino Strife Zone itself are areas of relative peace. Tibet has declared itself a separate nation, welcoming the return of the Dali Lama. The Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong and Macau have also declared themselves independent city states, with the Special Economic Zone of Shanghai doing the same.

As with Africa, many multinational corporations have used the anarchy in China to their advantage, collaborating with various warlords to create company towns where they can produce vast amounts of inexpensive consumer goods. It's strongly suspected some of these factories use virtual slave labor where the workers receive just the basic necessities and little else.

KOREA

Bird flu virtually annihilated North Korea. The insular and isolationist government of Kim Jong-il initially denied any threat from the disease, with preventive measures coming far too late to have any effect. When coupled with the loss of food aid from China, the results were devastating. In a desperate attempt to gain needed resources, North Korea accused South Korea of being responsible for the pandemic and promptly invaded, but was defeated by an alliance of South Korean, Japanese, and Australian forces, aided by remnants of the American military. Today Korea is once again a united nation, although the northern regions still show the scars of decades of Communist misrule. Much of northern Korea has come under the developmental control of various *jaebeols*, immense government-assisted corporate monopolies who dominate Korea's domestic industries.

INDONESIA

Global warming and climate change has had a major impact on Indonesia. Many its smaller islands have been lost beneath the ocean's surface and flooding is a constant worry throughout the nation. Despite these issues, Indonesia (along with Vietnam) has become the corporate answer to China, with numerous manufacturing centers scattered across its innumerable islands. In addition, Indonesia is known for producing low-cost knockoffs of just about anything — most of which are of dubious quality. It's also the world's largest havens for techno-pirates, who trade in stolen music, video, games, and software.

INDIA

India is still the world's largest democracy, having weathered multiple wars with Pakistan. While Pakistan's fragmentation virtually eliminated the chance of a full-scale war, there are still occasional forays by tribal groups and the like. The primary point of contention is Kashmir, which has been fought over by China, India, and Pakistan for years. Now, with China and Pakistan unable to press any claims, India has expanded to include Aksai Chin, Azad Kashmir, the Northern Areas, and the Shaks-gam Valley. However, Kashmir is still not fully pacified and attacks by insurgents are a common occurrence.

SINGAPORE

One of the largest manufacturing centers in Asia is the city-state of Singapore. Considered the second most business-friendly economy in Asia (next to Hong Kong), Singapore is home to thousands of people from around the world, all of whom are employed at numerous multinational corporations. It's Asia's second largest trading center (after MegaTokyo), with well-developed electronic, mechanical engineering, and biotechnological industries. Singapore also boasts numerous cyberclinics, and is a popular destination for those who want inexpensive cybersurgery.

I point at the display again, feeling less like David Lam's landlady and far more like one of the perpetually cheerful tour guides who infest the Central and Western District of Hong Kong Island. "Hong Kong isn't like most other cities. That's because it's an independent city-state, like Macau or Singapore. It's also the dumping ground for the Pacific Rim, with just about anyone and everyone ending up here at some time or another." I pause, take a sip of water, and continue. "Aside from the native Chinese who were born here and the descendants of British nationals who never left, you get refugees from the fighting on the mainland, Japanese tourists, Australian expatriates, North Americans seeking would-be fortunes, domestics from the Philippines, and migrant workers from Indonesia, Malaysia, and Vietnam. Not to mention all the replicated humans, cyborgs, mercenaries working the border, cyberdroids, and multinational personnel from all over the world." I look up from the map. "Hong Kong is a crowded and busy place."

— Sarah J. Ferrari explains life in Hong Kong to David Lam.

Hong Kong

Area:	Guangdong Province (small portion), Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
Government:	Representative democracy
Capital:	Hong Kong
Population:	20,000,000
Language(s):	Cantonese, English, Japanese, Mandarin
Currency:	Dollar
Resources:	Aquaculture, Finance, High Technology, Manufacturing

Modern Hong Kong has had a long and tumultuous history, from its origins as a British Crown Colony, the Japanese occupation during the Second World War, to the Chinese handover in 1997. Given the status of "Special Administrative Region," it remained a mostly autonomous region after the handover, retaining many of its original laws. The bird flu pandemic, coupled with an outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (a.k.a. SARS), killed significant portions of the population and was one of the reasons Hong Kong quickly declared independence from China once the Chinese Civil War broke out.

Dropping many trade restrictions and declaring itself an open city, Hong Kong lured many multinational corporations into investing in the city. Annexing portions of Guangdong Province in order to create a buffer zone between itself and the rest of China, Hong Kong's defensive forces, backed with numerous corporate security teams (as well as elements of the Australian and Japanese military) have managed to successfully turn back several invasion attempts. These days the northern border of Hong Kong is reminiscent of Korea's Demilitarized Zone. This border has become a popular testing ground for assorted forms of military technology, with many corporate "black ops" squads sent there to hone their skills.

POLITICS

By declaring itself an independent city-state, Hong Kong abandoned the laws and stipulations put in place by the People's Republic of China and wholly embraced a fully democratic form of government. The current government consists of an executive, legislative, and judicial branch, as well as a neutral civil service division responsible for basic government services.

Hong Kong is noted for having numerous political parties (such as the Civic Party, the Democratic Party,

the Liberal Party, and the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong) as well as contentious elections. Although out-and-out violence between parties is rare, shouting and shoving matches are common, and the police are normally on hand for any large political gatherings.

Corporate influence runs strong in Hong Kong, with rumors of corruption a common charge against any unpopular politician.

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Hong Kong is possibly one of the most multicultural cities in the world. Although its Chinese roots run strong and deep, a century of British occupation and rule has left its mark. The current influx of immigrants from the Asian Pacific Rim and the rest of the world has only added to the mix, resulting in such sights as traditional dim sum restaurants found next to the most current fast food outlets. *Feng shui* is still used to develop and plan buildings, and virtually no building has a fourth or thirteenth floor.

While a well-known center of finance and business, Hong Kong is also considered one of the planet's major entertainment centers. Hong Kong cinema has been well-regarded for years and its been quick to adapt to changing technologies. These days, Hong Kong simsense is some of the most popular in the world.

CITIES AND REGIONS

Hong Kong occupies the end of the Kowloon Peninsula and over 260 surrounding islands. It has one of the deepest and best-sheltered harbors in the world, and sees an immense amount of shipping. The city itself is one of the most densely populated places in the world, with downtown Hong Kong a virtual forest of hundred-story skyscrapers. Innumerable multinationals have arcologies in Hong Kong, including the Jinsei Corporation, Gunkoku Heavy Industries, Mitsumi Biotechnology, and Shiko-Shin Consumer Products.

To the north Hong Kong has annexed the city of Shenzhen (specifically the Futian, Luohu, Nanshan, and Yantian districts), increasing its economic base and providing a home for many of its new manufacturing centers.

"Japan has conquered the world not with bombs and guns, but with a combination of slick electronics and incredibly cute animated mascots to hawk them."

— Hafeez Karim, political commentator

Japan

Area: Japanese Archipelago
Government: Parliamentary constitutional monarchy
Capital: MegaTokyo
Population: 115,000,000
Language(s): Japanese, English
Currency: Yen
Resources: Aquaculture, Finance, High Technology, Manufacturing, Textiles

Rising above the chaos and turmoil of the early twenty-first century, Japan has become a world leader in finance, industrial innovation, and technological development. This has resulted in Japan assuming the role of the largest national economy in the world (although the UNA is a close second), as well as the world's largest exporter of consumer goods. In addition, Japan's booming economy has made it a popular destination for foreign workers who wish to be part of the Pacific Rim's "Land of Plenty."

Due to Japan's declining birthrate (the population is expected to drop from 130 million in 2010 to 100 million by 2050), immigration and guest worker laws have been relaxed, allowing a fresh influx of citizens. This has led to a certain diluting of the culture, although this effect is only felt in the larger cities (such as MegaTokyo, Yokohama, and Osaka). In more rural areas, little has changed and many traditional customs, habits, and views are still practiced.

POLITICS

The nominal head of the Japanese government is the Emperor, although in truth he's little more than a figurehead. The true head of the government is the Prime Minister, who is appointed to his position by the legislative branch (a.k.a. the Diet) and confirmed by the Emperor. The Diet itself is a bicameral parliament, consisting of the House of Representatives and the House of Councilors. Both Houses are elected by the people using a mixture of methods depending on prefecture.

The Prime Minister is head of the executive branch, which consists of himself, his Cabinet, and numerous Ministries (such as Internal Affairs, Foreign Affairs, Finance, Education, and so on). The Judicial Branch is heavily modeled on French and German civil law and includes a Supreme Court.

For decades Japan was controlled by the Liberal Democratic Party, a very conservative political body. However, the demographic changes in Japan since the turn of the century have allowed the far more liberal Democratic Party of Japan to take power. Other parties include the theocratic Buddhist Shin Komeito Party, the Communists, and the Social Democrats.

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Despite a massive influx of foreign influences, there's a strong desire to maintain many of Japan's traditional arts. Artisans still practice such crafts as *ikebana* (flower arranging), origami, pottery, lacquerware, and *ukiyo-e* (woodblock prints); perform *bunraku* (puppetry), *kabuki*, and *noh* plays; and practice the tea ceremony, the martial arts, keep gardens, and play traditional games. However, many of these art forms have been fused with Western influences and modern technology to produce something totally new. One prime example is Japanese popular music, which often incorporates traditional themes and instruments with modern North American and European musical styles and techniques.

Japanese cuisine has undergone a similar process. Foreign influences have been absorbed, adapted, and then refined into something uniquely Japanese. At the same time, Japanese cuisine has spread to the rest of the world, with ramen and sushi shops found almost everywhere.

One of the major changes to Japanese society has been a slow breakdown of the strict social hierarchy as well as the general disdain for foreigners. Much of this is due to the younger generations feeling constrained by traditional Japanese social mores and wanting a more open and welcoming society. At the same time, many of the older generations worry they're losing an essential part of the Japanese character.

CITIES AND REGIONS

Japan consists of over three thousand islands, although the bulk of the population only lives on four: Honshū, Hokkaidō, Kyūshū and Shikoku. Most of the country is forested mountains, resulting in urban areas with some of the highest population densities in the world. In many areas Japan is attempting to reclaim land lost to rising sea levels or is building artificial islands to expand on living space. Much of the coast is given over to aquaculture farms, and Japan is the recognized leader in nanofactory farming techniques.

Virtually all of Japan's major cities are densely-packed masses of high-rises. The threat of earthquakes means many of the buildings are sturdily built and few skyscrapers exceed 100 stories. Due to high petrochemical costs most Japanese vehicles use electrical drives or flex-fuel engines. Japan is also very energy conscious, with several fusion reactors in place or under construction, supplemented by numerous forms of solar, tidal, and wind-based energy collectors and generators.

MegaTokyo

The capital of Japan, MegaTokyo encompasses the Greater Tokyo Area, and is currently the most populous metroplex in the world, with more than 40 million residents. The city proper boasts a population of over 12 million, many of whom dwell in various corporate arcologies. Expansion needs and population pressures have resulted in the development of several floating residential and commercial structures built over Tokyo Bay. The city's enormous power requirements are filled by a pair of fusion reactors, supplemented by solar panel arrays and windmills found on the roofs of many buildings. To feed its teeming millions, MegaTokyo depends heavily

JAPAN'S TEN LARGEST CITIES

In order they are:
 MegaTokyo, Yokohama, Osaka, Nagoya, Sapporo, Kobe, Kyoto, Fukuoka, Kawasaki, and Saitama.

upon immense aquaculture farms and their attendant nanofactories, along with various food products made from soy or yeast bases.

A very cosmopolitan and multi-cultural city, MegaTokyo's citizens are a mix of native Japanese combined with expatriates from North American, Europe, and Australia, supplemented by refugees from the Sino Strife Zone and foreign workers from all across the Pacific Rim. The end result is a colorful and vibrant city, a melting pot of cultures which eagerly absorbs and assimilates incoming fashions, ideas, and trends before spreading them across the rest of the county.

Law and order is maintained by MegaTokyo's extremely efficient police force. The police are divided into five groups: the air police (who regulate air traffic and operate numerous helicopter patrol craft), the harbor patrol (who police Tokyo Bay and also operate as a search and rescue service), the highway patrol (who deal with traffic related issues), the foot patrol (who walk the beat and police the mass transit systems), and elite ESWAT (Enhanced Special Weapons and Tactics) teams. The MegaTokyo police are known for being equipped with the latest in weapons and personal armor and have proven themselves capable of handling a wide range of threats.

Although Japan has very strict laws concerning the importation and ownership of firearms, MegaTokyo has shown a disturbing trend with regard to the availability of firearms — paramilitary weapons are becoming increasingly common in the hands of the Yakuza, street gangs, and other criminal groups.

Several major corporations have located their home offices in MegaTokyo, including Gunkoku Heavy Industries, the Jinsei Corporation, and Mitsumi Biotechnology. The Jinsei Corporate Tower is considered to be the largest corporate arcology on Earth, having 350 floors and standing well over 1000 meters tall. Considered to be one of the modern wonders of the world, this massive edifice is easily visible from almost anywhere in downtown MegaTokyo.

AUSTRALIA

Area:	Australian Continent
Government:	Federal parliamentary democracy
Capital:	Canberra
Population:	30,000,000
Language(s):	English
Currency:	Dollar
Resources:	Livestock, Manufacturing, Mining, Ranching, Wool

Although it escaped the devastation wrought by the bird flu pandemic, Australia still almost collapsed economically when it lost two of its largest trading partners: Canada and the United States. The unrest in China only served to aggravate the situation, as markets across Southeast Asia effectively vanished. In desperation, the Australian government invited several Japanese-based multinationals in, allowing them access to relatively untouched mineral resources, vast areas of arable cropland, and a large supply of cheap labor in the form of the nation's legions of unemployed.

Unfortunately for Australia, the multinationals brought with them a small army of cyberdroids and replicated humans, therefore making it unnecessary to hire many native Australians. In return, Australia enacted a revolutionary legislature declaring replicated humans to be individuals and not property. This meant they needed to have worker visas, be paid a reasonable wage, and that wage could be taxed. The multinationals, not wanting to turn their backs on the resources to be had, agreed to the rulings, rescuing Australia from certain bankruptcy.

The bulk of the native population lives along the eastern coast, with the shipping port of Perth the only major west coast city. In-between is the Outback, a mostly empty area populated by scattered corporate enclaves and the decaying ruins of dead towns. The Outback has been likened to one large Zero Zone, with wandering Aboriginal tribes living as they have for centuries, along with criminals, malcontents, refugees, and illegal immigrants drifting about. Roving gangs eagerly prey on any and all of these people, although in some areas people have banded together for mutual protection. It's generally agreed that traveling the Outback should be attempted only by the well-armed or those with nothing of value to lose.

Despite these issues Australia is one of the economic cornerstones of Southeast Asia. Changes in climate have increased the rainfall across the northern regions of the country, where the formerly arid Outback is slowly starting to green. Immense corporate-run factory farms, raising grains and sheep in vast quantities, now exist where once was near desert. Those areas still too dry for crops are often the site of mining operations, with coal, gold, and iron major exports.

NEO YORK

Raven Clark went to Shion's living room window to admire Neo York by morning. It was less impressive than she'd expected as today was a bad air day. Although the penthouse was above the thick layer of smog that covered the entire city, the rising sun, clearly visible from so high up, colored the top of the smoky fog in weird greens, grays, and browns. Only the peaks of corporate arcologies and landmarks such as the Empire State Building pierced the thick pollution. The view seemed like an alien landscape of dispersed buildings rising from a weird, slowly rolling ground.

— Esper weapon Raven Clark views Neo York from 90 stories up.

NEO YORK

Vital Statistics

Population (2030): 10,000,000 (city)
22,000,000 (region)

Climate:

Month	Average Temp (Low/High) (F)	Average Precip (Inches)
January	29/41	4.23
March	38/53	4.47
May	57/74	4.79
July	66/82	4.72
September	63/78	4.33
November	44/56	4.46

There can be no doubt that the last few decades haven't been kind to the Big Apple. Wars, riots, and urban renewal have all taken their toll. Still, the city that never sleeps soldiers on. It's still the largest city in North America and still a leader in finance, fashion, and entertainment.

MAJOR LANDMARKS

Probably the most famous Neo York landmark is the Statue of Liberty, located on Liberty Island in New York Harbor. Other landmarks include: the Brooklyn Bridge (partially severed); the Empire State Building; the World Trade Center (still two of the tallest buildings in the world); Broadway (for various theatrical productions); the Bronx Zoo; Central Park; the Metropolitan Museum of Art; the Neo York Botanical Gardens (located in the Bronx); Rockefeller Center; Times Square; the Wintergreen Biosphere (a series of domes housing hydroponic gardens in southern Central Park); and the shopping district along Fifth and Madison Avenues.

Neo York's Zero Zone is a tourist attraction as well. Many come just to gawk at it from afar, with the brave (or foolhardy) actually visiting in person. The "Zone" is well known for its brothels, nightclubs, and stage shows, which attract patrons of all stripes from Neo York and beyond.

FESTIVALS AND CELEBRATIONS

As one might expect from a city as big as Neo York is, it hosts numerous festivals throughout the year. Highlights include: the Greenwich Village Halloween Parade; the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade (which hasn't been sponsored by Macy's in decades); the Neo York Easter Parade; the Neo York Marathon (held in November); numerous film and simsense festivals (including festivals dedicated to Asian cinema, horror films, alternate sexuality films, and festivals dedicated to older, 2D movies); numerous music festivals (including blues, jazz, classical, and so on); Shakespeare in Central Park, and Summerstage theatrical performances (located in Central Park, admission is free). The summer often sees various ethnic and cultural festivals, such as New Years celebrations in Chinatown, or days dedicated to people of different nationalities or ethnic groups.

SPORTS TEAMS

Neo York's sports franchises include: Neo York Mets and Neo York Yankees (MLB); Neo York Knicks (NBA); Neo York Giants and Neo York Jets (NFL); and Neo York Islanders and Neo York Rangers (NHL). In addition, Neo York is the home of *Lace & Steel* and *Smash TV*.

NEWS MEDIA

Although printed newspapers are pretty much a thing of the past, Neo York still has one paper producing a daily edition: *the Wall Street Journal*. *The New York Times*, Neo York's daily newspaper, is either found online or in a POD (print-on-demand) edition. Alternative papers include *The Village Voice*, the Spanish-language daily *El Diario la Prensa*, and the *The New York Amsterdam News*, a weekly paper geared toward African-Americans. All are available online, with *The Village Voice* also coming in a POD edition.

Popular tabloids are *The Neo York Daily News* and *The Neo York Post* (one of the oldest continuously-published papers in North America). Both are online only papers, and are infamous for lurid headlines, sensationalist stories, and biased reporting. They are also known for their constant sniping and pot-shots at each other, and it's suspected each has had the other's websites hacked. Finally, the *Post* is infamous for its "Page Six" gossip column and nude or semi-nude photos of replicated humans and *Lace & Steel* stars.

History

When the Second Civil War broke out in 2007 it sparked a flood of refugees who headed north, away from the fighting. At the same time, numerous neighborhoods of New York were being torn apart by riots as residents, out of work, out of food, and out of options, rose up in anger. Whole sections of the city burned while the fire department and police, backed by the New York National Guard, fought a losing battle to quell the violence. In desperation a suggestion was presented to the city legislature: since it was fiscally and logistically impossible for the city to protect all of the boroughs, it shouldn't bother. Instead, the various emergency services were pulled back to Manhattan, to form the first line of defense against the gangs, looters, and rioters rapidly taking over the streets.

Backed by a declaration of martial law, New York proceeded to consolidate police and National Guard units primarily in Manhattan and related boroughs. Brooklyn and Queens, the scene of some of the worst riots, were left to their own devices. Connecting bridges were first barricaded and then severed, keeping out the thousands of homeless refugees and making it far easier to defend Manhattan against roving gangs of smash-and-grab looters. Subway tunnels were walled off as well, effectively isolating Brooklyn and Queens to create the first Zero Law-enforcement Zone.

Once the war ended, New York went through a period of rebuilding and redistricting. As the financial costs of recovering Brooklyn and Queens were staggering beyond belief, the Zero Zone was left alone, instead New York added several new boroughs, renaming itself "Neo" York in the process.

Today Neo York stands as the UNA's crown jewel, a bustling metropolis risen from the ashes of the Civil War to regain its status as a shining example power and prestige.

Major Districts

Bayonne

Located between Jersey City and Staten Island, Bayonne is heavily industrialized, marked by numerous factory complexes and sprawling acres of warehouses. The borough's east coast, open to Upper New York Bay, bristles with shipping piers and includes a UNA naval terminal. Despite, or perhaps, because of this, Bayonne is noted for its generally run-down appearance, many abandoned buildings, and large population of street gangs.

The Bronx

A teeming sea of lower-income housing, the Bronx is only marginally patrolled by the NYPD, Inc. and is subject to frequent bouts of gang violence. The southeast corner of the Bronx is Port Morris, marked by run-down, turn-of-the-century warehousing districts and manufacturing plants. Directly to the south, in the middle of the East River, is Riker's Island. Home to Riker's Island Penitentiary, the island is considered to be little more than a way station for many criminals, who usually end up shipped off to the Zero Zone.

Central Park

Surrounded by towering hotels and apartment buildings, Central Park is a vibrant green oasis amid a forest of gray. The north end is thick with trees, open lawns, and the Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis Reservoir. The southern end is covered by a series of geodesic domes housing the WinterGreen BioSphere. This structure contains extensive hydroponic agricultural facilities and supplies fresh food to much of the surrounding area.

The buildings surrounding Central Park range in height from forty to nearly one hundred stories. They almost form a community all their own, with the lower floors containing athletic and entertainment venues, retail stores, and restaurants. The upper floors have offices and upper class residences, while the whole complex is linked by covered skywalks set well above street level. Most buildings have rooftop facilities for helicopters, tilt-rotors, and vectored-thrust vehicles.

Harlem

Formerly a low-income slum, Harlem has undergone extensive renovation since the end of the Civil War and is now almost totally overtaken by company housing developments. Uniformly drab and featureless, these buildings stand ten to fifteen stories in height and house 2,000 to 2,500 people each. Each development is owned and operated by a separate multinational corporation and forms its own gated community. Security is provided by the corporation itself and individual complexes usually include a health club, community center, and medical clinic. Monorail lines link the complexes to southern Neo York.

Jersey City

Neo York's other major industrial region, Jersey City is home to a large number of corporate manufacturing centers, as well as extensive shipyard facilities, shipping and receiving warehouses, and densely-packed lower-income housing. The western edges of Jersey City are more inviting, especially along Newark Bay, as renovation has resulted in several up-scale condominium complexes populated almost exclusively by middle-class corporate executives.

Long Island

Located beyond the Neo York Zero Zone, Long Island is where many corporate executives have their walled estates. Although technically not part of Neo York proper, it's closely associated with the city due to extensive corporate influence. Currently, its isolation (the Zero Zone prevents access by land) makes it the perfect company refuge.

Long Island, consisting of Nassau and Suffolk counties, is home to Hauppauge Industrial Park, which consists of over 1,000 companies employing 50,000 people. It's also noted for its agriculture, wines, aquaculture, numerous residential districts, recreational areas and small commercial centers. Access is by ferry or air, with many estates having a VTOL landing pad.

The western half of the island, made up of Kings and Queens counties, is now the Neo York Zero Zone. The border between the eastern and western half consists of a series of concrete walls, fences, razor wire, minefields, and watchtowers. It's also patrolled by cyberdroids, corporate security teams, and squads of replicated humans.

Manhattan

When people think Neo York, they usually imagine Manhattan. An endless sea of high-rise apartment complexes, condos, hotels, and office towers, it's also home to numerous multinational arcologies, including DF Productions, the Jinsei Corporation, Shiko-Shin Consumer Products, and Synthetic Technology Medical Systems. Downtown Manhattan (usually defined as everything south of 60th Street) contains the following: Fifth and Madison Avenues, one of the most exclusive shopping districts in the world; Broadway, where the latest in theatrical entertainment can be found; Chinatown, with its excellent cuisine; the Empire State Building; the Neo York Stock Exchange, United North America's financial center; Times Square; the Theater District; and the World Financial Center, home to the World Trade Center complex.

Manhattan is heavily patrolled by NYPD, Inc., especially near Delancey Street, which feeds into the Williamsburg Bridge. This bridge, the only connection to the Neo York Zero Zone from Manhattan, is a popular destination for gawkers and sightseers. Commercial traffic is surprisingly common, usually consisting of corporate vehicles entering the Zone for some form of field test. Shipments of assorted goods are also a regular occurrence; they normally consist of items ordered by the bars and clubs that dot the Zone's Entertainment District. In the evening there's often a long line of thrill-seekers awaiting entry — the Zone's Entertainment District has a reputation for offering sights and experiences far beyond anything available in Neo York.

Periodically, over-ambitious gangs assault the Zone side of the Williamsburg Bridge. Invariably outgunned, the gangs have yet to be a serious threat.

Mount Vernon

An upper-middle-class enclave, Mount Vernon prides itself on its low crime rate, clean streets, and outstanding schools. The southern half of the borough contains a variety of commercial industries, concerned mainly with electronics, manufacturing, and high-technology development. So far this district has resisted attempts by several developers to build lower income developments, and has contracted with the NYPD, Inc. for expanded patrols along its border with the Bronx.

New Rochelle

Located north of Manhattan along Long Island Sound, New Rochelle features numerous country clubs and golf courses. A haven for the upper-middle class and many young corporate executives, New Rochelle's waterfront properties are especially prized. Many developments are gated communities, with private security forces to ensure the safety of their residents.

Staten Island

Separated from New Jersey by the Arthur Kill (meaning "water channel" in Dutch), Staten Island has become Neo York's industrial center. The island's skyline is dominated by the immense corporate headquarters of the R. Scott Foundation, as well as the smaller Mitsumi Biotechnology arcology. Both companies maintain extensive facilities for the manufacture, development,

and distribution of commercial replicated humans. In addition, there are numerous manufacturing facilities and research and development centers.

The rest of the land is taken up by several large parks, the Staten Island Zoo, the Naval Station Neo York waterfront development, and residential high rises and medium-income housing.

Yonkers

Set north of the Bronx and west of New Rochelle, this district is heavily populated by a broad mix of middle-class residents along with some minor industrial sites and small corporate centers. The district's economy is sound, and the area is relatively crime free.

The Zero Zone

Composed of the boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens, these two districts have been cut off from the rest of Neo York for the past twenty years. At the moment there are no plans to reintegrate the area back into Neo York proper. However, the Neo York City Council is discussing one possible solution: offer the land at cut-rate prices to interested corporate developers. See the section on the Neo York Zero Zone for more information.

Government

The city of Neo York is a metropolitan municipality, the largest in the UNA and the second largest in North America behind Greater San Francisco. The city itself is run by the mayor and the Neo York City Council. The mayor has almost total administrative authority and can appoint and remove department heads without approval from the Council or input from the general public. The Council is a unicameral body with 66 members whose districts are based on population boundaries.

In theory, the government of Neo York is responsible for such civic duties as public education, public safety, public transportation, sanitation, and so on. In reality, decisions of the mayor and City Council are often heavily influenced by corporate pressures and are usually slanted to benefit the companies that do business within the city.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Neo York sees an immense amount of traffic day and night. Aside from an extensive — and sometimes confusing — highway system, the city offers various forms of public transportation.

BUSSES

Neo York maintains a fleet of busses capable of ferrying passengers to most city boroughs. Access is via an all-purpose pass, which allows the bearer to use the bus, ferry, and subway systems. Passes come in a variety of formats, ranging from a timed 24 hour "all-you-can-ride" card to rechargeable "smartcards" which can also be used in many parking garages and certain taxis.

TAXI CABS

Neo York's taxi system is famous (some say infamous) the world over. Masses of bright yellow cabs can be found at almost any major landmark or can be called to a specific location via cellphone or Net interface. The quality and rates of cabs are governed by the City Council, although many offer additional amenities, such as armored passenger sections.

Air

Following the creation of the Neo York Zero Zone access to John F. Kennedy and La Guardia airports was functionally impossible. The solution was to expand Newark International Airport. However, the facilities are now taxed by the sheer volume of daily air traffic and construction of a new airport has begun on the southern tip of Staten Island. Scheduled for completion in 2035, this airport will be capable of handling anything from simple short-range commuter jets to the immense transorbital scramjets used for intercontinental flights.

Rail

Despite the loss of Brooklyn and Queens, Neo York still has an extensive rail system. High-speed monorails connect points all throughout Manhattan as well as locations in Bayonne, the Bronx, Jersey City, Newark, and Staten Island. The lines run above and below ground, and for the most part are clean and efficient.

Secondary rail lines connect many outlying townships to the inner city. These lines vary greatly in quality, ranging from nearly new, to old and decrepit. In general, the closer one gets to Manhattan, the better the train service is. Law-enforcement on all rail lines depends upon location. Manhattan monorails are guarded by elements of the NYPD, Inc., while other lines often must make do with assorted for-hire security services.

Subway and monorail stations vary as much as the lines themselves. Many Manhattan stations are located directly inside corporate arcologies, office towers or apartment buildings. In general these stations are kept scrupulously clean, well lit and are heavily patrolled. Outlying stations tend to be less well maintained, and can become downright dangerous after midnight, as they become havens for drug dealers, prostitutes, and gangs.

Underneath Manhattan itself, the subway becomes a chaotic maze of tunnels. Some are only partially complete and others have been abandoned for eighty years or more. Some of these abandoned tunnels have been taken over by criminal groups, gangs, and squatters. Hidden from the general public, these “cities” are worlds unto themselves — Zero Zones in miniature — populated by gangsters, escaped replicates, unlicensed cyber doctors, vagrants, and out-and-out street trash. Only rarely does the NYPD, Inc. attempt to eradicate these communities.

Subway connections into the Neo York Zero Zone have been severed, with the East River tunnels sealed off at various points. However, smugglers have re-opened several of these lines, using them to bring drugs, guns, liquor, and simsense chips into the Zone. More mundane items are also common, including automotive supplies, clothing, food concentrates, electrical parts, and so on. Replicated humans and those on the run use the tunnels as well, although the cost can be high.

Due to the lucrative nature of these smuggling routes, finding and destroying them is an ongoing process for NYPD, Inc. — at least publicly. In truth many well-connected criminal organizations pay large bribes to ensure NYPD, Inc. ignores whatever happens in the tunnels under the East River.

Water

Multiple ferry services offer water transport across Upper New York Bay, the East River, the Hudson River, and out to Long Island. It's estimated the ferries shuttle well over 100,000 people each day. The Staten Island Ferry, which runs between Staten Island and Manhattan Island is Neo York's most famous and popular ferry, with nearly 70,000 daily passengers. It also runs 24 hours a day and offers excellent views of Manhattan and the Statue of Liberty.

UTILITIES

Power

The massive power requirements of the Neo York metroplex are fed by several sources. Most of Neo York's power comes from a pair of nuclear fusion plants, located to the north and south of the city proper. Additional electrical power is supplied by hydroelectric plants located at Niagara Falls. Natural gas is shipped via pipeline from the Republic of Texas and the United States of America. In addition, many buildings incorporate solar collectors into their design, while Long Island has several coastal windfarms.

Water

Most of Neo York's water is piped in via aqueduct from sources found in the far northern regions of New York. In older, pre-twenty-first century buildings, this water is normally pumped into enormous cedar storage tanks mounted on the roofs of many buildings. These tanks hold upwards of 10,000 gallons, and are constructed of three inch thick cedar staves bound with iron hoops; if undamaged, these tanks will last virtually forever. Newer structures and arcologies use tanks constructed of modern materials.

Most water is filtered before it reaches the consumer. In arcologies, water may be diverted to numerous uses, and many arcologies attempt to recycle their drinking water for secondary uses before sending it down the waste pipes. See “Waste Treatment” below for more.

Waste Treatment

Due to diminishing resources and lack of landfill space, many of Neo York's waste products are recycled. This includes paper, plastics, glass, and metals. There are whole industries in Bayonne dedicated to recovering the plastics, silicon, and metals used in junked computers and the like. Wastewater, however, can be handled in any number of ways.

Most rain water, often slightly contaminated by airborne pollutants, runs directly into the rivers. Many of the buildings surrounding Central Park pump their waste (or “gray”) water into massive treatment tanks located under the WinterGreen BioSphere. The organic waste is then processed and used to fertilize the BioSphere's hydroponic gardens, as well as heat the domes in winter. Arcologies recycle most of their wastewater and sewage, putting it to any number of uses, including supplying their own hydroponic gardens. The rest of the wastewater is used to regulate the arcology's internal temperature by being pumped over massive internal heat sinks. The resulting heated water is then usually dumped directly into the surrounding rivers, producing immense algae blooms near the outflow pipes.

The bulk of Neo York's sewage is shunted into any one of several treatment plants. There the water is processed through a series of nanofactories, which break down the organic waste into useful components. The resulting sludge is then shipped off to corporate factories to be used in the creation of replicate lifeforms.

"As part of the corporate initiation program they sent me down to the manufacturing facilities. There were rows and rows of tanks used for growing Pumas and Lynxes, each with read-outs monitoring the progress. If there's a glitch, the monitors signal a tech to come over and see what the issue is. If there's any evidence of abnormal development they flush the tank, dump the replicate into what's called a 'reduction chamber' and start over... using the recycled material to make a new replicate.

I didn't sleep too well for a few days after the visit."

— Matthew Shirow, Mitsumi Biotechnology

Economy

The largest regional economy in North America, Neo York is second only to MegaTokyo for largest metroplex economy. Although the primary basis of the city's economy comes from finance and related industries, a huge percentage of the business market is driven by the presence of several corporate arcologies.

Downtown Manhattan is some of the most expensive real estate in the world, in close competition with Hong Kong and MegaTokyo. In the quest for more office space, many older buildings are being torn down or renovated, resulting in a virtual forest of skyscrapers in the eighty to one hundred story range. Even the venerable World Trade Center has been eclipsed by the Jinsei and Shiko-Shin arcologies.

The huge arcologies of Jinsei, Mitsumi, and Shiko-Shin are joined by seemingly innumerable smaller foreign businesses and companies. Truly a multinational city with regards to trade, it's estimated that upwards of 25% of Neo York's workforce is employed by a corporation of foreign (meaning non-North American) origin.

Domestically, close to fifty different corporations call Neo York home, more than any other city in the world. The companies include businesses involved in banking, investing, securities, insurance, telecommunications, biotechnology, high-technology, and entertainment. In addition, Neo York has North America's second largest film and TV industry (after Los Angeles) as well as major music recording centers.

Sports-wise, Neo York is home to seven major teams in four different leagues, as well as the home arenas for *Lace & Steel* and *Smash TV*.

Crime

With the privatization of the police department crime in Neo York is matter of location. More affluent neighborhoods are able to afford increased police patrols which leads to a drop in crime rates. Lower income neighborhoods must make do with basic protection programs, with a corresponding increase in criminal activities. Gated communities and complexes are common, and often employ private security firms for additional protection. Although there's no location in Neo York receiving zero law-enforcement, some places seem to be only one step away from Zero Zone status.

Various gangs commit most of the city's crimes. Many gangs are primarily ethnic in nature and include African-American, Hispanic, and Asian gangs. Typical gang activities include robbery, extortion, drug production and sales, and prostitution. Gangs are found all through Neo York, but they are most common in lower income neighborhoods.

Organized crime is behind most of the illegal acts committed in Neo York and is often indirectly responsible for most gang activity. Organized criminal groups include the Mafia (which has been active in the Neo York area since the 1920s), the *Organizatsiya* (or Russian Mafia), drug cartels out of Columbia and Mexico, Chinese Triads and Tongs, and the Japanese-based Yakuza. Typical organized crime activities include, but are not limited to: smuggling, be it drugs, guns, pornography, simsense chips, or something as simple as cigarettes; extortion; gambling, including gambling halls, numbers running, horse racing, and sports betting (*Lace & Steel* is supposed to be rife with organized crime influence); murder-for-hire; and loansharking.

There is a great deal of tension both between and among the various criminal groups. Turf wars are common, as are fights for succession when a leader dies without naming an heir.

The final form of crime common to Neo York is corporate. Much of it is industrial espionage, with different companies spying on each other in an effort to learn trade secrets. Personnel extractions are also common. With an extraction, a corporate employee is kidnapped for any number of reasons, the most common being to allow the employee to defect from one company to another. Employees may also be extracted to delay or prevent work on a project, or to be used as a bargaining chip to force the company (or a specific person within the company) to submit to certain demands. Finally, the most dangerous form of corporate crime is denial of assets. Simply put, it involves the destruction of corporate resources — be it buildings, raw materials, vehicles, or people.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

For more on gangs and organized crime, see pages 290-305 of *Dark Champions*.

"Why'd I join the NYPD? It seemed like a good idea at the time.

"When I was younger I believed in doing good for others. You know, uphold the law, do the right thing, serve the people, and all that. I don't know why I thought like that. I think it's because I was young and stupid. I know it pissed off my parents which, when you're young and stupid, is as good a reason as any to do anything.

"The force wasn't quite what I was expecting. NYPD, Incorporated is the most courageous, loyal, and dedicated bunch of corrupt clowns you'll ever meet. No bribe is too small, no kickback too paltry, no corp exec too insignificant to escape their attention. As soon as somebody flashes their cash, they'll be there.

"I'd settled in for a career of exceptional mediocrity and pretending to be honest when I got tooled over big time. There were four of us on a bust. Problem was, our perp was an esper weapon, with an emphasis on the weapon part, and nobody bothered to tell us. The whole frelling place blew up as we went in. The two in front ended up a fine mist, I was horribly maimed, and my backup walked out without a scratch.

"Of course, this being Neo York's finest taxi service, the investigation consisted of a lot of buck passing. All the blame was dumped on the two dead guys, mainly because they couldn't speak up in their defense. As for myself, I lost an eye and most of my right hand, and was nicely fobbed off with a generous disability pension.

"Possibly the best years of my life."

— Sandra Blackmore, ex-NYPD, Inc. officer recounts her time on the force.

NEO YORK POLICE DEPARTMENT, INCORPORATED

History

The New York Police Department became the Neo York Police Department, Incorporated after the end of the Civil War, while New York was undergoing its transformation into Neo York. Faced with seemingly insurmountable debts, the Neo York City Council decided to bring in much-needed revenue by charging the public for police protection.

Initially, the decision to incorporate the NYPD resulted in a reduced police force, as officers quit the force over what they considered a breach of law-enforcement ethics. New personnel were quickly brought in to replace them, with many recruited from the ranks of Civil War veterans. The rapid build-up resulted in large numbers of poorly-trained officers out on the streets, leading to the NYPD, Inc.'s current reputation as a organization noted for extreme and brutal law-enforcement measures and rife with corruption.

Jurisdiction

The NYPD, Inc. is responsible for patrolling the various boroughs comprising the city of Neo York proper. Within this area they have rather broad law-enforcement powers, in which the policy of crime prevention is considered paramount. Thus, the NYPD, Inc. no longer has to worry about such twentieth century police procedures as reading a suspect their rights, obtaining search warrants, or proving probable cause before making an arrest.

Although the NYPD, Inc. patrols all of Neo York, protection in particular boroughs and neighborhoods is still on a per-contract basis. Usually a housing complex or apartment building will set-up an agreement with the NYPD, Inc. and supply its residents with an authorization number to be used in case of emergencies. This arrangement is best summed up by the NYPD's own (highly unofficial) motto: "We protect only those we serve."

In many cases, the larger apartment complexes, hotels, and office developments will utilize private security firms in addition to having NYPD, Inc. contracts to ensure complete resident and employee protection. Certain locations, such as the larger multinational corporate arcologies, have their own law-enforcement units and do not utilize the NYPD, Inc. for protection.

THE NYPD, Inc. AT A GLANCE

First Formed:	1845
Jurisdiction:	Neo York City
Motto:	"Fidelis ad Mortem" (Faithful till Death)
Unofficial Motto:	"We Protect Only Those We Serve"
Annual Budget:	\$6 Billion (in UNA dollars)
Headquarters:	One Police Plaza
Police Officers:	42,000
Auxiliary Police Officers:	6,000
Police Commissioner:	Gordon Feiner
Commands:	88 Precincts
Police Cars:	9,000
Police Boats:	30
Police Aircraft:	20
Police Exo-Suits:	24
Horses:	100
Dogs:	40

Privatizing the NYPD was an unpopular measure and caused a great deal of dissension among police, the general public, and the City Council. The mayor held firm, presenting the rationale behind the decision as follows: with the rising levels of violence the police were out-numbered and outgunned. If the people wanted proper police protection, then they would need to pay for the privilege. It was economically impossible to handle the matter any other way.

Organization

The NYPD, Inc. divides its forces into three basic divisions: patrol, investigation, and tactical. Each division is further examined below.

THE NYPD UNITS

The three divisions of the NYPD are further broken up into numerous units, each of which handles a specific form of law-enforcement. The units are as follows:

- ⊙ Air Patrol
- ⊙ Armored Trooper Division
- ⊙ Auxiliary Police
- ⊙ Aviation Unit
- ⊙ Cadet Corps
- ⊙ Controlled Substances Division
- ⊙ Crime Scene Unit
- ⊙ Cybercrime Division
- ⊙ Emergency Service Unit
- ⊙ Evidence Collection Teams
- ⊙ Harbor Unit and Scuba Team
- ⊙ Highway Patrol
- ⊙ Homicide Division
- ⊙ Housing Bureau
- ⊙ Major Case Squad
- ⊙ Mounted Unit
- ⊙ Movie and Television Unit
- ⊙ Organized Crime Control Bureau
- ⊙ Real Time Crime Center
- ⊙ School Safety Division
- ⊙ Special Weapons and Tactics
- ⊙ Special Victims Division
- ⊙ Taxi Squad/Anti-Crime
- ⊙ Technical Assistance Response Unit
- ⊙ Traffic Enforcement
- ⊙ Transit Bureau
- ⊙ Transportation Bureau
- ⊙ Zero Zone Border Patrol

Game Masters should feel free to add, remove, or detail these units as needed.

“The problem with the NYPD can be summed up by the statement ‘All power corrupts.’ The NYPD has been given a great deal of power to prevent crime, and for some, this power ends up surpassing any desire to uphold the law and serve the general public. Add in the various corporate ‘incentives’ and you have a climate rife for corruption.”

— Tony Morris, NYPD patrol officer

PATROL

This division makes up the bulk of the NYPD, Inc. and consists of foot (or “beat”) officers, as well as the Air Patrol, Harbor Unit, and Highway Patrol. The Patrol Division is directly responsible for crime prevention throughout the city and actively patrols assigned precincts in an effort to deter any potential criminal activity. Foot patrolmen are usually found in the densely populated borough of Manhattan with two-man car patrols found elsewhere. The Highway Patrol deals with the network of superhighways snaking their way in and around Neo York, while the Air Patrol utilizes helicopters and vectored-thrust vehicles to cover the city from the air. The Harbor Unit watches over the numerous waterways bordering Neo York.

INVESTIGATIVE

Made up of many smaller units (see the NYPD Units list), the Investigative Division’s responsibilities include computer security, controlled substance enforcement, homicide, organized crime, and vice crimes. The Cybercrime Division handles cases of computer fraud and theft, identity theft, and cyberhacking. Most of their work is done “in house”; they rarely hit the streets. The Controlled Substances Division deals with “normal” drugs (cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, and so on) as well as better-than-life chips, simsense chips, and synthetic “designer” drugs. The Organized Crime Control Bureau attempts to track down Mafia, *Organizatsiya*, and Yakuza activities (among others). These include gambling, smuggling, and prostitution.

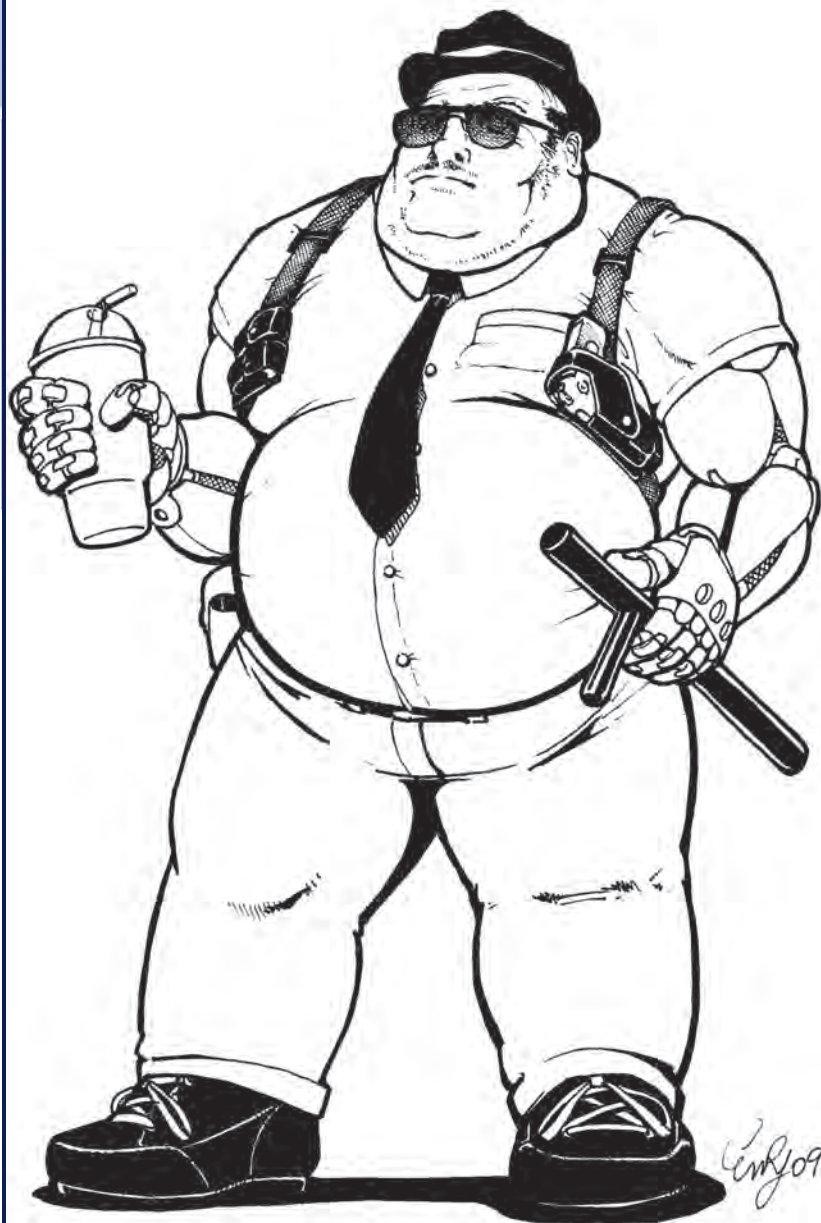
TACTICAL

The Tactical Division, the smallest of the NYPD’s three divisions, is made up of the Armored Trooper Unit, the Mounted Unit, riot police, SWAT teams, and the Zero Zone Border Patrol. The Tactical Division commands a great deal of firepower and is well equipped with various armored police cars and vehicles. They are normally used for crowd control, anti-riot measures, and any situation where paramilitary tactics and personnel are needed. The Armored Trooper Unit operates the NYPD’s Centurion and Decurion Exo-Suits, providing emergency backup or heavy firepower, depending on the situation and need.

Corruption In The Ranks

It’s no secret the NYPD is rife with corruption. The force’s pay for protection model is a breeding ground for extortion schemes, where officers encourage additional payments in order to speed investigations along. To make matters worse, many businesses are more than willing to slip the local precinct head a little extra to ensure their location receives a prompt response to any trouble calls. At higher levels, the multinationals are prone to gift the NYPD’s management with trips to exclusive retreats, tickets to in-demand shows, free home improvements, and so on, asking only in return the manager ensures an on-going investigation is quietly closed or that the NYPD ignore a certain incident.

However, not everyone in the NYPD is on the take. There are still plenty of honest, hard-working officers, but they seem to be few and far between.



STANDARD NYPD, INC. PATROL OFFICER

13 STR 12 DEX 13 CON 12 INT 11 EGO 13 PRE

4 OCV 4 DCV 4 OMCV 4 DMCV 3 SPD

4 PD 3 ED 6 REC 26 END 10 BOD 24 STUN

Abilities: *Colt Mark VI:* RKA 1 1/2d6, 16 Charges (+0); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) plus +1 OCV; OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) plus +1 versus Recoil Modifiers with RKA; OAF (-1), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (+1 to firearm's Hearing PER Roll modifier; -1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4); *Level II Spectracloth Jacket:* Armor (7 PD/7 ED); Activation Roll 11- (locations 7-12; -1), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4); *Observant:* +1 PER with Sight Group; Contacts: (4 points' worth); Fringe Benefit: Local Police Powers; Fringe Benefit (rank): Police officer; Fringe Benefit: Weapon Permit (where appropriate); +1 with Pistols and Shotguns; AK: specific NYC borough or neighborhood 11-; Bureaucrats 12-; CK: Neo York City 11-; Combat Driving 11-; Criminology 11-; KS: Criminal Law And Procedure 11-; KS: NYPD, Inc. History And Customs 11-; KS: The Corporate World 8-; KS: The Law-enforcement World 11-; PS: Police Officer 11-; Streetwise 12-; WF: Small Arms, Clubs [nightstick]

100+ Matching Complications (30): Distinctive Features: uniform and/or badge (Easily Concealed; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses); Hunted: NYPD, Inc. Infrequently (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching); Social Complication: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)

Notes: This character sheet represents a fairly generic NYPD patrol officer. Different Divisions and units will have slightly different gear. The Highway Patrol, for example, tends to wear Level III Spectracloth Jackets with motorcycle officers adding Spectracloth pants and reinforced boots. SWAT teams wear Level II Security Armor and a Standard Helmet and carry a wide variety of weapons, including the Colt Mark IV pistol, the KAC Personal Defense Weapon, the Bushmaster ACR, and the SRM Arms Model 1216 shotgun. Riot squads wear the equivalent of Level I Security Armor and add a Riot Helmet. Investigative and undercover officers can wear just about any type of personal body armor they prefer and are free to choose their own firearms.

In addition to their sidearm and armored jacket, patrol officers carry a number of additional items of equipment, including a nightstick (or tonfa), a cellular communications unit, suspect restraints (both metal handcuffs and plastic "zip strips"), flashlight, pepper spray, and so on (see *Dark Champions* page 273 for more information).

For information on the NYPD's police vehicles and Exo-Suits, see pages 136 of the Equipment section.

Taking a deep breath, David Lam squared his shoulders and straightened his jacket. He wasn't going to get back to Neo York if he kept jumping at shadows and wondering about the what-ifs. He needed to start walking west and hope for the best.

A block later David almost regretted his decision to come out of hiding. A side street heading south had been blocked off with chunks of rubble, the skeleton of a car, bits of fencing, and the metal stakes normally used for street signs. In front of that was a series of wooden posts, each decorated with a single human skull, gleaming white in the summer sun. Bits of yellowed bone poked through the leaf litter at the base of the posts. David stared at the display for a long time. Aside from the sound of the wind the street was quiet.

With a shudder, he turned and headed off, quickening his pace in an effort to get as much distance between himself and the grisly sight as possible. Someone had built that barricade and that same someone had put those skulls out there. And that was someone he certainly didn't want to meet.

— David Lam discovers a hint of what life is like in the Neo York Zero Zone.

THE NEO YORK ZERO ZONE

Area:	Kings and Queens counties of Long Island.
Government:	Anarchy
Capital:	NA
Population:	Unknown. Estimates range from 100,000 to 1,000,000 persons.
Language(s):	Primarily English, other languages possible, including Cantonese, French, Japanese, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese.
Currency:	UNA Dollar, although most of the Zone operates on the barter system.
Resources:	None, although the Entertainment District brings in a great deal of revenue.

History

The formation of the Neo York Zero Zone occurred in early 2010 as New York reeled under the impact of thousands of refugees fleeing the fighting of the Second Civil War. With the city's resources stretched to the breaking point, a daring plan was put forth to the city council: since New York couldn't afford to provide police protection for the entire city, it should only concentrate on those areas most worth saving. In addition, any of the city's remaining boroughs able to independently pay for law-enforcement would then receive police protection, while everyone else would have to fend for themselves. Finally, certain boroughs were declared too far gone to save and were to be fully sealed off and abandoned. The New York City Council, rapidly running out of options, fearing for the safety of Manhattan, and realizing that desperate times required desperate measures, agreed.

The transition was not a smooth one. As police precincts and fire stations were shut down and their personnel transferred into Manhattan there were numerous incidents of violence as enraged mobs tried to break through the cordons around the island. With the declaration of martial law, the governor of New York gave the police and National Guard orders to shoot looters on sight and many of the aforementioned mobs were broken up with concentrated gunfire.

To further insure the safety of Manhattan and the rest of New York, bridges across the East River were first barricaded and then severed, cutting Brooklyn and Queens off from the rest of the city. The only bridge left standing was the Williamsburg Bridge, which eventually became heavily barricaded with a mix of Jersey barriers, razorwire, mesh fences, and gun emplacements. Thus, the New York Zero Law-enforcement Zone was born.

After the Second Civil War ended and New York became "Neo" York, rebuilding began in earnest. However, the financial forecasts for recovering the Neo York Zero Zone were staggering. Subway tunnels would need to be reopened and reconnected, bridges rebuilt, power and sewer lines connected and repaired, and thousands of burned-out buildings torn down. There were also the thousands and thousands of people still living in the Zone, who would need to be processed, made into new UNA citizens, and in many cases, promptly placed behind bars.

It was pointed out that leaving things as they were would be best for all involved. The Zero Zone made an excellent dumping ground for UNA "undesirables," such as the mentally infirm, the homeless, and criminals, who would otherwise end up in already overcrowded prisons. The multinationals also found the Zone to be invaluable as an experimental proving ground for new equipment, vehicles, and products. Finally, the Zone's Entertainment District was just starting up, and the lure of a place where nothing was illegal was too much for some to pass up.

Some day the Zone will be cleared out, cleaned up, and brought back into Neo York's fold... just don't count on it happening anytime soon.

WHAT IS A ZERO ZONE?

Simply put, a "Zero Law-enforcement Zone" is any urban area that has been sealed off and ignored. After the Second Civil War, the UNA was littered with Zero Zones, as the various city governments concentrated their resources on specific urban areas and left the rest to their own devices. In the years since the end of the war, most of the Zero Zones have since been reclaimed, with only a few still in existence. The most famous extant Zero Zone is located in Neo York; the second is the Atlantic City Zone.

According to the media, a Zero Zone is either a dark, burnt-out urban hell populated by cannibals, mutants, and sub-human gangsters, or a techno-dreamscape of bars and nightclubs filled with full-conversion cyborgs, heavily-chromed street samurai, and world-class esper weapons. The truth lies somewhere in between.

Although this section is primarily concerned with the Neo York Zero Zone, it can easily be applied to any Zero Zone the GM desires.

REPLICATED HUMANS IN THE ZONE

A significant percentage of the Zone's population consists of replicated humans. The Zone is a common destination for replicates on the run as it's the one place in North America they can be truly free. Although those who make it to the Zone aren't exactly welcomed with open arms, they aren't shunned either. The enhanced physical abilities of the average replicate are invaluable to many Zone communities, meaning the typical replicate runaway will have a far easier time of it trying to fit in than most human arrivals.

However, the organized crime groups still look on most replicates as property, not people, and it's not unheard of for a pleasure model replicate to escape to the Zone only to end up enslaved by a Mafia or Yakuza-owned brothel.

Shoko was surprised at how many of the Zone locals were armed, considering how poor these people were supposed to be. A few even had weapons that put her precious Remington Stormbreaker to shame — like the cute black-haired girl sitting on the tail of her overheated truck, cradling a combat shotgun on a shoulder strap.

As she approached, the girl looked her over briefly, so Shoko returned the assessment. That's when she saw the fan of black tails spread-out across the truck's bed. So she was a replicate as well, obviously a custom job. Shoko tried to discreetly count the tails — eight or nine, she guessed. Nine was confirmed by the logo hand-painted on the side of the truck, "9-Tail's Towing." Not hard to guess where that came from.

Shoko considered asking the girl where she might find some food and water, hoping a fellow replicate might show her more goodwill than the other locals, but decided not to chance it. If her truck had just broken down, she might not be in a good mood, and she did have that shotgun.

As she started to walk past, Shoko glanced toward the plume of steam coming from the exposed engine and abruptly stopped, astounded. She didn't know much about engines, but she knew this metallic monstrosity couldn't be what the truck had originally come with. It looked like a mass of mismatched piping, assorted valves, and a crankshaft had been kludged together and made to run. No kludged wasn't the right word. In fact, the whole thing had obviously been carefully handcrafted into its present form, and was quite elegant on a certain level.

Abruptly Shoko realized the plume of rising steam wasn't coming from an overheated radiator, but was being vented from a boiler of some sort.

"It's steam powered!" she blurted. The many-tailed girl turned to look at her, Shoko flushing red as she realized how stupid she'd just sounded.

"Pardon?" the girl asked, the shotgun carefully not pointed at anyone in particular.

— Shoko makes a new friend.

Life In The Zone

According to the UNA government, most of the original Zero Zone inhabitants were "otherwise undesirable elements who had a detrimental effect on society." In other words, the homeless and jobless, refugees from the war, illegal immigrants, the mentally handicapped, and similar unfortunates, along with common criminals and their ilk. These days, Zone residents come from all walks of life. Some were born in the Zone and Zone life is all they've ever known. Others have come to the Zone to escape an intolerable situation, such as crushing debts, an unwanted or abusive marriage, or police warrant. The Zone has a certain romantic lure to teenaged runaways, whose view of the Zone is often based entirely on highly-inaccurate films, computer games, and simsense chips. New York State sends monthly bus-loads of prison inmates to the Zone, figuring it's cheaper to offload them there than spending thousands of tax dollars to keep them behind bars. They've also started soliciting the surrounding states to join the program for the price of a simple processing fee for each inmate sent over.

ZONE SOCIETY

In the twenty years since its initial inception, the Neo York Zero Zone has slowly formed its own, unique society. With no central government the inhabitants have banded together into groups of various sizes, ranging from small gangs of about a dozen who control a single block, to large communities numbering in the hundreds.

Gang structure varies greatly, but tends toward the "wolf pack" model, with an "alpha male" and "alpha female" (usually the alpha male's current love interest) on top and everyone else ranked by their overall usefulness to the gang. Most alpha males retain their position through strength and fighting skill, although some get

there through cunning, careful planning, and the proven ability to keep the gang alive and whole.

Larger, non-gang communities usually adopt some semblance of government. These range from dictatorships run by a single strongman and his enforcers, to communal enclaves where everything is owned and shared equally among all members. A few communities have even adopted a democratic system of self-rule. These places are normally small enough to allow everyone to vote on any decisions, although there's usually a community leader as well.

Although fragmented into innumerable smaller communities, the Zone does have a common identity. The residents consider themselves Zoners, not citizens of the UNA, and feel little to no loyalty to the country that abandoned them in their time of need. At best, they see Neo York as a source of much-needed goods and income, at worst they consider any Neo York resident a predatory target.

ZONE UTILITIES

Having been cut off from the local ConEdison powergrid, the Zone has had to make do with any number of alternative power sources. Solar panels can be found on rooftops all across the Zone, along with wind mills. Hydrogen fuel cells are particularly sought after and are commonly smuggled in from Neo York via the subway tunnels under the East River.

The Zone has a whole industry dedicated to producing alcohol-based fuel, which is burned by cars, motorcycles, and generators. Wood-burning stoves are used to heat most residences, and steam-powered vehicles are common. Animal waste is used to make methane, which is burned to heat some buildings. Human waste is collected for fertilizer.

A lucky few have managed to tap into the ConEdison powergrid, pirating power and selling it to the rest of the Zone for a steep fee. Most of these pirates have organized crime connections and route the stolen power to nightclubs run by the Mafia, Yakuza, and others.

Clean drinking water is a precious commodity, as water from the East River is usually too polluted to drink, and the rest of the surrounding waters are too brackish. Water collection systems can be found on the roof of just about any inhabited building, and water filters are frequently smuggled in using the same route as hydrogen fuel cells.

ZONE ECONOMY

Within the Zone, survival is job one. Thus, just about any open plot of ground has been made into a garden, with beans, corn, and tomatoes common. Some people raise livestock, with chickens, goats, pigs, and rabbits typical. Aside from farming, other lucrative trades include carpenter, electrician, and automotive mechanic. Much of the Zone's infrastructure is antiquated and falling apart. Anyone who can keep it up and running has a value all his own.

When the Zone was first formed, it was easy to make a living stripping the surrounding buildings of anything useful, such as lengths of pipe, wiring, doors, furniture, and so on. However, twenty years of neglect have rendered most such salvage useless. Still, people make occasional forays out into the eastern wastes in search of anything useful.

The Zone, for the most part, is a barter economy, in which goods are exchanged for services. Such exchanges can be between individuals on a one-to-one basis, or in large open-air markets. Markets offer a wide range of items, ranging from food to clothes to weapons. Money, specifically UNA currency, is used as well, since it's the only thing most smugglers will accept for their goods. The primary source of UNA currency is the Entertainment District, which sees large numbers of Neo York visitors every night, looking to experience a taste of the "wild side." Just about every bar and nightclub in the District is cash-only, with the nightly earnings promptly used to purchase various goods (such as food, medicine, alcohol, and so on) from Neo York proper.

ZONE CRIME

With no laws and no law-enforcement, the Zone can be an extremely dangerous place for the incautious and unprepared. While the larger communities tend to keep to themselves, the smaller gangs often fight amongst each other, squabbling over even the least of resources. However, the worst scenes of violence are when the NYPD sends the latest shipment of inmates into the Zone. Predators of all stripes lurk nearby, looking for an easy victim to rob of whatever meager possessions he may have. Worse fates await attractive youths, who are often sold into virtual slavery to certain brothels. Exceptionally healthy individuals, or those with certain forms of cyberware, run the risk of ending up in the hands of harvesters, who, after a quick and brutal introduction to Zero Zone culture, will strip the fresh corpse of organs and cybernetic systems.

Due to the presence of so many gangs, travel about certain parts of the Zone requires various travel passes, showing the bearer has paid the required dues to the gang in question. This sort of extortion extends to dwellings, farms, and businesses, who "donate" foodstuffs or goods to a local gang (or gangs) in exchange for protection. Unlike in Neo York, this arrangement is often more of a mutual pact — the gang gets much-needed food while the locals get reasonably skilled defenders.

The various organized crime groups view the Zone as a vast pool of untapped resources. The *Organizatsiya* and the Yakuza, especially, like to recruit muscle from the Zone, offering such luxuries as hot food, clean clothes, and hot showers in exchange for sworn loyalty oaths. Not surprisingly, most recruits are more than happy to accept.

Organized crime also uses the Zone to hide members wanted by the authorities, as a place to store goods until needed, and to house various criminal enterprises, such as drug labs. Zones are also a haven for certain industries of an extremely unsavory nature. These include organ-legging operations, better-than-life simsense studios (including "snuff" studios, where the person being recorded dies during filming), white slavery rings (who then ship their victims to other countries or to corporate arcologies), and live hunts (where heavily armed "sportsmen"

GETTING IN (AND OUT)

There's no law stopping anyone from entering the Neo York Zero Zone. The entrance is the NYPD checkpoint at the eastern end of the Williamsburg Bridge. Heavily defended, the checkpoint is well-marked with signs stating it opens onto a Zero Law-enforcement Zone and anyone going in is on his own. The NYPD will stop anyone who's a minor from entering, unless they have parental permission (which needs to be given in person) or they have sufficient cash on hand to pay for entry (and only if the officer can be bought). Replicated humans acting alone will be stopped and held until their owner can come pick them up. All others are free to enter at their own risk.

Returning to Neo York requires a valid ID card. This is usually a SIN Card, which can be run though a reader to prove the bearer is who he says he is. Persons without a valid card will be denied entry, although once again, sufficient cash — or other incentives — may be enough to convince the check point guards to open the gates.

The checkpoint has two gates, one for vehicles and a second, smaller one, for foot traffic. Technically, any vehicle returning from the Zone needs to be searched to make sure nothing is being smuggled into Neo York. Most corporate vehicles get around this by offering the checkpoint guards healthy bribes to simply pass them through.

After about another hour of walking David stopped at a wide intersection. Two divided highways met, and what had once been a busy crossroad was now a deserted and lonely looking landscape of bent lamp posts, tilted telephone poles, and mangled street signs. There was even the obligatory wrecked truck. But out in the middle of the intersection was a sight so strange that David, against his better judgment, had to walk out and look it over.

It was a towering stack of television sets. David wasn't sure how many there were, only that they were very old. Some had been shot through the tube, leaving them nothing more than empty cabinets filled with dust and shattered glass. Others were still whole, their glass faces blindly reflecting the world around them. On top of the sets were all manner of objects: innumerable candles — most melted down to mere blobs of wax, bundles of flowers (mostly dried and dead), empty bottles, a statue of Jesus with a scattering of crosses, spent shell casings, the skull of a deer (complete with antlers), optical disks, broken computers and chips, and a tangle of cables and wires. David walked slowly around the monument, wondering what possible purpose it served. Was it a marker? A warning? A sign? It was both peaceful and utterly creepy at the same time. With a start, David also realized it was an indicator he was in an inhabited area, and he probably didn't want to meet anyone who lived around here. Not if he valued his life.

— David Lam realizes the Zone is not only stranger than he imagined, it's stranger than he can imagine.

track down and kill assorted Zone inhabitants). This last item tends to occur in the Atlantic City Zero Zone rather than Neo York's.

MAJOR DISTRICTS

The Neo York Zero Zone is composed of the boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens. Its western border is the East River, Upper Bay, Lower Bay, and Jamaica Bay. The eastern border is Island Parkway, which has been heavily fortified. The Zone itself has been subdivided into districts based on factors such as population and purpose. These districts (and their associated landmarks) are as follows:

Zone City (or Zone Central)

Formally known as Long Island City, this is where the majority of the Zone's population lives and works. The area is fairly gang free, well established, and has seen the most post-war development. The streets are kept fairly clear, the buildings are in decent repair, and the worst of the trash and junk has long since been hauled off. Zone City is also home to most of the Zone's industries, such as windmill repair, alcohol-fuel distillation, and blacksmithing.

The borders of Zone City are generally considered to be the intersections of Highway 496, Highway 278, and Grand Central Parkway.

9-Tail's Towing: Although based out of Bell's Motors (found near the Entertainment District), 9-Tail's Towing tends to do most of their business in Zone City and the surrounding area. Owned and operated by André and his lover Ayane, 9-Tail's Towing uses their incredibly noisy twin-axle long-nose steam-powered truck to haul most anything you ask to most anywhere you want in the Zone. Getting shot at costs extra.

ANDRÉ AND AYANE

André is a young man in his mid-twenties, thin, with long brown hair and several days of stubble. He's usually dressed in worn clothing and a battered armored jacket. André is a Competent Normal with skills relating to auto mechanics and maintaining steam engines. Ayane is a Lynx Class Security Synthetic (see page 207). She's tall and well-toned, with long black hair. Instead of cat's ears, she has nine black-furred fox-like tails. She has an assortment of skills, including cooking, farming, and truck driving.

The Edge of Night: Blandly glitzy and tamely dangerous-looking, this nightclub lies directly across from the Neo York checkpoint. Well-policed by hired guards, the Edge of Night caters to people who want to experience the Zone's edgy sense of danger with a minimum of risk to their safety. Inside, the Edge is like a Neo York theme bar, except here the theme is the Zero Zone itself. Most of its decor is based off of Net and simsense imagery and has little to do with a "real" Zone club. Still, it does a brisk business and every night is packed with Neo Yorkers dressed like an "authentic" Zone resident (or what they think one would look like). Needless to say, genuine Zero Zone

natives avoid the place like the plague. However, the Edge of Night does manage to attract some fairly popular musical acts, including some who'd never play elsewhere in the Zone.

Fort Dixie: Founded by escapees from a Civil War POW camp, Fort Dixie is located on the eastern end of Zone City where it starts to merge with the Wastes. Commanded by the Dixie Patrol, Fort Dixie is well deserving of the name. Using abandoned construction equipment, the Patrol demolished numerous buildings they felt were indefensible and used the debris to block off most of the streets. The rest of the streets were made into virtual mazes, complete with dead-ends, elevated defensive positions, and hidden ambush points. In the years since, the Patrol has added fencing, razor wire, and watch towers.

Inside, the Fort boasts extensive cropland, animal pens, and some of the better machine and electronics shops available in the Zone. Their medical facilities are top notch (for the Zone). It's suspected the Patrol has made arrangements with smugglers in order to keep their supplies well stocked. What they pay the smugglers is unknown.

THE COLONEL

A former UNA officer, the colonel is a black man of moderate size and indeterminate age. He's in excellent physical shape and has a gruff, no nonsense approach to the job of running Fort Dixie. Unrelenting when it comes to Fort Dixie's security, he has a far more *laissez faire* attitude toward the residents' lives and business. So long as order is preserved, he doesn't interfere; but the moment the peace is broken, he will respond brutally and ruthlessly.

Louie's Bar & Grill: Located on Van Dam Street in the south of Zone City where it just brushes against Darkside, Louie's is nestled between two dilapidated brownstone apartment buildings. The outside features a single steel-shuttered window and a small washed-out sign over the door. Inside is a narrow front room, with the bar on the right side and tables and booths to the left. There's a small kitchen behind the bar and an over-worked alcohol-fueled generator out back. Louie is normally found in the back. He's a beefy dark-haired man who looks like he's seen it all. He's also very well connected and can either get you what you need or can get you in touch with someone who can.

LOUIE

Louie is a Skilled Normal with the Fixer Template and the *People Who Knows People* option. He also has +5 PRE; Only To Resist Presence Attacks defined as "Has Seen It All."

WFZZ (Radio Free Zero Zone): Better known as “The Fizz,” WFZZ operates out of an old (and heavily modified) Greyhound bus. The radio station broadcasts to the Zero Zone (mostly), and is on the air roughly 24 hours a day. There’s no set schedule, and most of the programming is based on the whim of the DJs. Music, news reports, sports, the weather, and rants are all mixed together to create a highly eclectic radio show.

Bartertown

This is where most Zone residents meet to buy, sell, and trade goods and services. Almost as well-kept as Zone City, Bartertown combines open-air markets with indoor establishments operating out of renovated warehouses and the like. It also features numerous repair shops and similar industries.

Bartertown lies to the south of Zone City near Newton Creek.

CK

A young man of mixed parentage, CK (it’s short for Corneilious Kuno) stands 5’4”, weighs about 140 lbs, and has extremely long black hair and brown eyes. He normally dresses in a once-white jumpsuit, black boots, black fingerless gloves, and a black armored jacket.

A Zone fixer (use the Fixer Template), CK is closely connected with the subway smugglers and has contacts in Neo York and New Jersey. He’ll gladly deal in just about anything, except for recreational drugs and simsense chips.

It’s rumored he has a small film studio in the back of his shop and makes a tidy sum shooting erotic videos of the Triple Puma Threat.

Bob’s Garage: Basically little more than an automotive abattoir, cars are brought in to be stripped of anything useable and then abandoned. The Mafia makes great use of Bob’s destructive talents. They also make fuel, and have a large still out back.

Clark Street: Located on the Bartertown-Zone City border, Clark Street is comprised of closely packed apartment buildings with retail outlets on the ground floors. There are a number of merchants on the street, offering various handcrafted goods, but the most important resident is Lydia, who runs a medical clinic.

Clark Street is the territory of the Clark Street Devils. Run by a man known only as “The Boss,” the Devils are far less violent than most Zone gangs, but can still be quite vicious if needed, although they avoid murder and rape. They actively protect Clark Street in exchange for food and medical attention, traffic in drugs, and try to extract a “toll” from any visitors they think they can shake down.

The Devils have spent a lot of time honeycombing Clark Street with tunnels and passages that allow them to move about quickly and safely. When combined with the The Boss’s tactical advice, it allows them to keep the area safe and secure, despite their small numbers.

THE CLARK STREET DEVILS

The Devils can be built using the Ganger Template. One of the Devils, Chester, carries a Remington Stormbreaker, another, Rammer, has a primitive cyberarm. The Boss, real name Jebediah Smith, has Tactics on a 14-. Their colors are black and red and the gang’s symbol is a red-eyed horned skull.

DOCTOR LYDIA

A spry older woman, Lydia runs the Clark Street medical clinic. She’s a Competent Normal with the Doctor Template, and the Cyber doc, Street Doc, and Ethical Doctor options. Raven’s (see page 227) adoptive mother, Lydia has been a part of Clark Street for as long as most people can remember. Her past is a total mystery, although it’s certain she’s had extensive medical schooling. She’s kind and gentle, and treats everyone as if she was their grandmother. Even the toughest of street gangers tend to say “yes ma’am” and “no ma’am” around her.

Lydia is also an esper, with minor precognitive powers. She’s never surprised by any occurrence, no matter how outlandish, and is virtually impossible to sneak up on. She often reacts to events before she could possibly know about them. Lydia will step outside her clinic to meet new patients before they arrive, happen to be holding whatever someone needs at that exact moment, and will abruptly get up and go to a patient, who will awaken the moment she reaches his bed.

Church Row: Set near Clark Street, this is an interconnected series of streets notable for the incredible density of churches. It’s home to several missions, sponsored by the Red Cross, the Catholic Church, Deseret, and the UNA. It’s the one place in the Zone where gangers and their ilk aren’t welcome, but children are.

Darkside

Situated near Brooklyn Heights, Darkside lies just southeast of the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges. Named due to a towering series of apartment complexes that block the city lights at night, Darkside is avoided by sensible Zone residents. It’s a known haunt of harvesters and junkvendors where buyers can acquire cyberware of highly questionable origins. Slavery rings operate out of Darkside, selling their wares either to Zone residents or exporting them to the outside world via various organized crime groups. Curiously, pig farmers are common in Darkside, although their presence is probably due to the need to dispose of unwanted bodies in a hurry. The home of the truly desperate and destitute, even for the Zone, Darkside is also the perfect place to hire those who have no scruples what so ever.

The Vat: This small bar is staffed and run by replicated humans for fellow replicates. Set on the northernmost fringe of Darkside where it brushes up against Zone City, the Vat isn't very big (it's in a rowhouse basement) but is very popular among the Zone's replicated human population. Non-replicated humans aren't welcome in the Vat, with the exception of André (but only if Ayane is with him) and Dawn, who some times drops by to play.

DOCTOR GERLACH

Sometimes called "The Mad," Doctor Gerlach specializes in quick and dirty surgery. Not known for his ethics, he's more than willing to attempt any surgery or procedure a customer asks for and has done work for both the Mafia and Yakuza. His part-time body-guard is Hiroko O'Hara (see page 248).

THE VAT

The Vat is run by a tall, muscular replicate named Roy and two waitresses: Dion, an extremely fit escort replicate and Nami, a one-armed Lynx Security-Class Synthetic. The bar itself is secretly owned by Sasha, of The Living End, with Gordon's backing (see page 177).

Entertainment District

Bordered by Zone City on the northwest and Barter-town to the southwest, this is where the bulk of the bars, brothels, nightclubs, and strip joints are located. The places here cater to a wide range of desires, fetishes, and tastes, and many exist only to allow the jaded residents of Neo York (and the UNA and beyond) a chance to indulge in their wildest fantasies. However, most of the establishments are far more mainstream, and simply serve as all-purpose watering holes and venues for various Zone stage acts.

The Entertainment District is a virtual forest of windmills and solar panels. Power is always in great demand here, as are competent repairmen.

ADDITIONAL ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT ESTABLISHMENTS

The Armageddon Clock: A bar run by Doctor Kenwood Muldowney's sister (see page 251 for his character sheet).

Heartbreak Hotel: Part hotel and part massage parlor, the Hotel takes in girls who have no where else to go. Despite appearances, it's not a brothel.

The Pink Nipple: A brothel with a reputation for catering to a wide variety of fetishes.

The Plastic Palace: Another brothel, this one is staffed entirely by replicated humans.

Bell's Motors: Located near where the Entertainment District and Zone City meet, this garage is considered neutral ground by many of the local gangs, since they get their motorcycles rebuilt and repaired here. Operated by Ken and his wife Bell, it's also the home of 9-Tail's Towing. Ken and André do automotive repair and salvage, while Bell runs a lunch counter, tends the garden with Ayane's assistance, and raises chickens, pigs, and rabbits.

Bell's is a fairly large place, built up around an existing automotive service center. There is a cobbled together chain-link fence topped with coils of razor and barbed wire surrounding it, although the front gate is usually open to allow customers easy entry (anyone foolish enough to try and rob Bell's will soon find himself dealing with a number of angry gang members). Inside the fence is the garage itself, an extensive garden, livestock pens, and two house trailers. Solar panels and windmills provide power, backed by a hydrogen fuel cell.

KEN AND BELL

Ken is one of the better mechanics in the Zone, while his wife is an excellent cook. They're both fairly short; Ken's 5'4", while Bell is 5'2". Ken has short black hair, stubble, and normally dresses in grease-stained overalls. Bell has long brown hair, blue eyes, and wears fashions that went out in the late 1960s (She really likes scarves.) Both are quiet, good-natured and very much in love.

Ken and Bell are Skilled Normals. Ken has extensive auto mechanic skills, while Bell has cooking and farming. Bell also has some rather unusual skills dealing with the making of napalm and explosives out of household chemicals.

Family Friendly Hotel: One of a number of similar establishments, the Family Friendly Hotel is owned and operated by the Mafia. The hotel caters to corporate employees who need to spend the night in the Zone. The prices are high, but the hotel is clean and secure.

The Darkside Lounge: Backed by the Yakuza, the Lounge is strictly for corporate executives and their ilk who want to experience the Zone in relative safety. Hooked up to a series of Exo-Suit cold fusion generators, the Lounge boasts filtered air, heat, and electric lights. The furniture is designed to look crude but is mass-produced and imported from Neo York proper, along with all of the food and liquor.

The Lounge has become a popular place for corporate executives to discuss business — usually pertaining to matters against UNA law, or to meet with corporate black ops agents.

The Living End: Popularly considered to be the Zone nightclub, the Living End's reputation extends even into Neo York itself. Connected to the power grid via a pirated hook-up, the Living End features working lights, running water, heat in the winter, and air conditioning in the summer. Built out of a

renovated grocery store, it's the most popular club in the Zone, and the favored establishment of Shion Nys when she visits.

The Living End checks weapons at the door, but otherwise accepts all comers. They have a fenced off parking area, external lights, and a partial-conversion doorman. Stage acts range from Dawn and her band, the Razor's Edge, to strip shows by the Triple Puma Threat.

THE LIVING END

The Living End is owned and operated by a man named Gordon, who's of average height and build, with black hair and dark eyes. He's friendly, open, and honest, and his word carries a lot of clout in the District. The End's chief waitress and co-owner is Sasha, an Ishtar Class Pleasure Synthetic from R. Scott (see page 205). Sasha is the only person allowed to serve Shion's table when she visits. Duke, a partial conversion cyborg of the iron angel type, acts as the doorman.

DAWN

See page 246 for her character sheet.

SHION NYS

See page 230 for her character sheet.

The Wastes

Generally considered to refer to everything east of Zone City, the Wastes are mostly uninhabited, except by scattered small gangs and desperate loners. The endless blocks of abandoned stores and homes have, over the years, provided a steady supply of raw materials for those who live in the rest of the Zone. These days however, most of the Wastes are just that, rain-soaked and weather beaten ruins far too gone to be useful.

The Wastes is where most corporate activity takes place. It's fairly remote, desolate, and uninhabited, allowing them to do as they please. Occasionally there's open fighting between rival corporate operatives. When this happens, most of the Zone ducks down until the shooting stops, then races out once the multinationals have left to see if there's anything left worth scavenging.

The Pit: Possibly the worst bar in the Zone, the Pit is built inside a ramshackle warehouse situated on the western edge of the Wastes where it meets the Entertainment District. Inside it's mostly dance floor with a long bar along one side. Power is supplied by a series of noisy and smoky generators. Entertainment ranges from strip and sex shows to loud and enthusiastic (but rarely skilled) bands pumping out grating music at deafening levels. The liquor is suspect and patrons drink at their own risk.

Southside

Consisting of southern Brooklyn, Southside is avoided by most Zone residents as it's the rumored home of Ran, an unimaginably powerful esper weapon. He's supposed to live far to the south, near the flooded ocean-front. In addition, the replicate trio known as the Triple Puma Threat lives in an old school where Southside meets Darkside.

THE TRIPLE PUMA THREAT

A trio of Puma Class Security Synthetics (see page 206), the "Threat" consists of Leona, who has tanned skin and golden hair, Petra, who has dark skin and straight black hair, and Tyra, who has pale skin, reddish-brown hair, and tiger-striped ears. They are well armed, with a wide assortment of weapons and even some scavenged armor.

Fairly amoral mercenaries, the Threat will take just about any job, provided it pays in food, fuel, or ammunition.

RAN

See page 259 for his character sheet.

Standing on the Williamsburg Bridge, looking out through the thick mesh of the Zone's entrance gate, Alan Davies stared at the desolate expanse of the Zone proper. It was an amazing sight. At night all you saw was a black nondescript mass, broken only by the occasional bright cluster of lights. During the day it was a sea of gray and brown, shot through with masses of green. There was more green than Alan had ever seen in once place before, unless you counted the gardens under the geodesic domes covering south Central Park. In-between the green was the silver glitter of solar collectors, which seemed to decorate any open rooftop.

Alan shook his head and looked back toward the clean towers of Neo York. The Zone was home to crazies and lowlifes. Better if it was all firebombed flat.

— Alan Davies doesn't much care for the Zone.

THE ZERO ZONE FROM BOTTOM TO TOP

The Neo York Zero Zone has been subjected to over twenty years of neglect. This means many parts of the Zone are now in total ruin, inhabited only by the desperate. This section describes the general appearance of the Zone from the deepest subway and sewer tunnels to the tops of building roofs.

Subways

Deep under the streets of the Zero Zone run the remnants of the old New York subway. The network is fairly extensive, stretching from the East River far out into the Wastes. Although the tunnels are pitch black and badly in need of repair, their size makes them natural thoroughfares for those wish to avoid attention. However, such passages are without their dangers, as the tunnels are also home to the most desperate of Zone residents. It's not unheard of for lone travelers out at night to be dragged down a subway station entrance and never seen again.

Due to neglect and lack of upkeep, much of the subway network is crumbling into rubble. The seepage of water (especially acidic rainwater) is the primary culprit, resulting in flaking concrete and large pools of standing water. Some tunnels are virtually flooded, from either water runoff, or in the case of the Broad Channel and Rockway Park lines, due to the rising waters of Jamaica Bay.

The subway tunnels have an ecology all their own. Fungi, molds, and mildews are common in the tunnels themselves, while open-air subway entrances are often festooned with thick growths of weeds and climbing plants. The tunnels serve to shelter a whole host of insects, as well as bats, mice, rats, feral cats, and wild dogs. The larger animals often serve as food for the people who live down in the tunnels, many of whom have spent their entire lives in the dank and dark.

Sewers

The Zone's sewer system ranges from tiny drains about a foot in diameter to large storm drains some eight to ten feet across with elevated maintenance walkways. These tunnels extend all across the Zone and are easily accessible. If followed far enough, the typical sewer line will link up to a large storm drain, which will eventually end up at a defunct pumping station, an inoperative treatment station, or at an outflow pipe opening up on the coast.

For the most part, the sewers are fairly clean, having been washed clear by twenty years of rains. However, as with the subway tunnels, the sewer lines haven't seen maintenance in nearly a generation and are now prone to collapses and cave ins. In addition, tree roots have clogged some lines, while leaves and other debris have filled others. Overflows from heavy rains are common, and some tunnels are permanently filled with large pools of standing (and usually stagnant) water.

All this water means the sewers are the perfect environment for a wide variety of animal life, including: mosquitoes and other insects, newts and salamanders, frogs, small fish, snakes, lizards, as well as mice, rats, and cats. There's plenty of plant life as well, including algae, fungi, moss and various forms of weeds. Even in those areas with no sunlight, travelers may need to deal with roots that have worked their way through cracks in the crumbling concrete (or brick for older sewers).

Streets

For a deserted urban wasteland, the Zone is surprisingly green. Any open land is thick with tall stands of weeds, and in many places this growth is starting to break up the concrete sidewalks and asphalt streets. Vines grow up the sides of most buildings, while many of the shade trees lining the streets have become wild and overgrown and in some cases storm-split.

The Zone is also surprisingly clean. Litter is a thing of the past — what was there before the Zone's creation has mostly rotted away, and no one throws out anything these days unless it's too far gone to save. Most of the automobiles have long since been hauled away and stripped down and many glass and plastic containers have been scavenged, cleaned, and reused.

With most of the human population gone, the Zone's wildlife has come back with a vengeance. Birds and bats cross the sky, while assorted small mammals dwell in the undergrowth. Large Zone animals include feral cats, packs of wild dogs, herd of deer, and feral pigs (which can grow quite large and aggressive). Many of these animals end up as food for the Zone's human inhabitants.

Like everything else in the Zone, the streets haven't seen repair crews in twenty years. Road conditions range from bad to impassible. Most streets are shot through with cracks with depressions and upheavals commonplace. Many streets are blocked due to collapsed sewers, sinkholes, fallen buildings, and damaged bridges. Situations like these are why motorcycles are so popular, as they can navigate the Zone's battered roads with far greater ease than any four-wheeled vehicle.

Buildings

The Zone's buildings range from small single-family homes to multistory apartment complexes and office towers. Most are still standing, although a few have given in to the ravages of time (or external abuse), and have partially or totally collapsed. Even those still in one piece usually show some sort of damage, be it missing doors, shattered windows, or sagging roofs.

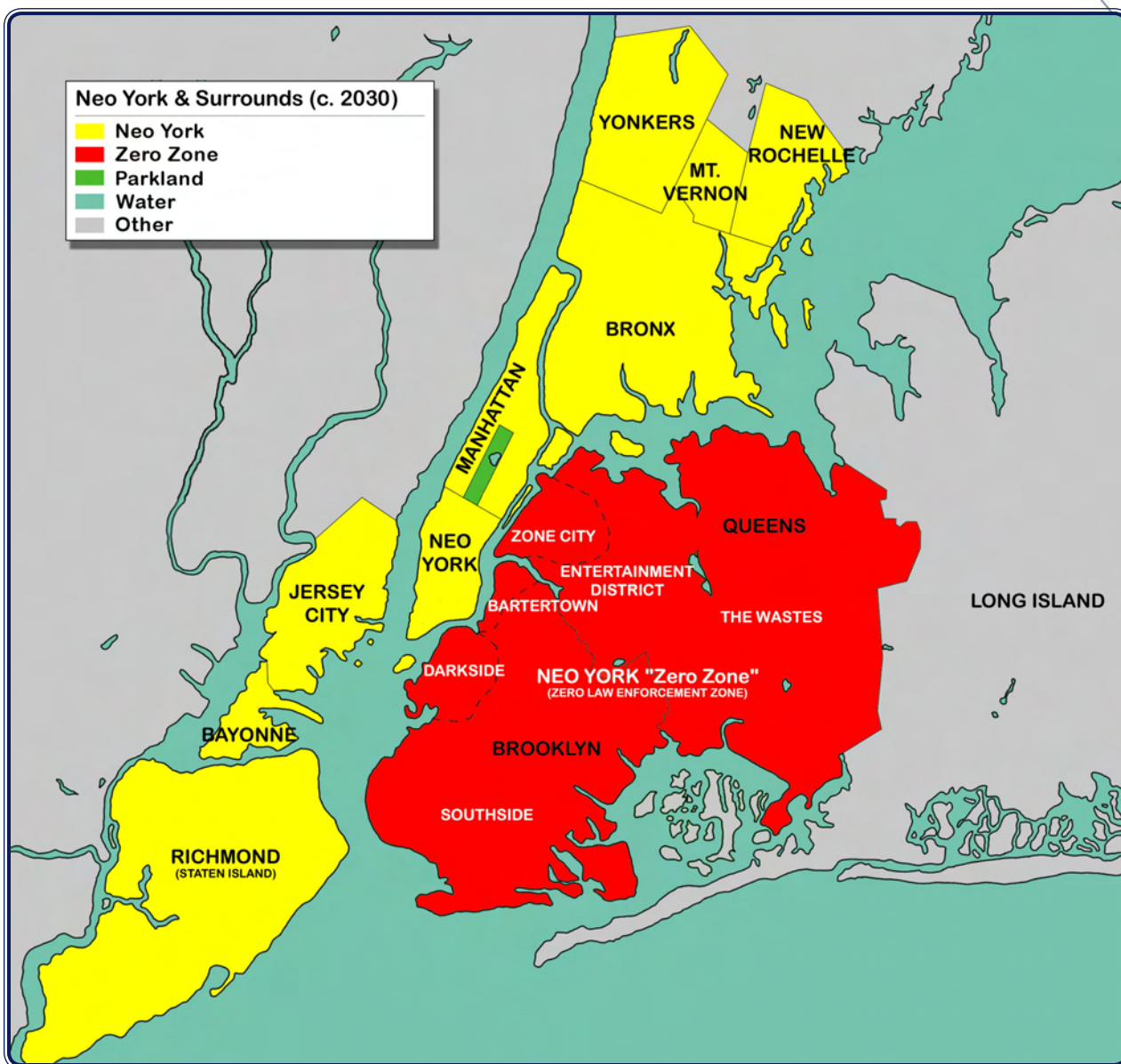
Buildings with basements are often flooded and serve as breeding grounds for hordes of mosquitoes. In extreme cases, the building has collapsed into the basement, which is now a small pond. These ponds quickly become home to masses of water plants, frogs, snakes, and fish. However, the water is rarely drinkable and submerged wreckage makes swimming hazardous.

Standing buildings have dangers all their own. Exposure to the elements has rotted, rusted, and mildewed many surfaces, resulting in sagging and warped doors, walls, and floors. Sudden collapses are a constant danger, especially in older wood frame buildings (all concrete towers are far less susceptible). Animals also den in many buildings, often resulting in an almost intolerable stink.

Rooftops see the most weather and many are sagging and weak. It's not unheard of for cyborgs to fall right through Zone rooftops, especially if they are traveling by leaping from roof to roof. Plants have taken over many roofs, along with hordes of pigeons and their predators — cats, falcons, and hawks.

Unique Features

While nature has taken its toll on the Zone, humanity has had its effect as well. Esper duels can shatter the already fractured pavement, crack and topple walls, and bring down entire buildings. Corporate operatives may blast a building apart in a test of hardware and combat tactics. Fires, either natural or man-made, may rage uncontrolled for days, consuming whole blocks and leaving them smoking ruins.



HOUSE COMPUTER?

Want to see a 2030 house computer in action? Watch the 2008 Iron Man movie. Now imagine every house has a JARVIS ("Just A Rather Very Intelligent System") set-up. It might even be voice activated.

Life in 2030

TECHNOLOGY

Technology, for better or worse, has had a huge impact on the world of 2030. It's changed the way man interacts with himself, other people, and the world around him.

Computer Technology

Ever since the personal computer revolution of the 1980s the computer has become more and more integrated into everyday life. At the turn of the century, the percentage of American homes with at least one computer was 51%, in the world of *Kazei 5*, it's closer to 95%. Computers are an inescapable part of life — they're in your car, your home appliances, and in many cases built directly into your house.

Computers communicate with each other as well as centralized servers all the time. A car computer will constantly monitor traffic and weather reports and alert the driver of developing conditions. Appliance computers will alert their owner if something is wrong with the device itself, or if certain consumables require replacing. Refrigerators will track the RF tags in products and send regular updates to its owner regarding the quantity and expiration dates of purchased products. Home computers are wired into the house's infrastructure and allow the homeowner to control the lights, heat, air-conditioning, and entertainment center from a central location.

This constant communication allows for unparalleled information access. Your car's computer will send its current status to the dealer, allowing him to email you reminders for oil changes and tune-ups. The manufacturer of your appliances will link to the computer to check warranty status and send you either an application for an extended warranty, or offers on newer versions of the same item. Your house's internal computer allows you to pay utility bills right from the terminal, not to mention order new media for the entertainment center. If you go shopping, visual scanners will register your size and shape, and send targeted ads to nearby display screens. Come to the same store often enough, and the database will "learn" who you are, and mention you specifically by name in their advertisements, linking to your past history of purchases to make sure the products shown are in your realm of interest.

Try as you might, it's impossible to operate in the twenty-first century without some sort of computer. For those who can't bear to be without one at any point, it's possible to get a computer implanted into your body (see the Cranial Computer on page 15). Other options include 'wearable' computers; stripped down systems capable of being integrated into a suit of clothing. Input is handled by a DNI and datagloves. The output is sent to a pair of goggles, which uses a heads-up display to present data.

"I had a cranial computer implanted a few years back. Works great; I can access the Net anytime, anywhere. The only side effect I've noticed is now I only dream in binary."

— Asagiri

COMPUTER BASICS

Personal computers come in three sizes: desktop, laptop, and palmtop. Desktops are non-portable systems designed for pro-

cessing power and expandability. Laptops are portable systems; although they don't have all the options of a desktop, they're far lighter. Palmtops are even smaller and lighter than laptops. They aren't meant for extended use, but can fit in a pocket or attach to the user's belt when not needed, and are extremely popular.

Computers have been progressively getting smaller, lighter, and more powerful. The limit to size is the interface — make it too small and users won't be able to read the monitor or work the data input. However, continuing advances in DNI technology should make it possible to eventually allow the user to entirely control the computer with his mind.

SURFING THE NET

The Net is an elaborate fully interactive graphical user interface (a.k.a a "GUI"). For most people, a keyboard and pointing device (usually wireless) is still sufficient for their computing needs. However, *otaku* and serious cyber crackers/hackers prefer to use more immersive systems, comprised of virtual reality goggles and what are known as data or feedback gloves (supplemented by a DNI link-up). The gloves allow one to directly manipulate objects seen in the Net, while the goggles supply a panoramic visual interface and audio effects. This system is also used for many games, simsense programs, and most high-end programming.

IN ADDITION...

Take a look at the various sections in Part Two for more on technology and its affects on society in 2030.

The 88 Exchange's office, Sandra Blackmore noted, was fairly bland, but then it wasn't designed to impress potential clients. Right now it held only a table, on which rested a sleek black computer cube, surrounded by four reclining chairs. Zhen Zhen sat in one, a bundle of wires in her hand. Sandra took another.

"Do you have a datajack?" the Asian woman asked.

"Yeah," Sandra replied without much enthusiasm. "Why?"

"Because we're going to go shopping." Zhen Zhen ground her cigarette out in a nearby ashtray. "Here, catch."

Snatching the tangle of cables out of the air, Sandra quickly sorted out a pair of goggles, the feedback gloves, and a DNI cable. Typical gear for surfing the Net. Pulling on the gloves and the fixing the goggles over her eyes, she took a deep breath, and then snapped the datacable home.

The VR world was stark white void without so much as a sky, ground, or horizon. Zhen Zhen stood a few feet away, dressed in formal Mandarin robes. The clothing was free of wrinkles and seams, with crisp, brilliant colors, and sported a coiling dragon apparently comprised of a nigh-infinite fractal pattern.

Sandra gave an internal sniff of disdain. Zhen Zhen's Net icon was obviously tailored for a certain sort of clientele. In the real world her bosom wasn't that ample; not to mention being subject to the pull of gravity. That, and her hair wasn't a liquid-like mass with not so much as a single stand out of place.

Sandra's own icon was the typical Net default — a sexless, hairless, humanoid figure with nothing to differentiate it from the countless other drones working the Net. "Tool," she muttered. But it wasn't like she had a Net icon anyway.

Meanwhile, the 'sky' had become a dark gray, with the 'ground' far lighter. A series of white lines formed on the ground, while the sky — actually the ceiling, was marked with a series of blue stripes. Everything went dark for a moment, and then brightened, as the blue strips came to life with a bright glow.

chackchackchackchackchackchackchackchackchack

Hearing a faint sound, Sandra glanced to the far horizon, where a blurred distortion was developing. Apparently a program was loading, and it must have been fairly big to be taking this long.

ChackChackChackChackChackChackChackChackChack

As the distortion came closer, Sandra realized what she was looking at — a series of racks were sliding up out of the ground in long rows. They stretched as far as the eye could see, and were approaching at a rapid pace. She glanced at her feet, noticed she was standing on one of the white lines and stepped forward as....

CHACKCHACKCHACKCHACKCHACKCHACKCHACKCHACK

"Tool!" Sandra didn't care if the programmer had stolen the idea from a forty year-old film, that trick was really impressive seen live.

Now able to examine the racks close up, it immediately became obvious what she was looking at. This was a VR weapons database, much like the ones the NYPD used, except NYPDink's were usually accessed via a flatscreen and not in person. In other words, the racks held guns, lots and lots of guns. There was at least one of each model of firearm currently manufactured in the world, and knowing Zhen Zhen she'd added all sorts of special black ops items.

Currently, Sandra was staring at a display of revolvers, although she was sure she'd never seen such a dodgy collection of pistols anywhere outside of a museum or piss-poor low-grade tri-vid thrillers. Reaching out, she selected a clunky-looking pistol, marveling at the weapon's crude lines and unwieldy bulk. Immediately a window popped open.

"Smith & Wesson Schofield Model 1873. Break-action loading design. Caliber: .45 inch Smith and Wesson. Six shots. Said to be the model used by famous outlaw Jesse James." Sandra announced, and then paused. "Damn gun's 160 years old!"

Zhen Zhen raised an eyebrow, "Somehow, I think we can find a better choice more suited for your needs."

"Ya' think?" Sandra put the gun back on its peg. She did not need a 160 year-old gun, no matter who had used it before. Especially a 160 year-old gun priced at over five hundred thousand dollars Hong Kong. "C'mon, let's go shopping for some toys."

"Of course. But one question."

"Sure."

"Who is Jesse James?"

TECH SPECS?

It's pointless to try and give tech specs for computer systems thirty years in the future. In addition, since this is an anime action-adventure setting, questions about a computer's speed or capacity are pretty much irrelevant. Computers should have whatever drive capacity or speed the plot demands, which means the PCs will usually be able to run programs or view files with no problems. Only in special plot-driven cases should the PCs need to find a bigger or more powerful computer.

Medical Technology

"Alpha Class cybernetics. Accept no substitute."

A top-of-the-line hospital, such as those found in Houston, MegaTokyo, and Neo York, is capable of virtual miracles when it comes to saving lives. An extensive array of computerized monitoring devices can track every aspect of a patient's condition, allowing doctors to diagnose many diseases or infections before they cause significant problems. Advances in gene therapy allow for the correction of certain hereditary defects and disorders, while bio and cyberware enable one to overcome certain physical disabilities or crippling injuries.

With the development of replicated humans came the ability to grow organs as needed. Long waits on an organ donor list are a thing of the past. Many hospitals stock replicated livers, kidneys, hearts, and lungs in specialized holding tanks, keeping them on hand for emergencies. It's also possible to use a patient's own cells to grow new, rejection-free organs, although this takes some time.

CLONING

Near the beginning of the twenty-first century there was a trend among some of the ultra-rich to be cloned instead of having children. Although this process has dropped out of favor with the advent of genetic upgrading, many individuals keep clones on hand to act as an organ donor if the need arises. It's also rumored the CEOs of several multinationals have had clones made of themselves for the express purpose of confusing their enemies.

Nanotechnology

One of the most significant developments of the last twenty years is the nanofactory. Comprised of microscopic robots suspended in a liquid solution, nanofactories are capable of manipulating organic matter at the cellular level. Their most common use is processing waste and sewage. Most major cities route their liquid sewage and much of their solid waste to treatment and recycling plants. There, the nano-factories break everything down into specific organic compounds, which are then used to create various biological products, such as replacement human organs and replicated lifeforms.

REPLICATED LIFEFORMS

The ultimate expression of modern technology is the replicated lifeform. Grown from genetically tailored DNA patterns, replicates start out as a blend of organic sludge, which is then assembled into a living, breathing body. Most replicates are animals, specifically livestock, and most large factory farms are populated with cloned chickens, cattle, pigs, sheep, and so on.

Aquaculture has also benefited from replication. As enormous factory ships trawl the oceans for various food fishes, the by-catch is dumped into a processor, broken down, then pumped into different nanofactory holding tanks. There the mixture is rebuilt into billions of fish fry, which are then vented out into the ocean before the ship returns to port. Although this process has saved numerous fisheries (including cod, swordfish, and tuna), critics note that the fish are all genetically identical and thus

susceptible to various diseases. Similar techniques are used to farm crabs, lobster, shrimp, and shellfish.

REPLICATED HUMANS

The first replicated humans were created as an offshoot of cloning technology. As advances in genetic engineering reduced the need and desire for clones, the techniques used to create them was altered, allowing biotech firms to grow virtual organic robots. The process was improved and made more reliable, and soon replicated humans could be ordered in either sex and with such programmable variables as facial features, ethnicity, and eye, hair, and skin color. When coupled with advanced imprinting techniques (allowing skills to be "programmed" into the replicate while it's still in the growth tank), the corporations had discovered a new and very lucrative industry.

The multinationals were careful to market their new creations as biological machines, leading to the popular perception of a replicate as a walking, talking tool, not an individual. The eventual integration of animal DNA, allowing for such features as cat-like ears or fox-like tails served to reinforce this perception. These days replicates are found in all levels of corporate society, from administration to security. For many executives, a replicate administrative assistant is a highly sought after perk, as is a replicate bodyguard. In many cases, the two are the same.

Currently, there are five broad classes of replicated human:

Combat: Combat replicates tend to be larger than the average human and much stronger, with great levels of physical endurance. Internal modifications render them much tougher as well — they are less likely to succumb to shock from injuries. Combat-class replicates tend to either be male, or more often sexless (albeit with a masculine look to them). Due to their conditioning (which emphasizes following orders and completing tasks once issued) combat replicates rarely go rogue.

Domestic: As their primary purpose is to serve as a domestic (*i.e.* in-house) servant, these replicates are only slightly stronger than the average human. Domestic-class replicates can be either male or female and are both attractive and physically fit. They are reasonably intelligent and capable of following complex orders without making mistakes. Much like Combat-class replicates, Domestics tend not to go rogue. Their programming blocks, coupled with their environment, works to prevent this.

Escort: An escort replicate appears as a highly attractive and fit human, often with extensive internal biological and cybernetic modifications to make them more durable and capable of defending themselves and their client (Escorts are commonly used as secondary bodyguards). They're stronger and faster than a normal human and are programmed with the capability for extensive emotional responses. This often leads Escorts to develop an advanced awareness of "self" and question their subservient existence. Most replicate runaways are Escort models.

"The trick with eating replicated anything is to not think too much about where it originally came from... or where it will probably end up."

— Lee Rhodes, food critic

Pleasure: A pleasure replicate is a subset of the Escort class. They have the same physical features as an Escort, but lack the internal modifications. Pleasure replicates are most likely to have unusual physical modifications, such as unnatural skin colors (such as blue, green, or red), hair (pure white, pink, or lavender), or cat/fox-like ears and tails. As their primary use is as a sexual companion, their body chemistry has been modified to reflect this. Designed with the same sort of emotional capabilities as an Escort, Pleasure-class replicates also have a tendency to rebel and attempt to escape their confinement.

"Someone asked me why Pumas and Lynxes were so popular when it was obvious cyberdroids were the superior choice. I told him it was all a matter of marketing... that and few people dream about having sex with a cyberdroid."

— Matthew Shirow, Mitsumi Biotechnology

Security: Security-class replicates are known the world over due to Mitsumi's aggressive marketing of their Lynx and Puma models. Designed to have an Escort's physical features and the physical prowess of a Combat-class, Security-class replicates can be found serving corporations the world over. The Security models are fairly intelligent (and certainly not as stupid as popular opinion would have it), and are known to be highly loyal to their owners, regardless of treatment. However, their intelligence also makes them the third most common replicate to go rogue.

"No matter how advanced the technology gets, you still need a human — a real human — to command the battle."

Captain Edward Reynolds, United North America Armed Forces

Military Technology

The battlefields of 2030 are found on land, at sea, in the air, and in cyberspace. APEX and Exo-Suits allow soldiers to carry heavier weapons, more ammunition, and offer greater personal protection than ever before. Manned combat aircraft use vectored thrust and variable-lift wings for greater maneuverability and handling. UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles) cruise the skies, transmitting data back to a remote operator, who can then call in an air strike, artillery barrage, or simply use the UAV's own weapons to eliminate the threat. UTVs (unmanned terrestrial vehicles) do the same on the ground, often serving as fire support for human or replicate fire teams. At sea, the big-gun battleships and super carriers of the last century are just a distant memory, replaced by smaller, faster cruisers, destroyers, and frigates, armed with rapid-fire cannons and guided missiles.

The advent of energy weapons has yet to cause any major changes in military doctrine. Most energy weapons are too heavy or too inefficient for normal battlefield use. Still, there is a certain degree of "shock and awe" inherent to ion cannons and the like, making them popular intimidation weapons. Projectile weapons are

evolving as well, with experimental railguns and magnetic mass drivers starting to appear on tanks and ships, as well as mobile artillery.

The various military Special Forces have embraced many of the new technologies whole-heartedly. Virtually all special ops soldiers have extensive cyberware, with many choosing to become either partial or full-conversion cyborgs. Often, a battle is conducted as much in the real world as it is in the virtual world of cyberspace, where the acquisition and denial of information is just as important as it is of territory.

TYPICAL TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY SOLDIER

This character sheet represents a well-equipped solider from a technologically advanced nation, such as the UNA, the USA, Japan, or the UK. He carries the FN-SCAR assault rifle with underslung grenade launcher, as well as a high-capacity pistol. The pistol includes four additional barrels, each containing a single rocket-propelled round. Finally, he has an all-purpose combat knife.

For protection the soldier wears a biosteel bodysuit and boots. On his head he has a high-quality helmet with an armored transparent faceplate. The helmet is packed with electronics, including a camera, microphone, radio, and IR filters. The radio allows the soldier to transmit video and sound, so others in his squad can see what he sees. The biosteel bodysuit is designed to seal over and apply pressure to basic cuts and other minor injuries, stopping any bleeding until the arrival of a medic. The soldier's uniform is also treated to resist chemical warfare agents, while an environmental subsystem built into his belt and connected to the under-layers of his armor will keep him cool in summer and warm in winter. Finally, the uniform incorporates Optical Camouflage technology, allowing the soldier to blend into his surroundings once he's gone to ground and is no longer moving.

In addition to his issued gear, the solider has a basic suite of cybernetics including a Datajack, Low-Light Filters, and Smartgun Link.

PLOT SEED: GOING ROGUE

Part of the imprinting process on any new replicate is a series of behavioral blocks designed to instill a sense of loyalty into the replicate for his owners. These blocks also ensure most replicates don't question their status and place in society, and simply accept whatever demands and requests are made of them. This doesn't mean they can't or don't think for themselves, just that they make excellent "company men."

However, the process isn't perfect, and a small percentage of the replicate population (perhaps 1 in 500 to 1000), rejects their programming and tries to escape. Known as "going rogue," such replicates are often hunted down by retrievers, who will either capture or kill the replicate, depending on the situation and their owner's desires.

One curious exception to this process is Sarah J Ferrari (see page 280), who seems to have been designed to be free-willed from the start.

TIP OF THE ICEBERG

The character sheet presented here is really only the most basic of representations. Soldiers from less advanced militaries would omit the Combat Pistol and Infantry Helmet, substituting the Standard Helmet on page 121 for the latter. Virtually all of the uniform modifications (Life Support, Invisibility, and so on) would be eliminated as well.

A true combat load-out for the twenty-first century soldier would include five 30-round magazines for the FN-SCAR, a half-dozen grenades for the FN40GL, two more magazines for the pistol, and thirty to forty 15mm rockets. Additional cyberware and Skills are possible, including a Noise Filter, optical enhancements, an Impact Compensator, Martial Arts, Demolitions, Stealth, and so on.

TYPICAL TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY SOLDIER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 151.6 kg; 2 1/2d6 HTH Damage [3]
14	DEX	8	12-	
13	CON	3	12-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
11	EGO	1	11-	
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2 1/2d6
5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
4	OMCV	3		
4	DMCV	3		
3	SPD	10		Phases: 4, 8, 12
5/13	PD	3		Total: 5/13 PD (0/8 rPD)
4/12	ED	2		Total: 4/12 ED (0/8 rED)
6	REC	2		
25	END	1		
11	BODY	1		
26	STUN	3		
				Total Characteristic Cost: 69

Movement:

Running: 14m
Leaping: 12m
Swimming: 4m

Cost Powers

END

- 27 *Basic Cyberbrain*: 10 EGO, 3 OMCV, 3 DMCV
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 7 *Attack Barrier*: Mental Defense (10 points total)
Software (-1/2)
- 8 *Smartgun Link*: +2 with Ranged Combat
Requires Smartlinked Weapon (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Limited Range (64m; -1/4) plus +1 versus Range Modifier with All Attacks; Requires Smartlinked Weapon (-1/2), Limited Range (64m; -1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 2 *Level One Datajack*: +1 with all computer-related Skills
Requires DNI-Capable Computer And Accessible Datacable (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 34 *FN SCAR-H*: RKA 2d6+1 [30]
30 Charges (+1/4), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Autofire (5 shots; +1/2); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) plus +1 OCV; OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) **plus** +2 versus Range Modifier; OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) **plus** Invisible Power Effects (Invisible To Sight Group, muzzle-flash only; +1/4) for up to 70 Active Points of RKA; OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 31 *FN40GL*: 135 STR [1]
Increased Maximum Range (x4 or 400m; +1/2); 1 Charge (-2), Only To Make Standing Or Prone Throws Of Grenades (-2), OAF (-1), Minimum Range (30m) (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) **plus** +1 versus Range Modifiers; OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 24 *Combat Pistol*: Multipower, 60-point reserve
all slots OAF (-1), STR Minimum (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 1f 1) *4.6mm Pistol*: RKA 1d6+1 [20]
20 Charges (+1/4); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)
- 2f 2) *Heatseeking 15mm Munition*: RKA 2d6 [4]
No Range Modifier (+1/2), Area Of Effect (24m Explosion; +1/2); 4 Charges (-1), OAF (-1), STR Minimum (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 6 *Combat Knife*: HKA 1d6-1
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)
- 11 *Level II Biosteel Bodysuit*: Resistant Protection (8 PD/8 ED)
Requires A Roll 12- (locations 7-17; -3/4), IIF (-1/4), Real Armor (-1/4)
- 7 *Biosteel Combat Boots*: Resistant Protection (8 PD/8 ED)
Requires A Roll 9- (locations 16-18; -1 1/2), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)
- 14 *Combat-Grade Infantry Helmet With Armored Face Plate*: Resistant Protection (11 PD/11 ED)
Requires A Roll 8- (locations 4-5; -1 3/4), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4) plus Armor (6 PD/6 ED); Requires A Roll 7- (locations 3; -2), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)
- 3 *Supercharged Footgear*: Leaping +8m (12m forward, 6m upward)
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); OIF (-1/2), No Noncombat Movement (-1/4)

- 2 *Movie Soldier!*: Running +2m (14m total) 1
- 35 *Helmet-Mounted Display*: Clairsentience (Sight Group), x8 Range (3,200m")
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2), Persistent (+1/2); OIF (-1/2), Only Through The Senses Of Others (-1/2)
- 7 *Helmet Microphone*: Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees) with Hearing Group
OIF (-1/2)
- 3 *Helmet Visor*: IR Perception (Sight Group)
OIF (-1/2)
- 3 *Low-Light Filter*: UV Perception (Sight Group)
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 7 *Helmet Receiver*: Radio Perception/Transmission (Radio Group)
OIF (-1/2)
- 12 *Zoom Camera Visor Display*: +12 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group
OIF (-1/2)
- 11 *Automatic Injury Response*: Healing BODY 1d6
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2), Trigger (Activating the Trigger is an Action that takes no time, Trigger resets automatically, immediately after it activates, Character does not control activation of personal Trigger; soldier takes BODY damage; +3/4); OIF (uniform; -1/2), Only Works On Cuts, Punctures, And Similar Injuries (-1/2)
- 20 *Stealth Suit*: Invisibility to Sight Group
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2), Persistent (+1/2); Chameleon (-1/2), Extra Time (Full Phase, Only to Activate, -1/4), IIF (-1/4)
- 3 *Chemically Treated Uniform*: LS (Immunity: All terrestrial poisons and chemical warfare agents)
OIF (uniform; -1/2), Chemical Warfare Agents Only (-1/4)
- 3 *Microclimate Conditioning*: LS (Safe in Intense Cold; Safe in Intense Heat)
OIF (-1/2)

Perks

- 4 Contacts (4 points worth)
- 0 Fringe Benefit: Military Rank

Skills

- 8 +1 with Ranged Combat
- 3 Breakfall 12-
- 3 Bureaucratics 12-
- 3 Climbing 12-
- 3 Concealment 12-
- 2 KS: Army History And Customs 11-
- 2 KS: Nuclear, Biological, Chemical Warfare Procedures 11-
- 2 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
- 2 Navigation (Land) 12-
- 3 Paramedics 12-
- 2 PS: Forward Observer 11-
- 3 PS: Soldier 12-
- 3 Systems Operation 12-
- 3 Tactics 12-
- 1 TF: Wheeled Military Vehicles
- 6 WF: Small Arms, Blades, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 336

Total Cost: 405

175 Matching Complications (50)

- 5 Distinctive Features: Uniform (Easily Concealed; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 10 Hunted: Nation's Army Infrequently (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 15 Psychological Complication: Sense Of Duty (Common, Strong)
- 20 Social Complication: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)

Total Complications Value: 50

Experience Points: 230

SPACE STATIONS AROUND THE WORLD

Orbital access can be obtained at the following locations:

United North America: The United North American Space Agency has a government-only spaceport near Phoenix, but also uses Alta California's launch facilities for civilian and mercantile efforts.

United States of America: The National Air and Space Administration uses the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. They allow other nations to launch commercial flights from Kennedy as well.

Alta California: The Alta California Space Agency operates the Rutan Space Center at La Paz in Baja California. This launch facility is ranked as the busiest in North America.

Brazil: Launches are made from the Alcântara Launch Center, located on Brazil's northern coast. This is both a military and civilian facility.

European Space Agency: Headquartered in Paris, their primary spaceport is Guiana Space Centre near Kourou, French Guiana. The ESA is the acknowledged leader in commercial space launches with Guiana Space Centre possibly the busiest spaceport in the world.

Japan: The Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency is headquartered on Tanegashima Island, south of Kyūshū. Japan's also working with the Jinsei Corporation and Gunkoku Heavy Industries to build Poseidon Station, an immense, man-made, floating island located on the equator north of New Guinea. Once complete, Poseidon Station will serve as Japan's (and Southeast Asia's) new spaceport.

India: Satish Dhawan Space Centre, near Sriharikota, is used by Indian Space Research Organization for commercial and scientific launches.

Indonesia: The National Institute of Aeronautics and Space, or LAPAN, is based at the LAPAN Space Center in Jakarta.

Russia: The Russian Federal Space Agency is headquartered in Moscow. Training is handled at Star City, civilian launches at the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan, and military flights at Plesetsk Cosmodrome in northern Russia.

Travel And Transport

As mentioned in the Equipment Section on page 126, diminished supplies of fossil fuels have forced the manufacturers of motor vehicles to develop new alternate-fuel engines. This has also brought about a rise in mass-transit, with busses and light rail common in the inner cities, and high-speed passenger trains for cross-country travel.

The airlines have changed drastically over the last few decades as well. Blended-wing body aircraft have replaced many of the older wide-body jumbo jets, since they have the passenger and cargo capacity to make long-distance travel economical. Those with money to burn can take an intercontinental transorbital scramjet. An immense space plane, scramjets skim the edge of the Earth's atmosphere at the tip of their flight trajectory, carrying a payload of 300 passengers from Neo York to Mega-Tokyo in as little as four hours.

Space

After an extended lull (caused by the Second Civil and Third World Wars), man has begun anew to travel into space. The UNA, USA, Alta California, Brazil, the European Space Agency, India, Indonesia, Japan and Russia all have either revised or started a space program. At the same time, several of the larger multinational corporations (such as Jinsei) have started looking to the sky as their next source of raw materials and corporate datastores. Working either in conjunction with an established space agency or on their own, these companies have made significant advances in the exploration and exploitation of outer space.

The last decade has seen man return to the moon, using cyberdroids to develop what will be a permanently manned moonbase, numerous orbiting manufacturing stations, and the start of several L-5 colonies. Work is progressing on eventually processing asteroids for their wealth in metal ores, putting a man on Mars, and a mining station on Jupiter's moon of Io. There is even talk of launching an expedition to another star system, albeit an unmanned one.

Access to Earth orbit is via any number of launching stations. Most are located on the Earth's equator, or very near to it. As the weather is fairly predictable, equatorial launch pads tend to avoid many of the delays associated with more extreme latitudes.

ENTERTAINMENT

Advances in computers and cybernetics have brought about new forms of entertainment and significantly changed older ones.

ONLINE MEDIA

These days, everything is online. Everything. While you can still see a movie in the theater, watch your favorite shows on television, or listen to music on the radio, all of this can also be found online. Missed seeing a film or TV show? Buy it online and download it to your computer. Hear a song you like? Buy it from an online store. Want something to read? Purchase it in electronic format online. While these same forms of entertainment can still be purchased on physical media at any store (with the exception of most books), virtual sales make up a significant percentage of the market.

The Net also has Net-specific entertainment; videos, music, and games released there and nowhere else. Some of it is released in conjunction with wide-scale commercial products, such as behind the scenes looks at a movie in progress, outtakes of a TV show, or advance tracks from a new musical album. But most Net-specific media targets a far smaller audience, servicing niche markets whose loyalty more than makes up for their lack of numbers. One appeal of this sort of release is the feeling of being part of a select group who's "in the know" and thus has an advantage over other, uninformed, individuals.

One major advantage of Net-based media is that it's "on-demand." The customer doesn't need to wait to see or hear it, he can access it at any time he desires. This has become a major selling point of online media, emphasizing the "get it now" aspect.

A large segment of Net-based entertainment is games. Ranging from the exceedingly simple (such as online versions of tic-tac-toe or checkers) to the mind-bogglingly complex (as is the case with many virtual worlds), online games offer anywhere from a few minutes to a few months (or even years) of play. Certainly the most popular form of online game is the virtual world format. When equipped with goggles, gloves, and datajack the player not only can see the game world, but also hear, touch, and even smell it. Although not as immersive as a simsense program (see below), online virtual worlds can be extremely detailed.

SIMSENSE

Short for "simulated sensory environment," simsense is an advanced form of virtual reality capable of stimulating all of the user's senses simultaneously. Proper use of a simsense chip requires a datajack or similar input capability. You can run a simsense program with just feedback gloves and goggles, but you'll miss much of the sensory input.

Simsense programs can be of any duration. Most last for only a few hours (about the same as a full-length movie), although simsense games may have running times measured in days. Erotic simsense programs are far shorter and can be looped, allowing the user to experience certain sequences over and over. Legal simsense programs have timers and will break in to let the user know how long he's been running the program. Hacked and certain illegal simsense chips can override this timer.

A particularly insidious form of simsense is known as "better-than-life." These are virtual worlds so desirable and addictive, the user sees no reason to leave. Better-than-life, or BTL, programs can be lethal, as the user ends up so wrapped up in his virtual existence he forgets to unplug in order to eat, drink, or rest. It's rumored BTL programs can be used as a form of brainwashing, by giving the victim impressions of past experiences so real he can't tell them apart from actual life memories.

Sports

Cyberware and genetic upgrading has made inroads in the world of organized sports. Although some sports, such as bowling and golf, have banned augmentation, others, such as baseball, football, and soccer, have embraced it. Most athletes use bioware, such as Impact Compensators for football and hockey players or Respiration Augmentation for soccer players. Certain forms of cyber are disallowed in athletic competition, such as Cyber Blades, Skeletal Reinforcement, Sub-Dermal Armor, or any other systems with a strong military application.

GLADIATORIAL COMBAT SHOWS

Derived from mixed-martial arts competitions and twentieth century professional wrestling, as well as older television programs like *American Gladiators*, modern gladiatorial-themed competitions are extremely popular with the viewing public. With many of these shows the lead up to the actual conflict is just as important, if not more so, than the fight itself. Combining the vicarious thrill of violence, sex appeal, and melodramatic plot lines, gladiatorial shows have an almost fanatical following.

The most popular of these show is *Lace & Steel* (described on page 84). The next two are *Smash TV* and its close relation, *Crash TV*. The former features no-holds barred one-on-one fights in various weight and modification classes (up to and including cyborgs), while the latter is more about spectacle, with such gimmicks as team play, variable battlefields, and lightweight Exo-Suits (and lots of explosions).

"The multinationals are more powerful than the government, and the worst part is I didn't vote for any of them."

— Glenda Aguilar, homemaker

BUSINESS

These days the world of business is dominated by immense multinational corporations that produce goods or provide services in multiple countries. The multinationals often wield immense political and economic power and are a major influence on local, national, and world economies. In fact, the largest multinationals, such as the Jinsei Corporation or the R. Scott Foundation, have a net worth greater than the Gross National Product of some nations. In some ways, the economic clout of the multinationals has made them a power unto themselves, able to ignore or work around attempts at regulation and restraint. Although they can't dictate government policy outright, they at the very least can influence it with contributions to reelection campaigns, gifts to local officials, and out-and-out bribes. The sheer economic impact of a major multinational facility is such that promises to build one in a certain area (or move one that's already there) can be sufficient incentive in and of itself to get governments to favor corporate desires.

The geopolitical break up of North America (and other regions) has resulted in many people coming to identify more with the corporation they work for than the nation they live in. The phrase "nations come and go but the company continues on" sums up the attitude of many people. Corporations are looked on as islands of stability in an otherwise chaotic society.

There are roughly a dozen major multinational corporations and scores of minor ones. Each one employs thousands of people with budgets ranging from the hundreds of millions into the billions. They produce virtually everything people need (and many things they don't), from food to clothes, electronics to cars, and cyberware to the latest in genetically modified replicated lifeforms. Between ad campaigns designed to entice even the most jaded consumer into buying their latest product, the multinationals squabble and snipe among themselves, engaging in datasteals, the forced extraction of employees, and numerous other forms of industrial espionage and corporate warfare.

INSIDE A CORPORATE ARCOLOGY

Arcologies are immense buildings, designed to be reasonably self-sufficient, and capable of housing thousands of company employees, their families, schools, shops, and workplaces. Originally built as a way of keeping valued personnel safe during the turbulent war years, arcologies also help ensure employee loyalty by confining them in a high-tech 'company town.'

Most arcologies follow a basic pattern — the floors nearest street level are given over to numerous retail stores, recreational facilities, and mass transit stations, while the upper levels house apartments, offices and manufacturing facilities. Near the top of an arcology are living quarters and offices for the highest-ranking corporate officials, as well as spy-proof meeting rooms and secure data storage.

ONLINE COMMUNITIES

There's a growing trend for some people to spend their entire lives online. They work and play online, do all their shopping online, their friends are online, and so on. This has led to the concept of online nations, comprising citizens who only meet in virtual space, not real space. At the moment it's still just a concept, but there is a growing movement to leave the physical behind and define one's self virtually.

ART IMITATING LIFE

Mechanized Propulsion Systems is a real company and gave the author permission to use them in this book! Their stated intention is to build an anime-styled mecha in the next 15 years (*i.e.* by 2025). You can learn more about them at <http://www.mechaps.com/>.

Status within the company's hierarchy can often be determined by the location of an employee's residence in the corporate arcology. The greater the employee's status, the higher up in the building he lives. Among younger arcology residents this usually leads to floor-based cliques, in which those from the upper floors dominate those from lower down.

In order to properly supply the needs of their residents, arcologies have huge basement structures extending far below the building itself. These assorted sub-levels house such things as the primary power plant, several secondary power plants, sewage treatment facilities designed to reclaim organic waste for use in the arcology's internal gardens, water treatment plants to filter incoming and outgoing water, storage tanks of various kinds, as well as climate control and maintenance facilities, along with several levels of parking.

With thousands of people packed into a single building, no matter how large it is, environmental control and maintenance is a major concern. "Green" technology is incorporated throughout many arcologies, with many wall dividers, wall coverings, and carpets made from recycled or easily renewable materials. Highly efficient windows and insulation in ceilings, floors, and walls reduce energy usage, as does incorporating passive solar heating. Mirrored shafts allow sunlight deep into the building, reducing the need for artificial lighting, while external collection points route rainwater into the plumbing for use in flush toilets and the like.

To reduce the claustrophobic effects of high-capacity living, large open areas break up the living quarters. These areas incorporate plants, water, and even animal life into indoor parks, complete with playing fields and swimming pools. The lower levels of an arcology may feature an aquarium, zoo, or amusement park, for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.

"...Mitsumi's formal declaration of corporate war was announced just three hours ago. The declaration is legal under the Commercial Conflict Act, enacted this afternoon by the Jamaican Parliament, which permits Mitsumi Biotechnology to prosecute the conflict using any level of conventional force. The Act also mandates that the combatants assume liability for damage to property owned by third parties, and for casualties among persons who are not employees of Mitsumi Biotechnology or Avatar Designs."

— Radio report announcing the start of a corporate war, circa 2029

Between the layers of living quarters are offices, research laboratories, assembly lines, and other work areas for producing company products. In some arcologies the manufacturing areas are serviced by immense elevators capable of lifting large cargo trucks in order to ensure the prompt delivery of raw materials as well as the rapid deployment of finished products.

Security for any corporate arcology is tight. While the lower levels are open to the general public, and guided tours of the upper levels are common, access to most parts of an arcology requires a corporate ID card. Security measures range from the passive — cameras, weight sensors, electric eyes and lasers — to the active, such as foot patrols by human, replicate, or even cyberdroid security forces, and automated sentry guns (used to defend only the most secure of areas). In cyberspace, company datastores are heavily guarded, with redundant firewalls,

encrypted password protection for file access, active attack barriers, and so on. The most secure datastores aren't even connected to the Net, but reside on highly secure local area networks (LANs) within the depths of the arcology itself.

Major Multinational Corporations

DF PRODUCTIONS

Primary Field

Of Operations: Multimedia entertainment

Primary

Competitors: The Bliss Group; Network 23; Union Broadcasting Systems

Headquarters: Neo York, United North America

Head: David D Lee

Living up to their slogan of "We Know What You Want," DF Productions (DFP) is a dominating force in the world of entertainment. Whether it's television, film, music, or Net-based, DFP is sure to have a hand in it somewhere. Known for their slick production values, DFP goes to great lengths to try and determine what the next big thing is, and is quick to capitalize on developing trends. While many accuse them of producing material that's all style and no substance, one can't argue with their success. DFP's most popular show, which brings in millions of revenue each season, is *Lace & Steel*. DFP guards the *L&S* copyright jealously and is quick to crack down on unauthorized recordings, simsense, clothing, toys, and so on.

GRAVES ELECTRONICS CORPORATION

Primary Field

Of Operations: Electronics design and manufacturing

Primary

Competitors: Grylos Technologies; Kutotachi Incorporated; Telerec Computers

Headquarters: Greater San Francisco, Alta California

Head: Paul Graves

Makers of electronics for the home market, GEC produces chip players, computers, radios, simsense rigs, televisions, and assorted home entertainment devices. While not a large company, their quality is exceptional, resulting in products priced slightly higher than the norm. Still, they have a loyal following across North America.

GEC is noted for their willingness to enter into cooperative relationships with other corporations based out of Greater San Francisco, producing the hardware platform for other companies' digital products. This has resulted in GEC developing an extensive network of contacts within the high-tech industry sector of Alta California.

GUNKOKU HEAVY INDUSTRIES**Primary Field****Of Operations:** Industrial engineering**Primary****Competitors:** Jinsei Corporation; Mechanized Propulsion Systems; Zuchert Aktiengesellschaft**Headquarters:** Nagoya, Japan**Head:** Akiko Natsume

One of Japan's largest manufacturing firms, Gunkoku produces a wide range of products. A sampling of their output includes civilian and military air, ground, and watercraft, APEX Suits, Exo-Suits, and cyberdroids. Aggressive in their desire to increase market share, Gunkoku has offices and production installations all around the world. Currently Gunkoku is engaged in a bitter rivalry with the Jinsei Corporation, their closest competitor. While it's been fairly low-key with regards to outside observers, those in the know have reported the two companies engaging in datasteals, extractions, and acts of sabotage. It seems only a matter of time before this rivalry escalates into full-blown corporate warfare.

JINSEI CORPORATION**Primary Field****Of Operations:** APEX Suits, cyberware, cyberdroids electronics, Exo-Suits, weapons, vehicles**Primary****Competitors:** Just about everyone.**Headquarters:** MegaTokyo, Japan**Head:** Darren Q. Watts

Currently the largest multinational corporation in the world, Jinsei produces an exhaustive and highly diversified line of products including (but not limited to) aircraft, commercial and military cyberdroids, commercial vehicles, satellite systems and space-capable vehicles. They have arcologies in numerous cities, including Berlin, London, MegaTokyo, Moscow, Neo York, and Sydney. These are all immense structures, containing extensive manufacturing facilities and are well guarded by Jinsei cyberdroids.

Having gained its size by absorbing and buying out lesser corporations, Jinsei brings new meaning to the term "hostile takeover." They're a ruthless and highly competitive player in the field of big business and are willing to go to extreme lengths to maintain their dominance in the corporate world. Jinsei has an extensive industrial espionage division and one of their common tactics is to discover another company's newest product, imitate it, and then rush it to market before the original is released. This same division is also used for more overt activities, including datasteals, employee extractions, assassinations, and open assaults. A favored Jinsei trick is a "denial of assets" strike, in which a Jinsei black ops team commits destructive acts of sabotage. In some cases, these strikes are used to weaken the company financially, allowing Jinsei to buy them out.

MECHANIZED PROPULSION SYSTEMS**Primary Field****Of Operations:** Exo-Suits**Primary****Competitors:** Aegis League Heavy Industries; Gunkoku Heavy Industries; Jinsei Corporation**Headquarters:** Rosamond, Alta California**Head:** Earle Bishop

Gounded in 1999, MPS was the first company in North America to manufacture a practical Exo-Suit, and has since gone on to be a leader in Exo-Suit design and production. Currently they produce a wide range of industrial and military Exo-Suits, including models specifically designed for law-enforcement use. Although they dominate the Exo-Suit market in North America, MPS is less common in the rest of the world, facing competition from Aegis League in Europe, and Gokoku and Jinsei in Asia.

You can find examples of MPS products in the Equipment section on page 142.

MITSUMI BIOTECHNOLOGY**Primary Field****Of Operations:** Biotechnology, replicated lifeforms**Primary****Competitors:** Avatar Designs, Diaplessic Industries, Incorporated; Engineering Life Labs; R. Scott Foundation**Headquarters:** Osaka, Japan**Head:** Ryogoko "Robert" Okazaki

Mitsumi is a recognized leader in replicate design and production, and are producers of the world-famous Lynx and Puma-Class Security replicates (hence their motto "Building A Better Bodyguard.") They also produce several other less exotic models, such as the Caracal and Serval-Class Domestic replicates. In addition, Mitsumi is heavily involved with bioware research and design, and is responsible for a number of advances in the field of organ cloning and transplanting.

Although based in Osaka, Mitsumi's largest facility is in Neo York, which serves the needs of the rest of North America. This arcology includes two 36-man security details, one of Lynxes and one of Pumas, to act as bodyguards, escorts, and intrusion countermeasures.

You can find character sheets for Lynxes and Pumas on page 206.

MITSUMI REPLICATE MODELS

Currently Mitsumi produces six different replicates in three classes. All of them share the company's trademark cat's ears. In each class there are two models — one physically larger, stronger, and more durable than the other (and also more expensive). The models are as follows:

- **Combat:** Lion, Tiger
- **Domestic:** Caracal, Serval
- **Security:** Lynx, Puma

Mitsumi does not make Escort or Pleasure models.

"The first rule of corporate ethics — they don't have any."

— ShadyGrady, WFZZ disc jockey

THE LONG ARM OF THE COMPANY

Game Masters should use the following to determine the frequency of a corporate Hunted:

Hunted by a local office (i.e. a single city):

Infrequently

Hunted by a regional office (i.e. North America): Frequently

Hunted globally: Very Frequently

In addition, virtually all corporations are More Powerful than the PC and have extensive Non-Combat Influence.

Corporations usually Hunt someone because that person has something the corporation wants or needs. In some cases, the person stole something from the company and they want it back, or they desire the individual's inventive skill and genius. In a worst-case scenario, the company wishes to make an example of the person for a real or imagined wrong (this is typical of local office Hunteds.) Corporations will also Watch individuals. For example, numerous corporations keep tabs on Shion Nys (and the dozen or so other esper weapons near her power level) in order to know what she's up to at any given time. Corporations will also Watch major figures within other companies, in order to keep track of their projects and new developments. In the case of research specialists, a Watched can quickly become a Hunted if the individual develops a technological breakthrough.

also heavily involved in experiments with pressed wood and paper pulp construction, finding them lightweight, easy to assemble, and biodegradable. Such structures would be an invaluable asset for any occasion needing rapid deployment of temporary housing, such as disaster relief. The UN has made inquiries about using pressed-paper huts in refugee camps as well. Naturally, this has made NFC a target for its competitors, who would pay handsomely for any information about the exact process.

POSEIDON INTERACTIVE SYSTEMS

Primary Field

Of Operations: Electronics games, interactive simulations, simsense

Primary

Competitors: ENCOM, Punkit, Incorporated; Semyaza Enterprises

Headquarters: Chicago, United North America

Head: Christopher Goodwin

One of the industry leaders when it comes to simulated sensory environments, Poseidon is known for their innovative programs, willingness to experiment, and a strong attention to quality. While their main product is simsense programming, Poseidon makes their own chips, as well as players and recorders. Poseidon is also big on creating tie-ins to licensed products, with one of their top sellers an interactive *Lace & Steel* fight simulator.

There are persistent rumors of a Poseidon-backed BTL studio located somewhere in Chicago, a charge Poseidon vehemently denies.

NORTHERN FORESTRY CORPORATION

Primary Field

Of Operations:

Agriculture, construction, forest management, lumber

Primary

Competitors:

Primatech Paper Company; Taliaferro Agritech

Headquarters:

Vancouver, Cascadia

Head:

Jamie J Jeans

Formed from a conglomerate of lumber firms based out of former British Columbia, NFC maintains a strict monopoly on forestry operations in northern Cascadia. There they manage logging operations, reforestation (using seedlings genetically-augmented for disease resistance and rapid growth), and commercial construction projects. They are

SHIRIASHI REFINING

Primary Field

Of Operations: Metal extraction and refining, carbon-graphite and composite material manufacturing

Primary

Competitors:

Allied Consortium; Chicxulub Astrodynamics; Zuchert Aktiengesellschaft

Headquarters:

Kashiwa, Japan

Head:

Masakatsu Shiraishi

Founded in 1995 by Isamu Shiraishi of Kashiwa Japan, Shiraishi specializes in carbon-graphite and composite-based products. They've also shown remarkable success in the field of powdered metals, resulting in a raw material that's popular due to its ease of transport and workability. Shiraishi has also ventured into low-earth orbit, where they manufacture the crystal structures used in modern computer hardware.

As a developer and supplier of materials most other multinationals use to manufacture their goods, Shiriashi does its best to avoid corporate conflicts. On the other hand, they have no illusions concerning the "dog-eat-dog" nature of modern business and are quite willing to use extreme measures to defend themselves if the need arises.

SHIKOKU-SHIN CONSUMER PRODUCTS

Primary Field

Of Operations: Computers, consumer electronics, cyberware, nanotechnology, pharmaceuticals

Primary

Competitors:

Daitokuji Financial Group; Grylos Technologies; Kutotachi Incorporated; Xanadyne Technology Corporation

Headquarters:

MegaTokyo, Japan

Head:

John Ashton Sampson Jr. and Ishikawa Nakatomi

Born from the merger of two separate companies (Sirocco Biomedical and Tsuki Consumer Electronics), Shikoku-Shin Consumer Products (or SSCP) produces a wide variety of goods, ranging from over-the-counter medications to so-called "smart" appliances. They've also expanded into the fields of financial consulting, information technology, and nanotechnology research and development.

An offshoot of their pharmaceutical research, SSCP has started delving into esper capabilities, including ways to activate, control, and dampen esper powers through chemical means. They also have an active esper recruitment program, although so far they haven't attempted to use force to bring new espers into the company fold.

SYNTHETIC TECHNOLOGY MEDICAL SYSTEMS**Primary Field**

Of Operations: Biotechnology, cyberware, cyborgs, medical technologies

Primary

Competitors: Diaplessic Industries, Incorporated; Meta International; Tritech; Xanadyne Technology Corporation

Headquarters: Neo York, United North America

Head: Jason Stone

Better known as Syntech MedSystems, they own and operate hospitals all across North America. They're engaged in a wide variety of research projects, mainly dealing with new and advanced forms of

cyberware, bioware, and gene therapy. Curiously, they seem to have no use for esper assets (unlike just about every other major multinational) and one of their side projects involves determining if it's possible to turn-off esper capabilities via a shunt implanted in the brain.

Overall, SynTech is still in a state of flux, as they were only recently acquired via hostile takeover by new CEO Jason Stone. He's engaged in a great deal of cost cutting and elimination of what he considers to be wasteful projects, much to the annoyance of some on the Board of Directors. There are rumors of inner rivalries starting to come to a head, and it's possible the company may find itself a house divided. It remains to be seen if Jason Stone will be able to remain in control and keep SynTech together for any length of time.

R SCOTT FOUNDATION**Primary Field**

Of Operations: Biotechnology, replicated lifeforms

Primary

Competitors: Diaplessic Industries, Incorporated; Engineering Life Labs; Mitsumi Biotechnology

Headquarters: Neo York, United North America

Head: Steven S. Long

In keeping with their motto of "As Human As Human Can Be," R Scott crafts their various replicated lifeforms to exacting specifications. This attention to detail is best seen in their line of Isis-Class Escort and Ishtar-Class Pleasure replicates. R Scott also produces specialized genetically-engineered animals for industrial and scientific use, as well as bioware for the military and security markets.

There are numerous rumors surrounding the inner workings of R Scott. CEO Steven Long is known to be one of the company's lead engineers and often takes a direct hand in the design process of a new product. At the same time, it's said Mr. Long isn't a "he," but a "they," having been cloned several times in order to fully manage all aspects of the Foundation's operations. Then again, some say CEO Long doesn't really exist — he's actually a highly-sophisticated Isis-Class replicate installed as a figure head by R Scott's real management team.

ZUCHERT AKTIENGESellschaft**Primary Field**

Of Operations: Industrial engineering, metal extraction and refining, carbon-graphite and composite material manufacturing

Primary

Competitors: Allied Consortium; Gunkoku Heavy Industries; Shiriashi Refining

Headquarters: Essen, Germany

Head: Joshua Van Diest

"Corporate interactions are fairly simple. You win some, you lose some, and sometimes you suffer a hostile takeover."

— Tony Morris, financial advisor

Zuchert AG is one of Europe's largest producers of industrial products, including the refining of steel, copper, and aluminum, the creation of composite materi-

als (used in space applications), and the manufacture of various forms of construction and farm equipment, including heavy-lift Exo-Suits. While they've had great success in Europe, Zuchert has been stymied in cracking the Asian and North American markets. It's possible they may attempt a partnership with Gunkoku rival Jinsei in order to break into Japan. If this succeeds, the two may then try and cut into MPS's North American monopoly on the Exo-Suit market.

PART FIVE:

**OPERATIVES, FIXERS,
& STREET SAMURAI:**

**THE PEOPLE OF
KAZEI 5**

OPERATIVES, SOLLOS, & STREET SAMURAI

“Triple-A, world class, whatever. Call them what you will, but let me tell you something — I don’t care how powerful the Empress and the rest are, they all look over their shoulder every now and then. It’s not the government or the multinationals that scare them. Oh no, it’s that guy Ran. You see, he’s more powerful than any two or three of them put together... and every now and then he gets it in his head to remind them of that.”

— Professor Edward Stanford, esper researcher

This section presents approximately 40 NPCs for GMs to use in their *Kazei 5* games. These NPCs are a mix of characters, including espers, cyborgs, replicates, and more.

CHARACTER PRESENTATION

The characters in this section are presented in the following order: five sample cyberdroids, then five sample replicated humans, then character sheets of specific individuals, broken up by region (Neo York, the Neo York Zero Zone, Hong Kong, and MegaTokyo).

Due to the possibly complex nature of these character sheets, I’ve used a standardized layout to present a character’s Powers. At the top of the Powers list are any modified Characteristics (such as extra Presence only for defending against Presence Attacks). Next comes the character’s cyberware (if any), starting with the Cyberbrain, the Attack Barrier, then all other cybernetic systems in the following order: Attack Powers, Defensive Powers, Movement Powers, and then everything else. Skill Levels defined by cyberware (such as Datajacks) come last. If the character is an esper, his powers will be listed instead of cyberware, following the same pattern.

After any cyber- or esper powers, the character’s weaponry is given, then armor, then any Movement abilities, and finally any other Powers. As stated in Chapter 3, most characters use Resource Points to purchase their equipment and won’t have weapons (or armor) on their main character sheet. However virtually all of the characters from the Neo York Zero Zone have purchased their equipment with Character Points since resources are scarce in the Zone and what they’ve bought is all they have. In addition, certain characters not from the Zone have also paid for equipment with Character Points, either because the item is fairly unique (as with Carlos Jagger on page 210), they wouldn’t otherwise have access to the item (as with Kenwood Muldowney on page 251), or as in the case of Shion Nys, the equipment is part of her standard kit and is always used, regardless of what other items she might acquire.

Generic characters, such as cyberdroids and replicates are built as Standard Heroic Characters, *i.e.* 175 Total Points with 50 points of Matching Complications. Individual characters are either built as Standard Heroic Characters or as Low-Powered Superheroic Characters, with 300 Total Points and 60 points of Matching Complications. Although many characters exceed the 300 Total Points normally allotted to a Low-Powered superhero, the value was chosen to keep things simple. The 60-point cap for Matching Complications also means many characters have Complications worth 0 points. Please don’t ignore these Complications, as they often provide quite a bit of color and flavor for individual characters.



PLOT SEED: ROGUE CYBERDROID!

A cyberdroid can go rogue due to programming glitches, the expert system being unable to cope with a never-before-seen situation, memory decay, a software or hardware system crash, a Cyberbrain virus, or cyberhacking. A rogue cyberdroid will usually revert to its most basic programming, often with destructive results. Combat cyberdroids will treat everything in view as the “enemy,” blasting the landscape with all the firepower they can muster until brought down. Commercial models will act similarly, with janitorial models attempting to clean everything, construction cyberdroids trying to build (or dismantle) local structures, a warehouse model stacking everything (such as people) in neat piles, and so on.

CYBERDROIDS

DOMESTIC CYBERDROID

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 [0]
13	DEX	6	12-	
10	CON	0	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
0	EGO	0	—	
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2 1/2d6
4	OCV	5		
4	DCV	5		
0	OMCV	0		
0	DMCV	0		
3	SPD	10		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4	PD	9		Total: 4 PD (4 rPD)
4	ED	9		Total: 4 ED (4 rED)
4	REC	0		
0	END	-2		
15	BODY	5		
—	STUN	—		

Total Characteristic Cost: 70

Movement: Running: 12m

Cost Powers

- 45 *Cyberdroid Body:* Takes No STUN (loses abilities when takes BODY)
- 15 *Cyberdroid Body:* Does Not Bleed
- 29 *Basic Cyberbrain:* 10 EGO, 3 OMCV, 3 DMCV
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 24 *Attack Barrier:* Mental Defense (12 points); Software (-1/2)
- 10 *Internal Power Supply:* Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) applied to STR
- 1 *Internal Power Supply:* Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) applied to Leaping
- 6 *Internal Power Supply:* Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) applied to Running
- 12 *Armored Frame:* Resistant for 4 PD/4 ED
- 6 *Heavy:* Knockback Resistance -2m
- 35 *Cyberdroid Body:* LS: Full
- 2 *Heavy:* Swimming —4m
- 5 *Visual Sensors:* IR Perception (Sight Group)
- 5 *Visual Sensors:* UV Perception (Sight Group)
- 5 *Visual Sensors:* Microscopic (x10) with Sight Group
- 6 *Visual Sensors:* +4 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group
- 3 *Audio Sensors:* Ultrasonic Perception (Hearing Group)
- 12 *Remote Pilot Link:* HRRP (Radio Group)

Talents

- 3 *Internal Range Finder:* Absolute Range Sense
- 3 *Internal Clock:* Absolute Time Sense
- 3 *Full Coordination:* Ambidexterity (no Off Hand penalty)
- 3 *Internal Compass:* Bump Of Direction
- 3 *Internal Processor:* Lightning Calculator

Skills

- 2 Language: (choice — for verbal input only) (fluent conversation)
- 2 PS: Commercial/Domestic Operations 11-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 236

Total Cost: 306

END

175 Matching Complications (50)

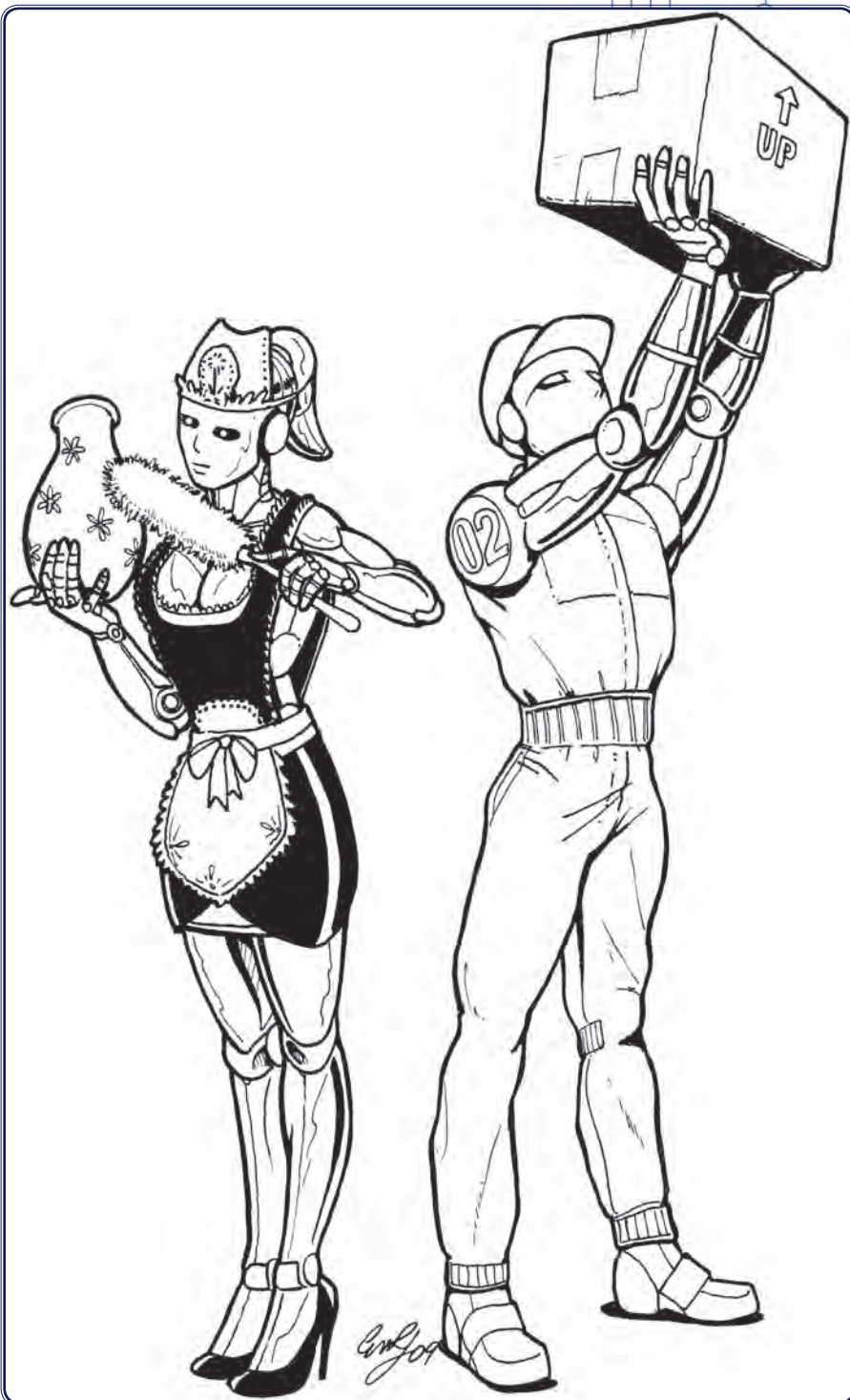
- 0 Dependence: must recharge every 6-8 Hours or suffer Weakness, and eventually total shutdown0Dependence: must recharge every 6-8 Hours or suffer Weakness, and eventually total shutdown: -3 To Characteristic Rolls and related rolls per time increment (Very Common, 6-8 Hours)
- 10 Distinctive Features: Commercial Cyberdroid (Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 5 Physical Complication: Heavy, weighs approximately 200 kilograms (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
- 25 Psychological Complication: Must Obey Programmer's/Owner's Commands (Very Common, Total)

Total Complications Value: 40**Experience Points: 141****DOMESTIC CYBERDROID**

Domestic cyberdroids are human-sized and shaped, with bright metal skin and only the most basic suggestion of facial features. They are typically used for the most menial labor, such as janitorial work, lifting, stacking, and storing goods, loading and unloading vehicles, and so on. They are a common sight on loading docks the world over, and most major warehouse facilities will have at least a half-dozen on hand.

This character sheet can be used to build all sorts of industrial cyberdroids, such as models used in construction, for road repair, as assembly line workers, and so on. Many will include tools integrated into one or both arms.

Although their Cyberbrains and Attack Barriers are fairly basic, domestic cyberdroids don't get hacked very often, mainly because they're just not that interesting.



LIGHT COMBAT CYBERDROID

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
40	STR	30	17-	Lift 6400 kg; 8d6 [0]
18	DEX	16	13-	
10	CON	0	11-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
0	EGO	0	—	
25	PRE	15	14-	PRE Attack: 5d6
6	OCV	15		
6	DCV	45		
0	OMCV	0		
0	DMCV	0		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
10	PD	27		Total: 10 PD (10 rPD)
10	ED	27		Total: 10 ED (10 rED)
4	REC	0		
0	END	-2		
18	BODY	8		
—	STUN	—		

Total Characteristic Cost: 206

Movement: Running: 24m
Flight: 30m
Leaping: 26m

Cost Powers

END

- 45 *Cyberdroid Body:* Takes No STUN (loses abilities when takes BODY)
- 15 *Cyberdroid Body:* Does Not Bleed
- 69 *Secure Cyberbrain:* 20 EGO, 7 OMCV, 7 DMCV
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 48 *Attack Barrier:* Mental Defense (24 points)
Software (-1/2)
- 20 *Internal Power Supply:* Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) applied to STR
- 1 *Internal Power Supply:* Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) applied to Leaping
- 6 *Internal Power Supply:* Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) applied to Running
- 65 *Mouth-Mounted Ion Cannon:* Blast 12d6 [40]
40 Charges (+1/2); Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4) **plus** +1 OCV; Real Weapon (-1/4)
plus +4 versus Range Modifiers; Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 15 *Armored Limbs:* HA +3d6
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 30 *Armored Frame:* Resistant Protection for 10 PD/10 ED
- 19 *Flare Compensators:* Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points), Hardened (+1/4)
- 18 *Heavy:* Knockback Resistance -6m
- 35 *Cyberdroid Body:* LS: Full
- 23 *Jump Thrusters:* Flight 30m, x4 Noncombat; 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (5 Minutes; -1/2) [1 cc]
- 16 *Cyberdroid Legs:* Leaping +22m (26m forward, 13m upward)
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2)
- 18 *Cyberdroid Legs:* Running +12m (24m total)
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2)
- 2 *Heavy:* Swimming -4m
- 5 *Visual Sensors:* IR Perception (Sight Group)
- 5 *Visual Sensors:* UV Perception (Sight Group)
- 5 *Visual Sensors:* Microscopic (x10) with Sight Group
- 9 *Visual Sensors:* +6 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group
- 3 *Audio Sensors:* Ultrasonic Perception (Hearing Group)
- 12 *Remote Pilot Link:* HRRP (Radio Group)
- 20 *Internal Radar:* Radar (Radio Group), Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees)

Talents

- 3 *Internal Range Finder:* Absolute Range Sense
- 3 *Internal Clock:* Absolute Time Sense
- 3 *Full Coordination:* Ambidexterity (no Off Hand penalty)

- 3 *Internal Compass*: Bump Of Direction
- 3 *Internal Processor*: Lightning Calculator

Skills

- 20 +2 with All Attacks
- 3 Climbing 13-
- 2 Language: (choice — for verbal input only) (fluent conversation)
- 3 Stealth 13-
- 3 Tactics 12-
- 7 WF: Small Arms, Anti-Materiel Rifles, Flamethrowers, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons

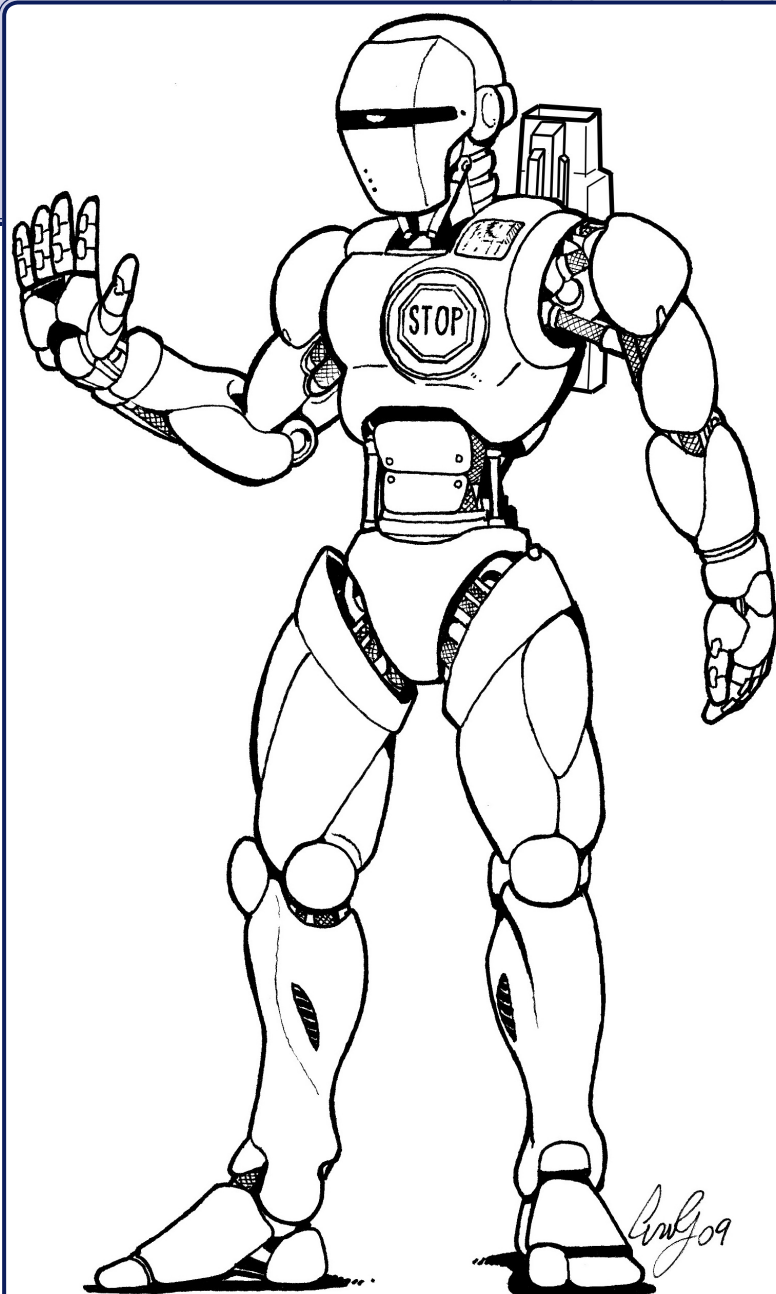
Total Powers & Skill Cost: 553**Total Cost: 759****175 Matching Complications (50)**

- 0 Dependence: must recharge every 6-8 Hours or suffer Weakness, and eventually total shutdown: -3 To Characteristic Rolls and related rolls per time increment (Very Common, 6-8 Hours)
- 25 Distinctive Features: Military Cyberdroid (Not Concealable; Extreme Reaction [fear]; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 0 Physical Complication: Heavy, weighs approximately 400 kilograms (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 25 Psychological Complication: Must Obey Programmer's/ Owner's Commands (Very Common, Total)

Total Complications Value: 50**Experience Points: 584****LIGHT COMBAT CYBERDROID**

Standing roughly 7' tall with the build of a bulky, well-muscled man, Light Combat Cyberdroids are designed to deal with mobs, rioters, and angry demonstrators. They can be used in open combat situations, but aren't heavily armored enough to make it worthwhile. Light Combat Cyberdroids are often found with multinational security forces and police departments, who find them an excellent form of crowd control.

Due to their size, Light models are often used for "shock-and-awe" tactics, where they use thrusters to fly in and then strafe the area with shots from their ion cannons. A popular option is to equip them with the XM-297 carbine or the XM-298 assault rifle as a secondary weapon.



MEDIUM COMBAT CYBERDROID

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
40	STR	30	17-	Lift 6400 kg; 8d6 [0]
20	DEX	20	13-	
10	CON	0	11-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
0	EGO	0	—	
28	PRE	18	15-	PRE Attack: 5 1/2d6
7	OCV	20		
7	DCV	60		
0	OMCV	0		
0	DMCV	0		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
14	PD	39		Total: 14 PD (14 rPD)
14	ED	39		Total: 14 ED (14 rED)
4	REC	0		
0	END	-2		
20	BODY	10		
—	STUN	—		Total Characteristic Cost: 259

Movement:

Running: 16m

Flight: 30m

Leaping: 26m

Cost Powers

END

- 45 *Cyberdroid Body*: Takes No STUN (loses abilities when takes BODY)
- 15 *Cyberdroid Body*: Does Not Bleed
- 79 *Military-Grade Cyberbrain*: 23 EGO, 8 OMCV, 8 DMCV
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrained (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 50 *Attack Barrier*: Mental Defense (25 points)
Software (-1/2)
- 20 *Internal Power Supply*: Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) applied to STR
- 1 *Internal Power Supply*: Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) applied to Leaping
- 6 *Internal Power Supply*: Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) applied to Running
- 102 *12.7 Heavy Gunpod*: RKA 3d6 [750]
+1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), 750 Charges (+1), Autofire (10 shots; +1); Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4) plus +1 OCV; Real Weapon (-1/4) **plus** +4 versus Range Modifiers; Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 113 *RCL-90 Recoilless Rifle*: RKA 7d6+1 [12]
+1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Armor Piercing (+1/4); 12 Charges (-1/4), Side Effects (backblast of RKA 1d6, Area of Effect (8m Cone) behind it whenever it's fired; +0), Real Weapon (-1/4) plus +1 OCV; Real Weapon (-1/4) plus +3 versus Range Modifiers; Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 15 *Armored Limbs*: HA +3d6
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 42 *Armored Frame*: Resistant for 14 PD/14 ED
- 19 *Flare Compensators*: Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points)
Hardened (+1/4)
- 18 *Heavy*: Knockback Resistance -6m
- 35 *Cyberdroid Body*: LS: Full
- 23 *Jump Thrusters*: Flight 30m, x4 Noncombat [1 cc]
1 Continuing Fuel Charge (5 Minutes; -1/2)
- 16 *Cyberdroid Legs*: Leaping +22m (26m forward, 13m upward)
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2)
- 6 *Cyberdroid Legs*: Running +4m (16m total)
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2)
- 2 *Heavy*: Swimming -4m
- 5 *Visual Sensors*: IR Perception (Sight Group)
- 5 *Visual Sensors*: UV Perception (Sight Group)
- 5 *Visual Sensors*: Microscopic (x10) with Sight Group
- 9 *Visual Sensors*: +6 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group
- 3 *Audio Sensors*: Ultrasonic Perception (Hearing Group)
- 12 *Remote Pilot Link*: HRRP (Radio Group)
- 20 *Internal Radar*: Radar (Radio Group), Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees)

Talents

- 3 *Internal Range Finder*: Absolute Range Sense
- 3 *Internal Clock*: Absolute Time Sense
- 3 *Full Coordination*: Ambidexterity (no Off Hand penalty)
- 3 *Internal Compass*: Bump Of Direction
- 3 *Internal Processor*: Lightning Calculator

Skills

- 30 +3 with All Attacks
- 3 Climbing 13-
- 2 Language: (choice — for verbal input only) (fluent conversation)
- 3 Stealth 13-
- 3 Tactics 12-
- 7 WF: Small Arms, Anti-Materiel Rifles, Flamethrowers, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons

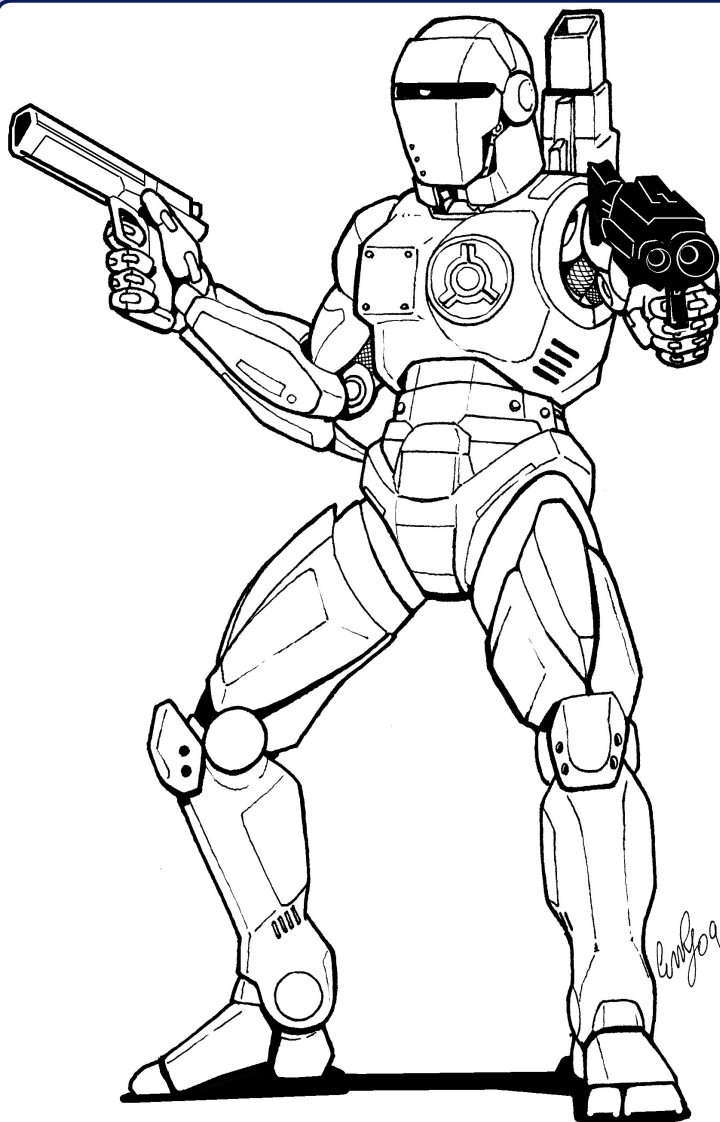
Total Powers & Skill Cost: 715**Total Cost: 984****175 Matching Complications (50)**

- 0 Dependence: must recharge every 6-8 Hours or suffer Weakness, and eventually total shutdown Weakness: -3 To Characteristic Rolls and related rolls per time increment (Very Common, 6-8 Hours)
- 25 Distinctive Features: Military Cyberdroid (Not Concealable; Extreme Reaction [fear]; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 0 Physical Complication: Heavy, approximately 400 kilograms (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 25 Psychological Complication: Must Obey Programmer's/ Owner's Commands (Very Common, Total)
- 730 Experience Points

Total Complications Value: 50**Experience Points: 808****MEDIUM COMBAT CYBERDROID**

Built on the same general frame as a Light Combat Cyberdroid, the Medium model features heavier armament and thicker armor. A true military model, it's often used as a squad support weapon. Medium Combat Cyberdroids normally house their armament together in the left arm, leaving the right free to manipulate objects. The gunpod can destroy or disable a wide variety of soft targets, while the recoilless rifle can eliminate fortifications and lightly armored vehicles.

There are many variations of the Medium Combat Cyberdroid possible. Removing the recoilless rifle for a second gunpod is a popular option, as is replacing both with an ion or electron weapon system.



HEAVY COMBAT CYBERDROID

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
50	STR	40	19	-Lift 25.6 tons; 10d6 [0]
21	DEX	22	13-	
10	CON	0	11-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
0	EGO	0	—	
30	PRE	20	15-	PRE Attack: 6d6
7	OCV	20		
7	DCV	60		
0	OMCV	0		
0	DMCV	0		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
16	PD	45		Total: 16 PD (16 rPD)
16	ED	45		Total: 16 ED (16 rED)
4	REC	0		
0	END	-2		
25	BODY	15		
—	STUN	—		Total Characteristic Cost: 290

Movement:

Running: 18m

Flight: 40m

Leaping: 30m

Cost Powers

END

- 45 *Cyberdroid Body:* Takes No STUN (loses abilities when takes BODY)
- 15 *Cyberdroid Body:* Does Not Bleed
- 81 *Military-Grade Cyberbrain:* 25 EGO, 8 OMCV, 8 DMCV
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 60 *Attack Barrier:* Mental Defense (30 points)
Software (-1/2)
- 25 *Internal Power Supply:* Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) applied to STR
- 1 *Internal Power Supply:* Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) applied to Leaping
- 6 *Internal Power Supply:* Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) applied to Running
- 84 *Mouth-Mounted Ion Cannon:* Blast 16d6 [40]
40 Charges (+1/2); Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4)
plus +1 OCV; Real Weapon (-1/4) **plus** +4 versus Range Modifiers; Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 113 *14.5 Heavy Gunpod:* RKA 3d6+1 [500]
+1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Autofire (10 shots; +1), 500 Charges (+1) ; Beam (-1/4), Real
Weapon (-1/4)
plus +2 OCV; Real Weapon (-1/4) **plus** +4 versus Range Modifiers; Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 15 *Armored Limbs:* HA +3d6
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 48 *Armored Frame:* Resistant Protection for 16 PD/16 ED
- 19 *Flare Compensators:* Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points)
Hardened (+1/4)
- 24 *Heavy:* Knockback Resistance -8m
- 35 *Cyberdroid Body:* LS: Full
- 30 *Jump Thrusters:* Flight 40m, x4 Noncombat [1 cc]
1 Continuing Fuel Charge (5 Minutes; -1/2)
- 7 *Cyberdroid Legs:* Leaping +26m (30m forward, 15m upward)
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2)
- 9 *Cyberdroid Legs:* Running +6m (18m total)
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2)
- 2 *Heavy:* Swimming -4m
- 5 *Visual Sensors:* IR Perception (Sight Group)
- 5 *Visual Sensors:* UV Perception (Sight Group)
- 5 *Visual Sensors:* Microscopic (x10) with Sight Group
- 9 *Visual Sensors:* +6 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group
- 3 *Audio Sensors:* Ultrasonic Perception (Hearing Group)

- 12 *Remote Pilot Link*: HRRP (Radio Group)
- 20 *Internal Radar*: Radar (Radio Group), Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees)
- 1 *Reach*: Reach +1m

Talents

- 3 *Internal Range Finder*: Absolute Range Sense
- 3 *Internal Clock*: Absolute Time Sense
- 3 *Full Coordination*: Ambidexterity (no Off Hand penalty)
- 3 *Internal Compass*: Bump Of Direction
- 3 *Internal Processor*: Lightning Calculator

Skills

- 40 +4 with All Attacks
- 3 Climbing 13-
- 2 Language: (choice — for verbal input only) (fluent conversation)
- 3 Stealth 13-
- 3 Tactics 12-
- 7 WF: Small Arms, Anti-Materiel Rifles, Flamethrowers, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons

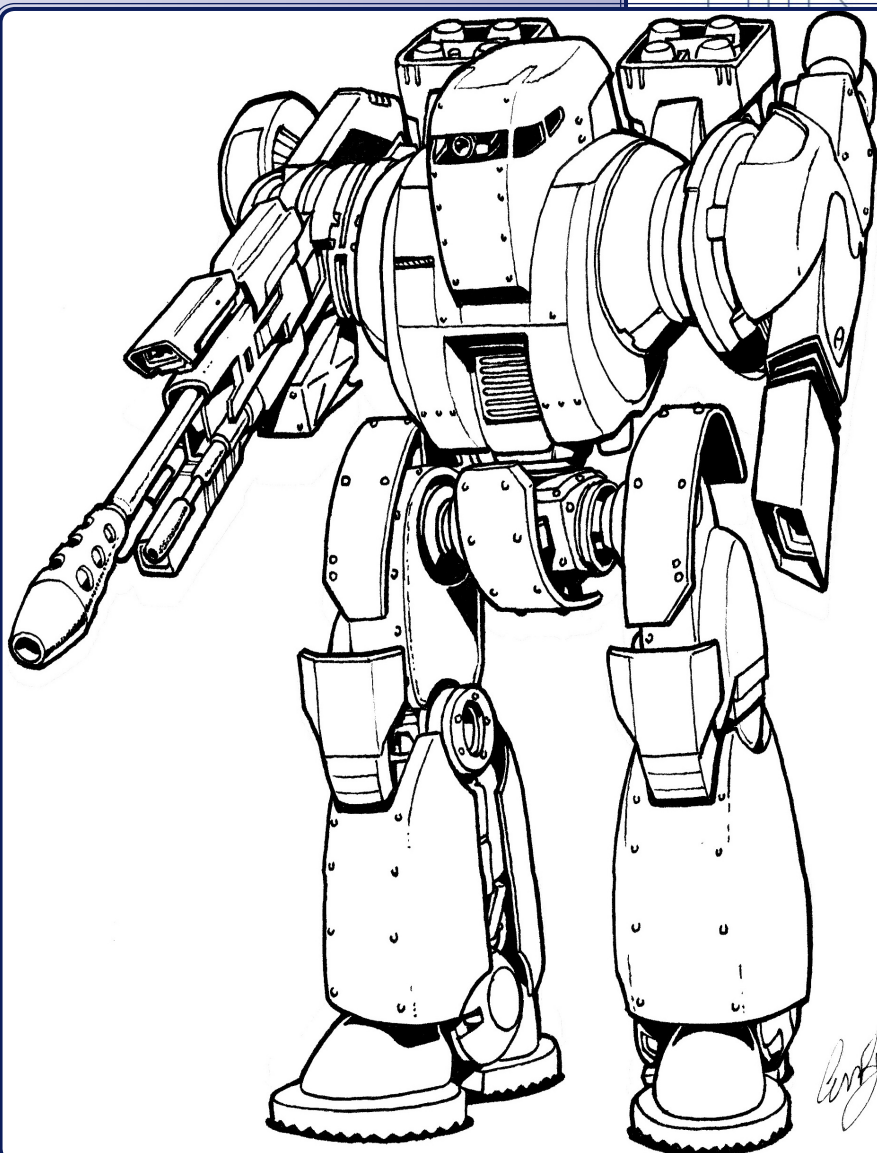
Total Powers & Skill Cost: 748**Total Cost: 1038****175 Matching Complications (50)**

- 0 Dependence: must recharge every 6-8 Hours or suffer Weakness, and eventually total shutdown Weakness: -3 To Characteristic Rolls and related rolls per time increment (Very Common, 6-8 Hours)
- 25 Distinctive Features: Military Cyberdroid (Not Concealable; Extreme Reaction [fear]; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 0 Physical Complication: Heavy, approximately 800 kilograms (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 0 Physical Complication: Large (up to 3m tall; -2 DCV, +2 to PER Rolls to perceive) Infrequently, Slightly Impairing
- 25 Psychological Complication: Must Obey Programmer's/Owner's Commands (Very Common, Total)
- 784 Experience Points

Total Complications Points: 863**HEAVY COMBAT CYBERDROID**

Standing a good three meters tall and weighing 800 kilograms, a Heavy Combat Cyberdroid is a fearsome battle machine. Capable of destroying lesser cyberdroids with ease, Heavy Combat Cyberdroids are often sent to break up enemy formations, wreck convoy lines, and assault fortified positions. While capable of operating alone, they are normally surrounded by a screen of human infantry and Medium Combat Cyberdroid flankers.

As with Medium Combat Cyberdroids, the armament of the Heavy Combat model varies depending on need. The gunpod can be swapped for any number of other weapons systems, with the LM series of autocannons (loaded with armor-piercing rounds) a popular option.



DF: STYLE (HARDWIRED COMBAT SKILLS)

The Hunter-Killer Cyberdroid's Style Complication represent the limits of the unit's combat programming. It only has so many maneuvers to select from, and thus has a fairly limited repertoire with little to no variation. This also means its combat tactics are easier to predict.

This same sort of Disadvantage is also used for the Puma and Lynx-Class security replicates, and should be used for any character with non-standard hardwired combat skills.

HUNTER-KILLER CYBERDROID

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
30	STR	20	15-	Lift 1600 kg; 6d6 [0]
26	DEX	32	14-	
10	CON	0	11-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 15-
0	EGO	0	—	
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
9	OCV	35		
9	DCV	105		
0	OMCV	0		
0	DMCV	0		
5	SPD	30		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
9	PD	24		Total: 9 PD (9 rPD)
9	ED	24		Total: 9 ED (9 rED)
4	REC	0		
0	END	-2		
15	BODY	5		
—	STUN	—		Total Characteristic Cost: 291

Movement:

Running: 28m
Leaping: 24m
Tunneling: 4m

Cost Powers

- 45 *Cyberdroid Body*: Takes No STUN (loses abilities when takes BODY)
 15 *Cyberdroid Body*: Does Not Bleed
 69 *Secure Cyberbrain*: 20 EGO, 7 OMCV, 7 DMCV
 Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
 48 *Attack Barrier*: Mental Defense (24 points); Software (-1/2)
 38 *Cold-Fusion Power Supply*: Endurance Reserve (120 END, 12 REC)
 45 *Eye Laser*: Multipower, 56-point reserve
 all slots No Knockback (-1/4)
 4f 1) *Single Shot*: RKA 3d6 5
 Armor Piercing (+1/4); No Knockback (-1/4)
 3f 2) *Constant Burn*: RKA 2d6 5
 Armor Piercing (+1/4), Constant (+1/2); Extra Time (Full Phase, -1/2), No Knockback (-1/4)
 5f 3) *Sweep*: RKA 2 1/2d6 5
 Area Of Effect (16m Line Nonselective; +1/4); No Knockback (-1/4)
 23 *Claws*: HKA 2 1/2d6 (4 1/2d6 w/STR) 4
 Restraining (-1/2), Reduced Penetration (-1/4)

Martial Arts: Hardwired Combat Skills

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
5	Block	+1	+3	Block, Abort
4	Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
5	Kick	-2	+1	10d6 Strike
4	Punch	+2	+0	8d6 Strike
5	Snap Kick /Punch	+1	+3	6d6 Strike
2	Weapon Element: Claws, Clubs, Staffs			

- 16 *Self-Destruct Charge*: RKA 5d6 [1 nr]
 Trigger (Activating the Trigger is an Action that takes no time, Character does not control activation of personal Trigger; Body = 0; +1/4), Area Of Effect (32m Radius Explosion +1/2);
 1 Charge which Never Recovers (-4), Side Effects (Cyberdroid Takes Full Damage From Attack; -1), Required Roll 11- (Trigger Has An Activation Roll Based On Negative BODY, see sidebar; -1),
 Extra Time (Extra Segment, -1/2), No Range (-1/2), Reduced Penetration (-1/4)
 27 *Armored Frame*: Resistant Protection for 9 PD/9 ED
 19 *Flare Compensators*: Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points)
 Hardened (+1/4)
 12 *Heavy*: Knockback Resistance -4m
 35 *Cyberdroid Body*: LS: Full
 10 *Cyberdroid Legs*: Leaping +20m (24m forward, 12m upward) 1

- 14 *Cyberdroid Legs: Running +4m (28m total)* 2
- 2 *Heavy: Swimming -4m*
- 10 *Claws: Tunneling 4m through 5 PD material* 1
No Noncombat Movement (-1/4)
- 6 *Acute Audio/Visual Sensors: +2 PER with all Sense Groups*
- 5 *Visual Sensors: IR Perception (Sight Group)*
- 5 *Visual Sensors: UV Perception (Sight Group)*
- 5 *Visual Sensors: Microscopic (x10) with Sight Group*
- 9 *Visual Sensors: +6 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group*
- 3 *Audio Sensors: Ultrasonic Perception (Hearing Group)*
- 12 *Remote Pilot Link: HRRP (Radio Group)*

Talents

- 3 *Internal Range Finder: Absolute Range Sense*
- 3 *Internal Clock: Absolute Time Sense*
- 3 *Full Coordination: Ambidexterity (no Off Hand penalty)*
- 3 *Internal Compass: Bump Of Direction*
- 4 *Universal Joints: Double Jointed*
- 3 *Internal Processor: Lightning Calculator*

Skills

- 40 +4 with All Combat
- 8 +4 versus Range Modifiers with Eye Laser
- 3 Acrobatics 14-
- 3 Breakfall 14-
- 3 Climbing 14-
- 2 Concealment 13-; Self Only (-1/2)
- 3 Disguise 13-
- 2 Language: (choice — for verbal input only) (fluent conversation)
- 3 Stealth 14-
- 3 Tactics 13-
- 3 Tracking 13-
- 10 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Small Arms, Anti-Materiel Rifles, Flamethrowers, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons, Staffs

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 608**Total Cost: 899****175 Matching Complications (50)**

- 20 Distinctive Features: Military Cyberdroid (Concealable; Extreme Reaction [fear]; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 0 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Large Group)
- 5 Physical Complication: Heavy, approximately 300 kilograms (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
- 25 Psychological Complication: Must Obey Programmer's/Owner's Commands (Very Common, Total)

Total Complications Value: 50**Experience Points: 724****HUNTER-KILLER CYBERDROID**

These fearsome (and feared) combat machines stand two meters tall and weigh roughly 300 kilograms. They have carefully modeled humanoid frames with androgynous (albeit static) facial features. Covered in off-white, light-gray, or tan armored plate, with long white "hair" (used to radiate excess heat), and fingers ending in razor-sharp claws, Hunter-Killer, or HK, Cyberdroids are designed to infiltrate a designated location and destroy it from within. They are programmed to attempt to disguise their basic form through the use of long coats, cloaks, and other garments, and will often hide until the proper moment to strike presents itself. Hunter-Killer units have been known to bury themselves near roads and checkpoints, then surface to attack once their designated target is within range.

Normally, HK units prefer to use their eye-mounted laser to destroy targets; Single Shot versus soft vehicles, Constant Burn versus a heavily armored target, and Sweep versus masses of lightly-armored human infantry. If pressed, the HK is programmed with a fixed set of hand-to-hand combat skills, which can be used with its claws, or simple improvised club-like or staff-like weapons (such as a length of pipe).

HK SELF-DESTRUCT

If severely damaged and no longer able to function, most HKs are designed to self-destruct, thus preventing such highly-advanced technology from falling into enemy hands while hopefully inflicting further damage on the opposing force. If reduced to 0 BODY, the self-destruct triggers automatically. If reduced to less than 0 BODY in a single attack, the HK must make an Activation Roll to successfully self-destruct, with a -1 to the roll for each -1 BODY the HK has taken. For example, if an HK Cyberdroid has 3 BODY and then takes enough damage to reduce it to -5 BODY, it will explode if it makes a 13- Activation Roll.

Hunter-Killer Cyberdroid

Replicated Humans

ISHTAR CLASS PLEASURE REPLICATE

10 STR 13 DEX 15 CON 18 INT 8 EGO 13 PRE

4 OCV 4 DCV 3 OMCV 3 DMCV 3 SPD

4 PD 3 ED 5 REC 30 END 10 BOD 24 STUN

Abilities: *Basic Cyberbrain:* 10 EGO, 3 OMCV, 3 DMCV; Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4); *Attack Barrier:* Mental Defense (10 points); Software (-1/2); *Alcohol Filter:* LS (Immunity: Alcohol); Cybersystem (-1/4); *Level One Datajack:* +1 with all computer-related Skills; Requires DNI-Capable Computer And Accessible Databable (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4); *Swift:* Running +2m (14m total); *Hyper Immune System:* LS (Immunity: All terrestrial diseases and biowarfare agents); Not Versus Bioweapons (-1/2); Positive Reputation: the ultimate sexual companion (on Earth) 11-, +1/+1d6; *Customized DNA:* Bioware Compatible; *Incredibly Beautiful:* Striking Appearance (+3/+3d6); Bureaucrats 12-; Charm 12-; Conversation 12-; CuK: (varies depending on intended market) 13-; High Society 12-; KS: Current Clothing Fashions And How To Apply Them 13-; KS: Sexual Techniques 13-; Persuasion 12-; TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles; WF: Handguns; Linguist; 1) Language: Cantonese (completely fluent); 2) Language: English (idiomatic); 3) Language: French (completely fluent); 4) Language: German (completely fluent); 5) Language: Japanese (completely fluent); 6) Language: Korean (completely fluent); 7) Language: Spanish (completely fluent); Jack of All Trades; 1) PS: Companion/Escort 13-; 2) PS: Cooking 13-; 3) PS: Dancing 12-; 4) PS: Sexual Techniques 13-

I75+ Matching Complications (50): Distinctive Features: Appears Too “Perfect” To Be Real (Concealable; Always Noticed and Causes Major Reaction; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses); Distinctive Features: Replicated Human (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Technology Or Major Effort); Psychological Complication: Must Obey Owner’s Commands (Very Common, Total); Social Complication: Replicated Human (Very Frequently, Major)

ISHTAR CLASS PLEASURE REPLICATE

R Scott’s Ishtar-Class Pleasure Replicates are created for the express purpose of providing sexual companionship. The come in a wide variety of ethnic styles, all of which are uniformly highly attractive, appearing as perfectly formed humans of exceptional grace and beauty. Pleasure Replicates are normally of average height, with any combination of hair, eye, and skin color desired, even ones not normally found in nature.

Programmed to be witty and entertaining, Pleasure replicates are also used as administrative assistants, butlers, maids, and other forms of domestic servants, as well as intimate escorts. Very expensive and rarely seen in public, Pleasure replicates are something of a status symbol among the multinational corporate elite.

ISIS CLASS ESCORT REPLICATE

13 STR 13 DEX 15 CON 10 INT 8 EGO 15 PRE

5 OCV 5 DCV 3 OMCV 3 DMCV 3 SPD

4 PD 4 ED 6 REC 30 END 10 BOD 26 STUN

Abilities: *Basic Cyberbrain:* 10 EGO, 3 OMCV, 3 DMCV; Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4); *Attack Barrier:* Mental Defense (10 points); Software (-1/2); *Level One Skeletal Reinforcement:* +4 PD Resistant Protection; Only Works Against BODY Damage (-1), Only To Protect Against Breaking Bones (-2) plus HA +1d6, Invisible Power Effects (Inobvious to Sight Group [see text]); +1/4, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/4) plus Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25%; Only Works Against HTH Attacks (-1), BODY Only (-1/2); *Alcohol Filter:* LS (Immunity: Alcohol); Cybersystem (-1/4); *Articulation Augmentation:* +1 with DCV; Only In HTH Combat (-1/2) plus +1 with Agility Skills plus Double Jointed; *Level One Datajack:* +1 with all computer-related Skills; Requires DNI-Capable Computer And Accessible Databable (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4); *Swift:* Running +2m (8m total); *Hyper Immune System:* LS (Immunity: All terrestrial diseases and biowarfare agents); Not Versus Bioweapons (-1/2); *Customized DNA:* Bioware Compatible; *Incredibly Beautiful:* Striking Appearance (+3/+3d6); Bureaucrats 12-; Charm 12-; CuK: (varies depending on intended market) 13-; Conversation 12-; High Society 12-; KS: Current Clothing Fashions And How To Apply Them 13-; KS: Sexual Techniques 13-; Persuasion 12-; TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles; WF: Small Arms; Linguist; 1) Language: Cantonese (completely fluent); 2) Language: English (idiomatic); 3) Language: French (completely fluent); 4) Language: German (completely fluent); 5) Language: Japanese (completely fluent); 6) Language: Korean (completely fluent); 7) Language: Spanish (completely fluent); Jack of All Trades; 1) PS: Companion/Escort 13-; 2) PS: Cooking 13-; 3) PS: Dancing 12-; 4) PS: Sexual Techniques 13-

I75+ Matching Complications (50): Distinctive Features: Appears To “Perfect” To Be Real (Concealable; Always Noticed and Causes Major Reaction; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses); Distinctive Features: Replicated Human (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Technology Or Major Effort); Psychological Complication: Must Obey Owner’s Commands (Very Common, Total); Social Complication: Replicated Human (Very Frequently, Major)

ISIS CLASS ESCORT REPLICATE

Meant to act as an administrative assistant, bodyguard, and possible sexual companion, the Isis-Class Escort is normally only found in the company of the most elite of corporate executives. Designed around a similar DNA pattern as the Ishtar-Class, the Isis model appears as a perfectly formed human of exceptional grace and beauty. Their nanofactory origins allow for a wide variety of hair, eye, and skin color combinations.

The Isis model comes with several cybernetic implants designed to allow them to act as covert bodyguards. Other implants are possible, as are additional imprinted skill sets. Popular options include hardwired combat training, Smart-gun Links, and Cranial Computers with a full communications suite.



PUMA CLASS SECURITY REPLICATE

25 STR 23 DEX 23 CON 10 INT 8 EGO 18 PRE

7 OCV 7 DCV 3 OMCV 3 DMCV 4 SPD

9 PD 8 ED 10 REC 45 END 14 BOD 40S TUN

Abilities: *Hyper Immune System:* LS (Immunity: All terrestrial diseases and biowarfare agents); *Not Versus Bioweapons* (-1/2); *Powerful Leaper:* Leaping +10m (14m forward, 7m upward); *Swift:* Running +8m (20m total); *Cat's Ears:* +3 PER with Hearing Group; *Hardwired Hand-To-Hand Combat Training* (Block; Escape; Joint Lock; Punch/Snap Kick; Take-down; Weapon Element: Blades, Clubs); *Customized DNA:* Bioware Compatible; *Striking Appearance* (+1/+1d6); +2 with All Combat; *Cat-Like Grace:* +1 with Agility Skills; *Acrobatics* 14-; *Breakfall* 14-; *Climbing* 14-; *Stealth* 14-; *TF:* Common Motorized Ground Vehicles; *WF:* Common Melee Weapons, Small Arms, Anti-Materiel Rifle, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons, Stun Rods; 9 Points Of Additional Skills

175+ Matching Complications (50): Distinctive Features: Replicated Human (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Technology Or Major Effort); Distinctive Features: Cat's Ears, Possible Non-Human Hair/Skin Color (Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses); Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Large Group); Negative Reputation: tough but stupid (Frequently); Psychological Complication: Must Obey Owner's Commands (Very Common, Total); Social Complication: Replicated Human (Very Frequently, Major)

PUMA CLASS SECURITY REPLICATE

The Puma Class Security replicate is the world's most well known (and popular) model of replicated human, mostly due to Mitsumi's excellent advertising campaigns. Visually distinctive due to their extreme height and tapering cat-like ears, Pumas are considered to be the best security replicates available. Advanced bioengineering techniques, as well as a unique internal body structure, have resulted in an excellent combination of strength, agility, speed, and toughness. These characteristics, combined with almost unbreakable personality governors, have greatly contributed to the Puma's popularity. They're found acting as security guards, bodyguards, and field agents the world over.

Personality-wise, Pumas are normally aggressive, with a strong "gung-ho" attitude. On the other hand, implanted personality governors can make them almost docile in the presence of their designated manager. These governors are also responsible for a Puma's almost mindless devotion to their corporate masters, as well as a distinct lack of personal ambition. A Puma takes pride in a job well done and can be very resourceful when it comes to completing that job, but they have no desire to better their lot in life — a useful trait for keeping them under control.

The typical Puma stands at least 6'3", with some exceeding 6'6". They usually weigh 180 to 225 pounds, although males may tip the scales at 250. They're broad-shouldered, with well-defined builds and a thick mane of hair that at a minimum falls to their shoulders. At the top of the skull is a pair of cat-like ears, Mitsumi's trademark for its entire line of replicates. A Puma's eye, hair and skin color has no set pattern.

LYNX CLASS SECURITY REPLICATE

20 STR 21 DEX 20 CON 10 INT 8 EGO 15 PRE

7 OCV 7 DCV 3 OMCV 3 DMCV 4 SPD

8 PD 7 ED 8 REC 40 END 12 BOD 32 STUN

Abilities: *Hyper Immune System:* LS (Immunity: All terrestrial diseases and biowarfare agents); *Not Versus Bioweapons* (-1/2); *Powerful Leaper:* Leaping +8m (12m forward, 6m upward); *Swift:* Running +6m (18m total); *Cat's Ears:* +3 PER with Hearing Group; *Hardwired Hand-To-Hand Combat Training* (Block; Escape; Joint Lock; Punch/Snap Kick; Take-down; Weapon Element: Blades, Clubs); *Customized DNA:* Bioware Compatible; *Striking Appearance* (+1/+1d6); +2 with All Combat; *Cat-Like Grace:* +1 with Agility Skills; *Acrobatics* 13-; *Breakfall* 13-; *Climbing* 13-; *Stealth* 13-; *TF:* Common Motorized Ground Vehicles; *WF:* Common Melee Weapons, Small Arms, Anti-Materiel Rifle, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons, Stun Rods; 9 Points Of Additional Skills

175+ Matching Complications (50): Distinctive Features: Replicated Human (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Technology Or Major Effort); Distinctive Features: Cat's Ears, Possible Non-Human Hair/Skin Color (Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses); Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Large Group); Negative Reputation: tough but stupid (Frequently); Psychological Complication: Must Obey Owner's Commands (Very Common, Total); Social Complication: Replicated Human (Very Frequently, Major)

**LYNX CLASS SECURITY REPLICATE**

Designed along the same general pattern as the Puma Class, a Lynx is shorter and more slightly built. Although Lynxes are primarily designed for combat, they're also widely used as personal assistants, household servants, and bodyguards. In some multinationals, one of the managerial perks is having a Lynx on call at all times.

Significantly stronger and more durable than a normal, unmodified human, Lynxes also come with a standard suite of hardwired and imprinted skills. Differing skill sets are possible; the write-up shows the standard security model. As with the Puma Class, Lynxes have implanted personality governors, allowing their corporate owners to command them freely.

The typical Lynx Class Security replicate stands 5'10", weighing about 150 pounds. They're generally broad-shouldered, with a well-defined build, and a thick mane of shoulder-length or longer hair. As with the Puma Class, two cat-like ears are located atop the skull. There's no set pattern to a Lynx's eye, hair and skin color.

CAMPAIGN SEED: CHILDREN OF MITSUMI

The PCs are all members of a Mitsumi Puma squad. Use this character sheet, but allow the PCs to customize the Skills and weaponry to fit the different duties described. Missions can consist of: guard duty at the Mitsumi arcology, escorting corporate executives about Neo York, guarding Mitsumi shipments from local gangs, assaulting rival corporate property (known as a “denial of assets” raid), as well as various missions into the Zone (often to test new equipment).

MITSUMI PUMA CLASS SECURITY REPLICATE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
25	STR	15	14-	Lift 800 kg; 5d6 [2]
23	DEX	26	14-	
23	CON	13	14-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-/14-
8	EGO	-2	11-	
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3 1/2d6
8	OCV	25		
8	DCV	25		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
9	PD	7		Total: 9 PD (0 rPD)
8	ED	6		Total: 8 ED (0 rED)
10	REC	6		
4	5END	5		
14	BODY	4		
40	STUN	10		Total Characteristic Cost: 168

Movement: Running: 20m
Leaping: 14m
Swimming: 4m

Cost Powers

- 42 *Jinsei M-100*: Multipower, 105-point reserve
all slots OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)
- 3f 1) *10mm Caseless Explosive Tipped*: RKA 2d6 [100]
+1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Invisible to Sight Group (no shell casings as evidence; +1/4), Armor Piercing (+1/4), Autofire (5 shots; +1/2), Increased Maximum Range (x2 or 600m; +1/4), 4 clips of 100 Charges (+1); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)
- 1f 2) *20mm High-Yield Grenade Launcher*: RKA 2d6 [6]
+1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Area of Effect (14m Radius Explosion; +1/4); OAF (-1), 6 Charges (-3/4), Minimum Range (20m; -1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)
- 2 *Inherent Accuracy*: +2 OCV (4 Active points)
OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 1 *Inherent Accuracy*: +1 versus Range Modifiers (1 Active point)
OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 5 *Combat Knife*: HKA 1d6-1 (1d6+1 w/STR)
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); OAF (-1), No Knockback (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)

Martial Arts: Hardwired Hand-To-Hand Combat Training

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes	
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort	
4	Escape	+0	+0	40 STR vs. Grabs	
3	Joint Lock	-1	-1	Grab Two Limbs, 35 STR for holding on	
4	Punch/Snap Kick	+2	+0	7d6 Strike	
3	Takedown	+1	+1	5d6 Strike; Target Falls	
2	Weapon Element: Blades, Clubs				
11	<i>Level I Ceramic Clamshell Vest</i> : Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED) Activation Roll 11- (locations 9-12; -1), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)				
4	<i>Level I Spectracloth Jacket</i> : Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED) Activation Roll 11- (locations 7-12; -1), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)				
4	<i>Level I Spectracloth Pants</i> : Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED) Activation Roll 10- (locations 13-16; -1 1/4), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)				
4	<i>Spectracloth Boots</i> : Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED) Activation Roll 9- (locations 16-18; -1 1/2), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)				
5	<i>Powerful Leaper</i> : Leaping +10m (14m forward, 7m upward)				1
8	<i>Swift</i> : Running +8m (20m total)				1
6	<i>Cat's Ears</i> : +3 PER with Hearing Group				

- 3 *Hyper Immune System*: LS (Immunity: All terrestrial diseases and biowarfare agents)
Not Versus Bioweapons (-1/2)

Talents

- 5 *Customized DNA*: Bioware Compatible
3 Striking Appearance (+1/+1d6)

Skills

- 20 +2 with All Combat
6 Cat-Like Grace: +1 with Agility Skills
3 Acrobatics 14-
3 Breakfall 14-
3 Climbing 14-
1 High Society 8-
1 KS: Mitsumi Biotechnology History And Customs 8-
1 Language: Japanese (basic conversation)
3 Paramedics 11-
3 Stealth 14-
3 Tactics 11-
3 Teamwork 14-
2 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles
9 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Small Arms, Anti-Materiel Rifle, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons, Stun Rods

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 184**Total Cost: 352****175 Matching Complications (50)**

- 0 Distinctive Features: Cat's Ears, Possible Non-Human Hair/Skin Color (Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
5 Distinctive Features: Replicated Human (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Technology Or Major Effort)
0 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Large Group)
0 Hunted: Mitsumi Biotechnology (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, PC has a Public ID or is otherwise very easy to find, Watching)
0 Negative Reputation: tough but stupid (Frequently)
25 Psychological Complication: Must Obey Owner's Commands (Very Common, Total)
20 Social Complication: Replicated Human (Very Frequently, Major)

Total Complications Value: 50**Experience Points: 177****MITSUMI'S
PUMA
AND LYNX
SQUADS...**

...actually number forty. There are thirty-six infantrymen, two commanders, and two full-time medics. In addition, each unit reports to a human duty officer. The Puma Duty Officer for Mitsumi Neo York is Matthew Shirow, found on page 226.

**MITSUMI PUMA CLASS SECURITY
REPLICATE**

This character sheet shows the weapons, armor, and skills of a typical Mitsumi Puma when used in-house by Mitsumi itself. The Mitsumi arcology in Neo York, for example, has thirty-six Pumas on staff, divided into six squads of six. A squad will have four riflemen (as listed), one heavy weapon expert (usually armed with an Anti-Materiel Rifle), and one support weapon expert (usually a light or heavy machine gun). In addition, one of the riflemen will be the squad's leader, while another will be the squad's medic. All of the squad's members will have communicators, usually consisting of a speaker clipped to one ear and a pickup near the mouth.

Depending on the situation, Mitsumi will swap out weaponry as needed. For example, in case of riot and civil disturbance, the Pumas may have riot shields and shock batons.

RESIDENTS OF NEW YORK

Carlos Jagger created
by Nestor Rodriguez.

CARLOS JAGGER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
40	STR	30	17-	Lift 6400 kg; 8d6 [4]
23	DEX	26	14-	
25	CON	15	14-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
13	EGO	3	12-	
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
8	OCV	25		
8	DCV	25		
4	OMCV	3		
4	DMCV	3		
5	SPD	30		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
8	PD	6		Total: 18 PD (10 rPD)
8	ED	6		Total: 18 ED (10 rED)
12	REC	8		
50	END	6		
15	BODY	5		
48	STUN	14		
				Total Characteristic Cost: 220

Movement: Running: 20m
Leaping: 22m

Cost Powers

- 41 *Secure Cyberbrain:* 20 EGO, 7 OMCV, 7 DMCV.
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 20 *Multi-Layered Attack Barrier:* Mental Defense (24 points total)
Hardened (+1/4); Software (-1/2)
- 10 *Armored Limbs:* HA +2d6
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 30 *Cybergraft Shell:* Resistant Protection (10 PD/10 ED)
Requires A Roll 15- (doesn't cover Hit Locations 3-5; -0)
- 10 *Skull Reinforcement:* Resistant Protection (5 PD/5 ED)
Required Roll 9- (or locations 3-5; -1 1/2), Real Armor (doesn't stop the first point of BODY from any attack, Reduced Penetration attacks are counted separately; -1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4)
plus HA +1d6, Only With Headbutts (+0), Invisible Power Effects (Invisible to Sight Group, Source Only +1/4), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 40 *Combat Cybergraft:* Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%
STUN Only (-1/2)
- 7 *Fully Cybernetic Limbs:* Does Not Bleed
Activation Roll 11- (or Hit Locations 6-8 and 14-18; -1)
- 2 *Heavy:* Knockback Resistance -2m
- 9 *Cybernetic Legs:* Leaping 18m (22m forward, 11m upward)
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); No Noncombat Movement (-1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 8 *Cybernetic Legs:* Running +8m (20m total)
- 2 *Cyborg Body:* Swimming -4m
- 3 *Thermographic Filter:* IR Perception (Sight Group)
Restraining (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 10 *Improved Smartgun Link:* +2 with Ranged Combat
Limited Range (64m; -1/4) Requires Smartlinked Weapon (-1/2), Restraining (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4)
plus +2 Versus Range Modifier with All Attacks; Limited Range (64m; -1/4) Requires Smartlinked Weapon (-1/2), Restraining (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 5 *Improved Smartgun Link:* Second Smartgun Link
- 35 *Customized Jinsei Hoshoku Zeta With Penetrating Frangible Ammunition And Smartgun Link:*
RKA 2 1/2d6
4 clips of 15 Charges (+1/4), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Autofire (3 shots; +1/4), Penetrating (+1/2); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) plus +1 OCV; OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) plus +1 versus Range Modifier; OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4)

END

1

[4x15]

Martial Arts: *Police Training*

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
5	Block +1	+3		Block, Abort
4	Choke Hold -2	+0		Grab One Limb; 2d6 NND
4	Strike +0	+2		10d6 Strike
3	Throw +0	+1		8d6 +v/5, Target Falls
1	Weapon Element: Clubs			

Perks

- 3 Well-Connected
- 5 1) Contact: Captain Blaisdell, NYPD, Inc. (Contact has significant Contacts of his own, Contact has very useful Skills or resources, Good relationship with Contact) 11-
- 1 2) Contact: Duke, the doorman for The Living End 11-
- 3 3) Contact: Kelly Fitzpatrick, reporter for Rolling Stone (Contact has significant Contacts of his own, Contact has useful Skills or resources) 11-
- 3 4) Contact: Louie the Fixer (Contact has significant Contacts of his own, Contact has useful Skills or resources) 11-
- 1 5) Contact: WinterRose, a Net Cracker/Hacker 11-

Talents

- 3 *Coordinated Limbs:* Ambidexterity (no Off Hand penalty)

Skills

- 20 +2 with All Attacks
- 2 AK: Neo York Zero Zone 11-
- 3 Breakfall 14-
- 2 CK: Neo York City 11-
- 3 Combat Driving 14-
- 3 Conversation 13-
- 5 Criminology 13-
- 5 Deduction 13-
- 3 Fast Draw (Small Arms) 14-
- 3 Interrogation 13-
- 2 KS: Criminal Law And Procedure 11-
- 2 KS: NYPD, Inc. History And Customs 11-
- 1 KS: The Corporate World 8-
- 2 KS: The Law-enforcement World 11-
- 2 KS: The Zero Zone Underworld 11-
- 2 PS: Ex-Police Officer 11-
- 3 Shadowing 12-
- 3 Stealth 14-
- 3 Streetwise 13-
- 2 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Tracked Military Vehicles
- 5 Two-Weapon Fighting; Ranged Multiple Attacks Only (-1)
- 3 WF: Small Arms, Anti-Materiel Rifles, Clubs [nightstick]

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 343**Total Cost: 563****300 Matching Complications (60)**

- 10 Distinctive Features: Synthskin/Cyborg Body his (skin doesn't quite feel right to the touch, he doesn't sweat, his mass is much greater than his size indicates, his skin degrades if he is hit by an attack) (Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 0 Hunted: NYPD, Inc. (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 20 Hunted: vengeful corporate official (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
- 10 Physical Complication: Cyborg (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 0 Physical Complication: Heavy (weighs roughly 200 kg) (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
- 10 Psychological Complication: Dislikes Espers And Replicated Humans (Common, Moderate)
- 0 Psychological Complication: Overconfident In His Abilities And Cybergraft (Common, Strong)
- 10 Psychological Complication: Thinks Results are More Important Than Rules (Common, Moderate)

Total Complications Value: 60**Experience Points: 263****MY CAMPAIGN, YOUR CAMPAIGN**

In the original *Kazei 5* game, Jagger often argued with Kenwood Muldowney over the meaning of humanity and how it applied to replicates. He didn't much like espers and butted heads with Takeda Johnson as well. Eventually he found a sense of peace with Katherine Ramis.

In your game you can use him to present anti-esper and replicate arguments, often presented in a perfectly rational manner.

PLOT SEED: LAST MAN STANDING

Having learned he's still alive, Jagger's Hunted has decided to eliminate him once and for all. He's called in some corporate black ops agent to see the job is done right, but isn't above spreading some money around at the street level to get every ganger and low-rent street samurai after Jagger's armored hide. Now Jagger needs the PCs help — he can handle some of his attackers, but he can't handle all of them. Since chasing down the operatives will probably be a waste of effort, he's willing to act as bait if the PCs will set-up an ambush. The plan is fool-proof: bring a lot of guns and don't stop using them until everyone is dead.

CARLOS JAGGER

Background/History: Carlos Jagger grew up in a household tyrannized by his father, a mid-level corporate manager who dealt with his work-related frustrations by taking them out on his family. When Carlos graduated from high school, he joined the nascent UNA Armed Forces, serving a full tour of duty helping rebuild his country. Upon his discharge, he enrolled in the New York Police Academy, graduating and joining the force a year after it became the NYPD, Inc.

Although Jagger chafed under NYPD, Inc.'s mercenary outlook, his dogged persistence on the job earned him a string of commendations and a steady rise through the ranks until he reached Detective-Investigator. Unwilling to engage in the politicking necessary to further his career, there he intended to remain until retirement.

Given a cushy escort job for a mid-level corporate executive as a reward for neatly resolving a potentially messy case, Jagger surprised the man in his hotel room, abusing an under-aged prostitute. Outraged, Jagger arrested the man with extreme prejudice, stating the resulting injuries came when the executive fell down some stairs trying to escape. A full court of inquiry followed, resulting in a two-week suspension and a demotion back to police officer. He also gained the enmity of the executive, whose personal and corporate standing had suffered from the scandal.

Less than a month after his demotion, Jagger was ambushed while on patrol by an extremely well armed street gang. The gangers poured a frighteningly large amount of gunfire into his armored patrol vehicle, including an anti-tank rocket. The suspiciously tardy backup found Jagger, or what was left of him, still strapped to his seat, unconscious but alive. His partner wasn't so lucky. Upon arrival in the hospital, a medical crew labored for over twelve hours to bring him back. What came out of the operating room was barely a man.

Not one to give up, Jagger took everything he had and underwent a complete cybergraft upgrade. He asked his remaining flesh-and-blood limb be removed and had his entire body rebuilt with cybernetic implants. Internally, damaged organs were replaced with artificial ones, while his skeleton was reinforced in order to make use of his full strength. Jagger went into the cyber doc's the ruined remains of what was once a man, he came out a walking combat machine.

As of yet, Jagger hasn't decided on his next step. Returning to the NYPD is out, but he also has no interest in becoming a corporate operative either. Currently, he's considering the life of a freelancer, working as a body-guard, courier, escort, or retriever as needed. Only time will tell.

Personality/Motivation: Jagger has no doubts or regrets about his new body and revels in his increased abilities. If he's ever injured so bad he'll need to become a full-conversion cyborg, he'll willingly go under the knife. In the meantime, he seeks to enjoy each day to its fullest, since he considers himself living on borrowed time. When not working, Jagger can be found bar-hopping through Neo York's hot spots, or sharing an evening (and/or bed) with a female companion willing and capable of handling a quarter-ton partner who can bend steel with his bare hands.

Because his encounters with espers and replicates has been as either criminals or corporate property, Jagger has an ingrained prejudice against them. He especially dislikes "skinjobs," as he considers them an unrecognized threat to mankind. He refuses to believe they're truly sentient, much less anything resembling human, since their personalities are imprinted into their brains while they're grown. Pointing out that Jagger can't exactly call himself human anymore either (due to his cybergraft) will only be met with amusement. The fact that his cybergraft is the only thing allowing him to compete with faster and stronger replicates is simply more evidence of the true danger they present.

Quote: "Looks like the target's hired some extra muscle... those unlucky bastards."

Powers/Tactics: Jagger's about as close as one can get to a full-conversion cyborg before simply removing the brain and placing it in a fully-artificial body. Well over 70% of his body is either fully cybernetic or enhanced by cybernetic implants. Even his skull has been reinforced to withstand otherwise lethal impacts.

Although Jagger will often carry a Colt Mark VI, his pride and joy is a custom-made one-of-a-kind modified Jinsei Hoshoku Zeta, which Jagger lovingly calls the "Hammer of God." Capable of three-round bursts, when loaded with penetrating frangible ammunition the Hammer can even wreck combat cyberdroid plating. Jagger uses it when he needs the extra punch to take care of well-armored opponents.

If part of a team, Jagger will act as fire support, arming himself with an Anti-Materiel Rifle or heavy machine-gun. If working alone, he'll take cover and use his Smartgun Link to place carefully aimed shots.

Campaign Use: Jagger could almost be the hero... if he wasn't so bigoted. As it stands, he's still a good man to know, as long as you're what he considers human. He has no liking for the NYPD's corrupt ways and would be more than willing to bring some law and order to the Zone, provided he had the backing to pull it off.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUNx	Shots	STR MIN	Notes
Colt Mark VI	+1	+0	1 1/2d6	1d6-1	16	9	

Body Armor: None, although he often wears sunglasses (Sight Group Flash Defense [5 points]).

Gear: PDA.

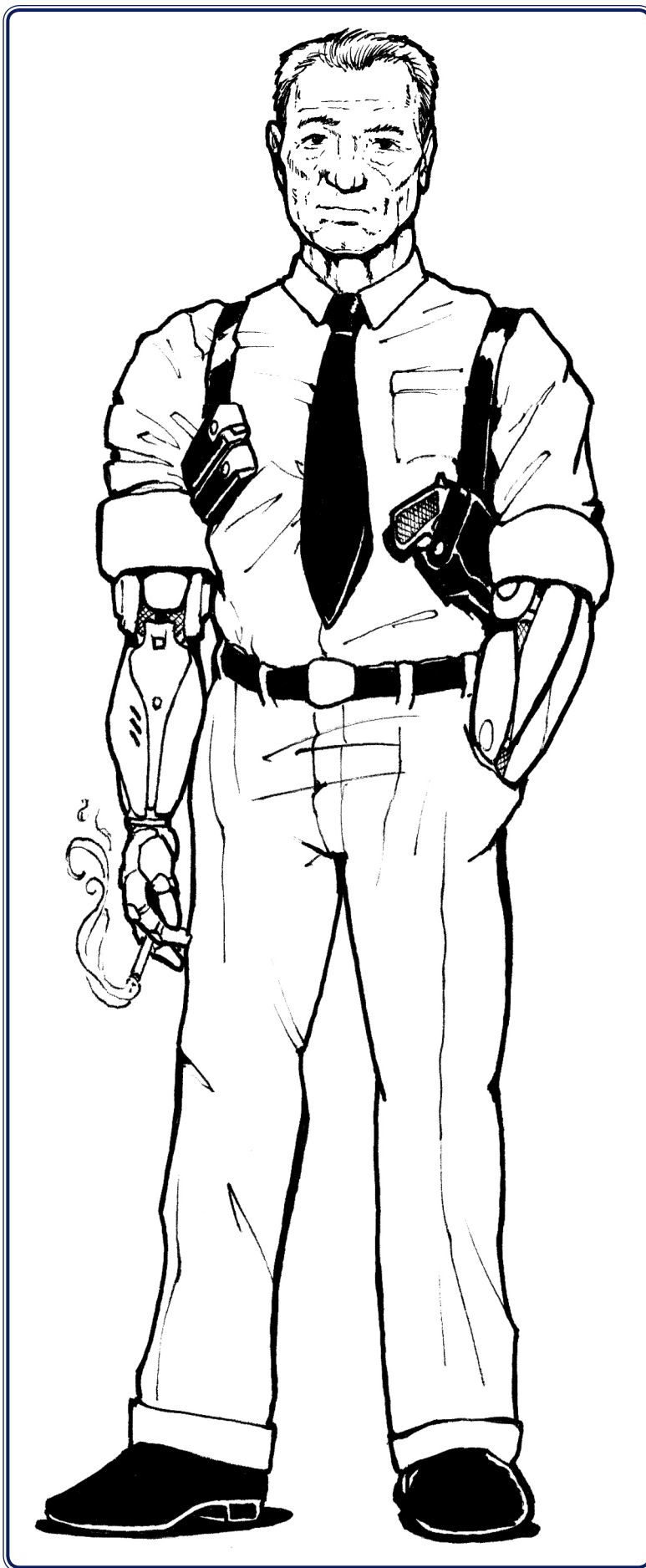
Clothing: As described under Appearance.

Jagger's pretty powerful as written, so there's no real reason to increase his power level any, unless you want to make him a full-conversion cyborg. To make him less powerful, remove the Hammer of God, the second Smartgun Link, and reduce his DEX to 21, his CON to 23, and his SPD to 4.

When working as a retriever, Jagger will hunt people who have bounties on their heads. He may also hunt those who've hurt his friends and acquaintances.

Appearance: Jagger stands 5'11" and weighs close to 450 pounds. The cosmetic surgery he received during his cybergraft has removed much of the age from his face, but he still exudes the image of a veteran. His eyes are gunmetal gray and utterly without life, while his dark brown hair is thinning in front. His cybernetic limbs are the same metallic gray of your average handgun.

Jagger usually dresses in the classic plainclothes cop suit with a black string tie and shades to spruce up his image. While he doesn't try to disguise his cybernetics, he also makes a point of not advertising them. Thus, they're a much more effective deterrent if a confrontation is likely.



DANNY 33

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [1]
16	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
15	CON	5	12-	
14	INT	4	12-	PER Roll 12-
11	EGO	1	11-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
4	OMCV	3		
4	DMCV	3		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
7	PD	5		Total: 7 PD (0 rPD)
6	ED	4		Total: 6 ED (0 rED)
6	REC	2		
30	END	2		
12/13	BODY	2		
30	STUN	5		
				Total Characteristic Cost: 98

Movement:

Running: 12m

Swimming: 4m

Cost Powers**END**

- 30 *Advanced Cyberbrain:* 15 EGO, 5 OMCV, 5 DMCV
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrained (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 12 *Attack Barrier:* Mental Defense (17 points); Software (-1/2)
- 10 *Level Two Combat Pump:* Aid STR, DEX, END, STUN 2d6 [4 bc]
all four characteristics simultaneously (+1 1/2), Invisible Power Effects (Fully Invisible; +1); 4 Charges (-1), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (2d6 STUN Drain when Aid effects wear off; -1), Only Aid Self (-1), Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 14 *Single Strength Arm:* +10 STR 1
Only When Using Right Arm (-1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4)
plus +1 BODY
plus Resistant Protection (6 PD/6 ED); Required Roll 9- (or Locations 6-8; -1 1/2), Only Affects Right Arm (-1)
- 11 *Finger Razors:* HKA 1d6 (2d6 w/STR)
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Cybersystem (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), Reduced Penetration (-1/4), No Knockback (-1/4)
- 6 *Flare Filter:* Sight Group Flash Defense (7 points)
Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 4 *Thermographic Filter:* IR Perception (Sight Group)
Cybersystem (-1/4)

Martial Arts: *Streetfighting*

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4 Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm; 25 STR to Disarm
4 Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
4 Elbow/Knee Smash	+2	+0	5d6 Strike
4 Escape	+0	+0	30 STR vs. Grabs
3 Legsweep	+2	-1	4d6 Strike, Target Falls
4 Punch/Snap Kick	+0	+2	5d6 Strike
5 Side/Roundhouse Kick	-2	+1	7d6 Strike
3 Throw	+0	+1	3d6 +v/5, Target Falls
3 Weapon Element:	Blades, Clubs, Cyber Blades		

Perks

- 3 Contact: Fixer (Contact has useful Skills or resources) 11-

Skills

- 10 +1 with All Attacks
- 3 Acrobatics 12-

- 5 Breakfall 13-
- 2 KS: Neo York 11-
- 3 Climbing 12-
- 1 KS: Assorted Martial Arts 8-
- 2 KS: Cybertechnology 11-
- 2 KS: Neo York Underworld 11-
- 3 Paramedics 12-
- 2 PS: Street Samurai 11-
- 3 Shadowing 12-
- 3 Stealth 12-
- 5 Streetwise 13-
- 5 Two-Weapon Fighting; Ranged Multiple Attacks Only (-1)
- 5 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Small Arms, Thrown Knives

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 182

Total Cost: 280

175 Matching Complications (50)

- 10 Distinctive Features: Extensive Cyberware (Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 0 Distinctive Features: Extensive Tattoos On His Upper Body (Easily Concealed; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 0 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Large Group)
- 5 Hunted: Neo York Police Department, Inc. 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Limited Geographical Area, Watching)
- 0 Psychological Complication: Dislike For Multinational Corporations (Common, Moderate)
- 15 Psychological Complication: Professional Code (Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Complication: Wants To Be His Own Man (Common, Strong)
- 5 Rivalry: Professional (with other street samurai for a larger share of the pie), Rival is As Powerful, Seek to Outdo, Embarrass, or Humiliate Rival, Rival Aware of Rivalry

Total Complications Value: 50

Experience Points: 105

DANNY 33

Background/History: There aren't a lot of options for those growing up in 2030 Neo York. You can join the military and be sent overseas to serve in what is left of Africa or war-torn China, take a menial service job (and between the domestic cyberdroids and the synthetic humans, there are precious few of those), become just another corporate wageslave, or simply opt out and run across the Williamsburg Bridge to the Neo York Zero Law-enforcement Zone, where you have no power, no heat, no running water, and no future. Or, you try staying where you are and work around the system.

Born Daniel Torres, Danny 33 took just such an option. Early on in life, he decided he wanted to be his own man and control his own destiny. He'd seen what being another corporate cog had done to both his father and mother, turning them into virtually numb drones whose only thought was how to better serve the company (and thus avoid being terminated in favor of a more willing worker), and he wanted none of it. So, taking his name from the street on which he lived, Danny made a new life for himself as a solo operative, a "street samurai."

Now Danny 33 lives and works in the shadows of the major multinational corporations he so despises. He's used the money he's made so far to buy himself a better body, and even has a new cyberarm to replace the one lost to a high-caliber bullet. It may not be the best choice of lifestyles, but at least he's in charge of it.

Personality/Motivation: Although he desires to be his own man, Danny 33 recognizes the need to be a dependable and honorable street samurai, which requires he submit to the will of others from time to time. But he also knows that as a samurai he is only selling his services, not himself, and while corporate clients may hire his skills they are not buying him outright. Thus, he asks only those questions that pertain to the mission at hand and doesn't ponder the "what ifs" about the missions he is sent on or the people who send him. His personal code also means he stays loyal for the duration of the job, dedicating himself wholly to the mission until the mission is over (or the mission is obviously a failure — Danny doesn't do suicide runs).

Even if he doesn't care much for the multinationals that virtually run Neo York, Danny 33 still loves his hometown. On the other hand, the Zero Zone just across the river is a place he'd rather not have to deal with. He likes Neo York's clean chrome and bright neon, and finds the Zone to be too chaotic, too confused, and too primitive for his tastes. But, even so, he has nothing against people living in the Zone. As he figures it, it's their choice, and if someone hires him to get them into the Zone, he'll work just as hard as if he was hired to get them out.

If Danny can be said to have a goal in life, it's to be someone — not another cog in the machine, but to become a bigger and better cog, or even someone who runs

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUNx	Shots	STR MIN	Notes
H&K UMP	+1	+1	2d6-1	1d6	25	11	AF5
Colt M1911A1	+1	+0	2d6-1	1d6	7	9	
Combat knife	0	—	1d6-1	-0	—	6	Can Be Thrown
Throwing knives	0	0	1d6-1	0	6	RBS	AF3

Body Armor: Level II Biosteel Vest (DEF 8 on Hit Locations 9-12)

Gear: As appropriate for his current mission.

Clothing: As appropriate for the circumstances.



the machine. Naturally, it's not an easy task, especially for a street-runner like himself, but it's something to shoot for. Thus, Danny has begun to try and make more contact with the local business scene in an effort to get his name around, making it so people will come to him with jobs, instead of his having to go to the local fixer for work.

Quote: "My price? I'm not for sale. But my combat skills are. Two thousand UNA dollars."

Powers/Tactics: As with virtually all street samurai, Danny 33 has trained for both armed and unarmed combat. He backs up these skills with assorted cybernetic implants, such as razor-sharp blades implanted in his forearms, polarized filters for his eyes, a fully-cybernetic right arm, and a Combat Pump.

When involved in a firefight, Danny will use his H&K UMP, retaining the Colt M1911A1 as a backup weapon, but if outnumbered or outgunned, he'll use both at once, to maximize his firepower. In hand-to-hand combat, Danny will Block attacks until he can close and use Elbow/Knee Smashes and Punches to beat his opponent down. Danny won't hesitate to use a weapon if he can, especially if his foe is armed, and will usually try to Block and Disarm before closing.

Campaign Use: Danny is representative of the typical low-end street samurai. To make Danny more powerful raise his STR and DEX to 18 or 20, his CON to 18, and add a few points to INT, EGO, and PRE. Give him a second Colt M1911A1 and more Armor (either worn or implanted). To make Danny less powerful remove his Two-Weapon Fighting, Combat Pump, Throwing Knives, and Razors.

As Danny tends to work as security for those who hire him, he's not likely to hunt a PC, although he may cross their path while on a mission — which might just bring him and a group of PCs at cross ends.

Appearance: Danny is of mixed parentage, with skin a light tan color and dark brown eyes. He stands about 5'9", with a very fit build, and trains constantly. He shaves his head, exposing the multiple tattoos of various geometric patterns that cover his scalp and upper body. He normally wears combat boots, fatigue pants, an equipment belt, and his armored vest, leaving his chest and upper body otherwise bare. Danny's cyberarm is of brushed steel, while his eyes are covered with reflective silver flare filters.

KELLY FITZPATRICK

9 STR 13 DEX 11 CON 18 INT 13 EGO 13 PRE
 4 OCV 4 DCV 4 OMCV 4 DMCV 3 SPD
 3 PD 3 ED 4 REC 20 END 10 BOD 20 STUN

Abilities: *Been There, Done That:* +5 PRE; Only To Resist Presence Attacks (-1); *Advanced Cyberbrain:* 15 EGO, 5 OMCV, 5 DMCV; Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4); *Attack Barrier:* Mental Defense (15 points); Software (-1/2); *Audio Recorder:* Eidetic Memory, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (flash drive, easy to obtain, 1 Hour; +0); Audio Only (-1), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4); *Video Recorder:* Eidetic Memory, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (flash drive, easy to obtain, 1 Hour; +0); Video Only (-1), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4); *Level One Datajack:* +2 with all computer-related Skills; Requires DNI-Capable Computer And Accessible Datacable (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4); *Skilljack:* Variable Power Pool, 10 base + 5 control cost, No Skill Roll Required (+1); Limited Class Of Powers Available (only specific Skills may be used; -1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4); *Striking Appearance* (+1/+1d6); *Fringe Benefit:* Press Pass; *Fringe Benefit:* Studio Access; *Well-Connected:* 1) Contact: Dawn, of Dawn of the Razor's Edge 8-; 2) Contact: Gordon, bartender for The Living End 11-; 3) Contact: Member of the Steel Commandos (Contact has useful Skills or resources) 8-; 4) Contact: NTYPD Patrol Officer (Contact has useful Skills or resources) 11-; 5) Contact: Zero Zone Esper (Contact has useful Skills or resources) 11-; Acting 12-; Bribery 12-; CK: Neo York 11-; Conversation 12-; High Society 12-; KS: Current Events 13-; KS: The Corporate World 11-; KS: The Entertainment World 11-; KS: Video Broadcasting Equipment 11-; KS: Who's Who In Neo York 13-; Oratory 12-; PS: Journalist 13-; PS: Video Editing 11-; Persuasion 12-; Research 13-; Streetwise 12-; Systems Operation (Broadcast Communications) 13-; WF: Handguns

175+ Matching Complications (50): Negative Reputation: investigative nuisance (Infrequently); Psychological Complication: Impulsive; Acts On Her Instincts (Common, Moderate); Psychological Complication: Investigative Curiosity; Want's To Know What's Going On (Common, Strong); Rivalry: Professional (with other reports to get to the story first; Rival is As Powerful; Seek to Outdo, Embarrass, or Humiliate Rival; Rival Aware of Rivalry); Social Complication: Well-Known Netzine Reporter (Frequently, Minor)

KELLY FITZPATRICK

Kelly is an investigative reporter for Rolling Stone's video-based Netzine edition. She pursues stories of all sorts; interviewing *Lace & Steel* stars, reporting on the newest music coming out of the Zone, the newest multinational abuses and scandals, and so on. In some ways she's like a 1930s muckraker, willing to do most anything to get her story out to the people. She knows a number of people in Neo York and the Zone, and is a good person to contact if you need to know what's going on in the city.

Kelly is in her late twenties, with blonde hair and an attractive build. As her recording gear is built into her eyes and ears, she normally doesn't carry much (aside from a PDA), but will don a stylish biosteel jacket when needed. If venturing into the Zone she'll also carry a pistol.



Lora Doubet created
by William Jordan.

LORA DOUBET

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
45	STR	35	18-	Lift 12.8 tons; 9d6 [4]
23	DEX	26	14-	OCV: 8/DCV: 8
23	CON	13	14-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
14	EGO	4	12-	ECV: 5
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3 1/2d6
8	OCV	25		
8	DCV	25		
5	OMCV	6		
5	DMCV	6		
6	SPD	40		Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
9	PD	7		Total: 18 PD (9 rPD)
7	ED	5		Total: 16 ED (9 rED)
12	REC	8		
45	END	5		
15	BODY	5		
50	STUN	15		
				Total Characteristic Cost: 241

Movement: Running: 32m
Leaping: 38m

Cost Powers

- 5 *Cool Under Pressure:* +10 PRE
Only To Resist Presence Attacks (-1)
- 41 *Secure Cyberbrain:* 20 EGO, 7 OMCV, 7 DMCV.
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 20 *Multi-Layered Attack Barrier:* Mental Defense (24 points total)
Hardened (+1/4); Software (-1/2)
- 10 *Armored Limbs:* HA +2d6
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 27 *Cybergraft Shell:* Resistant Protection (9 PD/9 ED)
- 34 *Combat Cybergraft:* Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%
STUN Only (-1/2), Linked (Cybergraft Shell; -1/4)
- 15 *Full-Conversion Cyborg:* Does Not Bleed
- 4 *Flare Filter:* Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points)
Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 2 *Heavy:* Knockback Resistance -2m
- 17 *Cybernetic Legs:* Leaping +34m (38m forward, 19m upward)
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); No Noncombat Movement (-1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 16 *Cybernetic Legs:* Running +20m (32m total)
Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 2 *Cyborg Body:* Swimming -4m
- 3 *Low-Light Filter:* UV Perception (Sight Group)
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 4 *Telescopic Implant:* +4 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 3 *Thermographic Filter:* IR Perception (Sight Group)
Restraining (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 6 *Internal Respirator:* LS (Self-Contained Breathing)
1 Continuing Fuel Charge (5 Minutes; -1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 3 *Pathogen Filter:* LS (Immunity: All terrestrial diseases and biowarfare agents)
Not Versus Bioweapons (-1/2), Required Roll 14- (-1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 8 *Smartgun Link:* +2 with Ranged Combat
Requires Smartlinked Weapon (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Limited Range (64m; -1/4) plus +1 Range Skill
Level with All Attacks; Requires Smartlinked Weapon (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Limited Range (64m; -1/4)
- 4 *Level Two Datajack:* +2 with all computer-related Skills
Requires DNI-Capable Computer And Accessible Datacable (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restraining (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)

Martial Arts: Jeet Kune Do, Tae Kwon Do

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Arm Sweep Block/Block*#	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4 Dodge*	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
4 Front Kick/Punch/Elbow Strike*#	+0	+2	11d6 Strike

END

2

[1 cc]

3	Grab/Joint Lock*	-1	-1	Grab Two Limbs, 55 STR for holding on
5	Kick/Knee Strike/Side or Roundhouse Kick*#	-2	+1	13d6 Strike
4	Punch/Elbow Strike*	+2	+0	11d6 Strike
3	Takedown#	+1	+1	9d6 Strike; Target Falls
3	Throw*	+0	+1	9d6 +v/5, Target Falls

*= Jeet Kune Do maneuver, # = Tae Kwon Do maneuver

5 *Latent Esper Awareness:* Mental Awareness, Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees)

Perks

- 1 Computer Link: Corporate Database
- 2 Fringe Benefit: Concealed Weapon Permit (where appropriate)
- 1 Fringe Benefit: Corporate ID Card

Talents

- 6 Striking Appearance (+2/+2d6)

Skills

- 20 +2 with All Attacks
- 10 +2 with Martial Arts
- 3 Acrobatics 14-
- 3 Breakfall 14-
- 5 Bureaucratics 14-
- 3 CK: Neo York 13-
- 2 Computer Programming (Personal Computers) 13-
- 3 Conversation 13-
- 1 Electronics (Cybernetic Systems) 8-
- 3 High Society 13-
- 2 KS: Shikoku-Shin Consumer Products History And Customs 11-
- 2 KS: The Corporate World 11-
- 1 Mechanics 8-
- 2 PS: Corporate Troubleshooter 11-
- 3 PS: Play Flute 14-
- 3 PS: Play Keyboards 14-
- 3 Security Systems 13-
- 3 Stealth 14-
- 3 Streetwise 13-
- 2 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles
- 2 WF: Small Arms
- 3 Linguist
 - 2 1) Language: Cantonese (completely fluent)
 - 1 2) Language: English (imitate dialects)
 - 3 3) Language: French (idiomatic)
 - 3 4) Language: German (idiomatic)
 - 2 5) Language: Japanese (completely fluent)

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 356

Total Cost: 599

300 Matching Compilations (60)

- 0 DNPC: Matthew Shirow, Mitsumi Biotechnology Puma Duty Officer (Frequently, Normal; Useful Non-combat Position or Skills)
- 10 Distinctive Features: Synthskin/Cyborg Body (her skin doesn't quite feel right to the touch, she doesn't sweat, her mass is much greater than her size indicates, her skin degrades if he is hit by an attack) (Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 0 Hunted: Shikoku-Shin Consumer Products (Frequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 20 Hunted: Shikoku-Shin Consumer Products Competitors (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
- 0 Hunted: UNA Government (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 10 Physical Complication: Cyborg (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 0 Physical Complication: Heavy (weighs roughly 200 kg) (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
- 10 Psychological Complication: Although Loyal To Shikoku-Shin Consumer Products, Cynical About Most Corporate Motivations (Common, Moderate)
- 20 Psychological Complication: Personal Code Of Ethics/Honor (Common, Strong)

Total Complications Value: 60

Experience Points: 299

MY CAMPAIGN, YOUR CAMPAIGN

In the *Kazei 5* PBEM, Lora was one of several PCs who were part of Shikoku-Shin Consumer Products. There she met and befriended Raven Clark, and later helped the esper escape from the multinational's clutches. She also fell in love with Matthew Shirow from Mitsumi Biotechnology, and through him learned to appreciate replicates as more than mere organic machines.

You can use her as a valuable (and friendly) SSCP Contact for the PCs, one who can introduce them to other SSCP NPCs (such as Raven) and Matthew Shirow. And unlike Carlos Jagger, Lora likes espers and replicates.

PLOT SEED: A SHELL FOR A GHOST

Lora's full-conversion cybergraft shell is so cutting edge a rival corporation wants to get their hands on it and see what makes it tick. They send a mercenary team out to capture Lora and then haul her disabled body off into the Zone to have Doctor Snakeye (or Doc, see pages 251 or 254) remove Lora's brain and place a new one in its place. The PCs can be the ones hired to take down Lora, SSCP can have them try and get her back, or they could be Zone residents who happened to visit the doctor's at the worst possible moment. Worse yet, Raven Clark has heard what's happened to her friend and has come to the Zone to rescue her. Odds are, things will get messy, no matter how you play it!

PLOT SEED: ESCAPE FROM SSCP

Lora has done some digging and has discovered exactly what her contract with SSCP entails. They own her lock, stock, and barrel. Her cybergraft wasn't cheap and she's so in debt to SSCP it's doubtful she'll ever pay it off. In addition, SSCP holds all rights to her body, including when she goes in for maintenance, how often she's upgraded, and what sort of

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUNx	Shots	STR MIN	Notes
Seburo C-25A	+1	+1	2d6	1d6-1	50	12	AF5
Seburo MN-23	+2	+1	2d6	1d6	25	12	2H, AF5
IMI Desert Eagle .50	+1	+0	2d6+1	1d6	9	13	
S&W .500 Magnum	+0	+0	2d6+1	1d6	5	13	
Remington Stormbreaker	+1	+0	3d6+1	1d6	3	15	

Body Armor: None, although see Appearance.

Gear: PDA, Jinsei Kage.

Clothing: As described under Appearance.

LORA DOUBET

Background/History: When Lora was born in 2010, the United States had begun to tear itself apart with the Second Civil War. Her parents died toward the end of fighting, and she was sent to live with her only living relatives, saved by a stroke of luck from the over-crowded and under-funded orphanages and refugee camps. Lora stayed with her aunt and uncle for eight years, attending school and discovering a talent for both languages and music. She learned to play the flute and piano and even dared to dream of someday joining a band or even an orchestra. Life was good.

Then she ran away from home. Lora won't talk about what drove her to leave home at age 15. Whatever happened, it was bad enough to cause her to hide in Neo York's Zero Zone. There, she managed to beat the odds again, avoiding the fate reserved for most runaways by using her musical skills to play for food and a little money. She still had a valid UNA SIN and planned to stay in the Zone until she was 18, so she could return to Neo York a legal adult, free to do as she pleased.

But Lora had another talent beyond her skill with music, one she was unaware of, one that was to become her undoing: she was a latent esper. A powerful latent esper. As Lora said years later, "I guess I always had the Power, but I just didn't realize it. It always appeared as weird stuff that I could ignore or pass off as a lucky break. I needed a trashcan to fall over and trip a ganger chasing me, it happened; I needed to jump up and grab a fire escape I couldn't otherwise reach, I did it; but never anything really reliable. I can look back now and see there was a lot of that stuff going on, but I never believed it was me. Now I know better.

"Anyway, I was practicing one morning before heading out to Zone Central to play. I got into a really good groove and kind of went into a trance, I guess... And then something opened up inside me... there was a whirlwind... a lot of stuff flying through the air. I think I remember a light post close by bending all crazy... I stopped playing, but I didn't know how to stop what was going on around me."

The most powerful esper on the planet — Ran — rarely ventures forth from his home in the Southside of the Zone. A young, uncontrolled, and powerful esper talent awakening for the first time and causing him a severe headache was enough incentive for him to stir in order to stop the ringing in his head — by swatting the annoyance.

had been researching esper abilities and how they were adversely affected by cybernetic implants. They theorized this was due to the esper using their body's nervous system as an "antenna" of sorts. Any disruption to the body's own feedback system would have a negative effect on the esper's ability to use her powers. However, SSCP researchers hypothesized that with a good enough neural network, you could get around this problem. So Lora's new body was given the best neural net that SSCP could get, in the hope they would gain a powerful cyborg-esper weapon. But Lora never developed any further ability to use her esper powers. All she exhibited was the same esper sense espers the world over shared, and even this sometimes caused her discomfort.

Lora adapted to her new body in a matter of months. Her advanced neural net gave her almost all the same sensations as a normal human. However, the question of just how human she was anymore weighed on her mind once she attended her first maintenance session, while the realization she'd never bear children made her doubt her femininity.

Although testing showed her to be a failure with regards as an esper weapon, her cybergraft made her an excellent security operative. Her duties took her around the world, MegaTokyo, Hong Kong, Berlin, Paris, and Greater San Francisco. Along the way she fully developed her talent for languages, eventually able to speak Cantonese, French, German, and Japanese fluently. She also demonstrated the ability to mimic any regional English accent once exposed to it, from Scottish to a southern American drawl. Upon her return to Neo York, Lora was made part of SSCP's esper program, acting as an escort and bodyguard for Raven Clark. She also met (and fell in love with) Matthew Shirow, an employee of Mitsumi Biotechnology. As his long association with Pumas has made him look beyond the surface of people he meets, he accepts her cybergraft without question, and makes her feel like a woman again. Things seem to be looking up at long last.

Personality/Motivation: Lora, despite being a high-powered combat cyborg, is one of the most relentlessly normal people you're ever likely to come across. She's genuinely caring and kind-hearted, with a sense of personal honor she's loath to compromise. Although no longer an actively practicing Christian, her faith still forms the core of her ethics. At the same time, she can be pragmatic and ice cold when needed, with a toughened core to her personality that won't bend to anything or anyone. She has an extremely long fuse, and it's very difficult to get her truly angry — but once she is, her

Shikoku-Shin Consumer Products, alerted by their own esper operatives to the awakening of a new talent in the Zone, arrived just in time to recover Lora's shattered body. Barely alive, she was saved through a full-body cybergraft. Shikoku-Shin

temper can be startlingly explosive! Deep down, Lora has developed a certain degree of pride in her cybernetic frame's physical prowess and durability. She doesn't recognize it as such, and would deny it if it was pointed out to her, but she feels – not without some justification – she can take on nearly anything and win. This manifests as a “take charge” attitude when combat is imminent. It also means she'll shield others with her body, even over protests, since she feels she can take the first few hits and still keep fighting. However, this confidence doesn't extend to esper weapons. She has no illusions about what one can do, having experienced it firsthand.

Quote: “It doesn't really matter what the shell is made of, does it? A body is a body. So mine is made of different materials. So what? It's what's inside that matters in the end.”

Powers/Tactics: Lora is a true full-conversion cyborg. Her brain has been implanted into an artificial body, covered in a layer of armored plate and synthetic flesh. Interlaced with a sensory mesh, Lora's synthflesh allows her to experience the world around her with almost the full range of normal human senses. She can eat, sleep, and even experience sex, just as if she was a normal human. The only difference is her body isn't “alive,” she doesn't bleed if cut, and she can suffer severe physical trauma (like having her arm shot off) with a minimum of ill effects.

Lora's esper potential has been permanently curtailed by her cybergraft upgrade. However, she can still sense other esper talents in use, but certain forms of esper abilities can cause discomfort and even pain depending on the power and its proximity. For example, if another esper teleports her directly, she can be nearly incapacitated for as much as a half-minute.

As part of her security training, Lora has studied Jeet Kune Do and Tae Kwon Do, combining the two into an effective and distinctive style thanks to her cybernetically enhanced physique. Many of her maneuvers seem possible only because of her body's resiliency and heightened reaction times. Lora often utilizes acrobatic flips and rolls and other unusual techniques in combat, making her an unpredictable and frustrating opponent to fight. Trained in a variety of firearms, Lora often makes use of heavy weaponry, thanks to her augmented strength. While her SSCP-issue weapons from Seburow serve for most encounters, she's also fond of the IMI Desert Eagle .50, the S&W .500 Magnum, and the Remington Stormbreaker — especially if loaded with armor piercing rounds.

Campaign Use: Lora has the potential to be either a strong friend or a dogged foe. If the PCs are opposed to SSCP, Lora can use her security skills to oppose their actions, and if they encounter her in person, she can be a holy terror in combat. On the other hand, in more social situations, she can make for a very useful contact. If ap-

proached the right way, she can provide useful information on the inner workings and politics within SSCP. If someone could help her out of her contract, they'd have her friendship and loyalty for life.

There's not much reason to make Lora more powerful, although you could up her DEX to 26 and her CON to 25. To make her less powerful, reduce her STR, SPD, and Movement abilities, and remove her Smartgun Link.

Lora normally hunts people on the orders of SSCP. However, she'll also pursue people who have harmed, or attempted to harm her friends, such as Matthew Shirow or Raven Clark.

Appearance: Lora Doubet stands 5'7" and weighs 380 pounds due to her cybernetic frame. She appears as to be an attractive and healthy young woman in her early twenties, with blue eyes and blonde hair. Her hair is worn waist length, and serves as part of Lora's cooling system. Excessive physical exertion (such as in combat) will bleach it out to its natural white color. When on duty, Lora normally wears the standard SSCP security uniform. On combat missions she'll don a form-fitting bodysuit with multiple pockets and snap on kneepads, calf-high boots with reinforced soles and protective shin guards, fingerless black riding gloves, and a black Level III biosteel jacket with armor inserts. Off-duty or outside the corporate environment, Lora's tastes run to “casual-eclectic.” She prefers blue jeans, athletic shoes, and sweaters, or stylish, tasteful combinations of knee-length skirts and blouses that flatter her figure.



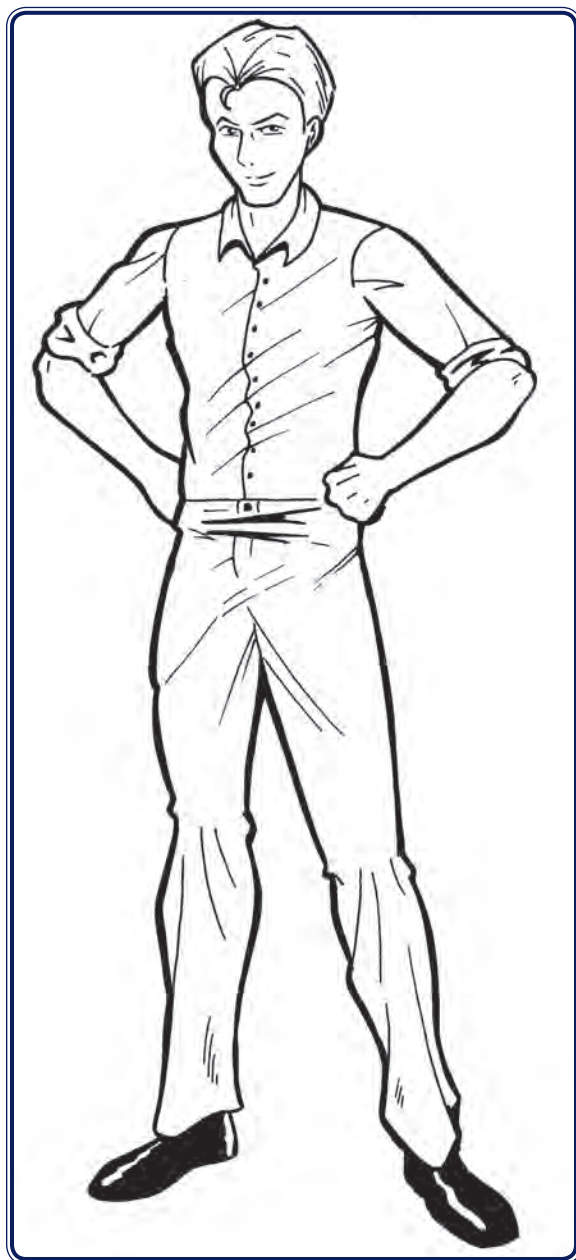
Continued from Previous page
medical attention she'll receive if damaged or injured. They even have control over how her body is to be disposed if she's killed. So she wants out. The only question is how. She can't run, she doesn't have the resources to evade SSCP for long, and the Zone isn't a sufficient hiding place. She could go mercenary, but the upkeep on her body would eat up anything she made. Besides, who'd hire her once they knew SSCP was after her? The only real option is to pay off her contract legally, but where's she going to get that kind of money?

The PCs can be engaged to help Lora escape (perhaps to be recruited into a different, less restrictive operation) or to help her amass the money needed to buy out her contract. Will they try and rob SSCP of the funds and then brazenly use those funds to help Lora? Or will they hit another multinational? Or, perhaps, they'll simply try and edit the relevant computer records — if they can find them.

MATTHEW SHIROW

A Neo York native, Matthew was made the Puma Duty Officer as a favor to his uncle, who is a highly placed official for Mitsumi Neo York. A natural at juggling supply problems, Matthew finds he enjoys his work and enjoys working with the Pumas as well. Unlike many of his coworkers, Matthew treats his charges as people and friends, not as pets. He also doesn't care for those who consider Pumas to be mindless machines or glorified combat-ready sex-toys. Interestingly, this attitude has begun to rub off on the Pumas, who have opened up to Matthew and now are rather protective and supportive of their beloved Commander.

Matthew stands 5'8", with a trim build, handsome features and blond hair. He dresses in business casual and carries a PDA.



MATTHEW SHIROW

11 STR 11 DEX 11 CON 13 INT 12 EGO 13 PRE
4 OCV 4 DCV 4 OMCV 4 DMCV 2 SPD
3 PD 2 ED 4 REC 20 END 10 BOD 22
STUN

Abilities: *Puma Commander:* +10 PRE; Only When Dealing With Pumas Under His Command (-1); *Basic Cyberbrain:* 10 EGO, 3 OMCV, 3 DMCV; Cyber-system (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4); *Attack Barrier:* Mental Defense (10 points total); Software (-1/2); *Level Two Datajack:* +2 with all computer-related Skills; Requires DNI-Capable Computer And Accessible Database (-1/2), Cyber-system (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4); *Computer Link:* Corporate Database; Contact: Lora Doubet (Contact has extremely useful Skills or resources, Very Good relationship with Contact) 14-; Follower (any one of the 36 Pumas under his command); Fringe Benefit: Corporate ID Card; AK: Mitsumi Biotechnology Arcology 11-; Bureaucratics 13-; CK: Neo York 11-; Computer Programming (Personal Computers) 12-; Gambling (Card Games) 12-; High Society 12-; KS: Mitsumi Biotechnology History And Customs 11-; KS: Replicated Humans 14-; KS: The Corporate World 11-; PS: Puma Duty Officer 11-; Paramedics 12-; SS: Logistics 11-; WF: Handguns

75+ Matching Complications: Hunted: Mitsumi Biotechnology (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Watching); Negative Reputation: Puma Duty Officer (Frequently, Mitsumi Biotechnology Employees); Psychological Complication: Cares Strongly For The Pumas Under His Command (Common, Strong); Psychological Complication: Company Loyalty (Common, Strong)

MICHAEL ERICA DE NORMANDY

7 STR 12 DEX 9 CON 18 INT 19 EGO 11 PRE
 4 OCV 4 DCV 6 OMCV 6 DMCV 2 SPD
 2 PD 2 ED 3 REC 20 END 8 BOD 16
 STUN

Abilities: *Esper Awareness:* Mental Awareness, Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees); *Computer Link:* Corporate Database(s); Fringe Benefit: Corporate ID Card; *Always Knows The Time:* Absolute Time Sense; *Ambidextrous:* Ambidexterity (no Off Hand penalty); *Never Gets Lost:* Bump Of Direction; *Never Forgets:* Eidetic Memory; *Mathematics Whiz:* Lightning Calculator; *Speed Reader:* Speed Reading (x10); *Striking Appearance* (+1/+1d6); *AK:* The Net 11-; *Bureaucratics* 12-; *Computer Programming* (Computer Networks, Hacking and Computer Security, Personal Computers, Mainframes and Supercomputers) 13-; *Cramming* ; *Cryptography* 13-; *Electronics* (Computer Systems) 13-; *Gambling* (Card Games) 13-; *PS:* Data Management Specialist 13-; *Research* 13-; *Security Systems* 13-; *Only Versus Computer Security Systems* (-1/2); *Systems Operation* (Communications Systems) 13-; *Scholar;* 1) *KS:* Current Clothing Fashions And How To Apply Them 11-; 2) *KS:* Simulation Technologies History And Customs 11-; 3) *KS:* The Corporate World 11-; 4) *KS:* The Esper World 11-; *Scientist;* 1) *SS:* Analysis 13-; 2) *SS:* Applied Mathematics 13-; 3) *SS:* Computer Engineering 13-; 4) *SS:* Computer Science 11-; 5) *SS:* Mathematics 11-; 6) *SS:* Software Engineering 13-

175+ Matching Complications (50): *Distinctive Features:* Albino (Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses); *Distinctive Features:* Negligible Esper (Easily Concealed; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses); *Hunted:* Simulation Technologies (Frequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Watching); *Psychological Complication:* Slightly Shy, Soft-Spoken, Quiet And Reserved (Common, Moderate)

MICHAEL ERICA DE NORMANDY

A programmer for Simulation Technologies Incorporated, Michael helps create virtual worlds for online games and interactive training. She's extremely good at her job and is a valued company asset. Part of her skill seems to result from her low-level esper talents, which include the uncanny ability to always know the correct time, to always tell which way is north, and the ability to work complex mathematical equations in her head.

Michael was born with oculocutaneous albinism type 1, meaning she has pale, almost white skin, white hair, and light blue eyes. Due to her condition, she tends to remain in the depths of SimTech's server rooms, where she keeps the lights down and/or covered with red filters. She stands 5'5" with a slight build, barely breaking 100 pounds. She wears her hair well down her back and due to her sensitivity to sunlight wears fully covering clothing.



PAULA MACARTHUR LARS

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15/30	STR	5	12-/15-	Lift 200 kg/1600 kg; 3d6/6d6 [1/2]
18	DEX	16	13-	
21	CON	11	13-	
12	INT	2	11-	PER Roll 11-
12	EGO	2	11-	
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3 1/2d6
6	OCV	15		
6	DCV	15		
4	OMCV	3		
4	DMCV	3		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	PD	4		Total: 18 PD (12 rPD)
6	ED	4		Total: 18 ED (12 rED)
10	REC	6		
40	END	4		
11	BODY	1		
30	STUN	5		
				Total Characteristic Cost: 123

/ = Values after slash are due to esper powers.

Movement: Running: 36m
Swimming: 4m

Cost Powers**END**

15	<i>Telekinetic Strength:</i> +15 STR	1
60	<i>Esper Force Projection:</i> Multipower, 75-point reserve all slots Esper Side Effects (-1/4)	
5f	1) <i>Force Bolt:</i> Blast 15d6 Cannot be Bounced (-1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)	7
5f	2) <i>Force Spike:</i> Blast 12d6 Armor Piercing (+1/4); Cannot be Bounced (-1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)	7
5f	3) <i>Force Bomb:</i> Blast 10d6 Area Of Effect (22m Radius Explosion (+1/2); Cannot be Bounced (-1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4) <i>Telekinetic Manipulation;</i> all slots have Unified Power (-1/4)	7
14	1) <i>Telekinetic Fist:</i> HA +9d6 Increased Endurance Cost (x4 END; -1 1/2), Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4), Unified Power (-1/4)	16
23	2) <i>Telekinetic Shield:</i> Resistant Protection (12 PD/12 ED), Protect Carried Items Costs Endurance (-1/2), Esper Side Effects (-1/4), Perceivable (-0), Unified Power (-1/4)	4
12	3) <i>Telekinetic Wall:</i> Barrier 12 PD/0 ED, 0 BODY (up to 4m long and 2m high) Costs Endurance (-1/2), Feedback (-1), No Range (-1/2), Restricted Shape (ring; -1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4), Unified Power (-1/4)	2
8	4) <i>Telekinetic Speed:</i> Running +24m (36m total) Esper Side Effects (-1/4), Unified Power (-1/4)	2

Martial Arts: Karate

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4 Punch/Snap Kick	+0	+2	5d6/8d6 Strike
5 Side/Spin Kick	-2	+1	7d6/10d6 Strike

7 *Esper Awareness:* Mental Awareness, +2 to PER Roll, Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees)

Perks

- 6 Contact: Shigeru Sanato, executive director SSCP esper assets (Contact has extremely useful Skills or resources, Contact has significant Contacts of his own) 11-
- 2 Fringe Benefit: Concealed Weapon Permit (where appropriate)
- 1 Fringe Benefit: Corporate ID Card
- 1 Fringe Benefit: Passport

Skills

- 20 +2 with All Combat

- 3 Breakfall 13-
- 3 Bureaucratics 13-
- 2 CK: Neo York 11-
- 3 Climbing 13-
- 1 High Society 8-
- 1 KS: Karate 8-
- 2 KS: Republic Of Texas 11-
- 2 KS: Shikoku-Shin Consumer Products History And Customs 11-
- 2 KS: The Corporate World 11-
- 2 KS: The Esper World 11-
- 2 Language: Spanish (fluent conversation)
- 2 PS: Corporate Trouble Shooter 11-
- 3 Stealth 13-
- 1 Streetwise 8-
- 1 TF: Equines
- 2 WF: Small Arms

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 229

Total Cost: 352

300 Matching Complications (60)

- 5 Distinctive Features: Esper (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
- 15 Enraged: if at a disadvantage (*i.e.* outnumbered) or losing (Uncommon), go 11-, recover 11-
- 10 Hunted: Shikoku-Shin Consumer Products Competitors (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 0 Physical Complication: Powers Are Occasionally Out Of Control (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 20 Psychological Complication: Extremely Loyal To Shikoku-Shin Consumer Products (Common, Total)
- 0 Psychological Complication: Overconfident With Regards To Her Powers And Her Ability To Handle Problems (Very Common, Strong)
- 10 Psychological Complication: Self-Centered (Common, Moderate)
- 0 Rivalry: Professional (all other esper weapons, especially Raven; Rival is More Powerful; Seek to Outdo, Embarrass, or Humiliate Rival; Rival Aware of Rivalry)
- 0 Social Complication: Esper (Frequently, Minor)

Total Complications Value: 60

Experience Points: 52

PAULA MACARTHUR LARS

Background/History: A Texas native, Paula was born in 2007, just two years before the start of the Second Civil War. Amid the fighting, riots and resulting hardship, Paula lost her parents and her home. She ended up in one of many federally funded orphanages run by the nascent Republic of Texas. The agents of Shikoku-Shin Consumer Products discovered her, realizing Paula's significant esper potential. Adopting her as a ward of the corporation, Paula left Texas in 2021 to become Shikoku-Shin's first "esper weapon."

Trained in the use of her rapidly developing powers, as well as hand-to-hand combat and the use of firearms, Paula seemed to be the perfect corporate tool: loyal, unquestioning, and efficient. But lately Paula has come to realize she's not the only fish in Shikoku-Shin's esper pond. Recently she was introduced to Raven Clark, Shikoku-Shin's newest esper agent, and told she not only needs to assist the young esper with getting acclimated to life in the SSCP arcology, but the two are scheduled to be made partners and are to work as a team. This has not sat well with the impetuous Paula, who has long thought she has more than enough skill and power to handle all of Shikoku-Shin's esper operative requirements.

Personality/Motivation: Paula's normal attitude is one of arrogance. She's confident that her powers will carry her through any situation she may face, and thus scorns such extra equipment as armor or weapons (although she will carry a large revolver from time-to-time, since she's from Texas, after all). Paula also carries a big chip on her shoulder and is more than willing to prove that she is stronger, faster, and more skilled than any other esper. She's also fairly self-centered and more concerned with her own well being than the needs or wants of others. This selfishness even extends to her fellow employees. However, Paula only displays this attitude around those who are her corporate equals (or less). To anyone of a higher rank she will give the utmost respect (even if grudgingly at times) and firmly believes in working for the good of Shikoku-Shin's future.

Quote: "I'm all the esper weapon Shikoku-Shin will ever need."

Powers/Tactics: Although she's a reasonably powerful esper weapon, most of Paula's abilities stem from the use of raw power, as opposed to any real skill. She tends to utilize brute strength to solve problems, with a wide assortment of force blasts at her command. More subtle skills, such as simple telekinesis, seem beyond her at the present.

MY CAMPAIGN, YOUR CAMPAIGN

In the *Kazei 5* PBEM, Paula was a constant thorn in Raven Clark's side, at least until Raven's skill and willingness to actually listen to others made her a corporate favorite. Angered by the slight, Paula made the mistake of trying to pick a fight with Raven while Shion Nys was around. While Paula survived the experience, she never was able to regain her previous status.

You can use Paula as a know-it-all who's tendency to talk first and think later gets her into trouble — which the PCs can rescue her from. Or they can let her fight her own battles, hoping she learns her lesson (which is doubtful). She also makes a good antagonist for an esper PC.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUNx	Shots	STR MIN	Notes
S&W Model 2019	+1	+0	1 1/2d6	1d6	6	10	

Body Armor: Normally none. She might don a thigh-length Level II Biosteel Jacket (DEF 8 on Hit Locations 7-14) if pressed by her supervisors.

Gear: Usually a PDA and that's it.

Clothing: As described under Appearance.



Paula's typical combat tactics are to activate her Telekinetic Shield and Speed, close with an opponent and hammer him with an assortment of force blasts. Her Force Bolt and Force Bomb are her favorites, as both attacks are very effective at disabling and scattering her targets. Against other espers as well as APEX and Exo-Suits she'll use her Force Spike

Once she has sufficiently softened up the enemy, Paula will close to hand-to-hand range. Combining her Telekinetic Fist with her karate skills and augmented strength, Paula will then wreak havoc, tearing the average corporate agent to shreds. If put on the defensive, Paula has a tendency to lash out with her Force Bolt, using it repeatedly until either her or her target falls.

Campaign Use: A fairly basic esper, Paula represents the typical sort of esper weapon found in multinational employ. She's not as tough and powerful as she thinks she is, and this almost certainly will be her undoing. To make her more powerful, Increase her DEX, SPD, and END. To make her less powerful, drop her Multipower down to 60 Active Points.

Paula will hunt anyone SSCP tells her to.

Appearance: Paula stands close to 5'9" and weighs a well-muscled 140 pounds. She has a well defined, but attractive build, and wears her blonde hair straight and trimmed at the shoulder. She has a noted taste for men's clothing, and wears a man's business suit (complete with Stetson and cowboy boots) to formal SSCP meetings. When in the field she'll switch to fatigue pants and tank tops.

RAVEN CLARK

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 151.6 kg; 2 1/2d6 [1]
18	DEX	16	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
20	CON	10	13-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
18	EGO	8	13-	ECV: 6
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
6	OCV	15		
6	DCV	15		
6	OMCV	9		
6	DMCV	9		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	PD	4		Total: 6 PD (0 rPD)
5	ED	3		Total: 5 ED (0 rED)
10	REC	6		
40	END	4		
10	BODY	0		
26	STUN	3		
				Total Characteristic Cost: 143

Movement: Running: 12m
Swimming: 4m

Cost Powers**END**

- 112 *Flexible Esper Power:* Variable Power Pool, 75 base + 75 control cost
Powers Can Be Changed As A Zero-Phase Action (+1); Side Effects (suffers "Brainburn" (2d6 Drain versus VPP, 2d6 Flash versus Sight Group, 2d6 Ego Attack) if Control Skill Roll failed; -1/2), Limited Class Of Powers Available (esper effects; -1/4); all slots Esper Side Effects (-1/4)
- 5 *Esper Awareness:* Mental Awareness, Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees)

Perks

- 2 Fringe Benefit: Concealed Weapon Permit (where appropriate)
- 1 Fringe Benefit: Corporate ID Card

Talents

- 5 *Optimized DNA:* Bioware Compatible
- 6 Striking Appearance (+2/+2d6)

Skills

- 15 +3 with all Esper Powers
- 2 AK: The Neo York Zero Zone 11-
- 3 Bureaucratics 13-
- 2 CK: Downtown Neo York 11-
- 3 High Society 13-
- 2 Language: Japanese (fluent conversation)
- 1 Mechanics 8-
- 3 Paramedics 13-
- 13 Esper Potential: Power: Esper Power Stunts 18-
- 3 PS: Sculpting 13-
- 1 Seduction 8-
- 3 Streetwise 13-
- 1 SS: Esper Abilities 8-
- 2 Survival (Urban) 13-
- 2 WF: Small Arms
- 3 Scholar
- 1 1) KS: Current Clothing Fashions And How To Apply Them 11-
- 1 2) KS: Science Fiction Literature 11-
- 1 3) KS: Shikoku-Shin Consumer Products History And Customs 11-
- 1 4) KS: The Corporate World 11-
- 1 5) KS: The Esper World 11-
- 1 6) KS: Zero Zone Gangs 11-

Raven Clark created by Mathieu Roy.

MY CAMPAIGN, YOUR CAMPAIGN

In the *Kazei 5* PBEM, Raven lived for some time in the SSCP arcology. She befriended Shion Nys, and helped the older esper realize how lonely she really was. Later, after a change in management, Raven ended up little more than an indentured servant, watched at all times and unable to go anywhere on her own thanks to a pre-programmed shock collar worn around her neck (and certain threats about her DNPCs). She finally managed to escape, an operation your PCs certainly could be part of if you wish. Eventually, she helped found a home for young espers in the Australian Outback before assisting Shion Nys in founding the Esper Institute.

In your game, Raven can help the PCs contact Shion Nys if they need it. Her escape from SSCP could be a mini-arc all by itself, as the PCs will need to both distract SSCP and hide Raven quickly and efficiently.

JOHNNY THE WRENCH

Jonathan Carstairs drifted into the Zone after losing his job at a garage in Neo York and ended up setting up shop on Clark Street. There he befriended a young Raven, building a working wheelchair for her. He also introduced her to the worlds of science fiction. In turn, she used her developing esper powers to assist him around the garage, eventually reaching the point where she could drag entire cars back to the shop.

An old-school grease-monkey at heart, Johnny enjoys good living and, never really happy living in the Zone, jumped at the chance to accompany Raven back to Neo York. Friendly and forthright, he's also not that quick on the uptake, and it's never occurred to him he's at SSCP to serve as leverage against Raven. However, he's so happy with his new job she doesn't have the heart to explain it to him.

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 196

Total Cost: 340

300 Matching Complications (60)

- 0 DNPC: Doctor (a.k.a. "Auntie") Lydia (Infrequently, Normal; Useful Noncombat Position or Skills)
- 0 DNPC: Johnny "the Wrench" Carstairs (Frequently, Normal)
- 0 Distinctive Features: Esper (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
- 20 Enraged: versus child-abusers and rapists (Uncommon), go 14-, recover 11-
- 0 Hunted: Shikoku-Shin Consumer Products (Infrequently Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 20 Hunted: Shikoku-Shin Consumer Products Competitors (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
- 0 Physical Complication: Cyber-Rejection (Infrequently, Fully Impairing)
- 0 Physical Complication: Powers Are Occasionally Out Of Control (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 5 Physical Complication: Unused To Her New Body, Must Make Periodic DEX Rolls At -3 To Avoid Trips And Stumbles (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
- 0 Psychological Complication: Gregarious, genuinely likes people unless proven otherwise (Common, Strong)
- 0 Psychological Complication: Slightly Over Confident, feels invulnerable and seeks thrills (Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Complication: Strong Code Of Ethics (Common, Strong)
- 0 Social Complication: Esper (Frequently, Minor)

Total Complications Value: 60

Experience Points: 40

RAVEN CLARK

Background/History: Raven's earliest memories are of her and her adoptive mother "Auntie" Lydia settling down in Neo York's Zero Zone. Badly deformed to the point her nick-name on the streets was "Goblin," her life was a hard one, buoyed only by the loving care of Aunt Lydia. Her esper talents developed when she was 12. With them she was able to become part of the Clark Street Devils, turning it into one of the more powerful gangs in the local area. Using her powers to help drive off and destroy several other more dangerous street gangs, Raven then went to work on turning the Devils into a more community-minded group willing to protect the locals and not simply exploit them.

Recently a mugger's lucky shot resulted in her landing in a small corporate-backed Zero Zone medical clinic. While there, a representative of Shikoku-Shin Consumer Products came to her with an offer she couldn't refuse — a full-body phenotype correction that would turn her from a twisted hunchback into a healthy and attractive young woman. Raven agreed almost instantly.

A year of treatments later and Raven is all that SSCP said and more. She can now stand, walk, and even run if she wants. In return she's become an asset of the corporation, an esper weapon operative tasked to do what SSCP needs, where they need it, and when. So far, Raven thinks it's a bargain.

Recently, Raven has completed a three month stint being trained in the full use of her esper powers by Shion Nys. While she found the older and more powerful esper to be more than a little intimidating, she

also thinks she's found someone in need of a friend. Despite Shion's assertions they'll probably be enemies the next time they meet, Raven isn't going to abandon her attempts to get the "Empress" to open up a little.

Personality/Motivation: At her core, Raven is a smart, thoughtful person with a strong sense of Lydia-instilled ethics. Having been taunted and verbally abused as a child, she abhors such treatment and killed a fellow Devil in a fit of rage when she caught him assaulting a young woman. His rather gruesome demise at her hands has made Raven reluctant to kill or even seriously harm others.

Like anyone who's lived in the Zero Zone for any length of time, Raven's a canny, cunning individual with a keen understanding of the laws of the street. She's refused to let herself fall into cynicism, but also maintains a realistic assessment of how the world works, and is unlikely to take any claim of virtue at face value. However, she hasn't totally lost her ability to trust others, due to the influence of Aunt Lydia and Johnny the Wrench.

Unsurprisingly, Raven's self-confidence has taken a serious boost over the last year. Already a powerful esper, she's suddenly become a beautiful, physically fit woman. As a result, she's developed something of an

invulnerability complex, and tends toward overconfidence when dealing with "normals." She's also discovered she can now approach people and they're willing, sometimes even eager, to be friendly to her. Raven has quickly come to truly enjoy this new aspect of her life, resulting in her becoming extremely gregarious. Her favorite evening activity

THE GOBLIN

Raven still keeps a couple of old pictures where she appears as her "old self." They show a short, hunchbacked girl with misshapen, twisted, bandy limbs, a lumpy, badly pockmarked face, faded brown eyes — one noticeably larger than the other — and shiny black hair whose eerie beauty makes the rest of her body appear even uglier. She's sitting in a rickety wheelchair in all of them.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUNx	Shots	STR MIN	Notes
Beretta 93R	+0	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	20	11	AF3, RC1

Body Armor: Level II Biosteel Bodysuit (DEF 5 on Hit Locations 7-17).

Gear: PDA and equipment appropriate for her current assignment.

Clothing: Various fashionable outfits. A dull gray leather coat when she goes out anywhere.

has become nightclubbing and meeting new folk. While she indulges in a bit of harmless flirting, Raven has never had a boyfriend, and actually has yet to realize her potential as a sexual being. She'll likely be very pleased, but somewhat disoriented, when first faced with a good-looking, well-meaning man.

While she's in a bit of a euphoric state, what with all of her fantasies having just been fulfilled, Raven is hardly naïve toward her corporate masters. While she's willing to accept a certain bending of ethics — she was part of the Clark Street Devils for a number of years, after all — she hopes SSCP will fulfill its promise of never asking her to do something truly reprehensible. She suspects that some of SSCP's departments are less than pristine, but knows the corporation isn't a single monolithic entity. She also feels a strong sense of obligation toward SSCP, further complicating her feelings toward her new job.

Quote: “That’s the story of my life: from crippled street girl to corporate strategic weapon. Guess that’s what they call moving up in the world.”

Powers/Tactics: Raven's combat abilities revolve around her extremely flexible, esper abilities. She has quite a bit of raw power, but her flexibility and finesse, born from ceaseless practice, is quite amazing. Her favorite powers include: Telekinesis, Barrier, Blast, and an RKA with Armor Piercing (used mostly against machines and vehicles). She's also fond of the Area Of Effect Advantage, but tends to use it rarely since it requires a lot of power, and usually leaves her defenses weakened. She's also capable of flying and impressive feats of teleportation, and will use these when threatened. She used to teleport around nearly everywhere, but these days prefers the newly-discovered pleasure of simply walking.

Raven rarely indulges in hand-to-hand combat, unless she feels very confident of her superiority. While she is physically very fit, phenomenally graceful, and hardened by a life in the Zero Zone, she still has trouble with her coordination and she lacks any truly effective hand-to-hand skills. When on an SSCP operation, she'll carry a Beretta 93R and wear an armored bodysuit.

Campaign Use: A powerful esper, Raven is the sort of esper weapon most multinationals can only dream of acquiring. She makes a good starting PC and her impressive powers are offset by what happens if she Brainburns. If you'd rather avoid the phenotype correction as too advanced for 2030 (it is rather cutting-edge biotechnology after all), you can make her a genetic upgrade, who apparently hit the DNA jackpot when she reached puberty.

To make Raven more powerful, remove the Brainburn Side Effects from her powers and give her

some HTH combat skills. To weaken her, drop her VPP to 60 Active Points.

Raven doesn't hunt anyone, unless they've harmed Johnny or Lydia, or SSCP has asked her to.

Appearance: Either Raven's genetics contained unexpected surprises, or someone at SSCP decided to fiddle with her phenotype correction since she stepped out of the incubation tank with an extremely attractive appearance. Raven stands 5'6", with a fit and curvy frame, long shapely legs, a gentle-featured face that's usually wearing a smile, big dark brown eyes, and smooth, shiny, long black hair. While usually very graceful, she does tend toward occasional slips and clumsiness, especially when doing complex operations (such as running). She also tends to forget she has a fully functioning body when under stress, and neglects to use both hands to hold or grasp something, since her right was unusable for so long.



SHIGERU SANATO

This soft-spoken, mild-mannered, middle-aged Japanese man is one of SSCP's most subtle and most effective executives. The director of SSCP's esper asset program, he's a firm believer in the idea that real loyalty is earned and not enforced, although he retains the ruthlessness one might expect from a fellow in his position. Sanato speaks in soft, warm, friendly tones, but he will often fill his discourse with subtle double-meanings if he wants to pass on a message. A workaholic, he has almost no social life aside from official corporate functions. He also has an inordinate fondness for imported German beers.

SHI-WHAT?

It's pronounced
"shy-on nice."

SHION'S PD AND ED

The listed value of 48 only takes into consideration her esper-based Resistant Protection. If you count all of her body armor (and use the optional armor layering rule), Shion's PD and ED can reach 64, with 56 resistant.

SHION NYS

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20/40	STR	10	13-/17-	Lift 400 kg/6400 kg; 4d6/8d6 [2/4]
26	DEX	32	14-	
25	CON	15	14-	
21	INT	11	13-	PER Roll 13-
23	EGO	13	14-	
30	PRE	20	15-	PRE Attack: 6d6
9	OCV	30		
9	DCV	30		
8	OMCV	15		
8	DMCV	15		
6	SPD	40		Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
8	PD	6		Total: 48 PD (40 rPD)
8	ED	6		Total: 48 ED (40 rED)
12	REC	8		
80	END	12		
14	BODY	4		
40	STUN	10		
				Total Characteristic Cost: 277

/ = Values after slash are due to esper powers.

Movement: Running: 16m/32m
Flight: 50m/200m
Leaping: 8m/16m
Teleportation: 80m/320m

Cost Powers

Cost	Powers	END
20	<i>Telekinetic Strength:</i> +20 STR	
5	<i>The Empress Knows No Fear:</i> +10 PRE Only To Resist Presence Attacks (-1)	4
140	<i>Esper Powers:</i> Multipower, 175-point reserve all slots Esper Side Effects (-¼)	
12v	1) <i>Force Bolt I:</i> Blast 18d6 Cannot Be Bounced (-¼), Esper Side Effects (-¼)	9
12v	2) <i>Force Bolt II:</i> Blast 14d6 Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼); Cannot Be Bounced (-¼), Esper Side Effects (-¼)	3
12v	3) <i>Force Bolt III:</i> Blast 12d6 Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Cannot Be Bounced (-¼), Esper Side Effects (-¼)	
10v	4) <i>Force Implosion:</i> Blast 14d6 Area Of Effect (4m Radius; +¼); Extra Time (Delayed Phase, -¼), No Knockback (-¼), Esper Side Effects (-¼)	9
12v	5) <i>Force Ram:</i> Blast 12d6 Double Knockback (+½); Cannot Be Bounced Or Spread (-¼), Esper Side Effects (-¼)	9
7v	6) <i>Telekinetic Knife:</i> HKA 3d6 (5 ½d6 w/STR) Esper Side Effects (-¼)	4
12v	7) <i>Telekinetic Rending:</i> RKA 6d6 No Knockback (-¼), Esper Side Effects (-¼)	9
14v	8) <i>Telekinesis I:</i> Telekinesis (70 STR) Cannot Punch (-¼), Esper Side Effects (-¼)	10
16v	9) <i>Telekinesis I:</i> Telekinesis (40 STR) Affects Porous, Area Of Effect (6 2m Areas; +¾); Affects Whole Object (-¼), Esper Side Effects (-¼)	12
10v	10) <i>Telekinetic Shield I:</i> Resistant Protection (20 PD/20 ED) (Protect Carried Items) Hardened (+¼); Nonpersistent (-¼), Perceivable (-¼), Esper Side Effects (-¼)	
14v	11) <i>Telekinetic Shield II:</i> Resistant Protection (40 PD/40 ED) Nonpersistent (-¼), Perceivable (-¼), Esper Side Effects (-¼)	
3f	12) <i>Telekinetic Wall:</i> Barrier 24 PD/24 ED, 0 BODY (up to 4m long, 2m tall, and ½m thick), Non-Anchored Costs Endurance (to maintain; -½), No Range (-½), Perceivable (-¼), Restricted Shape (ring; -¼), Esper Side Effects (-¼)	9
10v	13) <i>Telekinetic Flight:</i> Flight 50m, Position Shift, x4 Noncombat Esper Side Effects (-¼)	6
17v	14) <i>Telekinetic Matter Transmission I:</i> Teleportation 80m, x16 Noncombat, x4 Increased Mass Esper Side Effects (-¼)	10
5f	15) <i>Telekinetic Matter Transmission II:</i> Teleportation 20m, x4 Increased Mass MegaScale (1m = 1,000 km; +1 ¾); Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -½), Esper Side Effects (-¼) Notes: Side Effects are Blast 9d6, Explosion (18m) upon arrival.	

Martial Arts: *Aikijutsu, Tai Chi Chuan*

16

Maneuver **OCV** **DCV** **Notes**

4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Counterstrike	+2	+2	10d6 Strike, Must Follow Block
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm; 50 STR to Disarm
4	Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
3	Grab	-1	-1	Grab Two Limbs, 50 STR for holding on
5	Palm Slap/Kick	-2	+1	12d6 Strike
5	Redirect	+1	+3	Block, Abort
5	Strike	+1	+3	8d6 Strike
3	Takedown	+1	+1	8d6 Strike; Target Falls
1	Weapon Element: Blades			

18 *H&K P29*: RKA 2d6

[4x14]

Invisible Power Effects (; +¼), 4 clips of 14 Charges (+¼); OAF (-1), Beam (-¼), Real Weapon (-¼), STR Minimum (-¼) plus +1 OCV; OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-¼)
plus +1 versus Range Modifiers; OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-¼)

3 *Laser Sight*: +2 OCV

OAF (-1), Only +1 OCV Unless User Braces Or Sets (-½), Real Weapon (-¼), Limited Range (128m; -¼), Not In Adverse Conditions (-¼)

plus +8 versus Range Modifiers; OAF (-1), Only +4 Versus Range Modifiers Unless User Braces Or Sets (-½), Real Weapon (-¼), Limited Range (128m; -¼), Not In Adverse Conditions (-¼)

7 *Silencer*: Invisible Power Effects (Invisible to Hearing; +½) for up to 30 Active Points of RKA (H&K P29)
OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-¼)12 *Sword*: HKA 1d6+1

Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-¼), STR Minimum (-¼)

14 *Level II Biosteel Bodysuit*: Resistant Protection (8 PD/8 ED)

IIF (-¼), Real Armor (-¼), Requires A Roll (12- roll; locations 7-17; -¼)

16 *Level IV Ceramic Clamshell Vest*: Resistant Protection (12 PD/12 ED)

OIF (-½), Requires A Roll (11- roll; locations 9-12; -½), Real Armor (-¼)

5 *Biosteel Boots*: Resistant Protection (5 PD/5 ED)

Requires A Roll (9- roll; locations 16-18; -1), OIF (-½), Real Armor (-¼)

15 *Esper Shields*: Mental Defense (15 points total)2 *Telekinetic Strength*: Leaping +4m (8m forward, 4m upward) 14 *Fast On Her Feet*: Running +4m (16m total) 11 *Excellent Swimmer*: Swimming +2m (6m total) 125 *Esper Awareness*: Mental Awareness, +5 to PER Roll, Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees), Targeting1 *Esper Physiology*: LS (Longevity: 200 Years)**Perks**9 *Contact*: Kiyomi Noritake (Contact has significant Contacts of his own, Contact has very useful Skills or resources, Good relationship with Contact) 14-10 *Contact*: Zhen Zhen Li (Contact has significant Contacts of his own, Contact has very useful Skills or resources, Very Good relationship with Contact) 14-20 *Additional Contacts As Needed* (various, throughout the business world)2 *Fringe Benefit*: Concealed Weapon Permit (where appropriate)1 *Fringe Benefit*: Passport10 *Money*: Wealthy9 *Positive Reputation*: world's most powerful and stable esper weapon (on Earth) 14-, +3/+3d6**Talents**3 *Esper Awareness*: Lightsleep9 *Incredibly Beautiful*: +3/+3d6 Striking Appearance (vs. all characters)**Skills**

40 +4 with All Attacks

3 *Breakfall* 14-3 *Bureaucratics* 15-3 *Climbing* 14-2 *Computer Programming* (Hand-held Computers, Personal Computers) 13-3 *Conversation* 15-5 *Defense Maneuver I-II*4 *Electronics* (Communications Systems, Environmental Systems) 13-**MY
CAMPAIGN,
YOUR
CAMPAIGN**

In the original *Kazei 5* game, Shion started out as a ruthless and implacable enemy of Takeda Johnson. As time passed her character, and how she was perceived by the PCs, changed greatly. She terrified Blade, for example, was despised by Jagger, and elicited a bit of sympathy from Doc. By the end of the campaign, she was Takeda's ally, companion, and lover.

In the *Kazei 5* PBEM, she started out cold and impersonal, but slowly warmed up to Raven Clark. She eventually admitted her loneliness, and became one of Raven's friends. She also ended up with another PC (Aoi "Gem" Hari) as her valet and in time, the two developed a reasonably close friendship.

In your game, Shion can first appear as an emotionless ice-cold mercenary, who slowly thaws and becomes more human once one of the PCs makes an effort to get past the imperious corporate persona. She might become romantically involved with an esper PC. Also, if the PCs manage to assist her in some fashion, they might earn a powerful ally.

PLOT SEED: GONE IN 60 SECONDS

Someone was brave, crazy, and/or foolish as to steal Shion's car, and she wants it back. Now. A sizable reward has been put out for a white Mercedes SL2028 AMG with New York plates. Now every two-bit retriever and repo-man in the neighborhood (not to mention numerous NYPD, Inc. officers) is out looking to score big money by finding it.

You can play this one almost as a farce in which would-be reward-seekers bring Shion anything but a SL2028 (or when they do, it's someone else's!), or far more serious, with shoot-outs in the streets as people try to off the competition on the way to finding the car. The PCs can look for the car themselves, try to stop the carnage, or take a look beyond the immediate issue and ask "Why steal her car? You can't sell it to anyone." Smart PCs may realize that with hair like Shion's there are sure to be some strands scattered inside, which then leads to the next question: "Who would want her DNA? And why?"

Now it's not so funny anymore is it?

- 2 Gambling (Card Games) 13-
- 3 High Society 15-
- 3 Lockpicking 14-
- 3 Paramedics 13-
- 3 Persuasion 15-
- 3 Power: Esper Powers 14-
- 2 PS: Freelance Corporate Trouble Shooter 11-
- 3 Research 13-
- 3 SS: Esper Powers 13-
- 3 Security Systems 13-
- 3 Stealth 14-
- 3 Streetwise 15-
- 3 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Small Planes (Vectored-Thrust)
- 10 WF: Small Arms, Anti-Materiel Rifles, Blades, Electron Beam Weapons, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Ion Blasters, Laser Rifles, Shoulder-Fired Weapons
- 3 Linguist
 - 1 1) Language: Cantonese (fluent conversation)
 - 2 2) Language: French (completely fluent)
 - 2 3) Language: German (completely fluent)
 - 2 4) Language: Japanese (completely fluent)
 - 2 5) Language: Spanish (completely fluent)
- 3 Scholar
 - 1 1) KS: Aikido 11-
 - 2 2) KS: Current Clothing Fashions And How To Apply Them 13-
 - 2 3) KS: Current Events 13-
 - 2 4) KS: Military/Paramilitary Hardware And Technology 13-
 - 1 5) KS: Tai Ch'i-Ch'uan 11-
 - 2 6) KS: The Corporate World 13-
 - 2 7) KS: The Esper World 13-
 - 2 8) KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 13-
- 3 Traveler
 - 1 1) AK: The Neo Yrok Zero Zone 11-
 - 1 2) CK: Berlin 11-
 - 1 3) CK: Hong Kong 11-
 - 1 4) CK: MegaTokyo 11-
 - 2 5) CK: Neo York 13-
 - 1 6) CK: Paris 11-
 - 1 7) CK: Sydney 11-
 - 2 8) CuK: Japanese Culture And Customs 13-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 717

Total Cost: 994

300 Matching Compilations (60)

- 10 Distinctive Features: Esper (Not Concealable; Always Noticed and Causes Major Reaction; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
- 0 Distinctive Features: Extreme Beauty And Knee-Length White Hair (Concealable; Always Noticed and Causes Major Reaction; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 0 Hunted: assorted multinationals (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 0 Hunted: her current employer (Very Frequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 20 Negative Reputation: "The Empress" (an esper weapon of unlimited power), 14- (Extreme)
- 10 Physical Complication: Powers Are Occasionally Out Of Control (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 0 Psychological Complication: Code of Honor: Always Complete A Job, Always Fulfill A Promise (Common, Strong)
- 0 Psychological Complication: Disdain For Those Without Esper Powers (Common, Moderate)
- 20 Psychological Complication: Extreme Arrogance and Very Self-Centered (Very Common, Strong)
- 0 Psychological Complication: Inwardly Very Lonely (Uncommon, Moderate)
- 0 Social Complication: Esper (Frequently, Minor)
- 0 Social Complication: Famous (Frequently, Minor)

Total Complications Value: 60

Experience Points: 694

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon: Depends on the mission. Shion prefers heavier weapons, such as Franchi SPAS-12 combat shotguns, Barrett Anti-Materiel Rifles, and light machine guns (often loaded with armor piercing ammunition).

Body Armor: If expecting serious trouble, Shion will add Level IV ceramic plates (DEF 12, Hardened) to her forearms and shins.

Gear: Pretty much anything she needs (within reason). She normally carries a PDA and drives a Mercedes SL2028 AMG.

Clothing: Her combat dress is described under Appearance. Otherwise, finely-tailored and extremely expensive outfits for any occasion.

SHION NYS

Background/History: The world's most powerful (and stable) esper weapon was born in 2002, the daughter of a Chicago factory worker and his wife. Shion's early years were spent in humble, middle-class surroundings, but when she was seven the failing economy resulted in her father losing his job while her mother found herself subject to severe cutbacks. Her father took to drinking heavily and frequently raged against the injustices of the world, with the careless, faceless, and heartless multinationals his favorite target.

When she was 14, Shion's father died, a victim of too much drink and anger. Her mother vanished soon after, leaving Shion and her younger sister Marta alone on the streets of Chicago while the United States did its best to tear itself apart. At times without food or water, they lived a precarious existence for several years. However, Shion's rapidly growing esper talents soon made her a force to be reckoned with on the streets. She quickly made a name for herself, and moved from simple, street-level action to corporate work, hiring herself out as a solo operative. Marta, on the other hand, grew dissatisfied with living in her older sister's shadow, and left, heading west since Shion had expressed a desire to go east.

Neo York quickly made Shion rich. The multinationals and many smaller corporations were more than willing to pay her exorbitant fees to escort corporate executives around town, deliver goods, or even to simply appear at their booth during trade shows. She quickly left the streets behind, to travel in some of the highest levels of society, using the multinationals as she wished, but never being used by them in turn, or so she'd like to think.

Recently, Shion has just finished a three-month assignment, training Shikoku-Shin Consumer Products' newest esper asset, Raven Clark. The experience may prove to be a life-changing one for Shion. Raven has noted how empty Shion's life is; how her carefully-created public image as "The Empress," who's as aristocratically cold and beautiful as she is powerful has made her the victim of her own success. Only time will tell if Raven will be able to get Shion to recognize this fact as well, and warm up a little to those around her.

Personality/Motivation: In keeping with her reputation as the Empress, Shion is outwardly cold and arrogant, with decidedly aristocratic tastes and manners. She's also self-centered, as growing up on the streets of Chicago has given her a "me first" attitude in which Shion's main worry is the well-being of Shion. She's also somewhat disdainful of non-espers. Her powers allow her to travel in circles most non-espers can't really conceive of, so the needs, wants, and opinions of your average non-esper are pretty much meaningless to her.

Inwardly, things are a little different. She recognizes the corner she's painted herself into with her "Empress" persona and often puts on imperial airs simply so others won't think she's become weak and lost her touch. Thus, if she takes a contract, she'll complete it; if she gives her word on a matter, she'll not break it. To do otherwise would ruin her reputation and therefore diminish her market value. On the other hand, she hates being used and/or lied to, and if given sufficient proof (and sometimes sufficient monetary incentive) she'll cancel a contract she thinks has violated her personal code of ethics.

Her life on the street has given Shion an almost desperate need to surround herself with all manner of luxuries, including fine clothing, a well-appointed penthouse, a luxurious car, and expensive jewelry. She's at the top of the heap, so to speak, and wants to stay there. At the same time, she's sometimes wracked by bouts of guilt, depression, and self-doubt. Her primary response to these episodes is to drink heavily until the feelings go away. As of yet, she hasn't followed in her father's footsteps and become a full-fledged alcoholic.

One bright spot is her relationship with her sister. It has grown warmer since Marta's move to Hong Kong, and Shion genuinely likes her sister's lover, Zhen Zhen Li. While the two still occasionally snap at each other, they are the only family they have left and care more for each other than either will admit.

Quote: "Perhaps, I should kill you. I do have a reputation to uphold, after all."

Powers/Tactics: An incredibly powerful esper, second only to Ran, Shion possess a wide range of telekinetic abilities. Not only can she project a variety of force bolts, she can fly, teleport vast distances, and create defensive shields strong enough to withstand an artillery barrage. Her esper powers are also responsible for her phenomenal speed, strength and durability.

In combat Shion will wrap herself in Telekinetic Shield II, and use Force Bolt III to smash the opposition. If faced with groups of targets, she'll use Force Bolt I, spreading it so she can hit as many as possible. If surprised she'll Abort to Telekinetic Wall and allow the enemy to waste ammunition against an almost impenetrable defense. Shion also likes to arm herself with heavy weapons, such as powerful combat shotguns or Anti-Materiel Rifles, and use them for offense, while her esper powers supply defense and movement. It's a tactic that often works quite well for her.

Anyone who tries to tackle Shion in hand-to-hand will soon find that not only is she extremely fast and very strong, she's also well-versed in several forms of martial arts. Unlike some espers, who are used to fighting at range, Shion has no problems with close combat.

WORLD-CLASS ESPER WEAPONS

The upper echelon of the esper world are known as “world-class” espers, mainly due to the belief they can teleport to anyplace in the world at will. There are roughly a dozen people of this power level as of 2030. A few of them are listed here, but you can add (or remove) characters as needed.

Ran: The world’s most powerful esper, period. Ran is on page 259.

Shion Nys: Presented here.

Anton Manneck: A German, Anton is generally considered to be Shion’s near equal when it comes to esper power level. He’s also taller than her, handsome, with blond hair he wears down to his waist. A popular Net rumor pairs the two as lovers, something neither has ever denied (then again, they’ve never really commented on it, either.) Anton is somewhat more good-natured than Shion, but still shares her inability to relate to many non-espers. You can use Shion’s character sheet to represent Anton, just reduce the Multipower to 165 points.

Joseph Paterson: A native of London, Joseph is tall and dark-skinned with shoulder-length dreadlocks. He has a broad suite of esper powers, similar to Anton’s and Shion’s, but not as powerful (150 point Multipower). He’s also somewhat aloof, even to other espers, and prefers to be left alone.

Mayumi Kishiyama: A *miko* (Shinto shrine maiden), Mayumi lives in MegaTokyo, where she tends to an ancient Shinto shrine and its grounds. She teaches traditional skills (the bow, the naginata, calligraphy, dance, and music) to select groups of students — usually the children of corporate executives who want a veneer of traditionalism smeared over their children’s upbringing. Soft-spoken and polite, Mayumi tends to ignore those who are loud, rude, and arrogant. She doesn’t like to resort to her esper powers, but will if pressed, as some corporate muscle-boys have found out. Mayumi’s esper talents include Telekinesis, Blast, Barrier, Telepathy, Mind Scanning, Mind Link, and rarely, Precognitive Clairvoyance. She should be built on 500-700 points.

Others: Raven Clark and Takeda Johnson are both contenders, especially if they ever get to the point where they don’t need a Skill Roll to change their VPPs. While raw power has a lot to do with making the list, flexibility also helps.

Despite her extensive esper abilities, Shion equips herself with a biosteel bodysuit and boots, a ceramic clamshell vest, an H&K P29 with laser sight and silencer, and a medium-length sword. She knows her esper talents can’t do everything at once, and feels the armor adds an extra bit of insurance. The pistol and sword are for when using her powers would be too noticeable.

Campaign Use: Shion isn’t meant to be a villain per se, merely someone who’s usually working at cross purposes to the PCs. While you can present her simply as someone who needs to be fought and defeated to advance the plot, that’s really not the best use of her. In previous games (the PBEM especially) players wanted to interact with her, since many found Shion to be an interesting character with a lot of depth, once you got past the public persona. Do the same in your game. Have them meet her at a social function or a trade show. Perhaps the PCs can go to her for information or to ask her to help them get in touch with another esper. They could even hire her (if they can afford her rates). In fact, Shion could even hire the PCs! (But only if she really feels like she’s going to need back up or a distraction.)

To make Shion more powerful increase her Multipower to a 200-point reserve, or break it up into a Multipower and a Unified Power (see Paula MacArthur Lars on page 224). To make her less powerful, drop her Multipower down to 150 points.

Shion will hunt people if the contract requests it. She’s also been known to hunt those who have cheated or wronged her.

Appearance: Shion Nys stands 6’1” and weighs 175 pounds. Popularly considered one of the most beautiful women in the world, she’s broad across the shoulders and hips, with an athletic yet still curvaceous build. Due to her mixed parentage (her father is of French descent, while her mother is Mestizo) Shion’s skin is naturally a light tan. Her eyes are cool gray, while her hair is snow white and falls in thick waves to just past her knees.

Always concerned about appearances and her public image, Shion takes great pains to be as well-dressed as possible at all times. When meeting with corporate clients, she dresses in the finest and latest fashions available. Usually the exact selection will depend on the nature of the meeting. Thus, she might be found wearing a low-cut evening dress, a formal business suit, or even a traditionally fashioned kimono.

Shion’s “working clothes” consist of a black biosteel bodysuit, with matching boots and gloves. Over this goes a clamshell vest. Her sword is sheathed along the back of the vest, while her pistol rides in her gunbelt at her hip. When dressing to impress (and to play up her reputation as the “Empress”), Shion will add a gray ankle-length cloak with a waist-length mantle.

STEEL COMMANDO

Background/History: The Steel Commandos are an elite mercenary unit noted for their exclusive use of APEX Suited troops. Formed in the early 2020s, the Commandos originally consisted of ex-USA military. These days, they recruit qualified people from the world over, but still have a preference for former (or current) military personnel. Although small in size — there are only 500 people in the Commandos, and only 100 APEX Suits — they are well trained and highly experienced.

The Commandos pride themselves as an elite unit, capable of accomplishing any mission they're given. Noted for their ruthless methods, the Commandos are often hired by the multinationals to wreak havoc on other companies during corporate trade wars.

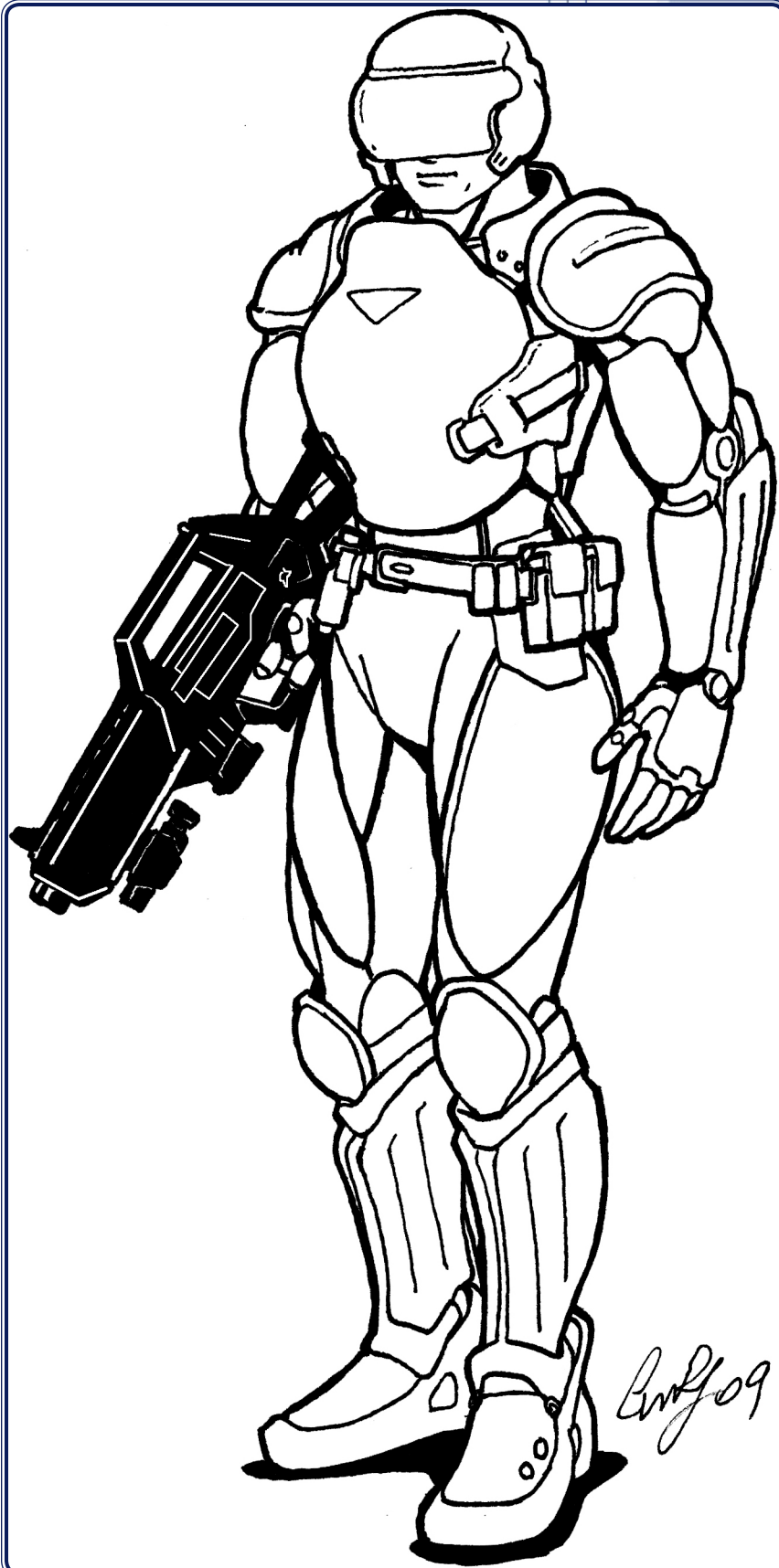
Personality/Motivation: Although the personalities of individual Commandos vary greatly, as a rule they're dedicated to the idea of completing their mission assignments. Failure is considered a black mark on the Commando's reputation and a possible point of contention in future contract negotiations. However, the Commandos are realists and don't expect suicidal actions from their troopers.

Powers/Tactics: The Commandos tend to operate in three-man fire teams, with two Commandos watching over a third on point. If attacked, they'll concentrate their firepower on the point of resistance until their foes are dead or dispersed. Grenades are used to flush enemies out of hiding, or to clear an area before advancing. If forced to engage in hand-to-hand combat, they'll draw their combat knives and use their martial arts to first Disarm, then Throw an attacker to the ground, before dispatching him (if needed) with a knife.

Campaign Use: The Steel Commandos represent the truly high-tech face of modern warfare. With even heavier armor and equipment than the Twenty-First Century Soldier on page 184, they're more than a match for an NYPD SWAT team or even a squad of fully-kitted out Mitsumi Pumas. To make the Commandos more powerful, increase the APEX Suit's DEX and CON to 23, the PRE to 20, and add in some of the systems found on the Twenty-First Century Soldier character sheet. You shouldn't make the Commandos any less powerful, however, as they're supposed to be a match for Pumas, combat replicates, and partial-conversion cyborgs.

The Steel Commandos will hunt whoever they're hired to pursue. They can be pretty persistent about it, as well.

Appearance: A Steel Commando APEX Suit is steel-gray in color with black highlights and trim. There are no external markings for rank, the better to deceive the enemy. Out of armor, the Commandos wear a simple light gray uniform. The Commandos themselves are a racially mixed group, although most originally come from North America.



STEEL COMMANDO

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15/30	STR	5	12-/15-	Lift 200 kg/1600 kg; 3d6/6d6 [1/2]
15/21	DEX	10	12-/13-	OCV: 5/7/DCV: 5/7
15/20	CON	5	12-/13-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
11	EGO	1	11-	ECV: 4
13/18	PRE	3	12-/13-	PRE Attack: 2 1/2d6/3 1/2d6
5/7	OCV	10		
5/7	DCV	10		
4	OMCV	3		
4	DMCV	3		
3/5	SPD	10		Phases: 4, 8, 12/3, 5, 8, 10, 12
6	PD	4		Total: 18 PD (0/12 rPD)
4	ED	2		Total: 16 ED (0/12 rED)
6	REC	2		
30	END	2		
11	BODY	1		
30	STUN	5		Total Characteristic Cost: 79

/ = Values after slash are due to APEX Suit.

Movement: Running: 14m
Leaping: 18m
Swimming: 4m

Cost Powers

END

Steel Commando APEX Suit, all slots Powered Armor (-1/2)

- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| 10 | 1) <i>Strength Augmentation:</i> +15 STR
Powered Armor (-1/2) | 1 |
| 21 | 2) <i>Reflex Augmentation:</i> +6 DEX, +2 OCV, +2 DCV
Powered Armor (-1/2) | |
| 3 | 3) <i>Inherent Durability:</i> +5 CON
Powered Armor (-1/2) | |
| 3 | 4) <i>Inherent Impressiveness:</i> +5 PRE
Powered Armor (-1/2) | |
| 13 | 5) <i>Reflex Augmentation:</i> +2 SPD
Powered Armor (-1/2) | |
| 24 | 6) <i>Armored Shell:</i> Resistant Protection (12 PD/12 ED)
Powered Armor (-1/2) | |
| 1 | 7) <i>Heavy:</i> Knockback Resistance -2m
Powered Armor (-1/2) | |
| 10 | 8) <i>Jump Jets:</i> Leaping +20m (24m forward, 12m upward) (Accurate)
Powered Armor (-1/2) | 1 |
| 4 | 9) <i>Visual Zoom:</i> +4 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group
Powered Armor (-1/2) | |
| 3 | 10) <i>Thermographic Filter:</i> IR Perception (Sight Group)
Powered Armor (-1/2) | |
| 3 | 11) <i>Low-Light Filter:</i> UV Perception (Sight Group)
Powered Armor (-1/2) | |
| 8 | 12) <i>Full-Spectrum Radio:</i> HRRP (Radio Group)
Powered Armor (-1/2) | |
| 11 | 13) <i>Coded Transmitter:</i> Mind Link to other Steel Commandos on same coded frequency , Human class of minds, Specific Group of Minds, No LOS Needed, Number of Minds (x8)
Only With Others Who Have Mind Link (-1), Affected as Hearing Sense Group and Radio Sense Group, Not Mental Group (-1/2), Powered Armor (-1/2) | |
| 11 | 14) <i>Heads-Up Display:</i> +2 with Ranged Combat
Powered Armor (-1/2) | |
| 13 | 15) <i>High-Yield Electrical Batteries:</i> Endurance Reserve (52 END, 9 REC)
Powered Armor (-1/2) | |

- 27 *Basic Cyberbrain*: 10 EGO, 3 OMCV, 3 DMCV
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 8 *Attack Barrier*: Mental Defense (12 points total)
Software (-1/2)
- 2 *Level One Datajack*: +1 with all computer-related Skills
Requires DNI-Capable Computer And Accessible Datacable (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)

Martial Arts: *Commando Training*

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4 Cross	+0	+2	5d6/8d6 Strike
4 Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm; 25 STR /40 STR to Disarm
3 Throw	+0	+1	3d6/6d6 +v/5, Target Falls
2 Weapon Element: Blades, Clubs			

- 32 *Knights Armament Company Stoner 96 LMG*: RKA 2d6 [200]
+1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Autofire (5 shots; +1/2), 200 Charges (+1); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) plus +1 OCV; OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) plus +2 versus Range Modifiers; OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 17 *Concussive Grenades*: Blast 8d6 [4]
Area Of Effect (18m Radius Explosion +1/2); 4 Charges (-1), OAF (-1), Range Based On STR (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 6 *Combat Knife*: HKA 1d6-1
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)
- 2 *Move Soldier!*: Running +2m (14m total) 1

Perks

- 1 Fringe Benefit: Military Rank
- 1 Fringe Benefit: Weapon Permit (where appropriate)

Skills

- 20 +2 with All Combat
- 3 Breakfall 12- (13-)
- 5 Concentrated Sprayfire
- 3 Demolitions 12-
- 2 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
- 2 KS: Steel Commando History And Customs 11-
- 2 PS: Mercenary 11-
- 5 Rapid Autofire
- 3 Stealth 12- (13-)
- 3 Streetwise 12- (13-)
- 3 Tactics 12-
- 10 WF: Beam Weapons, Energy Weapons, Small Arms, Blades (knives), General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 312**Total Cost: 391****300 Matching Complications (60)**

- 10 Distinctive Features: Steel Commando APEX Suit (Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 20 Hunted: current employer (Very Frequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 0 Hunted: Steel Commandos (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 15 Psychological Complication: Always Complete The Contract (if possible) (Common, Strong)
- 0 Rivalry: Professional (other mercenary units; Rival is As Powerful; Seek to Outdo, Embarrass, or Humiliate Rival; Rival Aware of Rivalry)
- 15 Social Complication: Secret ID (names of specific steel commandos are kept on secure servers) (Frequently, Major)
- 0 Social Complication: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)

Total Complications Value: 60**Experience Points: 91****CAMPAIGN SEED:
YOU'RE IN
THE ARMY
NOW!**

Want a quick and dirty method for getting all of the PCs together? Make them all troopers in the Steel Commandos! Each PC should select a specialty (demolitions, electronic warfare, medical, and so on) and modify their APEX Suit accordingly. Now all you need to do is develop a series of missions to send them out on, and you're all set.

TEMPLE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 [2]
21	DEX	22	13-	
20	CON	10	13-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-/16-
8/23	EGO	-2	11-/14-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
7	OCV	20		
7	DCV	20		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	PD	6		Total: 8 PD (0 rPD)
7	ED	5		Total: 7 ED (0 rED)
8	REC	4		
40	END	4		
12	BODY	2		
32	STUN	6		
				Total Characteristic Cost: 140

/ = Values after slash are due to cyberware.

Movement: Running: 18m
Leaping: 12m
Swimming: 4m

Cost Powers

END

- | | | |
|----|--|-----|
| 5 | <i>Self-Will Biochip:</i> 15 EGO
No Conscious Control (triggered by extreme stress, interrogation, or cyberhacking; -1), Costs Endurance (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4) | 2 |
| 41 | <i>Secure Cyberbrain:</i> 20 EGO, 7 OMCV, 7 DMCV
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) | |
| 20 | <i>Multi-Layered Attack Barrier:</i> Mental Defense (24 points total)
Hardened (+1/4); Software (-1/2) | |
| 16 | <i>Secure Cyberbrain Processor:</i> Endurance Reserve (60 END, 20 REC)
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Restricted Use (cyberspace utilities only; -1/4)
Side Effect (1/2d6 RKA)
plus 1d6 END Drain if character uses personal END after Endurance Reserve is exhausted; -0) | |
| 4 | <i>Level One Oxygen Booster:</i> Aid REC 1d6
Invisible Power Effects (Fully Invisible; +1); 4 Charges (-1), Only Aid Self (-1), Cybersystem (-1/4) | [4] |
| 4 | <i>Level One Impact Compensator:</i> Aid STUN 1d6
Trigger (when character takes STUN damage, activates as an Action that takes no time, resets immediately, Character does not control activation of personal Trigger; +3/4), Invisible Power Effects (Fully Invisible; +1); 6 Charges (-3/4), Only Restores to Starting Values (-1/2), Only Aid Self (-1), Cybersystem (-1/4) | [6] |
| 22 | <i>Cranial Computer:</i> Computer (see separate character sheet)
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) | |
| 6 | <i>Level Three Datajack:</i> +3 with all computer-related Skills
Requires DNI-Capable Computer And Accessible Datacable (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
<i>Cyberhacking Utilities</i> , all slots Software (-1/2) | |
| 40 | 1) <i>Data Bomb:</i> Mental Blast 6d6
Software (-1/2) | 6 |
| 24 | 2) <i>Data Scan:</i> Telepathy 12d6
Receive Only (-1/2), Language Barrier (-1/2), Software (-1/2) | 6 |
| 40 | 3) <i>Attack Virus:</i> Major Transform 4d6 (add, alter, erase, or otherwise edit stored data files and programs, heals back through application of a data editor [basically the reverse of this power], reprogramming, and/or re-entering the data)
Partial Transform (+1/2), ACV (uses OMCV versus DMCV; +1/4), AVAD (Mental Defense applies; +0), Invisible Power Effects (Invisible to Sight Group: +1/2), Line Of Sight (+1/2), Works Against EGO Not BODY(+0); Extra Time (1 Turn (Post-Segment 12), -1 1/4), Software (-1/2), Limited Target (computer/ Cyberbrain files and software; -1/2) | 11 |
| 35 | 4) <i>Anti-Virus Software:</i> Dispel Viruses 5d6 (standard effect: 15 points)
all Virus powers simultaneously (+2), Cumulative (+1/2), Increased Cumulative Points (240 points; +3/4), ACV (uses OMCV versus DMCV; +1/4), AVAD (Mental Defense applies; +0), Constant (+1/2), Invisible Power Effects (Invisible to Sight Group: +1/2), Line Of Sight (+1/2), Uncontrolled (lasts for 12 Phases, can be stopped by rebooting the targeted Cyberbrain; +1/2); Extra Time (1 Turn (Post-Segment 12) to scan target Cyberbrain, -1 1/4), Software (-1/2) | 10 |

40	5) <i>Improved Cyberbrain Scan</i> : Mind Scan 12d6 Software (-1/2)	6
Martial Arts: <i>Hardwired Hand-To-Hand Combat Training</i>		
	Maneuver OCV DCV Notes	
4	Block	+2 +2 Block, Abort
4	Escape	+0 +0 35 STR vs. Grabs
3	Joint Lock	-1 -1 Grab Two Limbs, 30 STR for holding on
4	Punch/Snap Kick	+2 +0 6d6 Strike
3	Takedown	+1 +1 4d6 Strike; Target Falls
2	Weapon Element: Blades, Clubs	
4	<i>Powerful Leaper</i> : Leaping +8m (12m forward, 6m upward)	1
6	<i>Swift</i> : Running +6m (18m total)	1
6	<i>Cat's Ears</i> : +3 PER with Hearing Group	
3	<i>Hyper Immune System</i> : LS (Immunity: All terrestrial diseases and biowarfare agents); Not Versus Bioweapons (-1/2)	
Talents		
5	<i>Customized DNA</i> : Bioware Compatible	
3	Striking Appearance (+1/+1d6)	
Skills		
20	+2 with All Combat	
6	Cat-Like Grace: +1 with Agility Skills	
3	AK: The Net 13-	
3	Acrobatics 13-	
3	Acting 12-	
3	Breakfall 13-	
3	Climbing 13-	
12	Computer Programming (Computer Networks, Hacking and Computer Security, Personal Computers, Mainframes and Supercomputers) 15-	
3	Cryptography 13-	
2	Electronics (Computer Systems) 13-	
2	KS: Computer Viruses 11-	
3	PS: Cyberhacker 13-	
3	PS: Nurse 13-	
3	Paramedics 13-	
2	SS: Computer Science 11-	
2	SS: Cyber Technology 11-	
2	SS: Medicine 11-	
2	Security Systems 13-; Only Versus Computer Security Systems (-1/2)	
3	Seduction 12-	
3	Stealth 13-	
2	Systems Operation (Communications Systems) 13-	
2	TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles	
9	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Small Arms, Anti-Materiel Rifle, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons, Stun Rods	

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 437**Total Cost: 577****300 Matching Complications (60)**

- 10 Distinctive Features: Cat's Ears, Possible Non-Human Hair/Skin Color (Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 0 Distinctive Features: Replicated Human (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Technology Or Major Effort)
- 20 Hunted: Poseidon Interactive (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
- 0 Negative Reputation: tough but stupid (Frequently)
- 15 Psychological Complication: Flamboyant/Subservient; depending on status of self-will bio-chip (Common, Strong)
- 10 Psychological Complication: Wants To Be Accepted As A "Normal Person" (Common, Moderate)
- 5 Rivalry: Professional (other cyberhackers; Rival is As Powerful; Seek to Outdo, Embarrass, or Humiliate Rival; Rival Aware of Rivalry)

Total Complications Value: 60**Experience Points: 277****MY CAMPAIGN, YOUR CAMPAIGN**

In the original *Kazei 5* game, Temple was Doc's assistant, and, for a brief period, his lover. She slowly overcame her programming, and eventually became romantically linked to another NPC. She was killed helping the PCs infiltrate a Jinsei installation.

In your game Temple can serve as team medic for the PCs. Her secret life can be hinted at slowly and eventually developed into a full campaign arc if desired. Also see the Replicate Revolution scenario on page 302.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUNx	Shots	STR MIN	Notes
Jinsei Hoshoku	+1	+0	2d6	1d6	10	13	

Body Armor: Level II Spectacloth Jacket (DEF 7 on Hit Locations 7-12).

Gear: None.

Clothing: See Appearance.

TEMPLE

Background/History: Of the hundreds of replicates produced each year, none are more popular than the Mitsumi Puma and Lynx-Class Security models. Used for more than just combat and security, they can be found just about anywhere, serving as administrative assistants, bodyguards, couriers, and personal aides. This fact allowed Semyaza Enterprises to execute an ingenious plan of industrial sabotage against Poseidon Interactive Systems, one of their closest rivals in the lucrative market of simsense gaming and entertainment devices.

The idea was startlingly simple in concept, although more difficult in execution. Semyaza managed to exchange an incoming Poseidon Lynx with a virtually identical replacement, the only difference being the new Lynx had been programmed with certain highly-specific instructions, to be followed only after a set period of time had passed.

Temple executed her programming flawlessly, infiltrating the Poseidon computer lab and uploading several slow-acting viruses into the system servers. In turn, the viruses subtly altered program instructions for an entire line of simsense chips, eventually causing a wide assortment of interface problems for consumers.

Her job done, Temple escaped from the Poseidon manufacturing facility and started to return to Semyaza as ordered. But somewhere the process broke down. The Self-Will Biochip Semyaza had installed seemed to work too well. Temple struck out on her own, eventually arriving in Neo York, selling her services as a data intrusion specialist. Of course, while Neo York's underworld may be more accepting of a replicated cyberhacker than most, word of a blue-haired Lynx with a computer in her brain has gotten out, and it's only a matter of time before Poseidon comes calling.

Personality/Motivation: Temple's Self-Will Biochip has caused a number of unexpected personality developments. Chief among these is Temple's recognition of her own existence. Unlike most replicates, which accept their status without question, Temple realizes she's the product of a nanofactory, and can never be accepted as a normal human. This has caused her a great deal of stress, as she questions the reasons for her existence as well as the motivations for her acceptance others.

To further complicate matters, Temple is still not fully free of her original personality governors. At times she's rather docile and submissive, unable to say "no" to most any request made of her. However, in stressful situations, her Self-Will Biochip will kick in, and she'll become far more aggressive and self-confident, even going so far as to taking excessive risks.

most people look upon her as a tool (an intelligent tool, but a tool none-the-less) hurts her deeply. Her happiest moments are when she's with the few people she calls friends, people who accept her as an individual, and not as a product.

Quote: "I am Temple, Mitsumi Lynx, serial number 3715-A1-201, inception date 22-09-28. I am programmed to be a medical assistant, and am familiar with a wide range of cybersurgery procedures. How can I help you?"

Powers/Tactics: Meant to be an assistant in Poseidon's simsense testing labs Temple has been trained as a nurse and makes a highly capable medical assistant. She's also been equipped with a number of cyber- and bioware implants to assist in her industrial espionage activities. Normally, she'll try to avoid confrontation, but if pressed she will run a Mind Scan, locate any nearby Cyberbrains, and Data Bomb whoever is bothering her. If that doesn't work, she'll try uploading a virus into her attacker's headware, hopefully wiping out operating data and disabling some of his cyberware. Of course, she's quite capable of defending herself in hand-to-hand combat, and won't hesitate to do so.

Normally, Temple doesn't carry a sidearm, the better to avoid problems with the authorities. However, she has a Jinsei Hoshoku tucked away amid her meager belongings. For protection she wears a Spectracloth jacket.

Campaign Use: The Temple given here is new to Neo York and missing many of the elements you'd expect of an underground cyberhacker. If you want to have an experienced version of Temple, give her assorted Contacts with various criminal groups, CK: Neo York, KS: The Neo York Underworld, and Streetwise. To make her less powerful, remove her medical skills, and Slots 3 and 4 from her Cyberhacking Utilities.

Temple doesn't hunt people in the physical world, but she can certainly make their life miserable online.

Appearance: Temple is 5'10" tall and weighs 145 pounds, with a trim, well-proportioned build. Her waist-length hair is bright electric blue, a sharp contrast to her soft blue eyes. Her cat-like ears tend to betray her emotions, the flatter they are, the unhappier she is. Her typical mode of dress is a black one-piece bodysuit, matching boots, and a tan, short-sleeved jacket that comes to mid-thigh.

Temple's greatest desire is to be accepted (in her words) as "Temple the Person," as opposed to "Temple the Lynx" or "Temple the Nurse." That

TEMPLE'S CRANIAL COMPUTER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
20	DEX	20	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
3	OCV	0		
3	DCV	0		
7	OMCV	12		
7	DMCV	12		
4	SPD	30		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12

Total Characteristic Cost: 84**Cost Powers**

- 15 *Intrusion Firewall*: Mental Defense (15 points total)
- 10 *Cellphone*: Radio Perception/Transmission (Radio Group)

Programs

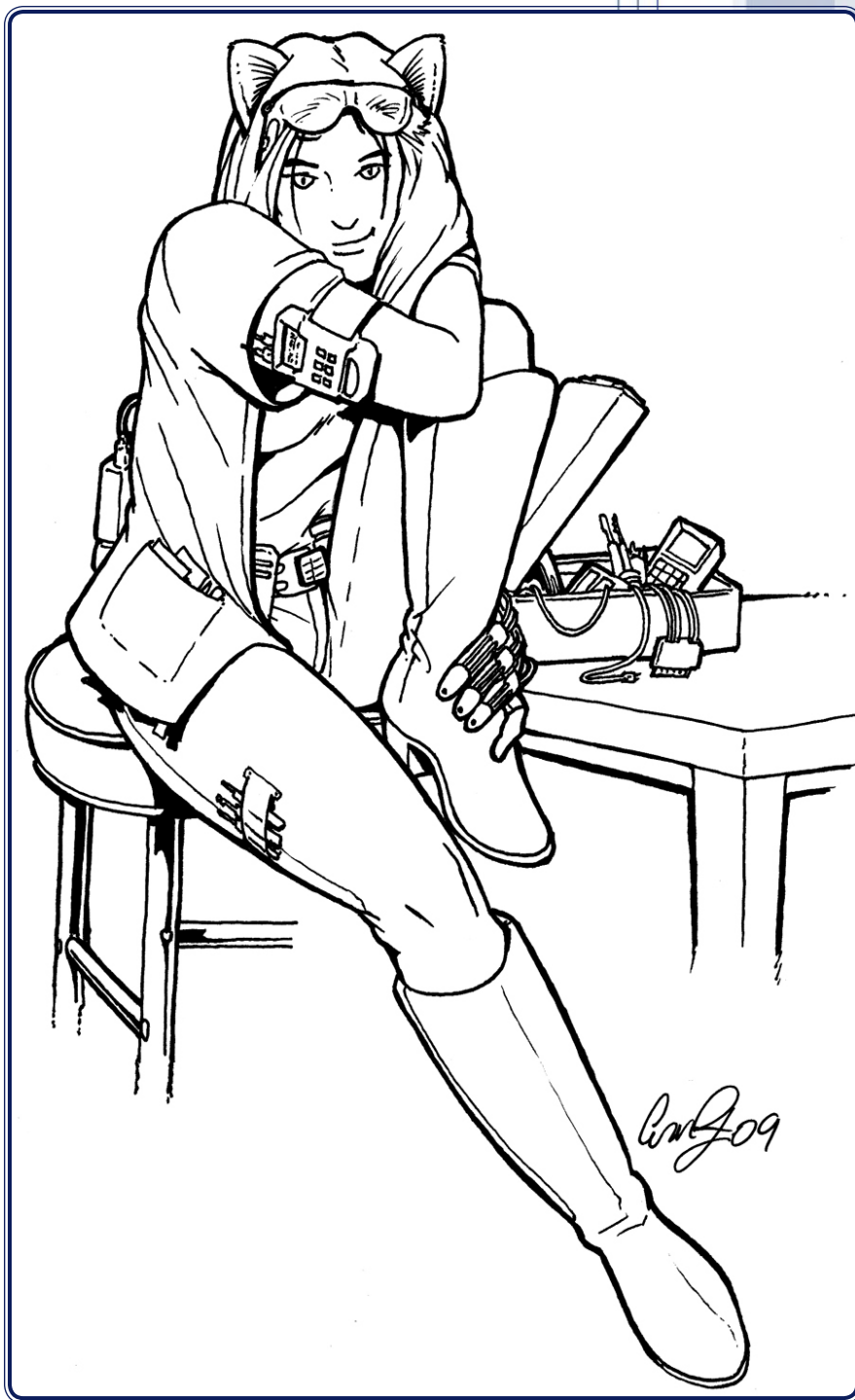
- 1 Program: Access Information Database
- 1 Program: Run Codebreaker/Creator
- 1 Program: Run Intrusion/Counter Intrusion Programs
- 1 Program: Install Virus
- 1 Program: Run Anti-virus Scan

Talents

- 3 Time Display: Absolute Time Sense
- 3 Calculator: Lightning Calculator
- 3 Instant On: Lightsleep

Skills

- 8 AK: The Net 18-
- 3 CK: Greater San Francisco 13-
- 3 CK: Neo York 13-
- 3 Cryptography 13-
- 2 Electronics (Communications Systems) 13-
- 3 Forgery (Documents, Credit Cards) 13-
- 3 KS: Computer Virus Database 13-
- 3 KS: Multinational Corporations Database 13-
- 3 KS: Net URL Database 13-
- 3 Mechanics 13-
- 2 SS: Computer Science 11-
- 3 Security Systems 13-
- 2 Systems Operation (Communications Systems) 13-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 80**Total Cost: 164/5 = 33/Cybersystem (-1/4).****Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) = 22 points.**

WILLIAM "HARD" CASE

A high-ranking executive for Shikoku-Shin Consumer Products, Case has a company-wide reputation for efficiency and intolerance for waste. His management style is very unforgiving and it's a well known fact any project he's assigned to will have a very high rate of employee turnover. On the other hand, he's also known to bring projects in on time (if not early) and under budget. In person, he projects an aura of control, almost to the point of obsession. It's commonly believed he'll go far within in the SSCP corporate hierarchy, provided a disgruntled employee doesn't try and kill him first.

Rumor has it that Case's latest replicate admin assistant looks a lot like Shion Nys. Apparently he became somewhat infatuated with her while she was staying at SSCP training Raven Clark. What Shion will think (and do to Case) if this is true is better left to the imagination. Most people agree there won't be enough left of Case to put in a bucket.

Case stands well over six feet in height, with a wide-shouldered, muscular build, short black hair and a full beard.



WILLIAM "HARD" CASE

15 STR 14 DEX 13 CON 13 INT 13 EGO 15 PRE

4 OCV 4 DCV 4 OMCV 4 DMCV 3 SPD

5 PD 4 ED 6 REC 25 END 11 BOD 26 STUN

Abilities: *Advanced Cyberbrain:* 15 EGO, 5 OMCV, 5 DMCV; *Cybersystem* (-1/4), *Restrainable* (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4); *Attack Barrier:* Mental Defense (15 points); *Software* (-1/2); *Level Three Datajack:* +3 with all computer-related Skills; *Requires DNI-Capable Computer And Accessible Datacable* (-1/2), *Cybersystem* (-1/4), *Restrainable* (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4); *Datalink:* Cramming ; *Requires DNI-Capable Device And Accessible Datacable Or Cranial Cellphone/Radio* (-1/2), *Cybersystem* (-1/4), *Restrainable* (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) **plus** *Speed Reading* (x10); *Requires DNI-Capable Computer And Accessible Datacable* (-1/2), *Only Applies To Direct Neural Feed Data* (-1/2), *Cybersystem* (-1/4), *Restrainable* (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) **plus** *Absolute Time Sense*; *Requires DNI-Capable Device And Accessible Datacable Or Cranial Cellphone/Radio* (-1/2), *Cybersystem* (-1/4), *Restrainable* (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4); *Marathoner:* Running +2m (14m total); *Strong Swimmer:* Swimming +2m (6m total); *Computer Link:* Corporate Database; *Follower* (replicated human administrative assistant); *Fringe Benefit:* Corporate ID Card; *Money:* Well Off; *Well-Connected;* *Contacts* (12 points worth in and around Neo York); *Bureaucratics* 13-; *Computer Programming* (Personal Computers) 12-; *Gambling* (Card Games, Sports Betting) 12-; *High Society* 12-; *KS:* Physical Fitness 12-; *KS:* Shikoku-Shin Consumer Products History And Customs 11-; *KS:* The Corporate World 11-; *Language:* Japanese (basic conversation); *Language:* Spanish (fluent conversation); *Persuasion* 12-; *PS:* Play Raquetball 12-; *PS:* Project Management 12-; *Research* 12-; *SS:* Accounting 11-; *Streetwise* 8-; *Trading* 12-; *WF:* Handguns

175 + Matching Complications (50): *Hunted:* Shikoku-Shin Consumer Products (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Watching); *Negative Reputation:* slave-driver who's obsessed with efficiency, (Frequently, Extreme; Shikoku-Shin Consumer Products employees only); *Psychological Complication:* Loyal To Shikoku-Shin Consumer Products (Common, Strong); *Psychological Complication:* Must Be In Control (of the situation, the project, a person, and so on) (Common, Strong)

RESIDENTS OF THE NEW YORK ZERO ZONE

BLADE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [1]
23	DEX	26	14-	
18	CON	8	13-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
23	EGO	13	14-	
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2 1/2d6
8	OCV	25		
8	DCV	25		
8	OMCV	15		
8	DMCV	15		
5	SPD	30		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
6	PD	4		Total: 26 PD (20 rPD)
6	ED	4		Total: 18 ED (12 rED)
10	REC	6		
40	END	4		
10	BODY	0		
24	STUN	2		
				Total Characteristic Cost: 178

Movement: Running: 12m
Swimming: 4m

Cost Powers

END

37	<i>Esper Powers:</i> Multipower, 75-point reserve, all slots Side Effects (suffers “Brainburn” (4d6 Mental Blast) if Required Roll failed; -1/2), Required Roll 14- (-1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)	
3f	1) <i>Psychic Squeeze:</i> Drain Esper Powers 1d6 Expanded Effect (all esper powers simultaneously; +4); Side Effects (suffers “Brainburn” (4d6 Mental Blast) if Required Roll failed; -1/2), Required Roll 14- (-1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)	7
3f	2) <i>Zaz:</i> Blast 12d6 Reduced Endurance (1/2 END; +1/4) (75 Active Points); Side Effects (suffers “Brainburn” (4d6 Mental Blast) if Required Roll failed; -1/2), Cannot be Bounced (-1/4), Required Roll 14- (-1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)	3
3f	3) <i>Instant Migraine:</i> Mental Blast 3d6 Side Effects (suffers “Brainburn” (4d6 Mental Blast) if Required Roll failed; -1/2), Required Roll 14- (-1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4) plus Sight Group Flash 4d6, ACV (uses OMCV against DMCV; +1/4), AVAD (Mental Defense; +0), Invisible Power Effects (Invisible TO Sight Group; +1/2), LOS (+1/2); Side Effects (suffers “Brainburn” (4d6 Mental Blast) if Required Roll failed; -1/2), Linked (Mental Blast; -1/4), Required Roll 14- (-1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)	7
4f	4) <i>Blackout:</i> Sight, Hearing, Smell/Taste, and Touch Groups Flash 12d6 AVAD (Mental Defense; +0); Side Effects (suffers “Brainburn” (4d6 Mental Blast) if Required Roll failed; -1/2), Required Roll 14- (-1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)	7
3f	5) <i>Slash:</i> RKA 2d6 Reduced Endurance (1/2 END; +1/4), Penetrating (+1/2); Side Effects (suffers “Brainburn” (4d6 Mental Blast) if Required Roll failed; -1/2), Required Roll 14- (-1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)	2
3f	6) <i>Teek:</i> Telekinesis (50 STR) Side Effects (suffers “Brainburn” (4d6 Mental Blast) if Required Roll failed; -1/2), Cannot Punch (-1/4), Required Roll 14- (-1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)	7
3f	7) <i>Pushback:</i> Resistant Protection (20 PD/12 ED) (Protect Carried Items) Reduced Endurance (1/2 END; +1/4); Costs Endurance (-1/2), Perceivable (-0), Required Roll 14- (-1/4), Side Effects (suffers “Brainburn” (4d6 Mental Blast) if Required Roll failed; -1/2), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)	3
7	<i>Telekinetic Blocking:</i> Deflection Reduced Endurance (1/2 END; +1/4); Linked (Pushback; Lesser Power can only be used when character uses greater Power at full value; -3/4), No Range (-1/2), Only Works Against Physical Attacks (-1/2), Required Roll 14- (-1/4), Side Effects (suffers “Brainburn” (4d6 Mental Blast) if Required Roll failed; -1/2), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)	4

Blade created by Lise Mendel.

MY CAMPAIGN, YOUR CAMPAIGN

In the original *Kazei 5* game, Blade was romantically involved with Takeda Johnson for a while. She also served as the team's conscience in a way, occasionally questioning the team's methods and often going out of her way to welcome newcomers into the fold.

In Zone-based games she could be the girlfriend of a PC, thus introducing them to the rest of the Wizards of Odds. Getting her brother and sister out of the Zone can be a plot seed.

Martial Arts: *Street Fighting*

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm; 20 STR to Disarm
4 Elbow/Knee Smash	+2	+0	4d6 Strike
3 Throw	+0	+1	2d6 +v/5, Target Falls
5 <i>Combat Knife</i> : HKA 1d6-1 (1d6+1 w/STR)			Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); OAF (-1), No Knockback (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)
5 <i>Combat Knife</i> : a second Combat Knife			
2 <i>Synthleather Jacket</i> : Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED)			Required Roll 11- (locations 7-12; -1), OIF (-1/2), Limited Power (0 DEF Versus Firearms; -1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)
2 <i>Synthleather Pants</i> : Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED)			Required Roll 10- (locations 13-16; -1 1/4), OIF (-1/2), Limited Power (0 DEF Versus Firearms; -1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)
2 <i>Synthleather Boots</i> : Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED)			Required Roll 9- (locations 16-18; -1 1/2), OIF (-1/2), Limited Power (0 DEF Versus Firearms; -1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)
10 <i>Esper Shields</i> : Mental Defense (10 points total)			
8 <i>Esper Awareness</i> : Mental Awareness, +3 to PER Roll, Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees)			
5 <i>Lucky Girl</i> : Luck 1d6			

Perks

- 1 Fringe Benefit: Member of the Wizards of Odds

Skills

- 20 +4 with Esper Powers
 8 +4 versus Hit Location modifiers with Esper Powers
 2 AK: The Zero Zone 11-
 1 KS: The Corporate World 8-
 2 KS: Esper Powers And Abilities 11-
 2 KS: R Scott Foundation History And Customs 11-
 2 KS: Who's Who In The Zero Zone 11-
 2 KS: Zero Zone Gang Colors And Customs 11-
 2 KS: Zero Zone Gangs 11-
 1 Language: Japanese (basic conversation)
 1 SS: Anatomy 8-
 1 SS: Biology 8-
 3 Stealth 14-
 3 Streetwise 12-
 2 Survival (Urban) 11-
 4 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Small Arms

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 173

Total Cost: 351

150+ Complications

- 0 Distinctive Features: Esper (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
 5 Distinctive Features: Gang Colors (Easily Concealed; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
 0 DNPC: Carlisle McIntyre III and Emily McIntyre 11- (Normal; Group DNPC: x2 DNPCs)
 20 Enraged: if cornered or faced with overwhelming odds (Uncommon), go 14-, recover 11-
 0 Hunted: Other Wizards of Odds Members 8- (Mo Pow, Limited Geographical Area, Watching)
 0 Physical Complication: Cyber-Rejection (Infrequently, Fully Impairing)
 15 Psychological Complication: Protective Of Her Friends And Those She Considers 'Innocent' (Common, Strong)
 0 Psychological Complication: Falls In Love Easily (but has trouble falling out of it) (Uncommon, Strong)
 15 Psychological Complication: Terrified Of Powerful And Hostile Espers (*i.e.* Shion Nys, Ran, Raven Clark, and so on) (Uncommon, Total)
 0 Social Complication: Esper (Frequently, Minor)
 5 Vulnerability: 1 1/2 x Effect from Fear-Based PRE Attacks (Uncommon)

Total Complications Value: 60

Experience Points: 51

BLADE

Background/History: Patricia McIntyre was born in the R Scott Foundation arcology and probably would have happily lived there for the rest of her life, except when she was twelve years old, her esper powers manifested rather publicly and spectacularly. A corporate operative, on the lookout for young (and thus vulnerable) esper talent, had Patricia and her three siblings (her twin brother Carlisle, younger sister Alison, and older sister Emily) extracted from the R Scott arcology and taken to a secure facility deep in the Zone.

For several years Patricia and her siblings were trained, tested, and brainwashed as part of a program code-named “Night sky.” Patricia was code-named “Antares,” and exhibited extensive mid-level telekinetic effects. Her older sister, Emily, (code named “Betelgeuse”) demonstrated the ability to telekinetically augment her own strength, while her metabolism made her particularly resistant to psychotropic drugs. However, neither Carlisle, nor Allison, ever manifested any sort of esper powers.

Eventually, Emily, due to her resistance to the esper-activation drugs the four children were regularly plied with, was able to orchestrate a successful escape, although Allison was shot by security guards. The Night sky building was destroyed and the McIntyre’s found themselves alone in a desolate section of the Zone. Their state of shock soon turned to mourning when Allison died of her wounds a few hours later.

The three remaining McIntyre children were soon discovered by a street gang known as the “Wizards of Odds” who had come to investigate the fire and explosions. Comprised of several low-powered espers and assorted hangers on, the Wizards were only too happy to adopt the McIntyres and especially Patricia and Emily’s impressive esper capabilities. In turn, Patricia and Emily integrated themselves into the gang’s hierarchy, with Patricia taking the street name “Blade,” while Emily became “Rose.”

A close-knit group, the Wizards look out for each other, including Carlisle, despite his lack of esper talents. Rose is now the lover of Jet Stream, the Wizard’s leader, while Blade has a stormy relationship with Whiplash, Jet Stream’s lieutenant. Comprised as they are of numerous espers, the Wizards are a force to be reckoned with in the Zone, and they know it.

Personality/Motivation: Blade tries very hard to be tough, to be loved, and to be “normal” (or as close as one can be in the Zone). She knows she’ll never succeed, but she’s not about to admit that to anyone else. At the same time, Blade has made it her practice to shed painful memories. She no longer responds to the name “Patricia,” even from her brother Carlisle, and never mentions the R Scott Foundation or Project Night sky. As far as she’s concerned she’s never had any life but that of a ganger, or known any life outside the Zone.

As she’s desperately seeking acceptance and a sense of belonging, Blade sees romance as the best way to find community. She’s always in love (or in lust, or infatuated) with someone (hence her rocky relationship with Whiplash). Any reasonably attractive young man who

shows her kindness is likely to find himself the object of her attentions, especially if she is currently unattached.

Although a reasonably powerful esper, brushes with certain Zone espers have left Blade more than a little fearful. A close encounter with Ran found her covered in someone else’s blood, a fight with the Clark Street Devils saw her tangle with Raven (it was a draw), and Shion Nys’ esper signature (they were both at the Living End once) intimidates her. If threatened by a sufficiently powerful esper, there’s a chance Blade will lose touch with reality and either retreat into the nearest corner and cringe, or strike out at anything and anyone who comes near her.

Quote: “Get outta my face, old man! I know what I’m doin’!”

Powers/Tactics: Blade is a moderately powerful telekinetic with the specialized ability to manipulate things inside other things — an ability she’s used to tear people apart from the inside, or put subtle pressure on sensory areas in the brain. She prefers to rely on her more direct powers in most situations. Usually Blade will come in with a strong Zaz to get an enemy’s attention, then Abort to Pushback once she’s drawn their fire. She’ll save her Slash for times when she wants to kill an armored opponent. Her more exotic powers (such as Instant Migraine and Blackout) are rarely used, as she’s still trying to perfect them.

Campaign Use: Blade represents a typical, although exotically powered, mid-level esper. You can make her more powerful simply by removing the Activation Roll from her Multipower. To make her less powerful, drop her Activation Roll to 11- and reduce her levels to +2 with esper powers.

Blade only hunts those who have crossed or wronged the Wizards of Odds.



THE WIZARDS OF ODDS

The Wizards can be as large or small as you need. They have at least four espers, Jet Stream, Whiplash, Blade, and Rose. You can use the Basic Esper Template along with the Ganger Template to build these characters. Jet Stream should have at least 40m of Leaping, if not outright Flight. Whiplash has various forms of Force Bolt and Telekinetic Rendering, while Rose has Telekinetic Strength and Truly Innate Esper Toughness.

Appearance: Blade is nineteen years old, medium height, and slender, with almost a child-like figure. Her eyes are green and her hair, though naturally blonde, is frequently dyed and cut and/or styled into exotic fashions, then periodically grown out to its natural color again. She wears worn synthleather clothes with “The Wizard” (a man in green robes) painted on the back of the jacket.

THE RAZOR'S EDGE

The band consists of Dawn on lead guitar and vocals, Leon on drums, Rachel on keyboards and back-up vocals, and Roy on bass. Although they all have experience with sound equipment and the like, Roy is the band's true electrician. On stage, each has his or her own distinctive mode of dress: Dawn in her black and green; Rachel in a white dress shirt, black tie, and skirt; Roy in jeans, white shirt, and black jacket; while Leon, capitalizing on a resemblance to Bruce Lee, often plays shirtless, wearing just drawstring pants, socks, and slippers.

As a rule, the band is very close and gets along well. They play as often as possible, since the more they play, the more they get paid. Since the Razor's Edge is well known throughout much of the Zone, the band's members can avoid most trouble simply by handing out free passes to their next concert.

DAWN

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 151.6 kg; 2 1/2d6 [1]
13/19	DEX	6	12-/13-	
11	CON	1	11-	
14	INT	4	12-	PER Roll 12-
12	EGO	2	11-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
4/6	OCV	5		
4/6	DCV	5		
4	OMCV	3		
4	DMCV	3		
3	SPD	10		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4	PD	2		Total: 8 PD (0/4 rPD)
3	ED	1		Total: 7 ED (0/4 rED)
5	REC	1		
20	END	0		
10	BODY	0		
24	STUN	2		Total Characteristic Cost: 57

/ = Values after slash are due to cyberware.

Movement: Running: 12m
Swimming: 4m

Cost Powers

END

- 2 *Seen All The Zone Has To Offer:* +5 PRE
Only To Resist Presence Attacks (-1)
- 25 *Advanced Cyberbrain:* 13 EGO, 4 OMCV, 4 DMCV
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 9 *Attack Barrier:* Mental Defense (13 points)
Software (-1/2)
- 20 *Reflex Enhancement:* +6 DEX, +2 OCV, +2 DCV
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 9 *Finger Razors:* HKA 1d6 (1 1/2d6 w/STR)
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Restrainable (can be affected by EMP pulses as well as Grabs and Entangles; -1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), Reduced Penetration (-1/4), No Knockback (-1/4)
- 3 *Noise Filter:* Hearing Group Flash Defense (5 points)
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 4 *Synthesizer Link:* +2 with all musical instrument-related Skills
Requires DNI-Capable Musical Instrument And Accessible Datacable (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)

Martial Arts: School Of Hard Knocks

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4 Elbow/Knee Strike	+2	+0	4 1/2d6 Strike
4 Escape	+0	+0	28 STR vs. Grabs
3 Takedown	+1	+1	2 1/2d6 Strike; Target Falls
1 Weapon Element:			Cyber Blades

- 4 *Level I Spectracloth Jacket:* Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED)
Required Roll 11- (locations 7-12; -1), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)
- 2 *Synthleather Boots:* Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED)
Required Roll 9- (locations 16-18; -1 1/2), OIF (-1/2), Limited Power (0 DEF Versus Firearms; -1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)

Perks

- 1 Just A Singer In A Rock And Roll Band: Positive Reputation: well-known and well-liked Zone rock star (the Neo York Zero Zone) 14-, +1/+1d6

Talents

- 6 Striking Appearance (+2/+2d6)

Skills

- 3 Acting 12-
- 2 AK: The Neo York Zero Zone 11-
- 3 Combat Driving 12- (13-)
- 2 Electronics (Electric Musical Instruments And Sound Systems) 12-
- 5 KS: Guitar 14-
- 3 KS: History Of Rock Music 12-
- 4 KS: Neo York Zero Zone Music Scene 13-
- 7 Plays Guitar Like A Mother-Luv'n Riot: PS: Guitarist 16- (17-)
- 3 Making Modern Music: PS: Song Writing 12-
- 5 Voice Like An Angel: PS: Vocalist 14-
- 3 Streetwise 12-
- 2 WF: Blades, Handguns

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 143**Total Cost: 200****175 Matching Complications (50)**

- 5 Distinctive Features: Always Wears Black And Green (jacket, jumpsuit, skirt, boots, and so on) (Easily Concealed; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 10 Psychological Complication: Strong Disdain For The Multinationals And Corporate Salarimen (Uncommon, Strong)
- 10 Psychological Complication: Lives For The Stage; Music Is Her Life (Common, Moderate)
- 10 Social Complication: Famous (Frequently, Minor)

Total Complications Value: 35**Experience Points: 40****DAWN**

Background/History: Not everyone who grows up in the Zone ends up a ganger or cyber-modified street samurai. Most live relatively normal lives, simply trying to get by. Dawn is one of these people. Forced to relocate to the Zone at an early age when a multinational renovation project resulted in the eviction of hundreds of low-income housing tenants, Dawn has little memory of life in Neo York. The Zone is her home, and she has no desire to return to Neo York and its corporate masters.

Personality/Motivation: First and foremost, Dawn lives for the stage, and is happiest when performing before an appreciative and enthusiastic crowd. Her father realized that if he didn't want to see his daughter dead at an early age from gang violence, he would need to find something that would keep her off the streets. So, he began to teach her the guitar. Dawn took to the instrument instantly and has done nothing but try to perfect her skill ever since. She's a featured performer at The Living End, and can often be found there before show time, practicing on her guitar or tinkering with the sound equipment.

The undisputed best guitarist in the Zone, Dawn's skill has attracted the attention of Neo York recording executives. Their attempts to sign her, however, have all met with failure. Dawn has no liking for the multinationals, their money, or their ideas. She's said more than once her greatest dream is for all of the "useless, egotistical, and worthless corporate hacks to a dive off the top of one of their shiny office towers."

Quote: "My musical inspirations? Well, a lot of what I play can be traced to the music my father listened to, so I'd have to say Alex Lifeson, Joe Satriani, David Gilmore, John Petrucci, and Kenny Wayne Sheppard; not to mention such classic artists as Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton, and Steve Howe."

Powers/Tactics: Since she's a musician and not a fighter, Dawn tries to avoid any sort of trouble. If pressed, she'll activate her Reflex Augmentation and alternate between Blocks and Elbow Strikes until her opponent is down. Her Finger Razors are mainly for intimidation purposes (and for some interesting effects while playing her guitar), but Dawn won't hesitate to use them on anyone armed with a knife or other weapon. When not on stage, Dawn usually wears a dark-green, Spectracloth jacket

Campaign Use: Dawn is a good person for PCs to contact, as she knows a lot of people in the Entertainment District. She's also extremely popular, and Razor's Edge concerts are even attended by people from Neo York (Shion Nys often attends her concerts). To make her more powerful, increase her base PRE to 20, her Reflex Augmentation to +8 DEX, and make the rest of The Razor's Edge Followers. To make her less powerful, remove her Reflex Augmentation and Finger Razors.

Dawn has no need to hunt anyone.

Appearance: Dawn stands 5'10", with dark brown eyes and a thick blonde mane of hair that falls well past her shoulders. She has a supple, well-proportioned, athletic build, which she displays to great effect in a variety of tight-fitting and highly revealing stage outfits. Green and black are her trademark colors, and she always has at least one piece of clothing in those colors on (black jeans, green boots, and green armored jacket are typical). Dawn lives in an abandoned cargo trailer near the Zone's Entertainment District. Her most prized possessions are her Fender Millennium Stratocaster guitar and her bike (in that order).

**PLOT SEED:
RESCUE
DAWN**

A recording studio, not wanting to take "no" for an answer has sent a team into the Zone to extract Dawn (and possibly her band). The PCs can either hear of it beforehand and try to stop the attack, or find out about it afterwards and attempt to get her back.

HIROKO O'HARA

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15/20	STR	5	12-/13-	Lift 200 kg/400 kg; 3d6/4d6 [1/2]
15/21	DEX	10	12-/13-	OCV: 5/7/DCV: 5/7
15	CON	5	12-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
5/7	OCV	10		
5/7	DCV	10		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	PD	4		Total: 11 PD (5 rPD)
6	ED	4		Total: 11 ED (5 rED)
6	REC	2		
30	END	2		
11	BODY	1		
28	STUN	4		
				Total Characteristic Cost: 88

/ = Values after slash are due to cyberware.

Movement: Running: 12m
Swimming: 4m

Cost Powers**END**

- 5 *Doesn't Feel Pain:* +10 CON
Only To Prevent Being Stunned (-1)
- 36 *Advanced Cyberbrain:* 15 EGO, 5 OMCV, 5 DMCV
Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 10 *Attack Barrier:* Mental Defense (15 points)
Software (-1/2)
- 4 *Muscle Augmentation:* +5 STR
Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 20 *Reflex Enhancement:* +6 DEX, +2 OCV, +2 DCV
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 4 *Flare Filter:* Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points)
Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 3 *Low-Light Filter:* UV Perception (Sight Group)
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 4 *Telescopic Implant:* +4 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 5 *Smartgun Link:* +2 with Ranged Combat
OAF (external cable; -1), Requires Smartlinked Weapon (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Limited Range (64m; -1/4), Poor Quality (-1/4) plus +1 vs. Range Modifier with All Attacks;
OAF (external cable; -1), Requires Smartlinked Weapon (-1/2), Limited Range (64m; -1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Poor Quality (-1/4)
- 2 *Level One Datajack:* +1 with all computer-related Skills
Requires DNI-Capable Computer And Accessible Datacable (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 13 *Colt Mark VI With Smartgun Adaptor:* RKA 1 1/2d6 [4x16]
4 clips of 16 Charges (+1/4); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) plus +1 OCV; OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) plus +1 versus Recoil Modifiers with RKA; OAF (-1), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (+1 to firearm's Hearing PER Roll modifier; -1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4)

Martial Arts: *Wing Chun Kung Fu*

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
5 Block	+1	+3	Block, Abort
4 Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm; 25 STR/30 STR to Disarm roll
5 Kick	-2	+1	7d6/8d6 Strike
3 Legsweep	+2	-1	4d6/5d6 Strike, Target Falls
4 Punch	+0	+2	5d6/6d6 Strike
2 Weapon Element:			Blades, Clubs

- 5 *Level I Biosteel Jacket*: Resistant Protection (5 PD/5 ED)
Required Roll 11- (locations 7-12; -1), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)
- 4 *Level I Spectacloth Pants*: Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED)
Required Roll 10- (locations 13-16; -1 1/4), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)
- 2 *Reinforced Synthleather Boots*: Resistant Protection (3 PD/3 ED)
Required Roll 9- (locations 16-18; -1 1/2), OIF (-1/2), Limited Power (0 DEF Versus Firearms; -1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)
- 8 *Doesn't Feel Pain*: Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, 25%
Not Versus AVAD Attacks (-1/2), STUN Only (-1/2), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (Hiroko doesn't feel the damage taken, see text below; -1/2)

Perks

- 6 Contact: Doctor Gerlach (Contact has useful Skills or resources) 14-

Talents

- 3 Striking Appearance (+1/+1d6)

Skills

- 10 +1 with All Combat
- 8 +1 with HTH Combat
- 2 +1 OCV with Colt Mark IV
- 2 AK: The Neo York Zero Zone 11-
- 2 AK: Darkside 11-
- 3 Acrobatics 12- (13-)
- 3 Breakfall 12- (13-)
- 3 Charm 12-
- 3 Climbing 12- (13-)
- 5 Fast Draw (Small Arms) 13- (14-)
- 4 Gambling (Card Games, Dice Games) 12-
- 2 KS: Cybertechnology 11-
- 2 KS: Neo York Zero Zone Nightclub Scene 11-
- 2 KS: Neo York Zero Zone Underworld 11-
- 3 Lockpicking 12- (13-)
- 3 Shadowing 12-
- 3 Stealth 12- (13-)
- 5 Streetwise 13-
- 4 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Small Arms

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 226**Total Cost: 314****300 Matching Complications (60)**

- 5 Distinctive Features: Chrome Cybereyes With No Visible Pupils (Easily Concealed; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 15 Distinctive Features: Twitchy And Jumpy Due To Inferior Reflex Enhancement (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 15 Physical Complication: Doesn't Feel Pleasure Or Pain (All the Time, Slightly Impairing)
- 10 Physical Complication: Suffers From Periodic Bouts Of The Shakes (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 0 Psychological Complication: Cyberjunkie, Craves The Best And Latest In Cyberware (Common, Moderate)
- 15 Psychological Complication: Vain About Appearances; Sensitive About References to Her "Condition" (Common, Strong)

Total Complications Value: 60**Experience Points: 14****HIROKO O'HARA**

Background/History: For some, the limitations of the human body are nothing more than a simple obstacle to be overcome with the proper application of modern technology. Hiroko O'Hara is one these people. Growing up in a low-income neighborhood, Hiroko quickly adapted to life on the streets by joining an area gang. Willing to do whatever was necessary to gain an edge over her fellow gangers, Hiroko turned to cyberware augmentation. Unable to afford a proper upgrade,

Hiroko visited an illegal chop shop and had a cheap but effective smartgun link and Cyberbrain installed. Impressed with her new 'ware, Hiroko had other cybernetic systems installed as soon as she could afford them. Now she supports her high-tech habit as a gun-for-hire, acting as a courier, bodyguard, or simple street muscle all through the Zone, and even into Neo York if the money's good.

HIROKO'S LITTLE PROBLEM

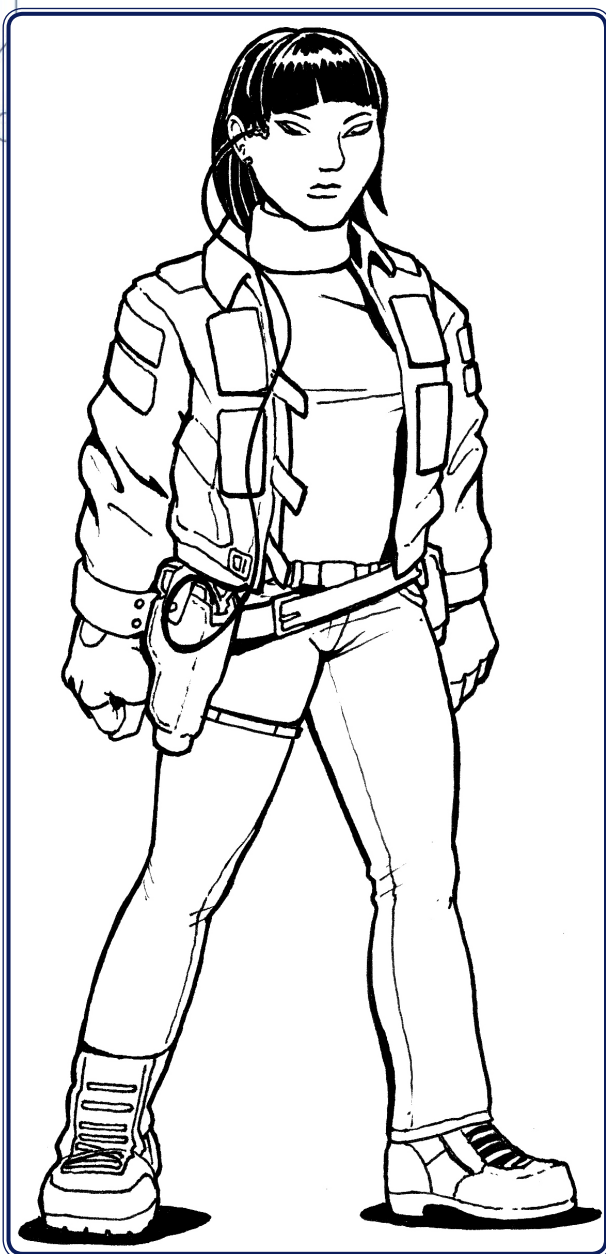
Paolo Zanabria (a.k.a. Doctor Snakeye) writes:

I met a woman named Hiroko O'Hara today. She wanted me to fix a problem with her Smartgun interface, and paid cash. I did it pretty easily, of course, and then told her the problem — and the host of others I knew she had — was caused by interference from her different cyberware implants. Her central nervous system was overloaded, her optical nerves were overworked, and all that cheap cyberware was stressing her metabolism. What she really needed, I explained, was a new Cyberbrain with an ultra-fast neural bus to handle all of her gear. I felt a little silly suggesting an advanced system like that to interface all the crap she's wired up with, but it didn't matter. She didn't have the money, and wasn't interested in anything that didn't make her faster or stronger in any obvious way.

Personality/Motivation: Hiroko is almost obsessed with cybernetic augmentation. She's constantly looking into ways to improve herself with the latest and greatest cyberware; the only reason she hasn't gone full-conversion cyborg is the sheer cost. Although she tries to downplay it as much as possible, it's rather obvious Hiroko's nervous system has been ruined through excessive surgery. If pressed about this, Hiroko tends to get annoyed and even angry.

When on the job, Hiroko can be quite loyal to her current employer. She'll do whatever's requested of her, no questions asked, and will do it promptly and efficiently. This attitude has made her a favorite of Doctor Gerlach, who often keeps her around as a bodyguard and overseer of his small crew of harvesters.

Quote: "I don't care what you heard, I'm not wired too tight. What? My hand? It's just a little shaky. Don't worry, it won't affect my aim."



Powers/Tactics: Hiroko would be dangerous, if her cyber worked properly. As it is, the poor quality of her Reflex Augmentation has left her unable to sit still for extended periods and she'll often develop a nervous twitch if asked to remain motionless. In addition, her walk often has a shaky, jerky look to it, the result of I/O conflicts in her Cyberbrain. During times of extreme stress, feedback will overload her entire nervous system, subjecting Hiroko to bouts of uncontrollable shaking and trembling.

Hiroko's Smartgun Link suffers from similar issues, mainly due to memory buffer issues with her Cyberbrain. It tends to jump about when used, has difficulty tracking a rapidly moving target, and will often fail outright if presented with a large number of targets.

Extensive nerve damage and problems with her Cyberbrain's interface are also responsible for Hiroko's inability to feel such sensations as pain or pleasure. If presented with a sudden rush of tactile stimulus, Hiroko's nervous system will shut down, cutting off the flow of information to her brain. Thus, if involved in a fight, Hiroko may be unaware of exactly how and where she's been struck, and to what extent she might have been injured. It's also done nothing for her love life.

Campaign Use: Hiroko is the perfect example of what happens when you get cyberware installed willy-nilly. She can serve as an object lesson to PCs, or simply as an object of pity (or even comic relief). You can make Hiroko a more credible threat simply by removing the *Poor Quality* Limitation on her various cybernetic systems. There's no real reason to make her weaker, as she's fairly average as is.

Hiroko only hunts people if asked by her employer.

Appearance: Of Japanese-Irish descent, Hiroko is short and slim, standing 5'4" and weighing a muscular 120 pounds. Her black hair is cut clean at the shoulders, while her eyes are featureless chrome orbs with no visible pupils, an effect some people find a bit unnerving. Hiroko's usual attire consists of black synthleather boots, black Spectracloth pants, and a black biosteel jacket worn over a white turtleneck. Her pistol is holstered on her hip, linked to her temple by a free-hanging cable. If required, she'll adopt a more formal mode of dress, with tinted glasses to hide her eyes.

KENWOOD "DOC" MULDOWNNEY

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
18	STR	8	13-	Lift 303.1 kg; 3 1/2d6 [2]
18	DEX	16	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
18	CON	8	13-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
15	EGO	5	12-	ECV: 5
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
6	OCV	15		
6	DCV	15		
5	OMCV	6		
5	DMCV	6		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	PD	6		Total: 21 PD (13 rPD)
5	ED	3		Total: 18 ED (13 rED)
8	REC	4		
35	END	3		
12	BODY	2		
30	STUN	5		

Total Characteristic Cost: 135

Movement: Running: 14m
Swimming: 4m

Cost Powers**END**

- 2 *Self Confidence:* +5 PRE
Only To Resist Presence Attacks (-1)
- 27 *Basic Cyberbrain:* 10 EGO, 3 OMCV, 3 DMCV
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 8 *Attack Barrier:* Mental Defense (12 points total)
Software (-1/2)
- 5 *Datalink:* Cramming
Requires DNI-Capable Device And Accessible Datacable Or Cranial Cellphone/Radio (-1/2),
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
plus Absolute Time Sense; Requires DNI-Capable Device And Accessible Datacable Or Cranial
Cellphone/Radio (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
plus Speed Reading (x10); Requires DNI-Capable Device And Accessible Datacable Or Cranial
Cellphone/Radio (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 18 *SRM Arms Model 1216:* RKA 2 1/2d6
16 Charges (+0), Charges Broken Up Into Four Tubes, With A Limited Number Of Charges Per
Tube (see Description; +0), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4), Area Of Effect (1m Radius;
+1/4); OAF (-1), Limited Range (40m; -1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), Reduced By Range (-1/4),
Reduced Penetration (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)

[16]

Martial Arts: *Dirty Infighting*

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Kidney Blow	-2	+0	HKA 1 1/2d6
4 Low Blow	-1	+1	2 1/2d6 NND
4 Punch/Backhand	+0	+2	6 1/2d6 Strike
3 Throw	+0	+1	4 1/2d6 +v/5, Target Falls
4 +1 HTH Damage Class			

- 24 *Complete Ballistic Armor:* Armor (13 PD/13 ED)
Hardened (+1/4); Activation Roll 14- (locations 6-18; -1/4), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)
- 15 *Full Helmet:* Armor (13 PD/13 ED)
Hardened (+1/4); Activation Roll 9- (locations 3-5; -1 1/2), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)
- 52 *Medical Kit With Diagnostic Computer:* see page 124 of the Equipment Section
- 2 *Move Soldier!:* Running +2m (8m total)

1

Perks

- 1 Fringe Benefit: License to practice Medicine
- 4 Contacts (4 points worth)

Kenwood Muld-
owney created by
Steve Kramer.

MY CAMPAIGN, YOUR CAMPAIGN

In the original *Kazei 5* game, Doc spent a lot of time working with Temple to break her out of her personality governor-induced shell and get her to recognize herself as her own person. This is one of the main reasons he and Jagger argued so often.

In your game, Doc can be a vocal proponent for replicate rights, as well as justice for those who've "fallen through the cracks." They can encounter him at his Zone clinic, The Living End, or The Armageddon Clock.

Skills

- 12 Practice Makes Perfect: +1 Overall
- 20 +2 with All Combat
- 16 Firearms Training: +2 with Ranged Combat
- 3 Bureaucratics 12-
- 2 Computer Programming (Personal Computers) 13-
- 3 Electronics (Medical Systems, Computer Systems) 13-
- 3 Interrogation 12-
- 2 KS: Mitsumi Security History And Customs 11-
- 3 KS: The Corporate World 13-
- 2 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
- 4 Language: Japanese (idiomatic)
- 7 Paramedics 15-
- 3 Research 13-
- 5 Streetwise 13-
- 2 Systems Operation (Medical Systems) 13-
- 3 Tactics 13-
- 3 WF: Small Arms, Blades (knives)
- 3 Jack of All Trades
- 3 1) PS: Cyberneticist 14-
- 3 2) PS: Doctor 14-
- 1 3) PS: Soldier 11-
- 3 Scientist
- 2 1) SS: Biology 13-
- 1 2) SS: Chemistry 11-
- 2 3) SS: Cyber Technology 13-
- 2 4) SS: Medicine 13-
- 1 5) SS: Physiology 11-
- 1 6) SS: Psychology 11-
- 2 7) SS: Surgery 13-
- 3 Traveler
- 1 1) AK: Alta California 11-
- 1 2) AK: Japan 11-
- 1 3) AK: The Neo York Zero Zone 11-
- 1 4) CK: Neo York 11-
- 1 5) CuK: Japanese Culture and Customs 11-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 287

Total Cost: 422

300 Matching Complications (60)

- 10 DNPC: Aileen Muldowney 11- (Slightly Less Powerful than the PC)
- 20 Hunted: Mitsumi Biotechnology (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
- 10 Negative Reputation: doctor who creates too many patients (Infrequently, Extreme)
- 0 Psychological Complication: Never Goes Back Upon His Word (once given) (Uncommon, Total)
- 20 Psychological Complication: Sees the World Divided into "Good Guys" and "Scum" (Common, Total)
- 0 Psychological Complication: Sense of Duty to the Community (Common, Strong)

Total Complications Value: 60

Experience Points: 122



DOC AND DOCTOR SNAKEYE

The characters of Doc and Doctor Snakeye (see page 254) share very similar and overlapping roles. Both are excellent doctors and cybersurgeons, both are Hunted by Mitsumi Biotechnology, and both have an altruistic streak. Game Masters need to decide if they intend to use one, both, or neither of the characters. One possibility is to link their origins, having them both working at Avatar Designs and escaping Mitsumi's invasion together, with Aileen being injured in the crossfire. You could even add in Shoko (page 268), who's now a nurse in their Zone clinic. This option works well if you intend to run a Zone-centric game and have no PCs with medical skills.

KENWOOD "DOC" MULDOWNEY

Background/History: When Kenwood Muldowney was ready to attend medical school, there was no doubt about where he'd go. Mitsumi Biotechnology had treated his family as their own, and their influence and power was known throughout Neo York. When his parents died, Mitsumi paid for an elaborate funeral in the suburbs. It was clear Kenwood could write his own ticket within the company arcology and support himself and his sister Aileen in grand style.

Alas, times (and people) had changed since the elder Muldowney had been an employee. Mitsumi was no longer at the top of the corporate heap, there were upstarts like Diaplessic Industries, Engineering Life Labs, and R Scott nipping at its heels. When Kenwood came to Hikari Kuzuhara, the man who had employed his father, the executive saw not a gifted medical student, but an invaluable aid in the upcoming corporate wars Mitsumi fully expected to be faced with. Kenwood, who felt he owed *giri* to Mitsumi, accepted.

Trained as a combat medic, Kenwood impressed his commanding officers and himself with his aptitude for firearms and small unit tactics. Mitsumi pronounced him ready and pressed him into service starting with their assault on Avatar Designs. While Kenwood excelled on the field of battle, his mind and soul were unprepared for the horrors of combat in the twenty-first century. When he saw Pumas and Lynxes used as expendable shock troops and any replicates used by Avatar executed out of hand, he began to question the purpose of fighting for his corporate masters.

Things didn't get any better after a tour in Japan. There a fellow operative in his unit broke up a violent demonstration by driving a troop transport through the thickest concentration of protestors. The operative was commended for quick thinking in saving valuable company property, while Kenwood was reprimanded for treating critically injured Pumas at a nearby aid station, spending too much time trying to save property that could simply be recycled.

Sent back to Neo York, Kenwood hadn't been back a month when a critical patient was brought into the Mitsumi medical center. It was his sister, Aileen Muldowney, near death after a brutal rape, beating, and torture. It took almost twenty hours, but the emergency cybergrafts took, and Kenwood collapsed into a chair next to Aileen as she lay recovering. It was then he overheard that his sister's attacker had been brought in as well — shot while attempting to escape — with orders he be "preserved for a future assignment elsewhere." In triage, Doc found his sister's attacker, a fellow operative from his time in Jamaica and Japan by the name of Tony Metzger, awaiting surgery.

In that instant, Kenwood decided the world he knew contained no justice, and he'd exact a long overdue payment right then and there. Mitsumi, his career, the Hippocratic Oath — none of it mattered anymore.

When the surgeon arrived to operate on Metzger, he found his patient had been given a full-drip IV of curare. Not less than five minutes later, Hikari Kuzuhara was found dead at his desk, a close-range blast from a combat shotgun having ended his life. As Kenwood drove away from the Mitsumi Biotechnology arcology, two

agents opened the door to his former quarters, only to be consumed in the resulting explosion. A short time later, Kenwood calmly drove across the Williamsburg Bridge into the Neo York Zero Zone.

Personality/Motivation: Once self-concerned and pragmatic, Kenwood, now known to Zone locals as "Doc," is a man on a mission. His only concern is with seeing justice done at any price — and in the Zone, that almost amounts to a death wish. His single-mindedness manifests itself in a black-and-white view of the world: everyone is either a friend, for whom no sacrifice is too great, or an enemy, for whom no mercy exists. To determine this, he trusts only himself and his closest associates, determined to never be duped by any faceless masters ever again.

Outwardly, he is usually grim, introspective, and impassive, speaking as though words were costly, and giving the impression he isn't always paying attention to what's going on. In times of indecision, he prefers to let the others talk it out, hear all the options, and then announce his decision, ending all debate. For Doc, there is a certain way things are done, no matter what the situation might be, and there's little variance from that solution.

Curiously, for a man who makes his living installing and repairing cyberware, Doc refuses to have any installed himself. His Datalink is as far as he'll go, mainly because it was a requirement of Mitsumi's, otherwise he's just fine to remain pure "meat." While he doesn't look down on those who undergo cybernetic implantation, he also does not and will not buy into the hype.

Quote: "We can't have things like this happening in my city."

Powers/Tactics: Doc is a normal human, with only the most basic of cybernetic implants. As a former combat medic, he prefers to hang back in most combat situations, waiting to see where he's needed most. He can also act as fire support, using his combat shotgun to keep enemy targets pinned down and unable to return fire.

Doc runs a clinic in the Zone, trading medical attention for supplies (food, fuel, clothes, ammunition, and so on). He's a skilled medic, and guards his Medical Kit carefully.

Campaign Use: Doc is an easily adaptable character. You can keep him a Zone medic, put him back in Neo York as part of a mercenary unit, or even keep him in Mitsumi — perhaps he hasn't decided to leave yet. Doc is pretty well balanced as is. Making him more powerful is hard without giving him a lot of cyberware, which is something he'd never do. You could make him a genetic upgrade, and increase his physical stats accordingly. To make Doc less powerful, remove his Medical Kit and CBA.

Doc will hunt those who've harmed his friends and allies, or who've committed gross acts of injustice.

Appearance: Doc is tall and broad shouldered, with a well-muscled build. His blond hair is cropped short, in the military style, topping a stern, square-jawed face. Doc usually dresses in simple fatigues, whether on duty or off. In his medical clinic he'll add a white lab coat and a broad-brimmed Stetson. On a combat mission, Doc dresses in full armor, complete with helmet.

AILEEN MULDOWNEY

Aileen owns and runs a bar called "The Armageddon Clock," located in the Entertainment District. She's a partial-conversion cyborg, with a very basic cybergraft upgrade (in other words, she has only the Basic Cyborg Template). In keeping with the bar's name, The Armageddon Clock features a lot of Cold War and nuclear imagery.

Doctor Snakeye created by Mark Kobrak.

PAOLO "DOCTOR SNAKEYE" ZANABRIA

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [1]
14	DEX	8	12-	
15	CON	5	12-	
23	INT	16	14-	PER Roll 14-/16-
18	EGO	8	13-	
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2 1/2d6
5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
6	OMCV	9		
6	DMCV	9		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
7	PD	5		Total: 7 PD (0 rPD)
6	ED	4		Total: 6 ED (0 rED)
6	REC	2		
30	END	2		
14	BODY	4		
30	STUN	5		
				Total Characteristic Cost: 125

Movement: Running: 14m
Swimming: 4m

Cost Powers

END

- 30 *Advanced Cyberbrain:* 15 EGO, 5 OMCV, 5 DMCV
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 10 *Attack Barrier:* Mental Defense (15 points)
Software (-1/2)
- 12 *Skilljack:* Variable Power Pool, 10 base + 5 control cost
No Skill Roll Required (+1); Limited Class Of Powers Available (only specific Skills may be used; -1/2),
Restraining (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 4 *Flare Filter:* Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points)
Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 3 *Vision Enhancement:* +2 PER with Sight Group
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restraining (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 3 *Thermographic Filter:* IR Perception (Sight Group) (5 Active Points)
Restraining (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 7 *Microscope Lenses:* Microscopic (x100) with Sight Group
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restraining (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 3 *Pre-Programmed Nerve Wires:* Fast Draw (Handguns) 13-
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restraining (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 4 *Level Two Datajack:* +2 with all computer-related Skills
Requires DNI-Capable Computer And Accessible Datacable (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restraining (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 10 *IMI Desert Eagle .41 With Armor Piercing Ammunition:* RKA 1d6+1 [2x9]
2 clips of 9 Charges (+0), Armor Piercing (+1/4); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR
Minimum (-1/4)
plus +1 OCV; OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 8 *Level II Spectracloth Jacket:* Resistant Protection (7 PD/7 ED)
Required Roll 11- (locations 7-12; -1), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)
- 2 *Swift Of Foot:* Running +2m (14m total) 1

Perks

- 1 Fringe Benefit: License to practice Medicine

Skills

- 6 +2 with Computer Programming, Electronics, Mechanics
- 3 Acting 12-
- 3 Bureaucratics 12-
- 2 Computer Programming (Personal Computers) 14-
- 3 Electronics (Medical Systems, Cybernetics) 14-
- 3 High Society 12-

SNAKEYE'S SKILLSOFTS

Doctor Snakeye keeps an small collection of skillssofts on hand. They are:

- ⊙ CK: Neo York
- ⊙ Climbing
- ⊙ Gambling (Card Games)
- ⊙ KS: Modern Dance
- ⊙ KS: Reggae
- ⊙ KS: Rock Climbing
- ⊙ Language: Japanese (Completely Fluent)

- 3 Language: English (completely fluent)
- 3 Language: Russian (completely fluent)
- 3 Lockpicking 12-
- 3 Mechanics 14-
- 5 Paramedics 15-
- 3 PS: Cybersurgeon 14-
- 3 PS: Play Guitar 12-
- 3 Research 14-
- 3 Security Systems 14-
- 2 Systems Operation (Medical Systems) 14-
- 2 WF: Small Arms
- 2 Weaponsmith (Firearms) 14-
- 3 Scholar
- 4 1) KS: Cyber Technology 16-
- 1 2) KS: Football/Soccer 11-
- 1 3) KS: History Of Medicine 11-
- 1 4) KS: History Of Rock Music 11-
- 1 5) KS: Jinsei History And Customs 11-
- 1 6) KS: Space Facilities/Stations 11-
- 1 7) KS: The Corporate World 11-
- 3 Scientist
- 1 1) SS: Chemistry 11-
- 2 2) SS: Cyber Technology 14-
- 2 3) SS: Medicine 14-
- 1 4) SS: Physics 11-
- 2 5) SS: Physiology 14-
- 2 6) SS: Robotics 14-
- 1 7) SS: Space Science 11-
- 2 8) SS: Surgery 14-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 181

Total Cost: 306

300 Matching Complications (60)

- 5 Distinctive Features: Cybernetic Eyes (Easily Concealed; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 20 Hunted: Mitsumi Biotechnology 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
- 20 Psychological Complication: Hippocratic Oath (Common, Total)
- 0 Psychological Complication: Refuses To Work For/With Another Multinational (Common, Strong)
- 0 Psychological Complication: Takes Professional Pride In His Work (Common, Strong)
- 0 Reputation: hot-shot cybersurgeon, 8- (Extreme; Known Only To A Small Group)
- 5 Rivalry: Professional (other cybersurgeons; Rival is As Powerful; Seek to Outdo, Embarrass, or Humiliate Rival; Rival Aware of Rivalry)
- 10 Vulnerability: 2 x Effect light-based Flash Attacks (Uncommon)

Total Complications Value: 50

Experience Points: 6

PAOLO "DOCTOR SNAKEYE" ZANABRIA

Background/History: Born in Mexico City, Paolo Zanabria was sold into indentured servitude to the Xanadyne Technology Corporation when he was six. Found to be exceedingly intelligent, young Paolo was placed in an advanced educational course, where he was trained to be the next generation of corporate researcher. Initially content with his life in a corporate-run learning institution (after all, he received three meals a day, clean clothes, a warm bed, and a roof over his head, unlike many in Mexico City), as an adolescent he began to rebel, realizing the terms of his contract meant he'd never be free of Xanadyne's clutches. However, his passion for science held him in check. He knew if he went too far

he'd be thrown out of the advanced sciences training group, and would never be able to work with high-technology again.

When he was eighteen, Paolo graduated from Xanadyne's core training program and was placed, at his request, into advanced studies in cybernetics. He attended M. V. Lomonosov Moscow State University, where he studied medicine and biomedical engineering. Paolo found university life to be exhilarating — he was no longer confined to the Xanadyne arcology and had free run of the city, could take part in the school's social life, and found his professor's academic demands to be mere child's play after growing up in a corporate school. Best yet, he fell in love and married Kelly Harris, an engineering student, the day he graduated.

Paolo's joy lasted mere hours, as Xanadyne declared the marriage a violation of his contract, had it quickly annulled, and promptly shipped Paolo off into space to spend the next two years of his life servicing cyberdroids and cyborgs working on an orbital construction platform. His firsthand experience with the short-comings of Xanadyne's cybernetic systems allowed him to prepare an in-depth and scathing review, outlining each and every structural flaw and procedural defect in great detail. Ignoring his direct supervisor, a weak and ineffectual man, Paolo sent it to Petra Ambunatov, chief manager of Xanadyne's cybernetics design division.

Frustrated at the lack of progress being made by her current team of cyberneticists, Petra read over Paolo's report with glee and promptly had him shipped back to Earth. No sooner had he arrived than Petra put him to work creating a new hard-shell chassis. Paolo created the Pisces chassis, a widely successful design that quickly became the mainstay of Xanadyne's orbital cyborg fleet. Handsomely rewarded, Paolo was given more projects to work on, and for the first time in years, he was happy. However, it was not to last. Petra Ambunatov eventually moved on to head a different division, and Paolo soon found himself falling back into his old ways. He alternated between design and development work and punishment duty as a medical officer on the orbital construction platforms.

After several years of this, Xanadyne licensed some of their technology to Chicxulub Astrodynamics. Paolo's R&D division was broken up, and while most of his fellow researchers were sent over to Chicxulub, Paolo was placed with Xanadyne's spin-off Avatar Designs. Curiously, when all was said and done, Paolo decided he'd gotten the better part of the deal. Avatar set itself up on the island of Jamaica, where the weather was beautiful, the beer cheap, and the water clear. In addition, Paolo dealt directly with clients, designing and building cybernetic systems to their specifications, and was free from most corporate oversight. For once he seemed to truly enjoy both his work and lifestyle. And then Mitsumi Biotechnology showed up.

Now Paolo is on the run, having fled Mitsumi's assault on Avatar's Jamaican facilities. Having managed to reach the Neo York Zero Zone, Paolo intends to stay. Here he's free from the multinationals and he's even set-up a small clinic to help make ends meet. It's his first taste of true freedom, and he intends to enjoy it while it lasts.

Personality/Motivation: Outwardly, Paolo is almost always formal and even a little cold, but carefully polite. He carries himself like a corporate executive, but at the same time he treats everyone else as if they were his peers. Many Zone denizens are thrown off by this behavior and end up treating Paolo warily, despite his apparent lack of combat skills. Paolo realizes he's somewhat defenseless against much of what the Zone has to offer and goes to great lengths to treat even the wildest Zone ganger with respect.

When working, Paolo is professional and meticulous. He takes his responsibilities as a doctor seriously, and will always do charity work to help a suffering patient. Paolo has a great deal of professional pride, and will

counter-attack viciously if his work is questioned. While he can admit a mistake, anyone who points one out had better be prepared to defend their opinion.

Privately, Paolo loves his new life in the Zone. Granted he lives a far more precarious existence than when he was in Jamaica or even on an orbital platform, but the rewards and respect he gains for his efforts are his and his alone to enjoy. Furthermore he has the freedom to do as he pleases: he can take long lunches, break for coffee whenever he wants, and go for walks when his clinic is free of patients. Of course, lunch is often grilled rat or feral dog, the coffee is little more than caffeinated mud, and the streets are dangerous, but it's the thought that counts.

Quote: "Calm down. I never turn away a trauma patient for bad credit. The first time. What I need these days is fuel alcohol. Can you get that? Good. The fee will be sixty liters of fuel alcohol, payable in ten liter installments, once a month for the next six months. Fair enough?"

Powers/Tactics: A highly-skilled doctor, Paolo's expertise with cyberware and cybernetic systems has made him an invaluable Zone asset. Currently he lives near Fort Dixie, in a converted ice cream shop that also serves as his clinic. When not serving as a medic for the Fort Dixie militia, he takes any and all customers, normally taking payment in barter, such as food, fuel for the fuel cell, firewood, and the like. The clinic itself is under constant expansion. There's power (partly thanks to Bell's Motors rigging up a windmill), and Paolo is trying to get a locking door made that he can operate remotely.

While Paolo has no illusions about his combat skills, he does carry a Desert Eagle loaded with AP rounds in a shoulder rig and wears an armored jacket. A custom-rigged Skilljack modification has given him the Fast Draw Skill and Paolo won't hesitate to bring his pistol out if there's trouble. However, he's no fool, and would rather negotiate than fight if outnumbered or outclassed.

Campaign Use: For those campaigns set in the Zone, Paolo is a good man to know. You can make him more powerful by expanding on his growing reputation and give him Well Connected and a number of Contacts with important and/or useful people in the Zone — Tetsutenshi for example. To weaken him, lower his INT, drop his SPD to 3, remove his Skilljack, and get rid of his Skill Levels.

Paolo doesn't hunt anyone.

Appearance: Paolo Zanabria is a Hispanic man in his late 30s, standing 5'9" with the toned build of someone who's had constant access to the corporate gym. His black hair is worn short and is always carefully groomed. As his nickname suggests, his cybernetic eyes resemble those of a snake, as they are almost entirely black with a small band of gray at the outsides.

Normally Paolo wears his armored coat and occasionally dons wrap-around sunglasses to hide his eyes. He keeps a portable medical kit with him at all times.

PAYNE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
16	STR	6	12-	Lift 229.7 kg; 3d6 [1]
16/22	DEX	12	12-/13-	
15	CON	5	12-	
8	INT	-2	11-	PER Roll 11-
8	EGO	-2	11-	
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2 1/2d6
5/7	OCV	10		
5/7	DCV	10		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
3	SPD	10		Phases: 4, 8, 12
7	PD	5		Total: 9 PD (2 rPD)
6	ED	4		Total: 8 ED (2 rED)
6	REC	2		
30	END	2		
13	BODY	3		
30	STUN	5		
				Total Characteristic Cost: 73

Movement: Running: 12m
Swimming: 4m

Cost Powers**END**

- 16 *Basic Cyberbrain:* 10 EGO, 3 OMCV, 3 DMCV
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Poor Quality (-1/4)
- 5 *Attack Barrier:* Mental Defense (7 points)
Software (-1/2)
- 18 *Reflex Enhancement:* +6 DEX, +2 OCV, +2 DC
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4), Poor Quality (-1/4)
- 3 *Flare Filter:* Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points)
Cybersystem (-1/4), Poor Quality (-1/4)
- 3 *Thermographic Filter:* IR Perception (Sight Group)
Cyberware (-1/4), Poor Quality (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 13 *Colt Mark VI With Smartgun Adaptor:* RKA 1 1/2d6
16 Charges (+0); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) plus +1 OCV; OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4)
plus +1 versus Recoil Modifiers with RKA; OAF (-1), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Poweris used (+1 to firearm's Hearing PER Roll modifier; -1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 8 *The Big Stick:* HA +3d6
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); OAF (-1), Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)

[16]

Martial Arts: *Big Stick-Fu*

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
5	Smash	-2	+1	Weapon +4 DC Strike
4	Strike	+2	+0	Weapon +2 DC Strike
0	Weapon Element: Clubs			
5	Leather Jacket With Plate-Armored Shoulders: Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED) Required Roll 11- (or Hit Locations 7-12; -1), OIF (-1/2), 0 DEF Versus Firearms (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4) plus Resistant Protection (3 PD/3 ED); Required Roll 8- (or Hit Location 9; -1 3/4), OIF (-1/2), 1/2 DEF Versus Firearms (-1/4), Real Armor (-1/4)			
4	Sheet Metal Greaves And Knees: Resistant Protection (5 PD/5 ED) Required Roll 8- (or Hit Locations 14-15; -1 3/4), OIF (-1/2), 1/2 DEF Versus Firearms (-1/4), Real Armor (-1/4)			

Perks

- 3 SINless

Skills

- 3 +1 with Big Stick Fu
- 2 AK: The Neo York Zero Zone 11-
- 3 Armorsmith 12- (13-)
- 3 Climbing 12- (13-)

- 2 Gambling (Dice Games) 11-
- 2 KS: Neo York Zero Zone Gangs 11-
- 2 KS: Neo York Zero Zone Underworld 11-
- 1 Mechanics 8-
- 3 Stealth 12- (13-)
- 3 Streetwise 12-
- 2 Survival (Urban) 11-
- 3 WF: Small Arms, Blades

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 120

Total Cost: 193

175 Matching Complications (50)

- 5 Distinctive Features: Cybereyes (Easily Concealed; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 10 Psychological Complication: Misogynist (Common, Moderate)
- 15 Psychological Complication: Sadist, Likes To Cause Pain And Hurt Others (Common, Strong)

Total Complications Value: 30

Experience Points: 38

PAYNE

Background/History: Payne is Zero Zone born and bred. Abandoned at an early age, he grew up in the harsh, violent world of gang life. It was there he learned how to fight and how to survive, until he was able to move on to bigger and better things. By cutting questionable deals with shady street docs, Payne was able to have several cybernetic systems implanted, although they're of dubious quality. Not that Payne cares; the systems work well enough and the edge they give him more than makes up for any occasional failures.

These days Payne has moved beyond being a simple gang enforcer and now sells his services as a harvester in Darkside. He's done a lot of work for Doctor Gerlach, and hopes to replace Hiroko O'Hara as the doctor's "go-to guy."

Personality/Motivation: Payne is a strong believer in "might makes right." In his mind, those who are bigger and stronger are the ones who make the rules. Anyone who doesn't like it can make their complaints known to Payne, just don't start

crying when he decides to beat some sense into you. Inflicting pain is Payne's way of proving his dominance and ensuring he's in control. This mindset explains Payne's attitude toward women; he considers them the weaker sex and thus not worthy of respect. Needless to say, Doctor Gerlach's preference for Hiroko drives him to distraction.

Quote: "Pain is my name and my business! Allow me to show you!"

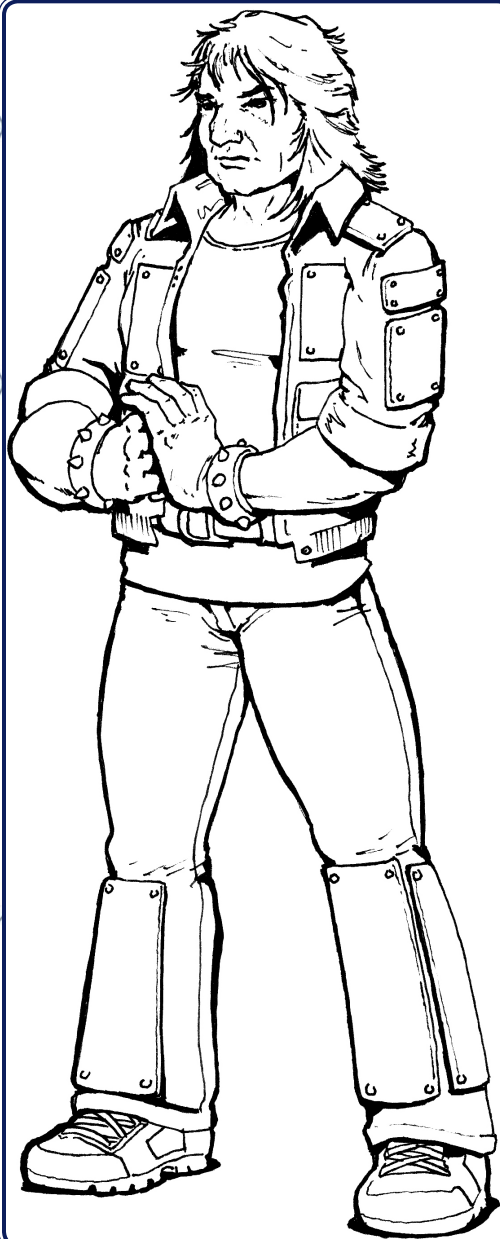
Powers/Tactics: When involved in a melee, Payne's tactics are as simple as they are brutal: hit 'em first and hit 'em hard. He'll engage his opponent directly, pounding him with a barrage of Strikes until his foe falls, at which point Payne will finish him off with a Smash to the head or chest. As ammunition is fairly scarce in the Zone, Payne will try to avoid gunfights if at all possible.

Payne's entire suite of cyberware is not of the best quality, and often fails if exposed to areas of intense electrical fields, such as near power lines. Thunderstorms are also a problem; his Reflex Augmentation works intermittently and has been known to short out all together. Worse yet, his cybernetic eyes usually fail, leaving him seeing either shades of gray or nothing at all. So far, Payne has been able to deal with such incidents by remaining under cover until his systems recover and he can act normally.

Campaign Use: Payne represents a fairly typical Zone ganger, albeit one with a little cyberware. He's pretty okay as is. If you really need to make him stronger, up his STR, DEX, and SPD, and give him a few more Combat Skill Levels.

Payne will hunt anyone he thinks has wronged him. This includes those who've beaten him in a fight, cheated at dice, or who haven't paid him the proper respect.

Appearance: Battered and worn by a life on the streets, Payne isn't a particularly attractive individual. He stands over six feet tall, with a muscular build and a scattering of scars. He dyes his hair bright green and lets it grown unkempt past his shoulders. He wears a heavy leather jacket with metal plates attached to the shoulders and crude sheet metal armor on his lower legs. The rest of his clothes consist of boots, jeans, and a T-shirt.



RAN

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [1]
21	DEX	22	13-	
24	CON	14	14-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
30	EGO	20	15-	
15/30	PRE	5	12-/15-	PRE Attack: 3d6/6d6
7	OCV	20		
9	DCV	30		
10	OMCV	21		
10	DMCV	21		
6	SPD	40		Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
6	PD	4		Total: 6 PD (0 rPD)
6	ED	4		Total: 6 ED (0 rED)
10	REC	6		
100	END	16		
13	BODY	3		
36	STUN	8		
Total Characteristic Cost: 244				

Movement: Running: 16m
Swimming: 4m

Cost Powers**END**

- 12 *Presence Of Madness:* +15 PRE
Only When In Manic State (-1/4)
- 400 *Unlimited Esper Potential:* Variable Power Pool, 200 base + 200 control cost
Cosmic (+2); Limited Class Of Powers Available (esper effects; -1/4); all slots Esper Side Effects (-1/4)
- 60 *Innate Esper Resistance To Harm:* Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%
- 20 *Living Embodiment Of Esper Power:* Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, +25% (75% total)
Only Works Against Esper Powers (-1/2)
- 31 *Esper Shields:* Mental Defense (25 points total)
Hardened (+1/4)
- 4 *Faster Than He Looks:* Running +4m (16m total)
- 26 *Esper Awareness:* Mental Awareness, +8 to PER Roll, Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees),
Targeting, Telescopic: +6
- 13 *Esper Body Control:* Regeneration (1 BODY per Hour), Can Heal Limbs
- 36 *Living Embodiment Of Esper Power:* LS (Eating: Character only has to eat once per week; Immunity
All terrestrial poisons and chemical warfare agents; Immunity: All terrestrial diseases and biowarfare
agents; Longevity: Immortal; Safe in High Pressure; Safe in High Radiation; Safe in Intense Cold; Safe
in Intense Heat; Safe in Low Pressure/Vacuum; Self-Contained Breathing; Sleeping: Character only
has to sleep 8 hours per week)

Perks

- 12 Positive Reputation: living embodiment of esper potential, a force of nature (All over the Zone (and beyond)) 14-, +4/+4d6

Talents

- 43 *Esper Awareness:* Danger Sense (general area, any danger, Function as a Sense) 18-
- 10 *Speed Of Esper Thought:* Lightning Reflexes: +10 DEX to act first with All Actions
- 3 *Esper Awareness:* Lightsleep

Skills

- 30 +6 with all Esper Powers
- 5 AK: The Zero Zone 14-
- 3 Climbing 13-
- 3 Concealment (Scavenging) 12-
- 1 KS: The Esper World 8-
- 2 KS: Who's Who In The Zero Zone 11-
- 1 Language: Japanese (basic conversation)
- 1 Mechanics 8-

"Ran" translates to
"chaos" in Japanese.

THE HERALDS OF CHAOS

Also known as the Four Bikers of the Apocalypse, the Heralds are four men who live in Southside. When Ran goes on one of his periodic rampages, the four tear through the Zone on their motorcycles, telling everyone "Chaos is coming! Chaos is coming!" To further get their point across, they've outfitted their bikes with assorted noisemakers and have attached large flags to the back of the frame. For his part, Ran seems to accept them, or, at least, hasn't destroyed them yet.

- 19 Unlimited Esper Potential: Power: Esper Power Stunts 23-
- 3 Stealth 13-
- 3 Streetwise 12- (15-)
- 2 Survival (Urban) 12-
- 2 WF: Blades, Handguns

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 745

Total Cost: 989

300 Matching Complications (60)

- 0 Distinctive Features: Esper (Not Concealable; Always Noticed and Causes Major Reaction; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
- 35 Enraged: Berserk when fighting other espers in manic state (Uncommon), go 14-, recover 8-
- 0 Hunted: assorted multinationals (Infrequently, Mo Pow, Watching)
- 0 Negative Reputation: world's most powerful esper weapon (Very Frequently, Extreme)
- 0 Physical Complication: Powers Are Occasionally Out Of Control (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 0 Psychological Complication: Loner, avoids all other people if he can help it (Common, Strong)
- 20 Psychological Complication: Manic-Depressive (Common, Total)
- 0 Social Complication: Esper (Frequently, Minor)
- 5 Vulnerability: 1 1/2 x Effect Mind Scan (Uncommon)

Total Complications Value: 60

Experience Points: 689

RAN

Background/History: Ran is, without a doubt, the most powerful esper weapon on Earth. His exact origins are unclear, obscured by conflicting rumors and wild speculation. The commonly accepted theory makes him out to be a product of uncontrolled esper experimentation, and esper *otaku* are quick to note how his initial appearance coincides with the destruction of a Jinsei research lab in Japan.

No one's sure why he chose the Zero Zone as his home, but then, no one's brave (or crazy) enough to ask him and find out. Curiously, several espers have stated Ran doesn't actually spend a lot of time in the Zone, but they have no idea where he goes. In any case, he's the Zone's most feared resident and even the merest rumor of his arrival is enough to send most people into a blind panic.

Personality/Motivation: Whatever process brought about the blossoming of Ran's unrivaled esper potential also broke his mind. He suffers from severe bipolar personality disorder, and ranges from an almost catatonic depressive phase to a psychotic manic state that revels in mindless destruction. Fortunately, most of his time is spent in a reasonably rational mentality somewhere between these two extremes. On the other hand, one can argue this is when Ran is at his most dangerous, since it's at times like this he's capable of coherent thought and extended planning.

When in his depressive state, Ran retreats deep within Southside, hiding himself within the battered warehouse he calls home. Often he'll sleep for days on end, curled up amid a pile of dirty blankets. If in his manic phase, Ran can literally be found almost anywhere in the world, looking for an outlet for his boundless energy. Having some semblance of rationality, he often works out his aggression on abandoned buildings and ruins left over from the Third World War. Occasionally, however, he searches out other espers, looking to test their power.

When in a rational state of mind, Ran prefers to be left alone. He travels the world, his esper abilities allowing him to visit even the most inhospitable regions with no ill effects (rumor has him walking on the Moon). He'll usually ignore anyone he meets, but will not hesitate to defend himself if attacked.

Recently, Ran has appeared periodically at Mayumi Kishiyama's (page 234) shrine in MegaTokyo. He seems to find solace and comfort there.

Quote: "Go away!"

Powers/Tactics: Simply put, Ran is power. He's been seen pulling helicopter gunships out of the air, crushing main battle tanks with a glance, and absorbing direct hits from cyberdroid ion cannons without flinching. It's no wonder even Shion Nys fears him.

With this much power at his command, Ran doesn't bother with anything resembling conventional tactics, preferring to eliminate foes and obstacles with overwhelming force. Usually he'll create a 40 PD/20 ED Telekinetic Shield around himself, then use the remaining points in his Power Pool to generate immense Force Bolts. His favorite attack forms involve adding Advantages such as Area of Effect or Explosion to a basic Force Bolt. Against opponents without energy weapons, Ran will normally reconfigure his Telekinetic Shield by dropping the ED portion and increase his offensive attacks accordingly. When fighting espers he's been known to unleash massive Telekinetic Rending attacks, often with the Advantage Armor Piercing.

Curiously, even when in his maniac state, Ran doesn't try to kill other espers, simply defeat them. Of course, at his power level, the end result is often the same. He also isn't one to fight to the bitter end, and more than once has simply teleported away from confrontations.

Campaign Use: Ran is more a force of nature than a person, someone who can't be defeated (or even dealt with) by conventional means. He should appear only sparingly, as even the mere possibility of his showing up is something the PCs should take seriously.

As the most powerful esper in the world, you shouldn't reduce Ran's power level. You also probably don't need to increase it, either, although you could always up his DEX and CON, increase his Damage Reduction to a flat 75% across the board, and give him two more DCV levels.

Normally, Ran avoids people and doesn't hunt anyone. When in his manic state, however, he often pursues nearby espers in order to test them.

Appearance: For all his power, Ran isn't all that physically imposing. He stands 5'10" and weighs roughly 160 pounds, with a lean but well-muscled build. His hair is black, wild and unkempt, and usually hangs past his shoulders. He normally dresses in scrounged cast-offs, although his general immunity to the elements means clothing isn't a primary concern. Biker's boots, jeans, and a shirt comprise a typical outfit.

If encountered during one of his depressive phases, Ran acts shy, introverted, and almost cowardly. In his manic state, he exudes a forceful, dominating presence that's very hard to ignore. At all other times, he's calm and even-tempered, secure in the knowledge he's virtually immune to anything the world can throw at him.



RYDER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [1]
22	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
18	CON	8	13-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
13	EGO	3	12-	ECV: 4
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3 1/2d6
7	OCV	20		
7	DCV	20		
4	OMCV	3		
4	DMCV	3		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
7	PD	5		Total: 23 PD (16 rPD)
6	ED	4		Total: 22 ED (16 rED)
9	REC	5		
35	END	3		
13	BODY	3		
30	STUN	5		
				Total Characteristic Cost: 144

Movement:

Running: 12m
 Flight: 40m
 Swimming: 4m

Cost Powers**END**

Esper Powers, all slots Esper Side Effects (-1/4), Unified Power (-1/4)

27	1) <i>Force Bolt</i> : Blast 4d6	6
	Cannot Be Bounced (-1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4), Unified Power (-1/4) plus Blast 4d6; Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -1/2), Cannot Be Bounced (-1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4), Unified Power (-1/4)	
30	2) <i>Telekinesis</i> : Telekinesis (20 STR)	9
	Cannot Punch (-1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4), Unified Power (-1/4) plus Telekinesis (20 STR); Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -1/2), Cannot Punch (-1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4), Unified Power (-1/4)	
31	3) <i>Telekinetic Shield</i> : Resistant Protection (8 PD/8 ED) (Protect Carried Items)	9
	Costs Endurance (-1/2), Perceivable (-0), Esper Side Effects (-1/4), Unified Power (-1/4) plus Resistant Protection (8 PD/8 ED) (Protect Carried Items); Costs Endurance (-1/2), Perceivable (-0), Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -1/2), Esper Side Effects (-1/4), Unified Power (-1/4)	
11	4) <i>Telekinetic Wall</i> : Barrier 4 PD/4 ED, 0 BODY (up to 4m long and 2m high)	6
	Costs Endurance (-1/2), Perceivable (-0), No Range (-1/2), Restricted Shape (ring; -1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4) plus Barrier 4 PD/4 ED, 0 BODY (up to 4m long and 2m high); Costs Endurance (-1/2), Perceivable (-0), Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -1/2), No Range (-1/2), Restricted Shape (ring; -1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)	
20	5) <i>Telekinetic Flight</i> : Flight 40m	8
	Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -1/2), Esper Side Effects (-1/4), Unified Power (-1/4)	
11	<i>Smith & Wesson Model 2019</i> : RKA 1 1/2d6	[4x6]
	+1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), 4 clips of 6 Charges (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) plus +1 OCV; OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4)	
5	<i>Combat Knife</i> : HKA 1d6-1 (1d6+1 w/STR)	
	Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); OAF (-1), No Knockback (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)	

Martial Arts: *Wing Chun Kung Fu***Maneuver****OCV****DCV****Notes**

4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
5	Kick	-2	+1	7d6 Strike
3	Legsweep	+2	-1	4d6 Strike, Target Falls
4	Punch	+0	+2	5d6 Strike
3	Weapon Element: Blades, Chain & Rope Weapons, Clubs			
5	<i>Level I Biosteel Jacket</i> : Resistant Protection (5 PD/5 ED); Required Roll 11- (locations 7-12; -1), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)			

- 4 *Level I Spectacloth Pants*: Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED); Required Roll 10- (locations 13-16; -1 1/4), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)
- 5 *Esper Awareness*: Mental Awareness, Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees)

Perks

- 3 SINless

Talents

- 6 Striking Appearance (+2/+2d6)

Skills

- 10 +2 with Esper Powers
- 3 AK: The Zero Zone 12-
- 3 Breakfall 13-
- 3 Combat Driving (motorcycle) 13-
- 2 Electronics (Electric Musical Instruments And Sound Systems) 12-
- 2 KS: Guitar 11-
- 2 KS: Zero Zone Gangs 11-
- 2 KS: The Zero Zone Underworld 11-
- 2 KS: Zero Zone Music Scene 11-
- 3 Mechanics 12-
- 2 PS: Guitarist 11-
- 3 Streetwise 13-
- 2 Survival (Urban) 12-
- 5 WF: Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons, Small Arms, Blades

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 221**Total Cost: 365****300 Matching Complications (60)**

- 0 Distinctive Features: Esper (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
- 10 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Large Group)
- 10 Hunted: Unnamed Zone Gang (Frequently, As Pow, Limited Geographical Area, Harshly Punish)
- 15 Psychological Complication: Despises Zone Gangs; Will Fight Then When Ever Possible (Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Complication: Thrill Seeker; Lives For Excitement And Danger (Common, Strong)
- 10 Social Complication: Esper (Frequently, Minor)

Total Complications Value: 60**Experience Points: 65****RYDER**

Background/History: Ryder has never known any other life than the Zone. His parents were trapped there when Neo York enacted its desperate plan to save the city. For Ryder's family, and thousands like them, life was hard. Although shelter was plentiful, food and medicine were not. Anarchy reigned, with smash-and-grab gangs taking all they could, burning and looting wantonly. Outside aid was sporadic, as the Red Cross and similar organizations had even larger issues to deal with. Eventually, a sort of order asserted itself as people banded together, forming new communities amid the ruins of Brooklyn and Queens.

This was Ryder's world as a boy. Unlike many, he avoided the lure of the gangs and helped his family with growing food and by performing odd jobs here and there. Life was hard, but in time they managed to do quite well for themselves.

When Ryder was sixteen, disaster struck. His family was caught in the path of a gang battle. Although the resulting stress and excitement was sufficient to fully

manifest Ryder's latent esper powers, it wasn't enough to save his parents or sister. Alone for the first time in his life, Ryder became a loner, drifting from place to place in the Zone. These days, he performs odd jobs for people in the Entertainment District and Zone Central, but leads an almost aimless existence, with no set direction to his life.

Personality/Motivation: Following the death of his family, Ryder has developed a devil-may-care attitude. He lives for the moment, appearing not to care about the future. He often engages in risky stunts, such as taking his bike for high speed runs along the Zone's abandoned highways, or picking fights with any of the Zone's countless gangs. It's highly possible he has a death wish, and seeks to join his slain family, or his on the edge lifestyle may simply be a way of affirming he's still alive. In any case, Ryder will be the first to admit his future options are limited. The life of a ganger is out of the question, as is becoming a foot soldier for one of the crime syndicates. Right now his biggest escape is through music. He practices regularly, and hopes to become good enough to eventually leave the Zone.

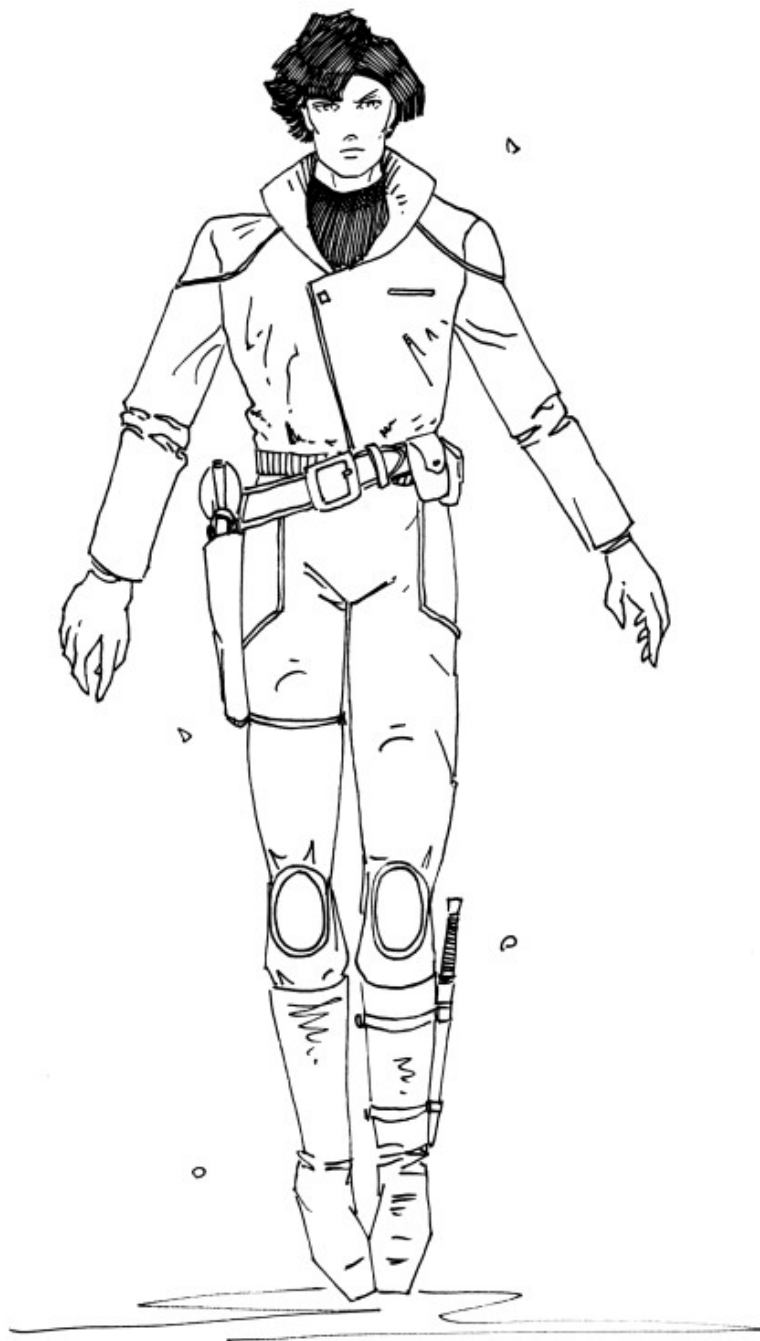
Quote: “Hey, it’s like I tell the other gangers all the time; ‘What goes around comes around.’ Now it’s your turn.”

Powers/Tactics: Possessing fairly basic esper powers, Ryder is typical of mid-level espers the world over. However, the exhausting nature of the powers means he can’t use them for long, so he prefers to strike quickly and then leave. Usually, he relies upon his Wing Chun training and pistol to get him out of trouble, but if pressed, he will put up a Telekinetic Shield and use Force Bolts to put down the nearest targets. If heavily outnumbered, Ryder will unleash the most powerful Force Bolts he can manage, Haymaking or Pushing if possible. He’s not above such risky stunts as trying to drop a building on himself and his attackers, counting on his Telekinetic Shield and a last-second Abort to a Telekinetic Wall to save him.

Campaign Use: As written, Ryder makes a good PC, perfect for recruitment into any of the organizational set-ups described in Part Six. To make Ryder more powerful, simply eliminate the 2x END on his powers and give him +2 with All Attacks. You could also give him a scattering of Contacts with such people as 9-Tail’s Towing, Bell’s Motors, and Gordon. There’s no real need to make him weaker.

Ryder primarily hunts gangers, especially those who have attacked people in the Entertainment District or Zone Central.

Appearance: Ryder stands 5’9” with a trim, athletic build. He has straight black hair that’s constantly falling into his dark eyes. His clothes consist of a dark red biker’s jacket, pants, and boots. His pistol is holstered at the hip, with the knife secured into a boot-top.



SANDRA BLACKMORESandra Blackmore
created by Alex Fauth.

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
12/18	STR	2	11-/13-	Lift 132 kg/303.1 kg; 2d6/3 1/2d6 [1/2]
13/21	DEX	6	12-/13-	
18	CON	8	13-	
14	INT	4	12-	PER Roll 12-
15	EGO	5	12-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
4/7	OCV	5		
4/7	DCV	5		
5	OMCV	6		
5	DMCV	6		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
4	PD	2		Total: 11 PD (7 rPD)
4	ED	2		Total: 11 ED (7 rED)
6	REC	2		
35	END	3		
16	BODY	6		
32	STUN	6		

Total Characteristic Cost: 93

/ = Values after slash are due to cyberware.

Movement: Running: 12m
Swimming: 4m

Cost Powers**END**

- 36 *Advanced Cyberbrain:* 15 EGO, 5 OMCV, 5 DMCV
Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 12 *Attack Barrier:* Mental Defense (18 points)
Software (-1/2)
- 5 *Muscle Augmentation:* +6 STR
Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 37 *Reflex Enhancement:* +8 DEX, +3 OCV, +3 DCV
Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 22 *Basic Cyber Blade:* HKA 2d6 (2 1/2d6/3d6 w/STR)
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Real Weapon (-1/4), Reduced Penetration (-1/4), No Knockback (-1/4),
Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 6 *Abdominal Sheathing:* Resistant Protection (5 PD/5 ED)
Invisible Power Effects (Invisible To Sight Group, source only; +1/4); Required Roll 9- (or Locations 11-13;
-1 1/2), Always Lets First BODY Through (attacks with Reduced Penetration are counted as two separate
attacks; -1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 6 *Flare Filter:* Sight Group Flash Defense (7 points)
Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 4 *Thermographic Filter:* IR Perception (Sight Group)
Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 9 *Smartgun Link:* +2 with Ranged Combat
Requires Smartlinked Weapon (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Limited Range (64m; -1/4) **plus** +1 Range Skill
Level with All Attacks; Requires Smartlinked Weapon (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Limited Range (64m; -1/4)
- 2 *Level One Datajack:* +1 with all computer-related Skills
Requires DNI-Capable Computer And Accessible Datacable (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4)

Martial Arts: *Police Training***Maneuver OCV DCV Notes**

- 4 Block +2 +2 Block, Abort
- 4 Disarm -1 +1 Disarm; 22 STR/28 STR to Disarm
- 3 Hold -1 -1 Grab Two Limbs, 22 STR/28 STR for holding on
- 3 Slam +0 +1 2d6/3 1/2d6 +v/5, Target Falls
- 3 Takedown +1 +1 2d6/3 1/2d6 Strike; Target Falls

- 13 *Colt Mark VI With Smartgun Adaptor:* RKA 1 1/2d6 [4x16]
4 clips of 16 Charges (+1/4); OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4)
plus +1 OCV; OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4) **plus** +1 versus Recoil Modifiers with RKA; OAF (-1), Side
Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (+1 to firearm's Hearing PER Roll modifier;
-1/2), Real Weapon (-1/4)

MY CAMPAIGN, YOUR CAMPAIGN

In the *Kazei 5* PBEM, Sandra was romantically involved with Jason Stone (CEO of Syntech MedSystems) for a brief period. He “rescued” her from her self-imposed exile in the Zone and she ended up living in Mandarin Towers in Hong Kong, where she befriended Sarah J Ferrari.

In your game, she could be the love interest of a PC or an off-beat Zone Contact. She’s also a useful GMPC, who can fill in the PCs on life in the Zone as well as run Zone-based errands for them — provided she’s paid. The PCs can encounter her just about anywhere in the Zone.

- 8 *Level II Spectracloth Long Coat*: Resistant Protection (7 PD/7 ED)
Required Roll 12- (locations 7-16; -3/4), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)
- 3 *Rigid Plates For Spectracloth Long Coat*: Resistant Protection (3 PD/3 ED)
Required Roll 10- (locations 10-13; -1 1/4), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)

Perks

- 2 Contact: Alan Davies, NYPD, Inc. 11-
- 2 Fringe Benefit: Concealed Weapon Permit (where appropriate)

Skills

- 10 +1 with All Combat
- 8 +1 with HTH Combat
- 2 AK: Neo York Zero Zone 11-
- 5 Breakfall 13- (14-)
- 2 CK: Neo York City 11-
- 3 Climbing 12- (13-)
- 3 Combat Driving 12- (13-)
- 3 Criminology 12-
- 3 Interrogation 12-
- 2 KS: Criminal Law And Procedure 11-
- 2 KS: NYPD, Inc. History And Customs 11-
- 2 KS: Neo York Underworld 11-
- 1 KS: The Corporate World 8-
- 2 KS: The Law-enforcement World 11-
- 2 KS: The Zero Zone Underworld 11-
- 3 Lockpicking 12- (13-)
- 2 PS: ex-Police Officer 11-
- 3 Persuasion 12-
- 3 Shadowing 12-
- 3 Stealth 12- (13-)
- 5 Streetwise 13-
- 6 WF: Small Arms, Clubs [nightstick], General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons, Thrown Knives

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 259

Total Cost: 352

300 Matching Complications (60)

- 10 Distinctive Features: scars on face, right arm and shoulder (Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 10 Psychological Complication: Bitter And Cynical, assumes the worst out of people (Common, Moderate)
- 10 Psychological Complication: Code Of Loyalty To Her Current Employer (Common, Moderate)
- 10 Psychological Complication: Dislike For Espers, Multinational Corporations, And Their Executives (Common, Moderate)
- 10 Reputation: unlucky ex-NYPD officer, 11-

Total Complications Value: 50

Experience Points: 62

SANDRA BLACKMORE

Background/History: A former officer with the NYPD, Inc., Sandra’s career in law-enforcement came to an abrupt end when a routine arrest turned out to be an angry esper weapon. Out of the four officers involved, one was killed almost instantly, another died shortly thereafter, and Sandra ended up hospitalized, her right eye, shoulder, and arm severely damaged. Discharged with a generous benefits package, Sandra sold most everything she owned and used the cash to rebuild her body with cutting-edge combat cyberware. Turning her back on Neo York and the NYPD, she drifted into the Zone, working as a gun for hire.

Personality/Motivation: Cynical, with a dry sense of humor, Sandra figures assuming the worst of people is the only way to survive the Zone. However, this doesn’t stop her from remaining loyal to the aims of whoever is her current employer, unless circumstances get unreasonable. In a fight Sandra remains levelheaded and sensible for the most part, figuring the best way to win is to let the other guy make the first mistake.

Her experiences at the hands of an angry esper weapon have left Sandra distrustful, wary, and even downright hostile of espers in general. Her experiences as a NYPD officer have left her similarly distrustful of multinational executives; more than once she had an in-

vestigation curtailed due to corporate influence. On the other hand, she recognizes corporations as a necessary source of income in her line of work.

Quote: “Want to know the difference between the Zone and a toilet? You can flush a toilet.”

Powers/Tactics:

Although her cybernetic systems grant her accelerated reflexes and enhanced physical strength, Sandra is still a regular, everyday human when you get right down to it. She has no innate powers (aside from brute cynicism) and she knows it. She tries to avoid hand-to-hand combat with the heavily cybered, but if pressed she will Block, perform a Takedown, then a strike with her Cyber Blades to finish them off. If in a fight, she'll fight to win, and will use every dirty and sneaky trick she can think of to get the upper hand. She also has no compunctions about running away from superior numbers.

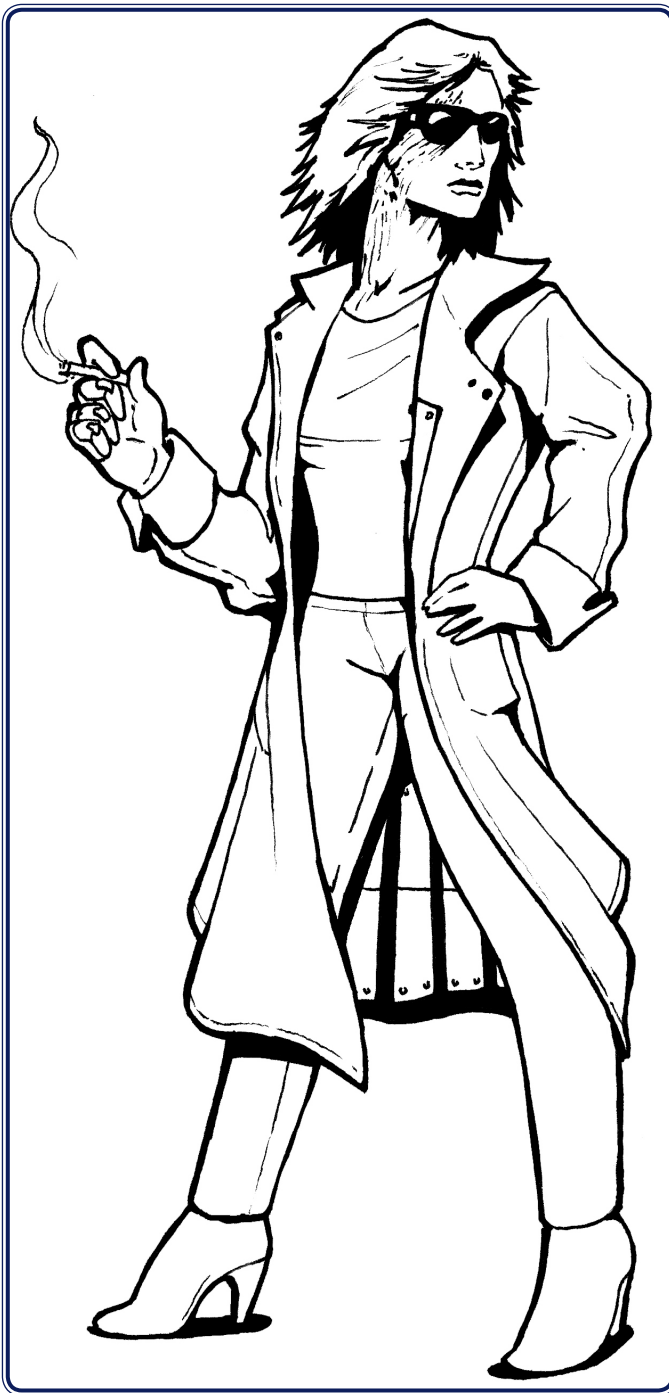
Campaign Use:

Sandra is a fairly typical mid-level street samurai, and might make a good PC in certain games. Player Characters venturing into the Zone could do worse than to hire her as a guide and, provided they act sensibly, might even earn her grudging respect. You can make Sandra more powerful by increasing her base STR and DEX, adding a Low Light Filter to her cybereyes, giving her a second Smartgun Link, adding more martial arts maneuvers, additional Combat Skill Levels, and Two Weapon Fighting (Ranged). Also, give her a second pistol, an SMG, and armored trousers and boots. There's no real reasons to reduce her power level, although can you reduce or remove her cyberware if you desire.

Sandra only hunts people if she's been hired to do so. She can be pretty relentless if needed.

Appearance: Sandra is fairly tall, standing 5'11", with an athletic and slightly muscular build. Once considered slightly attractive, the right side of her face now has a scattering of scars around the eye socket, down her neck, and across her right shoulder and arm. Her shaggy black hair comes down to her shoulders and is in bad need of a trim. Her blue eyes are artificial. Her right arm has been extensively rebuilt and the last three fingers on her right hand are fully cybernetic.

Her clothing varies depending on the weather and the situation, but usually consists of a black shirt, black “tactical” pants, boots, and a Spectracloth long coat with armored inserts.



**PLOT SEED:
ESCAPE
FROM THE
NEO YORK
ZERO ZONE**

Sandra's recently rescued one David Lam, a computer programmer, from certain death at the hands of Zone rabble. Now she needs to get him back across the bridge to Neo York proper. The only problem is David's ID cards. They were smashed in the shoot-out that resulted in his being stuck in the Zone in the first place. So she's asking the PCs to try and figure out a way to get David home safe and sound.

Shoko created by Jeff Skagen.

SHOKO

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
30	STR	20	15-	Lift 1600 kg; 6d6 [3]
26	DEX	32	14-	OCV: 9/DCV: 9
23	CON	13	14-	
16	INT	6	12-	PER Roll 14-/15-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
9	OCV	30		
9	DCV	30		
3	OMCV	0		
3	DMCV	0		
5	SPD	30		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
10	PD	8		Total: 10/14 PD (0/4 rPD)
9	ED	7		Total: 9/13 ED (0/4 rED)
12	REC	8		
45	END	5		
16	BODY	6		
42	STUN	11		Total Characteristic Cost: 216

Movement:

Running: 22m
Leaping: 20m
Swimming: 4m

Cost Powers

END

- 3 *Hyper Immune System*: LS (Immunity: All terrestrial diseases and biowarfare agents)
Not Versus Bioweapons (-1/2)

Martial Arts: *Hardwired Hand-To-Hand Combat Training*

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4 Elbow/Knee Strike	+0	+2	8d6 Strike
4 Escape	+0	+0	45 STR vs. Grabs
4 Evade	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
4 Punch/Snap Kick	+2	+0	8d6 Strike
5 Roundhouse/Side Kick	-2	+1	10d6 Strike
3 Takedown	+1	+1	6d6 Strike; Target Falls
3 Weapon Element: Blades, Clubs, Staffs			

- 16 *Remington Stormbreaker*: RKA 3d6+1 [3]
+1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/4); 3 Charges (-1 1/4), OAF (-1), Beam (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/4) plus +1 OCV; OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 4 *Level I Spectracloth Jacket*: Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED)
Required Roll 11- (locations 7-12; -1), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)
- 4 *Level I Spectracloth Pants*: Resistant Protection (4 PD/4 ED)
Required Roll 10- (locations 13-16; -1 1/4), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)
- 2 *Synthleather Boots*: Resistant Protection (2 PD/2 ED)
Required Roll 10- (locations 15-18; -1 1/4), OIF (-1/2), Limited Power (0 DEF Versus Firearms; -1/2), Real Armor (-1/4)
- 6 *Powerful Leaper*: Leaping +12m (20m forward, 10m upward) 1
- 10 *Swift*: Running +10m (22m total) 1
- 6 *Sharp Eyes And Ears*: +2 PER with all Sense Groups
- 2 *Fox's Ears*: +1 PER with Hearing Group
- 5 *Cat's Eyes*: Nightvision

Perks

- 3 Contact: 9-Tails Towing (Good relationship with Contact) 11-
- 5 Contact: CK (Contact has significant Contacts of his own, Contact has useful Skills or resources, Good relationship with Contact) 11-
- 2 Contact: The Triple Puma Threat (Contact has useful Skills or resources) 8-

Talents

- 5 Customized DNA: Bioware Compatible
- 4 Flexible Joints: Double Jointed
- 3 Lightsleep
- 6 Striking Appearance (+2/+2d6)

Skills

- 20 +2 with All Combat
- 6 +2 with Handguns
- 3 Acrobatics 14-
- 1 AK: The Neo York Zero Zone 8-
- 3 Breakfall 14-
- 2 CK: Sydney 11-
- 3 Charm 13-
- 3 Climbing 14-
- 3 Contortionist 14-
- 1 KS: Who's Who In The Zone 8-
- 3 Language: Japanese (completely fluent)
- 1 PS: Cooking 8-
- 2 PS: Exotic Dancing 11-
- 1 PS: Masseuse 8-
- 10 Rapid Attack
- 3 Stealth 14-
- 3 Streetwise 13-
- 3 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
- 3 Tactics 12-
- 3 Teamwork 14-
- 9 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Small Arms, Anti-Materiel Rifle, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons, Stun Rods
- 2 Weaponsmith (Firearms) 12-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 205**Total Cost: 421****300 Matching Complications (60)**

- 10 Distinctive Features: Fox's Ears And Tail (Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 5 Distinctive Features: Replicated Human (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Technology Or Major Effort)
- 0 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Large Group)
- 20 Hunted: Mitsumi Biotechnology (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
- 0 Psychological Complication: Hates And Fears Mitsumi Biotechnology (Common, Strong)
- 10 Psychological Complication: Lonely, Seeks Friends And Companionship (Common, Moderate)
- 15 Psychological Complication: Loyal To Her Friends And Current Employer (Common, Strong)
- 0 Reputation: Puma — tough but stupid, 11-
- 0 Rivalry: Professional (other Security-Class replicates; Rival is As Powerful; Seek to Outdo, Embarrass, or Humiliate Rival; Rival Unaware of Rivalry)
- 0 Social Complication: Not a Puma, But Actually The Last Of The Fox-Class Replicated Humans (Occasionally, Minor)
- 0 Social Complication: Replicated Human (Very Frequently, Major)

Total Complications Value: 60**Experience Points: 121****MY CAMPAIGN, YOUR CAMPAIGN**

In the *Kazei 5* PBEM, Shoko lived at Bell's Motors, working odd jobs around the garage and helping 9-Tails Towing when needed. She tried her hand at exotic dancing, but gave up when faced with the Triple Puma Threat (however, there are rumors she joined them in CK's film studio). She also took a jab as doorman at the Vat. PCs could meet her at any of these locations.

SHOKO

Background/History: Shoko started out as a Fox-Class Security replicate, a new product from Avatar Designs. One of ten prototypes, Shoko's life would have been one of constant field testing to ensure all systems were working perfectly followed by a run through the recycling chamber. A life expectancy of six months tops.

Then Mitsumi Biotechnology, aware of Avatar's new product through industrial espionage, declared an all-out corporate war, capturing Avatar's Jamaican facilities with almost contemptuous ease.

Fortunately for Shoko, researcher Nagate Onizawa ordered her to help him escape and not to try and defend the doomed compound. Together, the two made their

way to Montego Bay, where Onizawa hired a charter to take the pair to Haiti. From there they traveled across the Caribbean, eventually ending up in Bermuda, where the two boarded a flight for Alta California. Once free of Mitsumi's corporate war zone (or so they hoped), Onizawa announced he was taking Shoko to Sydney, Australia. His reasoning was simple — in Australia Shoko would be free, not property, and Mitsumi would have no claim over her.

For the next six months, Shoko lived a life of freedom. She slowly overcame her personality governors, learning to think for herself and how to live in the regular world. It seemed she and Onizawa had escaped from Mitsumi's net and were in the clear.

They were wrong.

A Mitsumi strike team assaulted Onizawa's apartment in the early morning hours. Shoko, due to her genetic enhancements, woke instantly, overpowering one of the attackers and using his weapons on the rest of the team. When it was all over, she was the only one left stand-

ing — and alive, as Onizawa had been killed in the crossfire.

On the run yet again, Shoko decided to head for the last place she figured Mitsumi would ever look: the Neo York Zero Zone. Trading in weaponry and gear scavenged from the Mitsumi team, as well as her recently purchased motorcycle and almost all the cash she had, Shoko secured passage on a container ship heading for the Eastern Seaboard of North America.

Personality/Motivation:

Considering her origins as a security replicate, Shoko is surprisingly laid back and even-tempered. She's quite capable of letting a few insults pass before becoming riled up, and will usually try to find

a way to avoid an unnecessary fight. It's uncertain if this trait is unique to her, or something the entire Fox-Class shared. She also tends to automatically like other people, until they give her cause not to.

The deaths of just about everyone she has ever known (or loved) has left Shoko simultaneously lonely for friends and companions yet afraid to let others get too close lest they end up dead as well. This has led her to keep most people at arm's length, using flirting, brief flings, and one-night stands to try and fill her need for companionship. Any one who manages to see beyond this almost pleasure-replicate facade will find Shoko to be a loyal and life-long friend.

As a side effect of her personality governors, Shoko still retains a strong sense of loyalty to her "master," which in this case means her current employer. Her team-oriented programming also explains her willingness to work with and quickly befriend others. At the same time, her experiences in Jamaica and Sydney have left her with a deep-seated fear of Mitsumi. She hates them for destroying Avatar Designs, her replicate "sisters," and her former lover Nagate. Her fear, however, outweighs her hate; the last thing she wants to do is attract their attention and risk capture yet again.

Quote: "Congratulations, mate. Despite my best efforts to be nice, you've just managed to pick a fight with me. Now, rather than distress the bouncers in here, why don't we go outside to do this?"

Powers/Tactics: Shoko resembles a Puma-Class Security replicate, except she's bigger, stronger, and faster. However, she prefers not to fight, and will try and negotiate a settlement before any argument gets out of hand. But once a fight starts Shoko is in it to win. She'll use her Stormbreaker to put down heavily armored or armed foes, but tries to be sparing with it; shells for the massive pistol are hard to come by. If possible, she'll get into hand-to-hand range, where her size, strength, and pre-programmed combat skills can make short work of most opponents.

Campaign Use: Shoko makes a good guide for people new to the Zone, as she's friendly, open, and honest. She also has connections to some useful Zone residents, such as 9-Tails Towing and CK. If you want to make Shoko more powerful, give her better armor and weapons; her Characteristics are fine as is. To make her weaker, drop her Characteristics down around to those of a Puma's.

Appearance: Shoko stands a towering 6'5" and weighs 190 pounds. with a well toned, broad-shouldered and yet buxom build. Her skin is naturally a deep tan, with extremely bright-red shoulder-length hair and arresting yellow-orange eyes. Her ears are similar to a Puma's, but larger, and she has a bushy tail the same color as her hair. When she walks, her movements are graceful and fluid, with a sense of restrained power.

When out on the street, Shoko wears a brown Spectracloth jacket, tight Spectracloth pants, and knee-high synthleather boots. Under her jacket she wears colorful T-shirts cut away to bare her midriff, while the Stormbreaker is worn openly on her right hip.



Takeda Johnson created by David Kujit.

TAKEDA JOHNSON

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [1]
23	DEX	26	14-	
23	CON	13	14-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
11	EGO	1	11-	
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3 1/2d6
8	OCV	25		
8	DCV	25		
4	OMCV	3		
4	DMCV	3		
5	SPD	30		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
7	PD	5		Total: 19 PD (12 rPD)
5	ED	3		Total: 13 ED (8 rED)
10	REC	6		
40	END	4		
13	BODY	3		
34	STUN	7		

Total Characteristic Cost: 170

Movement: Running: 14m
Swimming: 4m

Cost Powers**END**

- 84 *Flexible Esper Power:* Variable Power Pool, 60 base + 60 control cost
Powers Can Be Changed As A Zero-Phase Action (+1); Side Effects (suffers "Brainburn" (2d6 Drain DEX, 2d6 Mental Blast, 8d6 Sight Group Flash) if Control Skill Roll failed; -1), Limited Class Of Powers Available (esper effects; -1/4); all slots Esper Side Effects (-1/4)

Martial Arts: *Aikido*

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
5 Redirect	+1	+3	Block, Abort
5 Strike	+1	+3	3d6 Strike
3 Takedown	+1	+1	3d6 Strike; Target Falls

- 27 *Innate Telekinetic Shield:* Resistant Protection (12 PD/8 ED) (Protect Carried Items)
Esper Side Effects (-1/4), Nonpersistant (-1/4), Perceivable (-0)

- 2 *Swift:* Running +2m (14m total)
5 *Esper Awareness:* Mental Awareness, Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees)
2 *Body Control:* LS (Eating: Character only has to eat once per week; Sleeping: Character only has to sleep 8 hours per week)

Talents

- 3 *Esper Awareness:* Lightsleep

Skills

- 10 +2 with Esper Powers
2 AK: Jinsei Arcology, MegaTokyo 11-
1 AK: The Zero Zone 8-
3 Breakfall 14-
3 Bureaucratics 13-
2 CK: MegaTokyo 11-
3 Climbing 14-
2 KS: Jinsei Corporation History And Customs 11-
2 KS: The Corporate World 11-
2 KS: The Esper World 11-
4 Language: Japanese (idiomatic)
19 Esper Potential: Power: Esper Power Stunts 19-
3 Security Systems 12-
3 Stealth 14-

1

MY CAMPAIGN, YOUR CAMPAIGN

In the original *Kazei* 5 game, Takeda was initially romantically involved with Blade. He also had a rivalry of sorts with Shion Nys. Eventually the two realized they were both the targets of an unscrupulous and manipulative multinational corporation and decided to work together, eventually resolving their differences and becoming lovers (if only for a brief period).

- 1 Streetwise 8-
- 2 Survival (Urban) 12-
- 2 WF: Small Arms

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 204

Total Cost: 374

300 Matching Complications (60)

- 0 Distinctive Features: Esper (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
- 25 Hunted: Jinsei Corporation (Frequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
- 0 Hunted: assorted retrievers (Frequently, As Pow, Capture)
- 0 Physical Complication: Amnesia, remembers little to nothing of who he is or where he's from (Infrequently, Fully Impairing)
- 0 Physical Complication: Cyber-Rejection (Infrequently, Fully Impairing)
- 10 Physical Complication: Powers Are Occasionally Out Of Control (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 10 Physical Complication: Suffers From Occasional Migraine Headaches (-3 to CV, PER, Skill Rolls, and Running) (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 15 Psychological Complication: Driven To Seek And Understand His Past (Common, Strong)
- 0 Psychological Complication: "Fundamentally A Nice Guy," genuinely likes people unless proven otherwise (Common, Strong)
- 0 Social Complication: Esper (Frequently, Minor)

Total Complications Value: 60

Experience Points: 74

TAKEDA JOHNSON

Background/History: An exceedingly powerful esper weapon, Takeda has no memory of his past. He recalls waking up in a Zero Zone alley dressed in jeans and a black T-shirt. Other than that, nothing. There is a vague feeling someone is looking for him, and it would be best for everyone for Takeda to avoid being found.

Takeda is very new to the Zone and has yet to figure out where, or even if, he can fit in. He spends most of his time in the Entertainment District, which is where he picked up his name. "Takeda" came from a newsfeed, while "Johnson" was selected after previous Zone-given surnames (including "Smith," "Jones," and "Doe") all proved unsuitable.

Personality/Motivation:

Almost a tabula rasa (at least with regards to his past) Takeda is, for the most part, a fundamentally "nice guy." He likes people and wants people to like him. However, he's no shirker when it comes to danger; he can, and will, kill to protect himself and others. Takeda is also driven to find out who he is (or was), where he's from and why he's here, in the Zone. This desire to learn his past is slowly becoming an obsession with him, and may lead him to undertake potentially dangerous actions if he thinks it will help him unlock the secret of his origins.

Quote: "Don't make me do something you'll regret."

Powers/Tactics: Similar in power to Raven (see page 227), Takeda is somewhat faster. He also has incredible control of his physiology and is able to go long periods without eating or sleeping. In combat he fights conservatively, often augmenting his Innate Telekinetic Shield and using Force Bolts to hammer foes. He'll avoid such powers as Telekinetic Rending unless he's in desperate straights or feels he has no other choice. Due to the potential for Brainburn, Takeda will avoid switching slots in his VPP unless the situation calls for it.

Campaign Use: A campaign arc waiting to happen, Takeda's origins can be used to introduce the PCs to Jinsei and the world of corporate esper weapons. His true origins are up to the GM, but one possibility is found in the Game Master's Section on page 293.

To make Takeda more powerful up his VPP to 75 Active Points. There's no real reason to weaken him, although you can remove the Innate Telekinetic Shield if you wish.

Takeda will hunt people who he thinks know something about his origins.

Appearance: Takeda appears as a young Eurasian man with dark hair and eyes. He's wiry rather than muscular, stands about 5'10" in height, and could be called handsome if given a bath, a shave, and a haircut. All things considered, he appears fairly normal, although the intensity of his gaze betrays the force of his personality. As he can use his esper abilities to mitigate climatic effects, he usually wears jeans and a T-shirt, regardless of the weather.



TETSUTENSHI

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
40	STR	30	17-	Lift 6400 kg; 8d6 [4]
26	DEX	32	14-	
25	CON	15	14-	
14	INT	4	12-	PER Roll 12-
14	EGO	4	12-	
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
9	OCV	35		
9	DCV	35		
5	OMCV	6		
5	DMCV	6		
6	SPD	40		Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
9	PD	7		Total: 19 PD (10 rPD)
9	ED	7		Total: 19 ED (10 rED)
12	REC	8		
50	END	6		
13	BODY	3		
46	STUN	13		

Total Characteristic Cost: 261

Movement: Running: 20m
Leaping: 36m

Cost Powers**END**

- 41 *Secure Cyberbrain:* 20 EGO, 7 OMCV, 7 DMCV
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrained (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 20 *Multi-Layered Attack Barrier:* Mental Defense (24 points total)
Hardened (+1/4); Software (-1/2)
- 39 *TI Taser XREP Cybergun:* Blast 5d6 [12]
Invisible to Sight Group (no shell casings as evidence; +1/4); Beam (-1/4), 12 Charges (-1/4), Limited Range (20m; -1/4), No Knockback (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4) plus Blast 8d6, Invisible to Sight Group (no shell casings as evidence; +1/4), NND (any form of Resistant ED or fully insulated target; +0); Beam (-1/4), 12 Charges (-1/4), Limited Range 20m; -1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 10 *Armored Limbs:* HA +2d6
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 30 *Cybergraft Shell:* Armor (10 PD/10 ED)
Required Roll 15- (doesn't cover Hit Locations 3-5; -0)
- 34 *Combat Cybergraft:* Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%
STUN Only (-1/2), Linked (Cybergraft Shell; -1/4)
- 15 *Combat Cybergraft:* Does Not Bleed
Required Roll 15- (doesn't cover Hit Locations 3-5; -0)
- 2 *Heavy:* Knockback Resistance -2m
- 16 *Cybernetic Legs:* Leaping +32m (36m forward, 18m upward)
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); No Noncombat Movement (-1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 6 *Cybernetic Legs:* Running +8m (20m total), Cybersystem (-1/4) 1
- 2 *Cyborg Body:* Swimming -4m

Martial Arts: *Kung Fu*

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
5 Block	+1	+3	Block, Abort
4 Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
5 Kick	-2	+1	12d6 Strike
3 Legsweep	+2	-1	9d6 Strike, Target Falls
4 Punch	+0	+2	10d6 Strike
3 Throw	+0	+1	8d6 +v/5, Target Falls
4 Weapon Element:			Blades, Clubs, Polearms and Spears, Staffs

Perks

- 3 Contact: Doctor Snakey (Contact has useful Skills or resources) 11-
- 2 Positive Reputation: "Iron Angel," a no-holds barred retriever (The Zero Zone) 11-, +2/+2d6

"Tetsutenshi" translates to "iron angel" in Japanese.

Talents

- 3 Striking Appearance (+1/+1d6)

Skills

- 20 +2 with All Attacks
 3 AK: Neo York Zero Zone 12-
 3 Acrobatics 14-
 3 Breakfall 14-
 1 CK: Hong Kong 8-
 2 KS: Kung Fu 11-
 2 KS: The Corporate World 11-
 2 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
 2 KS: The Zero Zone Underworld 11-
 1 PS: Ex-Soldier 8-
 2 PS: Flutist 11-
 3 Shadowing 12-
 3 Stealth 14-
 3 Streetwise 13-
 3 Tactics 12-
 3 Tracking 12-
 7 WF: Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons, Common Melee Weapons, Small Arms, Staffs

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 310

Total Cost: 571

300 Matching Complications (60)

- 10 Distinctive Features: Synthskin/Cyborg Body (her skin doesn't quite feel right to the touch, she doesn't sweat, her mass is much greater than her size indicates, her skin degrades if she is hit by an attack) (Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
 20 Hunted: Yakuza (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
 0 Physical Complication: Cyborg (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing)
 0 Physical Complication: Heavy (weighs roughly 200 kg) (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
 15 Psychological Complication: Enjoys The Excitement Of The Chase And The Thrill Of Battle (Common, Strong)
 0 Psychological Complication: No Tolerance For Braggarts, Cowards, Or Fools (Common, Strong)
 15 Psychological Complication: Protective Of Those She Considers Her Friends (Common, Strong)

Total Complications Value: 60

Experience Points: 271

TETSUTENSHI

Background/History: In any society, there are the hunters and the hunted. The Neo York Zero Zone is no exception, with its gangsters, Mafia soldatos, Yakuza kobun, harvesters, white slavers, smugglers, and dealers in goods of all sorts. As they live in a Zero Zone, many of them operate openly, without fear of persecution. But all is not lost. There are a few who are brave enough and skilled enough to prey on the predators, to retrieve those who would rather not be found. Tetsutenshi is one of these people. She's made the Neo York Zero Zone her hunting ground, pursuing her quarry with ruthless efficiency.

Tetsutenshi's exact origins are a mystery; no one's quite certain where she comes from, much less her real name. A very private person, she's said little to nothing about her background, leading to a great deal of wild speculation. Many in the Zone have her pegged as a former corporate operative, on the run from her former employers. Others say she's a corporate assassin, a Yakuza hitwoman, or even secretly in the NYPD, Inc.

Personality/Motivation: A loner, Tetsutenshi avoids close relationships. She has few people she calls friends, and even those she keeps at arm's length. Still, she does value friendship, even if it's somewhat remote, and is quick to come to their aid if needed. However her retaliation can be tempered by circumstances. Tetsutenshi is notorious for her dislike of bullies, braggarts, loudmouths, and those who engage in stupid or foolish behavior. Friend or not, anyone who gets himself into trouble with such actions will need to get himself out of it on his own. Tetsutenshi feels that if your mouth writes checks your body can't cash, that's your problem, not hers.

Although quiet, even sedate, when tending her garden, Tetsutenshi's personality changes when out hunting. She seems to actually enjoy combat and has shown an unwillingness to backdown from challengers and threats. She's also known to be quite ruthless and will go to great lengths to track down and capture her designated target.

Quote: "You should consider yourself lucky... I was told to bring you in alive."

Powers/Tactics: Almost completely mechanical, Tetsutenshi's body grants her greatly enhanced strength, reflexes, durability, resistance to damage, and movement capabilities. She will use these abilities to move quickly around a battlefield, never letting her foes get a clean shot at her. Often, she'll put her levels into DCV, close to hand-to-hand range and let her martial skills do the rest.

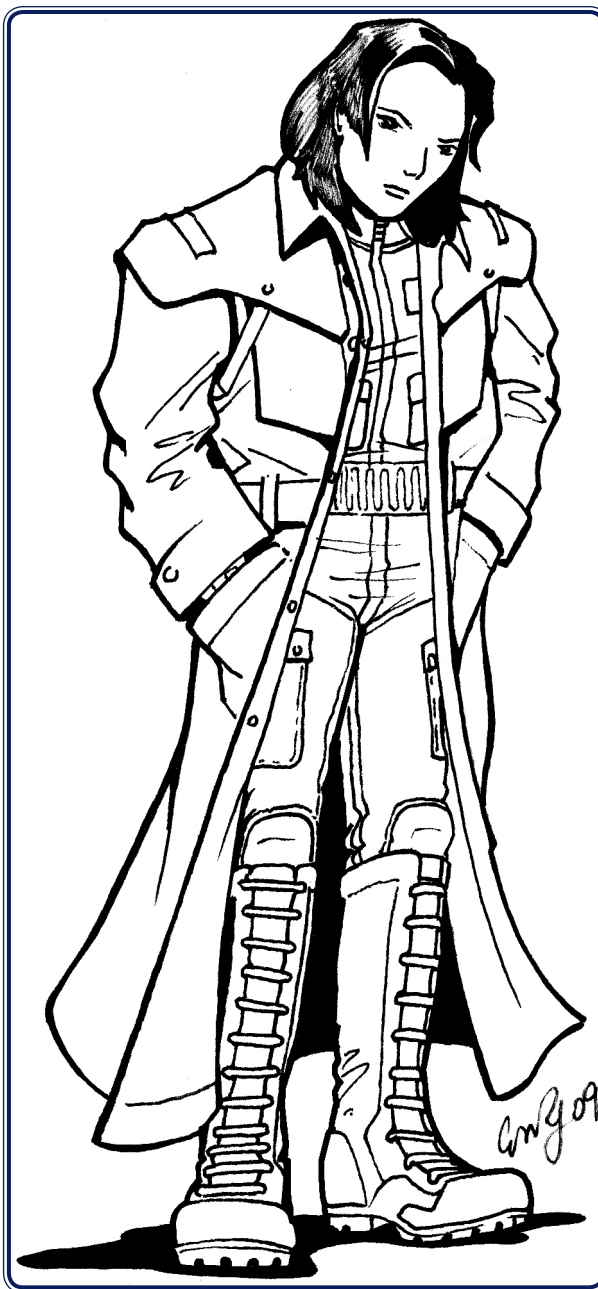
Built into Tetsutenshi's right arm is a Taser XREP Cybergun. She'll use this to take down targets who must be returned undamaged or who are otherwise out of range. However, as rounds for this weapon are hard to come by, she'll use it sparingly, if at all.

Campaign Use: Tetsutenshi's one of the closest things the Zone has to a police force. If your PCs intend to police the Zone themselves, you can have her mentor them, be a competitor, or remove her from your campaign.

If you need to make Tetsutenshi more powerful, up her STR to 45, give her more kung fu maneuvers, increase her CSLs to +4, and give her a nagimaki-like weapon. To make her less powerful, reduce her STR, DEX, SPD, and remove her cybergun.

If Tetsutenshi is hunting someone, there's a price on his head, he's harmed one of her friends, or she thinks he's up to no good in the Zone.

Appearance: Tetsutenshi's size belies her physical prowess. She stands just a little over 5' in height, with a highly advanced, albeit compact cyborg body. Tipping the scales at over 400 pounds, virtually her entire body (except for her head) is mechanical. What's left is of indeterminate heritage, with a pale complexion, dark brown eyes, and thick, black, shoulder-length hair. She usually dresses in a dark gray utilitarian jumpsuit, knee-high boots, fingerless gloves, and a full-length duster.



RESIDENTS OF HONG KONG

MARTA NYS

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
18/25	STR	8	13-/14-	Lift 303.1 kg/800 kg; 3 1/2d6/5d6 [2/3]
18/30	DEX	16	13-/15-	
18	CON	8	13-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
17	EGO	7	12-	
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
6/10	OCV	15		
6/10	DCV	15		
6	OMCV	9		
6	DMCV	9		
4/7	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12/2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12
8	PD	6		Total: 8 PD (0 rPD)
6	ED	4		Total: 6 ED (0 rED)
8	REC	4		
40	END	4		
13	BODY	3		
32	STUN	6		

Total Characteristic Cost: 152

/ = Values after slash are due to cyberware.

Movement: Running: 18m
Leaping: 8m
Swimming: 4m

Cost Powers

END

- 36 *Advanced Cyberbrain:* 15 EGO, 5 OMCV, 5 DMCV
Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 12 *Attack Barrier:* Mental Defense (18 points)
Software (-1/2)
- 6 *Muscle Augmentation:* +7 STR
Cybersystem (-1/4) 1
- 51 *Reflex Enhancement:* +12 DEX, +4 OCV, +4 DCV
Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 17 *Synaptic Accelerator:* +3 SPD
Costs Endurance (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4) 3
- 11 *Finger Razors:* HKA 1d6 (2d6 w/STR)
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Cybersystem (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4), Reduced Penetration (-1/4),
No Knockback (-1/4)
- 30 *Level Two Skeletal Reinforcement:* +5 PD Resistant Protection
Only Works Against BODY Damage (-1), Only To Protect Against Breaking Bones (-2) plus HA +2d6,
Invisible Power Effects (Inobvious to Sight Group [see text]); +1/4, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2);
Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/4) plus Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%; Only Works Against HTH
Attacks (-1), BODY Only (-1/2)
- 9 *Smartgun Link:* +2 with Ranged Combat
Requires Smartlinked Weapon (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Limited Range (64m; -1/4) plus +1 Range Skill
Level with All Attacks; Requires Smartlinked Weapon (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Limited Range (64m; -1/4)
- 5 *Smartgun Link:* a second Smartgun Link
- 13 *Articulation Augmentation:* +1 DCV;
Only In HTH Combat (-1/2) plus +1 with Agility Skills plus Double Jointed
- 2 *Level One Datajack:* +1 with all computer-related Skills
Requires DNI-Capable Computer And Accessible Databank (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4)

Martial Arts: Streetfighting

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4 Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm; 28 STR/35 STR to Disarm
4 Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
4 Elbow/Knee Smash	+2	+0	5 1/2d6 / 7d6 Strike
4 Escape	+0	+0	33 STR/40 STR vs. Grabs

- 3 Joint Lock -1 -1 Grab Two Limbs, 28 STR/35 STR for holding on
- 3 Legsweep +2 -1 4 1/2d6 / 6d6 Strike, Target Falls
- 4 Punch/Snap Kick +0 +2 5 1/2d6 / 7d6 Strike
- 5 Roundhouse Kick -2 +1 7 1/2d6 / 9d6 Strike
- 3 Throw +0 +1 3 1/2d6 / 5d6 +v/5, Target Falls
- 3 Weapon Element: Blades, Clubs, Cyber Blades

2 *Powerful Leaper*: Leaping +4m

6 *Swift*: Running +6m (18m total)

9 *Combat Swiftness*: Running +18m

Only To Make Half Moves In Combat (-1)

1

2

Perks

1 Fringe Benefit: Passport (Alta California)

2 Fringe Benefit: Concealed Weapon Permit (where appropriate)

4 Positive Reputation: extremely skilled street samurai (Hong Kong) 14-, +2/+2d6

Talents

3 Ambidexterity (no Off Hand penalty)

6 Striking Appearance (+2/+2d6)

Skills

20 +2 with All Attacks

16 +2 with HTH Combat

3 Acrobatics 13- (15-)

3 Analyze: Style 13-

5 Breakfall 14- (16-)

2 CK: Hong Kong 11-

3 Climbing 13- (15-)

3 Combat Driving 13- (15-)

3 Contortionist 13- (15-)

2 CuK: Hong Kong Culture And Customs 11-

10 Defense Maneuver I-IV

3 Fast Draw (Blades) 13- (15-)

3 Fast Draw (Small Arms) 13- (15-)

2 KS: Cybertechnology 11-

3 KS: Fitness Training And Nutrition 13-

3 KS: Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 13-

1 KS: The Corporate World 8-

2 KS: The Hong Kong Underworld 11-

2 Language: Cantonese (fluent conversation)

2 PS: Bodyguard 11-

5 Rapid Attack; HTH Multiple Attacks Only (-1)

3 Sleight Of Hand 13- (15-)

3 Stealth 13- (15-)

5 Streetwise 14-

3 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Small Motorized Boats, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles

5 Two-Weapon Fighting; Ranged Multiple Attacks Only (-1)

10 WF: Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons, Common Melee Weapons, Small Arms, General Purpose/ Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons, Thrown Knives

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 391

Total Cost: 543

300 Matching Compilations (60)

10 DNPC: Zhen Zhen Li (Very Frequently, Slightly Less Powerful than the PC; Useful Noncombat Position or Skills)

10 Distinctive Features: Extensive Cyberware (Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)

10 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Large Group)

5 Hunted: Assorted Members Of The Hong Kong Underworld (Frequently, As Pow, Watching)

15 Psychological Complication: In Love With Zhen Zhen Li (Common, Strong)

10 Psychological Complication: Short-Tempered (Common, Moderate)

Total Complications Value: 60

Experience Points: 243

PLOT SEED: THE PRINCESS BRIDE

Marta Nys and Zhen Zhen Li have decided to get married via a civil union. However, Zhen Zhen's father Lianjie Li is less than thrilled at his daughter's relationship with another woman (and a foreigner at that!). He wants her to marry a nice rich well-educated Chinese businessman, like a proper daughter should.

The PCs can get involved in a number of ways: 1) Marta is grabbed by Lianjie Li's men and Zhen Zhen hires them to help free her; 2) Lianjie Li kidnaps his own daughter and Marta hires the PCs; or 3) Lianjie Li hires the PCs to do the kidnapping. To make matters worse, Lianjie Li has picked out a suitable fiancé for Zhen Zhen — Juntao Tang, who arrives with his own entourage of flunkies and bodyguards.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUNx	Shots	STR MIN	Notes
Jinsei Hoshoku Zeta	+1	+1	2d6	1d6	15	13	Smartgun Link
SIG/SAUER P240	+1	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	15	8	Smartgun Link
2nd SIG/SAUER P240							
Katana	+1	—	1 1/2d6	1d6-1	—	12	

Body Armor: Level III Biosteel Bodysuit (DEF 10 on Hit Locations 7-17), biosteel-lined boots (DEF 5 on Hit Locations 16-18).

Gear: As appropriate for her current mission. Yamaha XTR1000

Clothing: In combat the biosteel bodysuit under a form-fitting jumpsuit with an ankle-length coat. Out of combat, any number of different outfits, mostly in black.

MARTA NYS

Background/History: Like her older sister Shion, Marta Nys grew up on the streets of Chicago after their father died and their mother abandoned them. While her sister's growing esper abilities made Shion a force to be reckoned with, Marta lived in Shion's shadow, acting as Shion's manager and messenger. Eventually, Shion's esper talents rendered Marta's assistance unnecessary, and the two drifted apart on poor terms.

Heading west (mainly because her sister went east), Marta settled in Alta California. Augmenting her admittedly impressive physical skills with an array of cutting-edge cyberware, Marta became a street samurai, selling her skills to individuals and corporations alike. Her reputation as a skilled fighter brought her to the attention of Zhen Zhen Li, who hired Marta to be her bodyguard while she conducted business for a few days in the Greater San Francisco area.

The next few days ended up a whirlwind of violence, as Marta tried to deal with a seemingly endless supply of Triad soldiers. Already attracted to Zhen Zhen's well-developed physique, Marta soon found her to be daring, intelligent, resourceful, unflinching in the face of danger, and capable of defending herself if needed. After seducing Zhen Zhen in the quiet confines of a Japanese-style bathhouse, Marta was more than willing to accompany Zhen Zhen back to Hong Kong when asked.

Personality/Motivation: Marta is a highly emotional individual and makes a sharp contrast to the more refined mannerisms of her lover, Zhen Zhen, or the aristocratic airs of her sister, Shion. Fiercely possessive and hot-tempered, she can be quite volatile if provoked, and is prone to acting (and speaking) without thinking. On the other hand, she is a professional, and will do her best to keep herself under control when acting as Zhen Zhen's bodyguard (at least until given the signal to cut loose).

Part of Marta's temperament seems to thrive on hazardous situations and potentially lethal encounters. The adrenaline rush of combat, the thrill of the chase, and the risk of death is what she lives for. Although Marta is smart enough to take the appropriate precautions and preparations before tackling a target, she's more than willing to accept even the riskiest of assignments.

Marta loves Zhen Zhen passionately and will do almost anything for her. Her relationship with her sister, Shion, is far less intense. There's a deep seated-jealousy for Shion's esper talents residing within Marta, although it's doubtful Marta even realizes it exists and certainly

wouldn't admit to it if she did. Still, Marta cares deeply for her sister, and will do her best to be there if needed. For her part, Shion finds Zhen Zhen

far more acceptable than any of Marta's previous lovers, and finds the woman to be a calming influence on her sister's normally hotheaded ways.

Quote: "I'm faster than you, I'm probably stronger, and I know I'm better armed... you might want to keep that in mind during the rest of this conversation."

Powers/Tactics: Heavily cybered, with synthetic muscle tissue, enhanced neural processors, fingertip-mounted blades, and paired Smartgun Links, Marta's reinforced bones are needed to keep her body from tearing itself apart under the stress of combat. All of her systems are top-notch, and it shows in the way she walks and moves. Despite appearances, she's always been double jointed and fully ambidextrous; her cybernetics simply enhance these abilities.

Her natural agility, coupled with her cybernetically-enhanced strength and speed, makes Marta a whirlwind in combat. She will often try and take the fight to her opponent, getting in close where her martial arts skills can be used to their best advantage. If that's not possible, she'll use Two-Weapon Fighting to cut down foes *en masse*. Due to her speed, Marta will move quickly and often during a fight. She'll try to use a foe's numbers against them, sowing as much confusion as possible, before finishing off any survivors.

Campaign Use: Marta represents the pinnacle of cybernetic enhancement without going cyborg. There's no real reason to increase her power level, unless you want to bump her Skeletal Reinforcement up to Level Three. To down-power Marta, reduce her Muscle Augmentation, Reflex Enhancement, Skeletal Reinforcement, and Synaptic Accelerator to desired levels.

Appearance: Marta stands a mere 5'5", but weighs over 160 pounds due to her cybernetics, with an athletic, well-defined build. She has dark eyes, straight black hair that falls to her waist, and naturally tanned skin due to her mixed heritage.

When working as Zhen Zhen's bodyguard, Marta wears a form-fitting black jumpsuit over a biosteel bodysuit, along with matching boots. She slings a katana across her back, and puts the SIG/SAUERs in shoulder holsters, with the Jinsei Hoshoku Zeta on the left hip. Spare magazines for all of her weapons are placed in pouches attached either to her shoulder rig or the gunbelt at her waist. Over all of this goes a black ankle-length longcoat.

Off-duty, Marta will dress far more casually, often in outfits meant to emphasize her figure.

Marta Nys



Shion Nys



MY CAMPAIGN, YOUR CAMPAIGN

In the *Kazei 5* PBEM, Mandarin Towers ended as home for roughly a half-dozen PCs. The PC tenant who stayed the longest was Sandra Blackmore (page 265) who eventually became Sarah's closest friend. Another of Sarah's tenants was a man named Andy Lau, who Sarah (rightly) suspected of being a potentially dangerous street samurai. He was also the closest thing to a love interest she ever had.

If your game takes place in Hong Kong one of the PCs should live in Mandarin Towers. Sarah might call on him to help out with the occasional odd event or rebellious tenant. If the PCs are only visiting, perhaps they end up meeting their contact in the retail section of the Towers, or use one of the rentable conference rooms.

SARAH J FERRARI

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [1]
14	DEX	8	12-	
15	CON	5	12-	
14	INT	4	12-	PER Roll 12-
11	EGO	1	11-	ECV: 4
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2 1/2d6
5	OCV	10		
5	DCV	10		
4	OMCV	3		
4	DMCV	3		
3	SPD	10		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4	PD	3		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	3		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
6	REC	2		
30	END	2		
10	BODY	0		
26	STUN	3		

Total Characteristic Cost: 75

Movement:

Running: 14m

Swimming: 4m

Cost Powers

- 27 *Basic Cyberbrain*: 10 EGO, 3 OMCV, 3 DMCV
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 8 *Attack Barrier*: Mental Defense (12 points total)
Software (-1/2)
- 4 *Level Two Datajack*: +2 with all computer-related Skills
Requires DNI-Capable Computer And Accessible Datacable (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 2 *Swift*: Running +2m (14m total)
- 3 *Hyper Immune System*: LS (Immunity: All terrestrial diseases and biowarfare agents); Not Versus Bioweapons (-1/2)

Perks

- 1 Fringe Benefit: Passport (Australia)
- 1 Fringe Benefit: Weapon Permit (where appropriate)

Talents

- 5 *Customized DNA*: Bioware Compatible
- 3 Striking Appearance (+1/+1d6)

Skills

- 3 Bureaucratics 12-
- 5 CK: Hong Kong 14-
- 2 Computer Programming (Personal Computers) 12-
- 3 Conversation 12-
- 2 CuK: Hong Kong Culture And Customs 11-
- 1 Electronics (Hotel Environmental Systems) 8-
- 1 High Society 8-
- 4 KS: The Best Noodle Shops In Hong Kong 13-
- 2 Language: Cantonese (fluent conversation)
- 1 Mechanics 8-
- 2 PS: General Handyman Skills 11-
- 2 PS: Hotel Manager 11-
- 2 Security Systems 12-; Mandarin Towers Hotel Systems Only (-1/2)
- 1 Streetwise 8-
- 3 Systems Operation (Communications Systems, Environmental Systems) 12-; Mandarin Towers Hotel Systems Only (-1/2)
- 3 Trading 12-
- 2 WF: Handguns, Taser Guns

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 93

END

1

Total Cost: 170**175 Matching Complications (50)**

- 15 Distinctive Features: Blue Skin And Hair (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 5 Distinctive Features: Replicated Human (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Technology Or Major Effort)
- 10 Psychological Complication: Refreshingly Cynical World-view (Common, Moderate)
- 15 Social Complication: Free Replicated Human (Very Frequently, Minor)

Total Complications Value: 45**Experience Points: 0****SARAH J FERRARI**

Background/History: Currently the manager of Mandarin Towers, located in Wan Chai, Hong Kong, Sarah J Ferrari originally grew up in Perth, Australia. There she did all the things one would expect — attended school, learned to ride a bike, went beach combing after storms, saw movies with her friends....

Except she didn't.

Sarah is a replicated human. She knows it, and anyone who looks at her knows it. She couldn't have grown up in Perth; replicates grow up in tanks. They're decanted as adults and don't have a childhood, meaning all of her memories (or most of them anyway) are false. The only question is, whose are they?

Sarah is fairly sure she's been in Hong Kong for the last three years (at least, she hopes so), meaning she's at least 3 years old, even though she looks to be more like 25, but then, virtually all replicates look to be 25. At best guess, she figures her real memories start from just before her arrival in Hong Kong. Before that? It's anyone's guess.

Personality/Motivation: Sarah has developed a rather interesting defense mechanism to deal with her unique state: sarcasm. While outwardly she's friendly and polite, inwardly she maintains a constant internal monologue, one that's harshly critical of the world around her and the people in it. She's a walking example of the phrase "familiarity breeds contempt" and Sarah has a great deal of contempt for the average human. Since most people are weaker, slower, less attractive, and yes, even less intelligent than her, it's not hard to see where her attitude comes from. Still, she doesn't hate everyone; obviously competent people (like most PCs) will gain her (begrudging) respect and possibly even friendship.

Quote: "Children.... I find something strangely odd about the concept. I've memories of being a child, but they're false. Honestly, I can't imagine it. The idea of being smaller, weaker, and less capable than I am right now is not something I can easily come to terms with. I've always been an adult and always will be. Humans seem to see childhood as something special, but personally, I don't see the appeal."

Powers/Tactics: Aside from her physical abilities as a replicate, Sarah has no real combat skills. She does

know how to use a handgun and keeps a Glock 20 and a TI Taser XREP Pistol in a locker in her office. Being a replicate living in Hong Kong, she'll use the Taser Pistol if at all possible. If things get really out of hand, she'll call on the two dozen cyberdroids under her control and have them try and contain the problem.

Campaign Use: Sarah is a fairly typical domestic replicate — physically anyway — and can easily be used to make similar models. She also allows you to inject a little levity into your game, especially if a telepathic PC stands to close to her. (Sarah thinks really loudly!)

If you feel the need to make Sarah more powerful, give her the same cybernetic modifications as an Isis-Class replicate. You can also give her assorted Contacts defined as people in her building who owe her favors or she especially likes. There is no need to make her weaker.

Sarah doesn't hunt anyone, although she does occasionally daydream about tossing troublesome tenants off of the roof.

Appearance: Sarah stands 5'8" and weighs an athletic 140 pounds, with the shapely, well-toned figure common to domestic replicates. Her eyes, hair, and skin are all differing shades of blue; her skin is pale blue, her eyes ice blue, while her hair is deep blue (and turns black when wet). As manager of Mandarin Towers, she dresses to look the part.

**PLOT SEED:
KIDNAPPED!**

A multinational hires the PCs to kidnap Sarah, or, the PCs live in Mandarin Towers and come across some other group trying to kidnap their landlord. Who would do this? And why? Is it because Sarah's such an unusual replicate? And why is she blue, anyway?

MANDARIN TOWERS

Mandarin Towers is sixty stories in height. The first five stories consist of a multi-level retail center, designed to meet the needs of the tower's residents. There are several suites of offices, including Sarah's, which is on the ground floor. The 5th floor also connects to the local skywalk, which allows residents to move from building to building without having to venture onto the city's streets.

Floors 6 to 59 contain condos. Sarah has a large, two bedroom on the 6th floor. Floors 6-56 have ten condos per floor, 57 and 58 have four, and 59 has two. The 60th floor is reserved for the HVAC system, the elevator hardware, electrical systems, and so on. The roof contains a landing pad for vectored-thrust and tilt-rotor vehicles.

The residential section of the tower is circular with an open space extending from the 6th floor to the 59th. It's used mainly for air circulation, although concealed mirrors do allow sunlight in. According to Sarah, she's only had to deal with two jumpers — one of which was a drunken esper showing off.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUNx	Shots	STR MIN	Notes
Glock 20 +0	+0	2d6-1	1d6-1	15	9		Polygonal rifling
TI Taser XREP Pistol	+0	+0	5d6	—	6	5	IPE, LR(20m)
			+8d6NND				

Body Armor: None.

Gear: Personal data assistant, 6 domestic replicates, 24 domestic cyberdroids.

Clothing: Various business, business casual, and casual outfits.

ZHEN ZHEN'S NAME...

...is pronounced
"jen-jen" and means
"adorable."

ZHEN ZHEN LI

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
23	STR	13	14-	Lift 606.3 kg; 4 1/2d6 [2]
17	DEX	14	12-	
17	CON	7	12-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
16	EGO	6	12-	
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
6	OCV	15		
6	DCV	15		
5	OMCV	6		
5	DMCV	6		
3	SPD	10		Phases: 4, 8, 12
6	PD	4		Total: 6 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	2		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
8	REC	4		
35	END	3		
11	BODY	1	11-	
32	STUN	6		
				Total Characteristic Cost: 125

Movement: Running: 14m
Leaping: 6m
Swimming: 4m

Cost Powers

- 2 *Inscrutable And Unflappable:* +5 PRE
Only To Resist Presence Attacks (-1)
- 30 *Advanced Cyberbrain:* 15 EGO, 5 OMCV, 5 DMCV
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 12 *Attack Barrier:* Mental Defense (18 points)
Software (-1/2)
- 6 *Cranial Cellphone:* Radio Perception/Transmission (Radio Group)
Affected As Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 8 *Internal Locator:* Absolute Time Sense
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
plus Bump Of Direction; Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
plus AK: area described in specific map skillsoft (usually Hong Kong), Variable Special Effects (any number of different areas, one at a time; +1/4); Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4) 14-
- 6 *Level Three Datajack:* +3 with all computer-related Skills
Requires DNI-Capable Computer And Accessible Datacable (-1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrainable (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)

Martial Arts: Hung Gar/Wing Chun Kung Fu

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
3 Joint Lock	-1	-1	Grab Two Limbs, 33 STR for holding on
5 Kick	-2	+1	8 1/2d6 Strike
3 Legsweep	+2	-1	5 1/2d6 Strike, Target Falls
4 Punch	+0	+2	6 1/2d6 Strike

- 1 *Strong Leaper:* Leaping +2m
- 2 *Swift Of Foot:* Running +2m (14m total)
- 3 *Hyper Immune System:* LS (Immunity: All terrestrial diseases and biowarfare agents); Not Versus Bioweapons (-1/2)
- 1 *Improved Longevity:* LS (Longevity: 200 Years)

Perks

- 2 Fringe Benefit: Concealed Weapon Permit (where appropriate)
- 10 Fringe Benefit: Improved Equipment Availability (Advanced Military Equipment)
- 1 Fringe Benefit: Passport (Australia)

END

- 5 Money: Well Off
- 4 Positive Reputation: well-connected fixer (Hong Kong) 14-, +2/+2d6
- 3 Well-Connected
- 15 Assorted Contacts and Favors in and around Hong Kong

Talents

- 5 *Optimized DNA*: Bioware Compatible
- 6 Striking Appearance (+2/+2d6)

Skills

- 10 +1 with All Attacks
- 5 +1 with Hung Gar/Wing Chun Kung Fu
- 2 AK: The Asian Pacific Rim 11-
- 3 Breakfall 12-
- 3 Bribery 12-
- 2 CK: Hong Kong 11-
- 2 Computer Programming (Personal Computers) 13-
- 3 Conversation 12-
- 2 Gambling (Mahjongg) 13-
- 4 Language: Cantonese (idiomatic)
- 2 Language: Japanese (fluent conversation)
- 3 PS: Business Management 13-
- 2 SS: Accounting 11-
- 3 Streetwise 12-
- 5 Trading 13-
- 2 WF: Small Arms
- 3 Scholar
- 1 1) KS: Current Trends In Technology 11-
- 1 2) KS: Hung Gar/Wing Chun Kung Fu 11-
- 2 3) KS: Asian Pacific Rim Economic/Political World 13-
- 2 4) KS: The Corporate World 13-
- 1 5) KS: The Hong Kong Underworld 11-
- 1 6) KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 203**Total Cost: 328****300 Matching Complications (60)**

- 15 Dependence: must have a cigarette at least once an Hour or suffer Incompetence: -1 to Skill Rolls and related rolls per time increment (Very Common, Addiction)
- 0 Distinctive Features: Always Dresses In Traditional Chinese Clothing (Easily Concealed; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 0 Distinctive Features: Cosmetically-Altered Elf-Like Ears (Easily Concealed; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 5 Distinctive Features: Genetic Upgrade (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Technology Or Major Effort)
- 0 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Large Group)
- 10 Hunted: Assorted Members Of The Hong Kong Underworld (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 0 Physical Complication: Nearsighted (-3 to Sight PER rolls if missing her glasses) (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 15 Psychological Complication: "Inscrutable And Mysterious" When Dealing With Customers (*i.e.* present a facade of cool, calm efficiency) (Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Complication: In Love With Marta Nys (Common, Strong)

Total Complications Value: 60**Experience Points: 28****ZHEN ZHEN LI**

Background/History: Born in Hong Kong in early 1997, Zhen Zhen Li's parents immigrated to Sydney, Australia a little more than a month before the People's Republic of China took over. There, Zhen Zhen grew

up, undergoing an early form of the genetic upgrading process when she was 12. After graduating college, she returned to Hong Kong in 2021, seeing it as a land of opportunity. Working with contacts gained from her parents, Zhen Zhen started a small import/export busi-

**PLOT SEED:
LORD OF
WAR**

Zhen Zhen needs a shipment of firearms (something highly advanced and very expensive) delivered and wants the PCs to guard it. The shipment can either be to her (at the 88 Exchange, see below) or to her client. The PCs will have to pick up the goods and make the delivery, all the while trying to avoid the HKPD, the Triads, and the Yakuza.

Alternative scenario: the PCs have themselves been tasked to intercept the delivery.

**PLOT SEED:
THE 88
EXCHANGE**

Zhen Zhen's legitimate import/export business is located in a small warehouse near the waterfront in an older section of Hong Kong. There she deals in anything small in size and high in markup: high-end computer parts, top-of-the-line cybernetics, rare art objects, fine teas, quality firearms (along with other weapons), and designer clothing. Zhen Zhen's office is in the back and she does most of her research there on a secure computer system. The PCs can be hired to attempt to steal or sabotage Zhen Zhen's research or gather information to help her advance it.

PLOT SEED: THE WEDDING BANQUET

Marta Nys and Zhen Zhen Li decide its time to formalize their relationship with a civil union. In order to placate Zhen Zhen's parents, who are less than impressed by the idea of a simple ceremony at the local courthouse, they hold a lavish wedding banquet. As the guest list includes Shion Nys and various other notables, security for the dinner will very tight. The PCs can either be hired to act as security guards for the feast, or to infiltrate it.

ness, eventually graduating into her present occupation as a supplier of gray and black market goods.

Zhen Zhen met Marta Nys on a business trip to Greater San Francisco, when she hired the street samurai to be her bodyguard for the duration of her stay. The trip itself nearly ended in disaster, as the pair found themselves hunted by several local Triads, all trying to keep Zhen Zhen from conducting business with another Triad. Several days of car chases, fistfights, and shoot-outs later, Zhen Zhen managed to conclude her dealings. Impressed with Marta's skill, Zhen Zhen asked her to accompany her back to Hong Kong to act as her full time bodyguard. Marta, who by this time had fallen in love with Zhen Zhen, readily agreed.

Personality/Motivation: Zhen Zhen tries to remain calm, cool, and collected at all times, with her emotions restrained and her mannerisms properly refined. She likes to play-up the image of the 'mysterious Orient' when dealing with (non-Chinese) customers, often meeting them in small teahouses and out-of-the-way restaurants. To further enhance her image, she dresses only in traditional Chinese fashions, favoring cheongsams worn of a loose tunic and trousers.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUNx	Shots	STR MIN	Notes
Steyr M40	+1	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	10	9	
Body Armor: Level II Biosteel Vest (DEF 8 on Hit Locations 9-12).							
Gear: Personal data assistant, cigarettes, lighter, Nissan 600ZX Turbo.							
Clothing: A wide variety of traditional Chinese outfits, primarily cheongsams.							

Privately, Zhen Zhen feels she's only one half of a whole, the yin to Marta's yang. Feeling somewhat restrained by traditional Chinese customs (even relaxed as they are in Hong Kong), she gets a certain vicarious thrill by having Marta as her bodyguard, since Marta can do all of those things she herself could never get away with — like being rude to annoying Triad foot soldiers, punching (and shooting) bothersome street samurai who won't take "no" for an answer, and dressing in scandalous outfits. Zhen Zhen is cool by nature, with a preference for shadows and darkness, while Marta shines like the sun, hot-blooded and full of energy, the male to Zhen Zhen's female.

Quote: "Information is never free. It has a price, and the more you wish to know, the higher that price will be. So, before we get started, I must ask: cash or charge?"

Powers/Tactics: As a genetic upgrade, Zhen Zhen is naturally stronger and faster than most other people. Regular exercise and sparring sessions with Marta means she's significantly more capable than she looks. Her great strength, when coupled with her training in several kung fu forms means she can more than hold her own against non-cybered opponents.

Normally, Zhen Zhen avoids fights — she's a businesswoman after all. If needed she'll don a biosteel vest (worn under her clothes) and carry a Steyr M40 in a shoulder rig. A reasonable shot, Zhen Zhen will wisely take cover before engaging in a gunfight. If things get really bad, she'll call upon those of her clients who owe her favors to assist in resolving any issues.

Campaign Use: Zhen Zhen is a perfect contact for PCs who will be working in or traveling to Hong Kong. She also is a good conduit for contacting Shion Nys.

To make Zhen Zhen more powerful, increase her DEX and CON to 18, increase her SPD to 4, give her a Skilljack, and add another 15 points to spend on Contacts. To make her less powerful, drop her STR to 18, her DEX and CON to 15, and reduce her equipment availability Perk.

Zhen Zhen never hunts anyone personally — if she feels she's been wronged by a former client she'll use her network of clients and contacts to make that person's life miserable.

Appearance: Zhen Zhen stands 5'8" and weighs 135 pounds, with a well-toned and well-endowed figure (courtesy of her genetic upgrade). She has brown eyes and waist-length black hair. Terribly nearsighted, she wears glasses as she's afraid to have any surgery done to her eyes. Back in college, a former boyfriend talked her into getting her ears cosmetically altered, resulted in their long tapering, elf-like appearance. As noted, she normally dresses in traditional Chinese clothing styles.



Residents of Megatokyo

KATHERINE "KITTEEN" RAMIS

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
43	STR	33	18-	Lift 9700.6 kg; 8 1/2d6 [4]
21	DEX	22	13-	
23	CON	13	14-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
14	EGO	4	12-	
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3 1/2d6
7	OCV	20		
7	DCV	20		
5	OMCV	6		
5	DMCV	6		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
9	PD	7		Total: 18 PD (9 rPD)
8	ED	6		Total: 17 ED (9 rED)
12	REC	8		
45	END	5		
14	BODY	4		
48	STUN	14		
				Total Characteristic Cost: 204

Movement: Running: 16m
Leaping: 32m

Cost Powers

- 2 *I've Seen Worse:* +5 PRE
Only To Resist Presence Attacks (-1)
- 41 *Secure Cyberbrain:* 20 EGO, 7 OMCV, 7 DMCV
Cybersystem (-1/4), Restrained (EMP cut-off switch; -1/4)
- 20 *Multi-Layered Attack Barrier:* Mental Defense (24 points total)
Hardened (+1/4); Software (-1/2)
- 10 *Armored Limbs:* HA +2d6
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/4), Real Weapon (-1/4)
- 27 *Cybergraft Shell:* Resistant Protection (9 PD/9 ED)
Required Roll 15- (doesn't cover Hit Locations 3-5; -0)
- 34 *Combat Cybergraft:* Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%
STUN Only (-1/2), Linked (Cybergraft Shell; -1/4)
- 7 *Fully Cybernetic Limbs:* Does Not Bleed
Requires A Roll 11- (or Hit Locations 6-8 and 14-18; -1)
- 2 *Heavy:* Knockback Resistance -2m
- 12 *Cybernetic Legs:* Leaping +24m (32m forward, 16m upward)
Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); No Noncombat Movement (-1/4), Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 3 *Cybernetic Legs:* Running +4m (16m total); Cybersystem (-1/4)
- 2 *Cyborg Body:* Swimming -4m
- 6 *Internal Respirator:* LS (Self-Contained Breathing)
1 Continuing Fuel Charge (5 Minutes; -1/2), Cybersystem (-1/4) [1 cc]

Martial Arts: Police Training

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
5 Block	+1	+3	Block, Abort
4 Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm; 53 STR to Disarm
3 Joint Lock	-1	-1	Grab Two Limbs, 53 STR for holding on
4 Punch	+0	+2	10 1/2d6 Strike
3 Takedown	+1	+1	8 1/2d6 Strike; Target Falls
1 Weapon Element: Clubs			

Perks

- 10 Contact: Kiyomi Noritake (Contact has extremely useful Skills or resources, Contact has significant Contacts of her own, Good relationship with Contact) 14-
- 4 Contact: Eriko "Erica" Meade, MTPD (Contact has useful Skills or resources, Good relationship with Contact) 11-

MY CAMPAIGN, YOUR CAMPAIGN

In the original *Kazei 5* game, Kitten ended up as Carlos Jagger's lover. She served as a counter to Jagger's acceptance and delight in his cyborg body with her more depressed state of mind and concern she'd lost her humanity.

You can use Kitten as a counter to those PCs who think too highly of their cybernetic bodies, as she goes to great lengths to appear "normal" to the rest of the world.

END

- 2 Fringe Benefit: Concealed Weapon Permit (where appropriate)
- 1 Fringe Benefit: License (retriever)
- 1 Fringe Benefit: Passport (Alta California)

Talents

- 3 Coordinated Limbs: Ambidexterity (No Off Hand penalty)
- 3 Striking Appearance (+1/+1d6)

Skills

- 20 +2 with All Attacks
- 6 +2 with Handguns
- 3 Bureaucratics 13-
- 3 CK: MegaTokyo 13-
- 3 Combat Driving 13-
- 1 Criminology 8-
- 2 CuK: Japanese Culture and Customs 11-
- 2 KS: Bonsai Gardening 11-
- 2 KS: Criminal Law And Procedure 11-
- 3 KS: MegaTokyo Underworld 13-
- 1 KS: San Francisco PD History And Customs 8-
- 2 KS: The Corporate World 11-
- 2 KS: The Law-enforcement World 11-
- 3 Language: Japanese (completely fluent)
- 3 Lockpicking 13-
- 2 PS: Bounty Hunter/Retriever 11-
- 1 PS: Ex-Police Officer 8-
- 3 Security Systems 13-
- 3 Shadowing 13-
- 3 Stealth 13-
- 3 Streetwise 13-
- 2 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles
- 5 Two-Weapon Fighting; Ranged Multiple Attacks Only (-1)
- 4 WF: Small Arms, Anti-Materiel Rifles, Blades, Clubs [nightstick]

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 288

Total Cost: 492

300 Matching Complications (60)

- 10 Distinctive Features: Synthskin/Cyborg Body (her skin doesn't quite feel right to the touch, she doesn't sweat, her mass is much greater than her size indicates, her skin degrades if he is hit by an attack) (Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 10 Hunted: MegaTokyo PD (Infrequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 10 Physical Complication: Cyborg (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 0 Physical Complication: Heavy (weighs roughly 200 kg) (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
- 15 Psychological Complication: Detests Cyberdroids (Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Complication: Professional Attitude, Ethics, and Mannerisms (Common, Strong)
- 0 Psychological Complication: Tries to Hide Cybernetics and Cyborg Body (Common, Moderate)
- 0 Vulnerability: 1 1/2 x STUN from Electrical Attacks (Uncommon)

Total Complications Value: 60

Experience Points: 192

KATHERINE "KITTEN" RAMIS

Background/History: Katherine Ramis's life as a member of the Greater San Francisco Police Department Special Investigations unit ended with a one-on-one encounter with a rogue cyberdroid. Although she survived (albeit barely), Katherine would never walk again, much less wear a badge, walk the beat, or hold a gun. Unable to accept a life as an invalid, Katherine used her life's savings to move to MegaTokyo, be rebuilt as a cyborg, and start her life anew.

Having been rebuilt with a combat-grade cybergraft, Katherine decided to use her new body and police training to work as a freelance retriever. Deciding returning to Greater San Francisco would awaken too many painful memories, she elected to remain in MegaTokyo.

As cybergraft upgrades, especially combat-class ones, don't come cheap, Katherine found she couldn't be too picky about any job offers that came her way. However, her reputation for professionalism soon brought her to the attention of Kiyomi Noritake, a MegaTokyo fixer

of some note. Katherine soon found herself working as Kiyomi's operative of choice. These days, she alternates retrieval jobs with stints as a courier and personal agent for Kiyomi.

Personality/Motivation: Being rebuilt with a combat cybergraft upgrade has made Katherine ("Kitten" to her friends) something more than human, but what exactly, she's yet to figure out. On one hand, her body, strong enough to lift several tons and tough enough to shrug off the effects of most small arms, excites her. On the other, she no longer feels fully human; her body is a cybernetic construct and differs little from the creation that nearly ended her life. Because of this, Katherine goes to great lengths to hide her cyborg nature. For example, she never wears any sort of revealing clothing, preferring to cover herself as much as possible.

Her new life as a retriever helps Katherine deal with her identity issues. Bounty hunting provides sufficient brushes with danger to make her feel alive and almost human once again. However, at times Katherine's been known to take slightly excessive risks; it's as if she secretly desires death and an end to her existence as an unnatural semi-machine.

When working, Katherine always does her best to present herself in a professional manner. She likes to dress well, is polite and courteous to her clients, completes a contract promptly (if possible), and tries to avoid excessive damage and casualties. Katherine takes a dim view of those retrievers who are loud, obnoxious, and trigger-happy.

Quote: "I'm 70% combat cybergraft upgrade, which means I'm more machine than human. If you don't mind, I'd rather not go any further. So why don't you make it easier for both of us and just give up now?"

Powers/Tactics: Most of Katherine's physical abilities come from her combat cybergraft upgrade. She can lift well over eight tons, her armor plating can stop most small arms fire, and the augmentations in her legs grants expanded leaping and running capabilities. Katherine's entire cybergraft is coated with an advanced form of synthskin. Color-matched to her natural skin, it's laced with a fine network of neural terminals, giving her full body sensations of touch, heat, cold, and so on. However, this enhanced sensitivity also makes Katherine especially vulnerable to electrical shocks and discharges, as they tend to overload her neural interface.

Katherine normally carries a KPB IDB PP-2000 loaded with 7N31 +P+ ammunition in a shoulder holster. If expecting trouble, she'll load a 44-round magazine and use a second one as a shoulder stock. The Smith & Wesson Assault Pistol is often carried along with several spare magazines, each loaded with a different type of ammunition (Katherine prefers solid slug, baton, and flechette rounds), allowing her to adapt to changing combat conditions. The Stormbreaker is used to wreck vehicles, cyborgdroids, APEX Suits, and so on.

If possible, Katherine will try to use the Stormbreaker's sheer size into intimidating a foe into surrendering. Otherwise, she'll draw both the PP-2000 and the AP and use her Two-Weapon Fighting skill to cut down enemy numbers as quickly as possible. If engaged in hand-to-hand combat, Katherine's police training and augmented strength are usually sufficient to deal with any attacker.

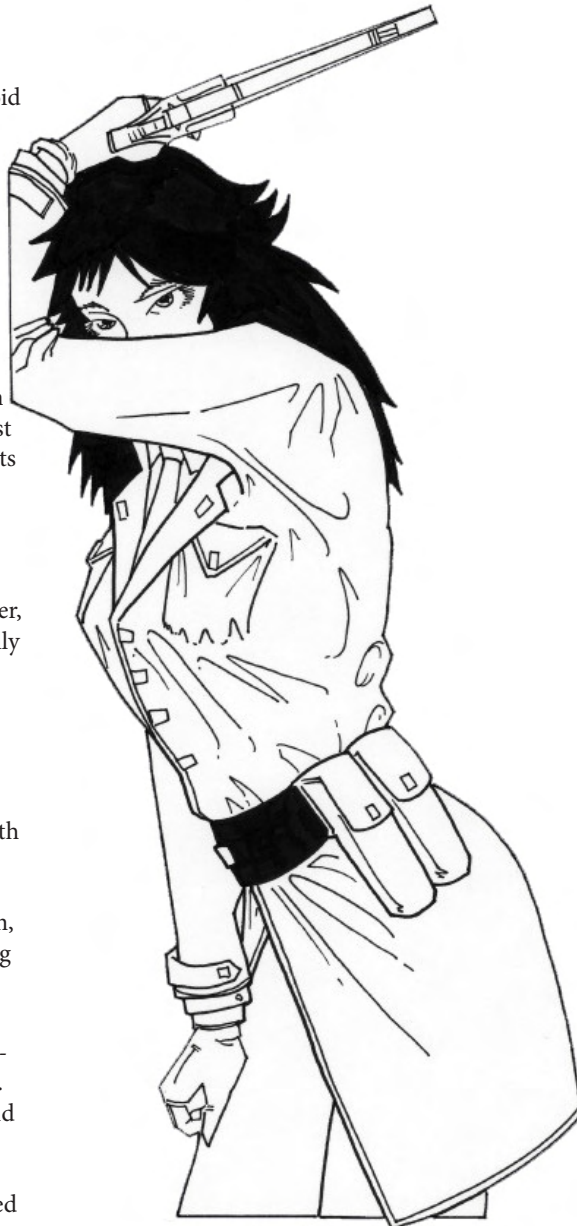
Campaign Use: Player Characters going to MegaTokyo to contact Kiyomi Noritake will probably meet Katherine beforehand. She may also come to them, usually to physically deliver a message or goods.

To make Katherine more powerful, give her a Smart-gun Link and an Impact Compensator. To make her less powerful, reduce her STR, reduce her Damage Reduction to 25%, and drop both of her CSLs to +1.

Katherine only hunts MegaTokyo PD-designated criminals.

Appearance: Katherine is of medium height, standing about 5'8". Her build is attractively slender, but highly deceptive, as fully 70 percent of her body is cybernetic (she weighs roughly 425 pounds). Of mixed parentage, she has light brown skin, green eyes, and thick black hair that falls well past her shoulders.

When on the job, Katherine dresses somewhat formally. For example: dark blue, knee-length jacket, white dress shirt, red tie, black gun belt, dark blue pants, black boots, and black fingerless gloves. When off-duty, Katherine will always dress in outfits that cover her from neck to wrist to ankle, such as pantsuits or long flowing dresses.



Noriko Kobayashi
created by Jeff Mueller

NORIKO KOBAYASHI

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10/20	STR	0	11-/13-	Lift 100 kg/400 kg; 2d6/4d6 [1/3]
18	DEX	16	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
18	CON	8	13-	
21	INT	11	13-	PER Roll 13-
21	EGO	11	13-	ECV: 7
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
6	OCV	20		
6	DCV	20		
7	OMCV	15		
7	DMCV	15		
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	PD	6		Total: 33 PD (25 rPD)
4	ED	2		Total: 24 ED (20 rED)
8	REC	4		
50	END	6		
10	BODY	0	11-	
26	STUN	3		Total Characteristic Cost: 167

Movement: Running: 12m
Swimming: 4m

Cost Powers

END

7	<i>Telekinetic Strength:</i> +10 STR Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -1/2)	
56	<i>Esper Powers:</i> Multipower, 76-point reserve, all slots Esper Side Effects (-1/4)	
1f	1) <i>Mental Warp:</i> Mental Group Images, -3 to PER Rolls Area Of Effect (16m Radius; +3/4); Concentration, Must Concentrate throughout use of Constant Power (0 DCV; -1), Requires An EGO Roll (-3/4), Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -1/2), Extra Time (Full Phase, Only to Activate, -1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)	4
2f	2) <i>Telekinetic Rending:</i> RKA 3d6 Extra Time (Full Phase, -1/2), No Knockback (-1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)	4
2f	3) <i>Mental Block:</i> Suppress Esper/Telekinetic powers 2d6+1 Any Esper power one at a time (+1/2), LOS (+1/2); Costs Endurance (to maintain; -1/2), Extra Time (Full Phase, -1/2), No Conscious Control (affects target's powers randomly; -1), Requires An EGO Roll (-3/4), Side Effects (power affects Noriko instead if EGO Roll is failed; -3/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)	7
8v	4) <i>Telekinesis:</i> Telekinesis (45 STR) Cannot Punch (-1/4), Extra Time (Full Phase, Only to Activate, -1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)	7
9v	5) <i>Telekinetic Shield:</i> Resistant Protection (24 PD/20 ED) (Protect Carried Items) Costs Endurance (-1/2), Perceivable (-0), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)	8
1f	6) <i>Telekinetic Wall:</i> Barrier (14 PD/10 ED, 0 BODY (up to 4m long and 2m high) Non-Anchored; Concentration, Must Concentrate throughout use of Constant Power (0 DCV; -1), Costs Endurance (-1/2), Extra Time (Full Phase, Only to Activate, -1/4), No Range (-1/2), Restricted Shape (ring; -1/4), Side Effects, Side Effect occurs automatically whenever Power is used (3d6 Mental Blast; -1), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)	5
1f	7) <i>Telepathic Link:</i> Mind Link, Human class of minds, Any Willing Target Costs Endurance (-1/2), Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -1/2), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)	2
2f	8) <i>Extended Esper Awareness:</i> Mind Scan 8d6 (Human class of minds), +5 OMCV Concentration (0 DCV; -1/2), Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -1/2), Extra Time (Full Phase, Only to Activate, -1/4), Esper Side Effects (-1/4)	10
9	<i>Telekinetic Resistance:</i> Knockback Resistance -8m Trigger (Activating the Trigger is an Action that takes no time, Trigger resets automatically, immediately after it activates, Character does not control activation of personal Trigger; if Noriko is hit by any attack; +3/4); Costs Endurance (Only Costs END to Activate; -1/4), Must Be Aware Of Attack (-1/4)	1
10	<i>Esper Shields:</i> Mental Defense (10 points total)	
10	<i>Esper Awareness:</i> Mental Awareness, Discriminatory, Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees)	

Martial Arts: *Aikido*

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
3	Hold	-1	-1	Grab Two Limbs, 20 STR/30 STR for holding on
5	Joint Break	-1	-2	Grab One Limb; HKA 1d6 +1 , Disable
5	Redirect	+1	+3	Block, Abort
3	Takedown	+1	+1	2d6/4d6 Strike; Target Falls

Perks

- 2 Fringe Benefit: Concealed Weapon Permit (where appropriate)
- 2 Fringe Benefit: Local Police Powers

Talents

- 15 *Heightened Intuition:* Danger Sense (self only, any danger, Function as a Sense)
Costs Endurance (-1/2), Psionic (-1/4) 13-

Skills

- 6 +1 with All Mental Combat
- 3 +1 with Mental Block, Telekinetic Rending, Telekinesis
- 3 Breakfall 13-
- 3 Bureaucratics 13-
- 2 CK: MegaTokyo 11-
- 1 Combat Driving 8-
- 3 Criminology 13-
- 3 High Society 13-
- 3 Language: English (completely fluent)
- 3 Persuasion 13-
- 2 PS: Police Officer 11-
- 3 Streetwise 13-
- 1 TF: Small Planes (Vectored-Thrust)
- 2 WF: Small Arms, Clubs [nightstick]
- 3 Scholar
 - 1 1) KS: Classical Japanese Literature 11-
 - 2 2) KS: Criminal Law And Procedure 13-
 - 1 3) KS: ESWAT History And Customs 11-
 - 1 4) KS: Shinto Rites And Rituals 11-
 - 2 5) KS: The Corporate World 13-
 - 2 6) KS: The Esper World 13-
 - 1 7) KS: The Law-enforcement World 11-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 204**Total Cost: 371****300 Matching Complications (60)**

- 0 Distinctive Features: ESWAT Uniform (Easily Concealed; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 0 Distinctive Features: Esper (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
- 0 Hunted: ESWAT (Frequently, Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 15 Physical Complication: Cyber-Rejection (Infrequently, Fully Impairing)
- 20 Psychological Complication: Always Follows Orders and Procedure (Common, Total)
- 0 Psychological Complication: Emotionally Distant And Cold; Very Business-Like In Her Dealings With Others (Common, Moderate)
- 10 Social Complication: Esper (Frequently, Minor)
- 0 Social Complication: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
- 15 Susceptibility: if Teleported 3d6 damage Instant (Uncommon)

Total Complications Value: 60**Experience Points: 71**

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUNx	Shots	STR MIN	Notes
Styer GB-100	+1	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	18	9	two spare magazines plus EB 3d6 NND
Shock Stick	0	—	2d6N	-0	—	5	

Body Armor: Level II Biosteel Jacket (DEF 8 on Hit Locations 7-14); Plate Greaves (DEF 5 on Hit Locations 15-18)

Gear: Personal data assistant, ESWAT-issue communicator, restraints, notepad, flashlight, and so on. Jinsei Kami.

Clothing: ESWAT uniform.

NORIKO KOBAYASHI

Background/History: Noriko Kobayashi never intended to be a police officer. At her father's request she attended business school, fully intending to follow in his footsteps. Graduating near the top of her class, she found employment with Shiraishi Refining, but quickly became dissatisfied with office life, feeling the opportunities for a woman in the executive arena were limited at best. Presenting her thoughts to her father, Noriko was severely chastised for her lack of commitment. The following argument raged for what seemed like hours, with neither Noriko nor her father willing to give ground.

Eventually, Noriko pushed to the breaking point by her father's merciless verbal attacks, erupted with an intense display of her formerly latent esper powers. Every window in the house blew out in a spray of fragments, followed by the shattering of anything else made of glass (drink glasses, mirrors, shelves, and so on). A long moment of silence followed, ending with Noriko storming from her parents' home in tears.

For a time, Noriko struggled to understand the powers she now possessed, trying to come to grips with both her esper abilities and a disintegrating relationship with her parents. Eventually, she decided upon a radical course of action — enlisting in the MegaTokyo Police Department. While it brought Noriko the job satisfaction she desired, as a career choice it was deemed totally unacceptable by her parents, who disowned her at this point, limiting family contact to rare conversations with her brother.

Upon graduating from the MTPD Academy, Noriko was assigned to public relations as a corporate liaison officer. Her experience with Shiraishi Refining allowed her to excel, and Noriko rose quickly through the ranks. Eventually, after gaining greater understanding and control of her esper powers, Noriko transferred to Enhanced Special Weapons and Tactics (a.k.a. ESWAT), where she handled cases deemed outside the capabilities of regular police officers. Now, aged 26, Noriko feels she's found her calling, and continues to improve upon her impeccable service record.

Personality/Motivation: Past experiences have left Noriko very emotionally detached, resulting in a purely "business first" mentality. She doesn't relate well to others and comes across so cold and impersonal, her departmental nickname is Himuro-hime (literally, "ice house princess"). Noriko for her part, ignores such things, preferring to

present an image of perfect efficiency to her superiors. Thus, she takes great pains to ensure her desk is as neat and organized as possible, while her uniform is always properly arrayed, with all accouterments polished, pressed and shined.

Noriko's devotion to her duties as an ESWAT officer has rendered her private life devoid of any undue influences. She feels romantic entanglements will only interfere with her work and there'll be enough time for such things later, although what she means by "later" is anyone's guess. Currently, Noriko's sole motivation is to show her father she can be successful in her chosen field, capable of making it on her own and without his guidance. However, this desire is doomed to fail, as her father has effectively denied her existence, and any successes she has as a police officer will not change this. The tenets of Japanese honor and face will not allow for reconciliation, yet this harsh reality has not deterred Noriko in the slightest, with her current major goal to qualify as an ESWAT division chief.

Quote: "Trafficking in unlicensed cyberware and illegal BTL chips, carrying a concealed weapon, resisting arrest, and assaulting an ESWAT officer... there's no end to your bad habits, is there?"

Powers/Tactics: Noriko is a police officer first and foremost, and her tactics will follow standard police procedure 99% of the time. In most situations Noriko will try to resolve the situation through a combination of persuasion and force of personality. If this method fails, she'll fall back to her aikido training (supported by her esper-enhanced strength) or her pistol. And if this still isn't enough, Noriko will then resort to her esper powers.

In combat, Noriko will create her Telekinetic Shield and use telekinesis to manhandle the opposition into surrounding. If dealing with cyborgs, cyberdroids, APEX Suits, and the like, she'll use Telekinetic Rending to put an end to the fight quickly. The rest of her powers are so draining she'll only use them if the situation calls for it (usually if opposing another esper) or if she has plenty of MTPD and ESWAT backup.

Campaign Use: Characters who make trouble in MegaTokyo might run into Noriko, an encounter they'll be sure to regret. She also makes an excellent commanding officer in a Shadows Angelus game (see page 299).

To make Noriko more powerful, remove the Increased Endurance Disadvantage from her various esper powers. To make her less powerful, remove Mental Warp, Mental Block, Telepathic Link, and Extended Esper Awareness.

Noriko only hunts ESWAT-designated targets.



Appearance: For all her impressive esper powers and impassive demeanor, Noriko is surprisingly non-threatening in appearance. She's short (5'3"), with a trim figure (she scarcely tops 105 pounds). Very pale-skinned, her hair is blue-black and shoulder-length, while her eyes are brilliant green. Although physically quite attractive, her distant personality offsets this a great deal.

Noriko's ESWAT uniform consists of low black boots (covered in armored plate), a dark blue, knee-length armored jacket, dark blue trousers, a white shirt, red tie, and white gloves. Over this goes a white belt holding her pistol, badge, restraints, and other equipment. Off-duty, Noriko dresses in conservative Western fashions, as well as more traditional dress. She wears only the barest minimum of makeup, jewelry and other accessories at all times.

PART SIX:

THE GM'S VAULT:

**THE SECRETS OF
KAZEI 5**

the gm's vault

This section is for GMs only. Players should try to avoid reading this section, as it might spoil any surprises the GM might have for you in his *Kazei 5* campaign.

Campaign Secrets

Unlike many fantasy and superhero games, *Kazei 5* doesn't have an extensive secret history, places where strange things happen, hidden worlds, or lost artifacts. Still, there are a few oddities that need a little explanation.

WHERE DID THE ESPERS REALLY COME FROM?

Do you really want to know where they came from? Do you? It's not big secret — you can pin the blame on the CIA, the KGB, MI5 and MI6, MSS, and other intelligence agencies. Espers aren't secretly aliens, or dimensional travelers, or "mutants" in the superhero comic sense. They're simply people with a touch of paranormal, extrasensory power, who've had their mental abilities turned up to 11 by six decades of human meddling. Case in point — Shion Nys's parents didn't have any esper powers, but both participated in some ESP studies back in college in the early nineties. The activation drugs they were exposed to didn't do a thing to them; their first-born daughter on the other hand....

CLONED ESPERS

The experiments have been a little more successful than the main text leads you to believe. See the entries for Ran and Takeda Johnson in this section.

IS THERE TRUE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE?

The answer is "not yet." But the research and development of an AI system, as well as the economic and political fallout if one is successfully brought online, could fuel an entire campaign arc. And remember— replicates are technically clones, they're not machines, so they're not exactly what's meant by "artificial intelligence."

HOT ZONES

The Israeli Eradication destroyed the following cities: Beirut, Bagdad, Damascus, and Tel Aviv. The weapons used were significantly more powerful than the atomic bombs dropped during World War II and virtually wiped their targets from the map. Now, roughly fifteen years later, there's been some attempt at recovery and rebuilding, except in Tel Aviv.

China has seen its share of nuclear detonations as well. When the fighting was at its worst, military commanders engaged in a short, but fierce exchange of short-range missiles. The result was the destruction of several cities and industrial regions. Pakistan threatened to use nuclear weapons during its various confrontations with India, but never did. Iran says it has nuclear weapons, but has yet to demonstrate one publicly.

CK'S MOVIE STUDIO

The rumor is true. CK's studio consists of an empty room, an open shower area, and a closet of props. CK films the Triple Puma Threat with a digital camera and emails the raw footage out to be edited and processed at a Neo York studio, which then uploads the final product to the Net. In turn, CK gets much-needed cash, part of which goes to the Threat, and the rest he uses to buy supplies for his Zone clients. Much to CK's delight, Shoko has attended a few recording sessions. While she doesn't want to make a career out of it, right now the money's too good for her to pass up.

WHO IS DOCTOR LYDIA?

An esper with extensive medial training. Anything else is up to the GM to decide.

BELL'S BACKGROUND

Bell is ex-military with a degree in chemistry. She came to the Zone to get away from the ugliness of the Second Civil War, met Ken, and fell in love. She's familiar with an assortment of small arms, and can make napalm, thermite, and even mustard gas, if she really needs to. So far, she hasn't.

JINSEI'S ESPER PROJECT

Jinsei has been conducting research into the nature of esper powers almost since the day the company was founded. One of their initial test subjects was Maurillo Kazama, better known these days as Ran. In an effort to unlock his true potential, Jinsei researchers pumped him full of experimental activation drugs. His powers then manifested rather destructively, flattening the research center and killing most of the on-site personnel. Undaunted, Jinsei has continued their work, and even expanded into the field of cloning.

Using DNA collected from Ran when he was with them, and working with a slower process than the typical replicate nanofactory, Jinsei has produced a few clones of Ran. One of these is Takeda Johnson (see this listing in this section). To make matters worse, they've also collected DNA from Shion Nys (and anyone else the GM desires), and are working on a new batch of clones. They're also trying to splice the DNA together, in order to produce a "super-esper." The results of this experiment are best left up to individual GMs.

POSEIDON'S BETTER-THAN-LIFE STUDIO

The studio exists. However, you can play this two ways:

One, All is as written: Poseidon, as a whole, doesn't know the studio is there and denies involvement. However, one (or more) corrupt executives have been supplying chips, data, and software to the studio for a cut of the profits.

Two: Poseidon knows exactly what's going on, and they're just lying about it.

A FIVE WHAT?

The number five has a great deal of cultural significance in Asia due to its relation to the five Confucian virtues (benevolence, justice, courtesy, wisdom, and sincerity). Each virtue has an element, color, and personality associated with it. (Now you know where the costume colors for groups like the Power Rangers come from!) Many anime and manga have five primary characters. For example *Cowboy Bebop* has Ed, Ein, Faye Valentine, Jet Black, and Spike Spiegel, while *Silent Möbius* has Katsumi Liqueur, Kiddy Phenil, Lebia Maverlick, Nami Yamagumo, and Yuki Saiko. If you really want to capture the feel of an anime series, make sure you have five PCs.

ANIME HAIR IN YOUR GAME

For the most part, *Kazei 5* uses real world hair colors, although there are ways for PCs to have wild and wacky anime hairstyles (via genetic upgrading, for example). Building on this idea, you can have your players “color-code” their characters via hair color. The typical breakdown is as follows: hero of the show and/or team leader — black, dark blue, or dark green; hot-tempered fighter — red (with dark/tanned skin); mystic/intellectual — purple or lavender (often with glasses); mechanic/sleuth — brown or blond. Americans are often blond-haired while anyone with pure-white hair usually has a strong link to the supernatural or paranormal.

R SCOTT'S CEO

None of the rumors about CEO Steve Long are true. A genetic upgrade, he only needs one to two hours of sleep a night. The rest of the time he's usually checking in on one division of the company or another, which is why there seems to be more than one of him.

WHO'S AFTER JAGGER?

Whoever you wish. The same goes for any other Hunteds found on a character sheet without specific names attached.

RAVEN'S ORIGINS

Are up to you. If you feel they might be important, go ahead and flesh out her background. In the PBEM, her past was never an issue — the present had more than enough to keep her occupied.

WILLIAM CASE'S NEW REPLICATE

Known as Catherina, she's a two meter tall Puma with floor-length hair that otherwise looks almost exactly like Shion. Long-legged and very well-endowed, Case has Catherina dress in outfits designed to emphasize this.

RAN

As noted on page 293, Ran is actually Maurillo Kazama. Changed in ways not even espers like Shion fully understand, he's become something more than human. His madness is slowly fading; his time spent at Mayumi Kishiyama's MegaTokyo shrine helps immensely. Eventually, he'll stabilize, at which point he may simply transcend normal human existence. See page 304 for some comments as to possible future events involving Ran in the *Kazei 5* setting.

TAKEDA JOHNSON

Is a clone of Ran. His real name is Takashi Kazama, but he chose “Takeda” because it sounded familiar after his memory loss. He also has three “brothers” — clones like himself. They are: Kaneo, Shimazaki, and Yoshiyasu. All should be built along the same lines as Takeda. In addition, Takeda has a lot of skills he's forgotten about. Feel free to tag skills on his character sheet as “forgotten” for now. He may suddenly “remember” them in times of stress, although this knowledge may fade once the situation is resolved.

Takeda ended up in the Zone after he had a sudden panic attack on a BWB airliner. He destroyed the plane, killing everyone aboard, and ended up teleporting into the Zone, blanking out the traumatic memories.

TETSUTENSHI'S ORIGINS

She's a former special operative who saw a lot of action in and around Hong Kong. Like Bell, she's come to the Zone to forget for a while.

WHAT IS SARAH J FERRARI?

A test model for the next generation of replicated human. R Scott made her, trying to live up to their “As Human As Human Can Be” motto. There are a dozen replicates (including her) scattered around the world: six male, six female; six perfectly normal, six with unnatural skin and hair colorations. Sarah herself is a test in mental stability. Her memories tell her she was born and grew up in Perth, but her blue coloration says otherwise. How long will she stay together? At what point will she crack up? Her “brothers” and “sisters” have been set-up in the same way for the same reasons.

Anyone who does enough digging will find R Scott owns Mandarin Towers through various other corporations and shell companies.

Campaigning

Kazei 5 can be run as its own setting or you can use it as a source of powers and ideas for your own *Champions*, *Dark Champions*, or *Star Hero* games. In addition, the core setting is very modular, and sections can be removed (or even added) as desired to simulate many different popular anime and manga worlds. Dislike the idea of espers? Remove them. You'll be left with a much more “traditional” cyberpunk setting, but that might be just what you want. On the other hand, some GMs might want to run an all-esper campaign, in which the PCs end up akin to something like the classic “5-Man Team” seen so often in Japanese live-action television.

HOUSE RULES

Technically, everything you've read up until now has been an elaboration or expansion of the existing HERO System rules and not a “house rule.” In addition, everything you've read up to now is needed to properly run a *Kazei 5* game. The following items, however, are totally optional house rules, to be used as you wish.

STRENGTH DAMAGE

It's recommended GMs use the rules for Increased Damage Differentiation as seen in *The Ultimate Brick*. This will make minor STR gains through bioware, cyberware, and genetic upgrading have more in-game effect. For convenience's sake, the chart is repeated here.

INCREASED DAMAGE DIFFERENTIATION

STR	Damage
10	2d6
11	2d6
12	2d6+1
13	2 1/2d6
14	3d6-1
15	3d6
16	3d6
17	3d6+1
18	3 1/2d6
19	4d6-1
20	4d6

...and so on

THE ONE PER TWENTY RULE

In order to simulate the battering many anime and manga heroes seem to undergo, *Kazei 5* uses what's called "The 1 for 20 Rule." What this means is that for every 20 STUN you take in a single lump sum, you take 1 BODY. It doesn't matter how you took that 20 STUN, it could have been an NND gas attack or a 20d6 EB, you're going to take 1 BODY for every 20 STUN that gets past your defenses. This damage cannot be reduced or negated by Damage Reduction or any of your character's other defenses. In addition, this BODY damage stacks with any BODY damage you take from the initial attack.

Example: Shoko and Paula MacArthur Lars have come to blows in the Zone. While Shoko has the drop on the overconfident esper, she's low on rounds for her Stormbreaker, and decides to kick Paula instead. Normally, her 10d6 kick would almost never do BODY to Paula, thanks to Paula's 6 PD and 12 PD Telekinetic Shield. But using The 1 For 20 Rule, Shoko can actually hurt Paula and possibly drive her off. Shoko rolls a whopping 38 STUN and 13 BODY for her attack. Paula subtracts her total DEF of 18, leaving 20 STUN and 0 BODY. However, due to the 1 Per 20 Rule, she takes 1 additional BODY. She's not Stunned (she has a 21 CON), but she's going to be feeling that kick for a while.

Example: A Mitsumi Puma in full kit has 9 PD, a 10 DEF ceramic vest and a 4 DEF armored jacket. If you use the optional rule for layering armor [see page 120], that comes out to 21 PD, 12 of which is resistant. Shion hits said Puma with her 18d6 Force Bolt, doing 70 STUN and 20 BODY. Normally, the Puma wouldn't take any BODY from the attack, but $70 - 21 = 49$ STUN. The Puma takes 2 BODY due to the 1 Per 20 Rule. The Puma is now at -9 STUN and down 2 BODY.

Each attack is counted separately, so if you take 13 STUN from one attack and 7 from another, you're okay. BODY damage taken this way is considered to be general bruising and physical abuse. It's also a perfect excuse for damaging a character's cyberware. In fact, it's a great way to partially disable a cyborg without totally destroying him.

CAMPAIGN TONE

An important thing to keep in mind when you're setting up and running a *Kazei 5* campaign: as written, the setting is not a dystopia. Of course, you can make it one if you choose; all you need to do is up the level of conflict and lower the quality of life — the UNA and USA are still at war, multinationals are a law unto themselves, and any place that's not a corporate arcology or fortress town is a Zero Zone. Instant dystopia.

The intent of *Kazei 5* is to present a dark future, one full of moral questions and quandaries. Should man be altering his genetic code? Should children be genetically upgraded without their consent? Is it right to grow and sell cloned humans into a life of slavery? What do you lose when you have cyberware implanted or chose to become a cyborg? These are questions you'll need to keep in mind as a *Kazei 5* GM. Many of them are part of the campaign's general themes (see the next section), and help in creating the look and feel of the game world.

Unlike some other campaign worlds, such as many fantasy or superhero settings, the PCs probably won't be able to change the overall way the world works. They just don't have enough power, be it financial, political, or social. However, since this is a dark future and not a dystopia, the PCs should be able to have an effect within a certain area of influence, be it the Zero Zone or parts of Neo York. The PCs should also be able to achieve and retain successes; they can make things better, if only for a little while. In a dystopia, on the other hand, the PCs almost never succeed, or see most of their successes immediately wiped out. Realize, however, that knowing all they do is doomed to failure takes quite a bit of fun out of the game for the PCs, so as GM you should throw them the occasional bone.

As seen in the *Future Of Kazei 5* section, the world will get better — after a fashion. All is not lost, man will continue to evolve socially and overcome his current problems. It's the PCs' job to help him get there. However, not everything the PCs do will turn out the way they hope. You still have the right to throw twists and turns into even the best-laid plans. In addition, the PCs may get caught up in political maneuverings outside of their control. Their characters may likely be only one small part of a larger group, and face challenging situations where they can't always be certain who's right and who's wrong. Add in double agents, corrupt NPC team members, political backstabbing, and questionable missions, and you've got a game that keeps the PCs always on their toes.

EXPERIENCING THE 1 FOR 20 RULE FIRSTHAND

This house rule was first introduced during the Shadows Angelus game (see credits) after being discovered on the Hero Message Boards. It provided the perfect level of grittiness to combat, and in many cases the only BODY damage PCs took during a fight was due to this rule. In addition, the author almost lost his PC due to the 1 Per 20 effect. While investigating a crime scene, his character was attacked by someone in an Exo-Suit. Not only did the character take 4 BODY (after defenses) from an initial attack, she took another 2 BODY due to STUN damage, leaving her with only 2 BODY remaining. The result was a nerve-wracking nail-biter of a combat in which I had to balance trying to keep my PC alive with helping the rest of the group.

TURNING IT UP A NOTCH

The multinationals in *Kazei 5* are fairly powerful as is, but there's one further step you can take if you want to really push home their power. It's called extraterritoriality, and it would make any corporate arcology, manufacturing facility, and/or office complex immune to local laws. Thus, a multinational could do whatever it wanted within the confines of its own buildings, provided these acts didn't violate the corporation's laws. It also means an executive could commit a crime, return to his corporate office, and be immune from arrest. Granted, said executive might be handed over to local law-enforcement anyway, but under extraterritoriality, the police don't have the right to come onto the company's grounds and arrest him.

CAMPAIGN THEMES

When developing scenarios for your *Kazei 5* campaign, consider including some of the following concepts:

- ⊙ **A Greener World:** One thing that may seem a little jarring about *Kazei 5* is how environmental-friendly it is. Unlike some settings, the world hasn't been totally contaminated by pollution. Part of this is due to the decline of oil (and the oil companies), forcing the development of alternative fuels and energy sources (such as fusion and solar power). There's also the nanofactory angle, which allows sewage to be processed into something useful, in this case the organic base used to make replicated goods and lifeforms. Of course, there's still a "darker" side to all of this. The climate has changed for the warmer, thus changing water levels and rainfall. The oceans have been restocked, but only after man has pumped out billions of cloned fish larvae. Animals in Africa have been rescued from extinction via nanofactory replicates, but only so the rich can have something to shoot at. And so on.
- ⊙ **Female Empowerment:** Many anime and manga series have strong female protagonists, especially ones in the "animepunk" genre. The reasons for this are many: Shirow Masamune, for example, prefers to have women as the main characters in his manga. There's also the idea that "sex sells," and there's no easier way to sell a series to Japanese salariman bachelors than to have your manga star several attractive, well-drawn (and occasionally scantily-clad) female characters. In addition, there's a certain appeal to the idea of strong and independent (albeit fictional) female characters in Japanese society. A short list of such characters includes: Alita (*Battle Angel*), the Attacked Mystification Police (*Silent Möbius*), Deunan Knute (*Appleseed*), Faye Valentine (*Cowboy Bebop*), the Knight Sabers (*Bubblegum Crisis*), Major Motoko Kusanagi (*Ghost in the Shell*), and Revy (*Black Lagoon*).
- ⊙ **Greed Is Good:** No one is evil simply to be evil. Multinationals don't bulldoze low-rent tenements just to watch the poor end up out on the street. There's a reason behind many of the morally questionable and repugnant actions made by corporate executives, and that reason is usually quite simple: money. The pursuit of bigger and better profits is what drives the business world, and you can use this to justify all sorts of actions. On a similar note, the desire for power, be it financial, economic, or personal (or simply power for power's sake) is also a great motivator, leading to corporate infighting, sabotage, and one-upmanship. For many *Kazei 5* scenarios, you don't need to create an elaborate reason why a corporation is doing something; simply work with the typical human foibles of laziness, shortsightedness, and pursuit of the all-mighty dollar.
- ⊙ **Us And Them:** For thousands of years, man has made decisions about others based solely on the color of their skin, despite the fact we're all funda-

mentally identical on a genetic level. However, in *Kazei 5* there is a genetic difference between different groups of humans. Now what?

One subtle element of the *Kazei 5* setting is an apparent breakdown of racial barriers. Many of the NPCs in this book have parents of mixed ethnicities (for example, Carlos Jagger, Katherine Ramis, Marta and Shion Nys, and even Ran). Encourage your players to follow suit.

- ⊙ **Will The Real Human Please Stand Up?:** Espers, cyborgs, replicates, genners... mankind is changing, both socially and at the genetic level. What is his future? What will he become? Is he splitting up into separate species? This is probably *Kazei 5*'s most consistent theme. The concept of "Who is human?" drives most of the setting and can be expressed in a myriad of ways. Is Carlos Jagger still "human?" How about Lora Doubet? Both of them are now far more machine than meat — in fact, Lora is almost entirely machine. Is Sarah J Ferrari human? Sure, she's been cloned from a genetically engineered template, but is that any different than Zhen Zhen Li and her upgrade?

There's no right answer to this question — each GM will need to decide for himself how he wants it to play out. At the same time players who decide to discriminate against espers, or replicates, or cyborgs, shouldn't be punished for making a "bad" decision, just as those who go out of their way to accept espers, or replicates, or cyborgs, shouldn't be rewarded (or vice versa). That said, many plot seeds involve corporations, or governments, running roughshod over the rights of others. If the world of *Kazei 5* is going to get any better, people are going to have to learn to accept each other. Of course, considering how well things are going in the real world, the PCs will have their work cut out for them.

DRESSING THE STAGE

When running a *Kazei 5* campaign you'll need to work a bit to bring home the idea this is both the future and a different past from the one the players know. It doesn't have to be anything major, however; there's a lot of subtle ways you can get the point across. Here is a list of things to keep in mind while setting up and running your campaign:

- ⊙ The World Trade Center still stands; Osama bin Laden never launched his attack. On the other hand, they're overshadowed by several multinational arcologies.
- ⊙ The United States is now seven different countries, and there's no Canada.
- ⊙ There's a colony on the Moon and plans to venture out to Mars (and beyond).
- ⊙ There are multiple space habitats/stations in orbit. You can see them on most clear nights.
- ⊙ Domestic and industrial cyberdroids have replaced most menial labor, including ditch digging, landscaping, sanitation, vehicle loading/unloading, and so on. Anything you would expect to see cheap immigrant labor doing, have a cyberdroid do instead.

- ⊙ Replicated humans have replaced many domestic servants and secretaries. If the PCs venture into a corporate office, the first face they should see would be the replicated human behind the front desk.
- ⊙ There are flying cars. Not many, but they exist.
- ⊙ Car engines don't "roar" any more. With all of the hybrids and electrics around, they tend to purr if they make any noise at all.
- ⊙ Computers are everywhere. Although this has been mentioned before, it can't be stressed enough. Of course, most computer interaction is invisible to the PCs, unless something breaks down. Still, people should mention linking to the home computer in order to have the house ready before they arrive. "What does the Net say?" should be the first reaction to any question or unusual situation. Also, exchanging phone numbers, addresses, business cards, directions, and so on should simply be a few seconds of wireless contact — no one uses pen and paper anymore.
- ⊙ Instead of showing off what's new, remind the PCs of what's gone. Paper products, be they books, magazines, or newspapers are rare to non-existent. Many countries (Canada, China, Israel, the USA) are gone. Many major companies no longer exist. The exact ones are up to you, but some suggestions include: AIG, Avis/Budget Rent-a-Car, Banana Republic/Gap/Old Navy, Borders Books, Chrysler, Saturn, any number of airlines (American, United, US Air, and so on), as well as numerous automakers, banks, insurance companies, and retail establishments.
- ⊙ People don't wear glasses, contacts, or hearing aids anymore — surgery or cyberware is much more efficient.

BUT ZHEN ZHEN LI WEARS GLASSES!

Zhen Zhen is also unwilling to have her eyes operated on. She's an exception to the rule. Also, she's realized her glasses are part of her "mystique" and an essential element of her business persona.

- ⊙ A greater acceptance of high-technology. In the real world, there's a lot of concern over genetically-altered foods and animals. In the world of *Kazei 5*, people accept them as a matter of course. People are also more accepting of genetic augmentation in humans, as well as cybernetic implants and upgrading. The corporations go out of their way to encourage this attitude, as it means more business for them.
- ⊙ There's an extreme gulf between the haves and the have-nots. Once you get outside of the clean and shiny arcologies, things become a lot more dingy, dirty, and rundown. Chrome and steel skyscrapers stand towering over decaying graffiti-decorated rowhouses. There is little to no middle class anymore; there's the wealthy elite and a vast sea of workers who struggle to make ends meet. And if you can't afford even that, there's the Zero Zone across the river, where Neo York is more than happy to dump all of the criminals, homeless, invalids, and whoever else they feel is a drain on society.

Campaign Set-up

The typical set-up for an animepunk series has the PCs belonging to some sort of official law-enforcement organization. This section presents several frameworks for using that sort of setting, as well as some additional methods for bringing the PCs together. In addition, there are two alternative campaign layouts that use *Kazei 5* only as a source and aren't directly set in the universe described in this book.

THE OVERT POLICE FORCE

The premise for this campaign is simple: the PCs all belong to the police department. Granted, this being anime (and an action-adventure setting), odds are the PCs are members of an elite division within the regular police, one charged with pursuing and capturing criminals the regular patrol officers can't.

There're many advantages to a campaign set-up such as this. As you can see from the examples below, you have a lot of source material to work from. Also, it's easy to get the PC's together — the players simply have to come up with a reason why their PC joined the police. You also can control the setting (it's unlikely the PCs will be jetting around the world chasing suspects). It's easy to add and remove PCs (recruitment, retirement, and transfers are popular reasons), and you can control the gear the PCs use. The PCs won't need to pay for their equipment with points (the department does that) and injured officers may be able to get cybernetic upgrades for free.

At the same time, some of the advantages might also prove to be drawbacks. Players may balk at having to follow police rules and regulations (even the loose ones so common to police action shows), feel restricted by the limited campaign venue (*i.e.* the city they patrol), and may be unable to play certain character types (an NYPD, Inc. task force probably won't have replicates or espers). Game Masters will need to create the police task force in question, provide a template for officers, and present their standard gear, much of which can be adapted from material presented in this book. There's also the chain of command question — someone needs to be in charge of the PCs. If the PCs are onboard with the campaign concept, you can make the unit commander a PC; if not, a GMPC works just as well.

The purpose of the overt police force can be as simple as rogue replicate or cyberdroid detection and elimination, or as complex as corporate crime investigation and prosecution. The specifics are up to you and your players. Appropriate campaign world suggestions include NYPD, Inc.'s Organized Crime Control Bureau or Special Weapons and Tactics, MegaTokyo's Enhanced Special Weapons and Tactics, or Hong Kong's Organized Crime and Triad Bureau. Obviously, you can create other police forces of your own — Atlanta, Chicago, the Dallas metroplex, Greater San Francisco, and Seattle (and the Puget Sound metroplex) are all likely locations.

SELF DISCOVERY

This is not so much a campaign set-up as it is a campaign theme. Usually centered around a single character, the game focuses on the character's interaction with the world around him. In many cases, the character's past is a mystery, discovering who (or what) he is and why he was made (if applicable) is a driving motivation of the character. During the course of play, the character learns more about himself, his abilities and purposes, and the world.

A Self Discovery campaign is perfect for being run by the GM and a single player.

Examples: Advanced Police (*AD Police Files*, *Bubblegum Crisis*), Attacked Mystification Police (*Silent Möbius*), Blade Runner Rep-Detect (*Blade Runner*), Main Force Patrol (*Mad Max*), Martian Police Department, (*Armitage III*), Newport City Tank Police (*Dominion Tank Police*, *New Dominion Tank Police*), Police Company (*Hyper Police*) Precrime (*Minority Report*).

THE COVERT POLICE FORCE

Similar in many ways to the Overt Police Force, the Covert Police Force has one major difference — they work behind the scenes. In addition, the covert force is likely to be part of the federal government, with greater law-enforcement powers and equipment access. At the same time, their targets are often far more dangerous than anything the regular police come across. Covert police forces usually deal with foreign espionage, domestic and international terrorists, and agents of foreign governments.

A covert police force is often more open in its recruiting. While the overt force only accepts officers who've come up through the ranks, the covert force may recruit from the police, the military, or even regular civilians who show promise and have the right kind of powers and/or skills. Thus, the GM could allow a mixed PC team consisting of an esper, cyborg, replicate, and a cybernetically enhanced human. In addition, each member of the team usually has his specialty. One might be the computer hacker, with a headful of software, another is the infiltration expert, another the sniper, and so on (the esper's speciality is often just being an esper.) A covert force can range all over — the GM doesn't need to restrict their activities to just one campaign city. They also have great equipment access — the covert police often use military equipment or custom and/or experimental devices.

The drawbacks to the covert police campaign mainly revolve around the nature of the police force and its chain of command. Realistically, the PCs' squad may be split up and sent out in small groups to investigate different matters at the same time (great for PBEM play, not so good face-to-face). There may also be a stricter reliance on rules and regulations. In order to maintain their covert status, the agency the PCs are working for may frown or forbid certain actions or tactics. Violators may be punished severely, up to and including removal from the squad, resulting in the player losing his character and needing to create a new one.

The first *Kazei 5* game used the Covert Police Force as the concept behind the campaign. Backed by the UNA government, and code-named "kazei" (for "small military force"), the setting had multiple covert police teams scattered around the country, each with their own region to watch over. (*Kazei 5* is based in Neo York.) The teams were tasked with keeping tabs on (and opposing if needed) the multinationals and their activities. While the UNA prefers ex-police or ex-military, they're willing to recruit and induct anyone with skills and abilities they can use.

It's recommended that any PCs in a covert police game take the Social Complication *Secret ID*. Their names are probably classified by the government and/or they have cover identities they use while on the job.

Examples: ESWAT (*Appleseed*), Section 9 (*Ghost In The Shell*), Special Security Force (*Angel Cop*).

MILITARY/SPECIAL FORCES OPERATIVES

With this sort of campaign, the PCs become part of a military organization. They don't have to belong to a nation's armed forces — they could just as easily be part of a corporate army or act as independent mercenaries. In any event, the PCs are all part of a small, elite unit of soldiers, sent in to various situations that require more finesse than a simple all-out assault.

In some regards, this premise can be even more flexible than the Covert Police Force. The PCs can be drawn from all across the armed forces, or be hired specifically for their unique talents. They can be called on to perform all sorts of missions, ranging from simple assaults to hostage rescues. They can go anywhere in the world orders or a contract requires, and have access to highly advanced military hardware.

The primary drawback becomes one of possible repetition of missions. Virtually all of the scenarios involve military objectives — PCs can't simply take off to resolve a personal matter and non-military interaction might be lacking. On the other hand, if the team is small enough, and elite enough, they may have significant free-rein to resolve situations as best they see fit. Player Characters in this sort of campaign can also act as a form of law-enforcement, especially if they're corporate trouble-shooters.

The obvious choice for a *Kazei 5* campaign of this sort would be to have the PCs be part of the Steel Commandos. However, you could also try having them play a six-man Puma squad for Mitsumi, or members of any number of corporate security and paramilitary forces.

Examples: ARCAM Private Army (*Striker*), Imperial Assault Force — Flower Division (*Sakura Taisen*), World Welfare Works Association (*Dirty Pair*).

FREEDOM FIGHTERS

In this type of campaign, the PCs aren't members of any official organization, but instead work by themselves. They're goal is to reach a specific objective, whether it's personal freedom from oppression, seeking the downfall of an uncaring corporation, the overthrow of a tyrannical government, or something similar. A Freedom Fighters campaign has several things going for it: a broad range of possible character types (the PCs can be just about anybody), constant action, often intense PC-NPC interaction, and plenty of room for those melodramatic moments so common to anime series of this type. The disadvantages come from determining how or if the PCs can succeed in their mission, and if they do, where they go after that.

This sort of game can be very difficult to set-up and run properly. The PCs must be careful not to get caught, while the GM must try to keep adventures balanced and fair. Access to equipment is another important issue;

the GM needs to determine how and where the PCs will acquire their gear, which is often quite limited.

Within the *Kazei 5* setting, PCs could fight for the freedom of replicated humans the world over, or they might struggle against the domination of a multinational corporation and the undue influence they have over the local government.

Examples: Alita (*Battle Angel*), Knight Sabers (*Bubblegum Crisis*), Zion (*The Matrix*).

FREELANCERS

The most open sort of *Kazei 5* campaign, this sees the PCs operating with no set objective or purpose other than to make their way in the world. They may try to serve a more noble cause (such as opposing the multinationals whenever possible), but for the most part, they're simply doing their best to make a little money and get by. There's little structure to a game like this — the PCs can have most any background and origin, they can do what they want, when they want, and their adventures may take them all over the world. On the other hand, they have no backing, no support, and in many cases no future. Still, if you want to run the most flexible game possible, this might be the game for you.

Examples: the crew of the Bebop (*Cowboy Bebop*), Lagoon Traders (*Black Lagoon*).

VARIANT CAMPAIGN SETTINGS

There's no requirement for you to use the world of *Kazei 5* as is. You can easily use the sourcebook to create your own, or help you replicate already published settings. Two examples of alternate settings are described here:

ESPER HIGH SCHOOL

This campaign only uses the esper rules from *Kazei 5*. Set in the modern day, it revolves around a group of high school students (*i.e.* the PCs) who are all secretly espers. They belong to an equally secretive organization dedicated to opposing the activities of Novus Mundus, a criminal conspiracy dedicated to controlling the world. The end result is a game that captures the feel of many Japanese high school adventure manga, in which action is mixed with intrigue and romance. Characters will have to deal with school life during the day (tests, studying, romantic entanglements, that bully in your third period class), while fighting evil at night.

The character may attend a normal school, or a special school for the gifted and talented. They may all be wards of the state, either created by the government or brought in from orphanages once their special talents were discovered. It's recommended there be five PCs (see the *A Five What?* sidebar on page 293) and they should be built as Low-Powered Superheroic characters (300 total points with 60 points of Matching Complications). Game Masters can treat the game like a low-powered superhero campaign mixed with *Teen Champions*. The PCs have a base (probably on school grounds), equipment (usually communicators and maybe a team vehicle), and an NPC contact who gives them orders.

The enemy organization, Novus Mundus, should employ espers as well, along with a lot of agents armed with high-tech equipment such as flying vehicles, energy

weapons, simple cyberdroids, and powered armor. The PCs may be asked to foil, prevent, or stop any of the following: kidnappings of young espers, attacks on esper research centers, assassination attempts against certain politicians, and even out-and-out robberies.

For those GMs who wish to retain more of the feel of *Kazei 5*, you can move the venue from the modern world of 2009 to the corporate world of 2030. Perhaps the PCs are all part of a multinational's new esper strike team, sent out to deal with various issues. Or, if you're feeling really daring, you can set the game much further in the future, around the year 2100, and the PCs can be a response team for the Esper Institute, tasked with resolving a wide range of problems, both for the Institute and paying clients.

SHADOWS ANGELUS

It's the year 2112 and the PCs are all members of XSWAT (Extra Special Weapons and Tactics), the elite police force of the immense floating city of Angelus. Built after the Cataclysm, which dropped most of the West Coast into the Pacific Ocean, Angelus has a population of 20 million citizens, who all live in the most advanced technological marvel on Earth. But Angelus has a dark secret — deep within abandoned Omega Sector there's a rift in the space-time continuum, a rift that allows horrific things to cross over into our world.

Shadows Angelus is modeled after a curious subset of animepunk — supernatural animepunk. It uses all of the *Kazei 5* rules, but also adds in something new: magic. And more specifically, anime magic. Usually modeled after hermetic theurgy and kabbalism, anime magic requires the magician to call upon various angels, demons, gods (*kami*), and spirits to power his spells. Other forms of magic are possible — ghost-busting Buddhist priests and talisman-tossing Japanese *miko* are common.

As members of XSWAT, the PCs are charged with protecting Angelus from incursions by horrific Lovecraftian monsters known simply as "Entities." They're also responsible for dealing with rogue sorcerers, espers, cyberdroids, cyborgs, and anything else beyond the capabilities of the normal police. They usually work in squads of four to six and wear nanofiber bodygloves and knee-length biosteel jackets. The standard sidearm is a hand-held energy weapon since they are more useful than a projectile weapon against extra-dimensional monsters. Officers are recruited from all walks of life — previous police experience is not needed.

Point levels and the like are left up to the GM. Powerful Hero (225 points plus 50 points of Matching Complications) is a suggested starting point (not counting the XSWAT officer template and standard equipment). Various magical and/or supernatural powers are allowed, and GMs and players are encouraged to be creative in coming up with concepts. A sampling of PCs who saw play include: a cybernetically enhanced police officer, a cyborg, a female gunfighter, a half-human/half-demon, a paladin of God armed with a holy sword, a replicate ex-*Lace & Steel* fighter, a replicate Exo-Suit pilot, and a spirit-calling sorceress.

MORE ON SHADOWS ANGELUS

You can visit the webpages of Shadows Angelus campaigns I-III at <http://surbrook.devermore.net/index/worldbooks.html>

Using Kazei 5 In Other Settings

As written, *Kazei 5* is a stand-alone setting. There're no dimensional portals or time machines and no aliens (yet) or strange visitors from alternate worlds. Still, there's nothing stopping you from having characters from your superhero world visit *Kazei 5*. The author has seen this done twice, once with a superhero team and once with the *Shadows Angelus* group (which was sent sideways in time, to the year 2112). It can be a bit of an eye-opener for those involved. Supers will find that the average soldier is built on almost as many points as they are, while certain esper weapons are more than a match for some of the more powerful superheroes. The world itself can have a long-term effect on characters. For example, the supers may find themselves in the Zero Zone and discover a new-found resolve to uphold justice for all, or an XSWAT officer may decide to start an Esper Institute of his own once he returns home.

Conversely, GMs may want to bring elements of *Kazei 5* into their own games. For example, the cybernetics rules could easily be used in any number of *Star Hero* settings, as could the replicated humans and genetic upgrades. *Champions* GMs should find the assorted energy weapons useful for UNTIL and VIPER, the cyberdroids make great battle machines for people like Doctor Destroyer and the Warlord, while the esper powers can be used by any *Champions* telekinetic. Speaking of espers, the various esper characters all make excellent heroes (and villains), with Shion Nys perfect in the role as master villain (she's on the same power level as the *Champions Universe's* Gravatar) or extremely high-powered mercenary. The Esper Institute could even be brought over to your superhero world and made into a heroic alternative or competitor to PSI.

Many of the firearms listed in the Equipment section are real and make the perfect addition to your modern-era games. Street Fighting can be added to modern (or near-future) *Ninja Hero* games. You could even use some of the characters in a *Post Apocalyptic Hero* game, either as survivors of a former high-tech society, or by changing their cyberimplants into radiation-spawned mutations.

Campaign And Adventure Seeds

THE CLONE WARS

At some points Jinsei's (or another multinational's) experiments with cloning espers comes to light. Takeda and Shion aren't ones to take such news lightly, and they are going to confront Jinsei directly, destroying the clones at the source. On the other hand, they're not fools and know any such research will be under heavy guard.

This is where the PCs come in. They're needed to distract Jinsei's security by attacking the arcology from a different angle, destroying company assets with a much enthusiasm as they can muster. Property damage is a top requirement, as well as showy explosions and plenty of noise. They'll also need to handle the inevitable response, which will include heavily armed and armored troopers and units of combat cyberdroids. They may also be asked to help Shion and Takeda get back out.

For those GMs who wish their PCs to take a more direct role, the obvious solution is to have one of them be the target of Jinsei's cloning project (naturally, this works even better if one of the PCs actually is an esper). They can make the assault themselves, and possibly hire others to act as the distraction or backup muscle. You can also have an appropriately dramatic moment where the esper PC confronts one or more of his clones — all of whom look like him, but don't act like him.

COURIER DUTY

It's simple really — take object A to location B. The object can be anything — a prototype device, a datachip (sent via courier to avoid any Net-based issues), a message, or even a shipment of goods (such as a vehicle). The PCs must ensure safe and prompt delivery, while avoiding anyone out to intercept the delivery. Optionally, the object is data, contained in an individual's headware. The PCs must guard and deliver him to the desired location. For a more comedic angle, the object is a new replicate lifeform, which naturally gets loose at some point and must be found. For a slightly more serious bent, the replicate is a human, who doesn't want to be recaptured.

CRISIS AT DDL

At Digital Designs Laboratories, things have gone terribly wrong. A unit of mercenaries dressed as delivery men has taken over the building in an impressive display of coordination and planning. However, in the process an alarm was triggered and now the building is surrounded by NYPD SWAT teams and Exo-Suits from the Armored Trooper Division. The PCs are being sent in to resolve the situation before it ends in a bloodbath. Aside from rescuing the hostages and ensuring DDL's building comes out in one piece, there's the question of the mercenaries. Who are they? Who do they work for? Are they mercs, or a corporate strike team in disguise? And what are they doing at DDL? What are they looking for?

DEATH RACE 2030

It's *Crash TV*'s newest "sport." Heavily armed and armored cars race through the Zone, trying to be the first to complete a set route. Racers have to deal not only with each other, but with Zone residents, many of whom aren't too happy about having these would-be road warriors around. Since the drivers have been told to consider Zoners as "obstacles" to be dealt with as the racers see fit (and there are points to be scored by eliminating them), things don't look good all around.

There's probably not much the PCs can do to stop the races, at least at the corporate level. The Zoners might ask them to help in making the route too dangerous for *Crash TV*'s racers (although all that might do is boost ratings). Or, the PCs might be racers themselves, using the race as cover for either smuggling something (or someone) in or out of the Zone. The PCs might even be called on to mount a rescue mission of a popular driver who's been stranded in the Zone after a nasty wreck.

DESTROY ALL ESPERS

Syntech MedSystems is going beyond a simple implanted shunt in their research in preventing esper abilities from manifesting. Someone in the company is developing an anti-esper cyberdroid, outfitted specifically to find and destroy espers. The secret is in the cyberdroid's Cyberbrain — it was removed from a former esper and set into a heavily armed and armored frame. Only able to sense other espers (the limit of its power), it only "feels" pleasure when it has destroyed the source of the terrible buzzing in its brain.

Jason Stone initially knows nothing of this (which is code named "Project Forge") and is horrified to discover it when he does. He hires the PCs to eliminate the three prototypes and to destroy as much of the research material as possible (up to and including making sure the project director suffers a fatal "accident"). He'll pay well, in both cash and services from Syntech, and, if impressed with the PCs' handling of the mission, will certainly keep them in mind for future projects.

The cyberdroids are large, armored combat machines, armed with various Exo-Suit scaled energy weapons. Each has Esper Awareness (with Targeting) but no other esper powers. They are fast, strong, highly mobile (thanks to their jump thrusters), and very dangerous. There are also human guards to consider as well as the problem of getting into (and out of) the complex where the anti-esper cyberdroids are being designed, built, and housed. Stone says there are only three right now. Is his information up to date? And even if the PCs succeeded, how can they be sure no one else has the data and isn't making their own anti-esper weapons?

THE EMPRESS HAS BEEN SHOT

The almost unthinkable has happened — Shion Nys has been severely wounded. She needs immediate medical attention as well as a safe place to stay while she heals. A corporate hospital is out of the question, leaving either a public hospital or a private institution. Getting her there is only the first issue, however, since once she's been seen to, she'll be out for a while, and thus, vulnerable. The PCs have been tasked with watching over her for a few days until she's well enough to leave and stay at

her own home. It sounds like an easy mission — but it's not. The "Empress" has a lot of enemies, ranging from corporations who'd like to see her gone, to rival espers who want to take her place. Will the hospital become a battleground? Will the PCs be able to stop the assassin disguised as a nurse? Will they say "no" to the bribe to make sure Shion doesn't leave the hospital alive?

An alternate version of this scenario has Shion captured by someone. It's not as hard as it sounds — as powerful as she is, Shion still needs to breathe. Flash-bangs and tear gas might disorientate her enough to allow a barrage of Taser rounds to take her down before she can teleport away. Or, perhaps, she's lured into a meeting with a prospective client, and when she's handed a briefcase of cash and mission information it sprays forth a powder designed to render her unconscious and suppress her esper talents. In any event, she's now a captive of a multinational, for reasons one can only speculate about.

When Marta Nys learns of this, she and Zhen Zhen Li start investigating who (and why), and in the process assemble a team of individuals to help them free Marta's sister. They need to locate where she is, how she's being kept, and who (or what) is guarding her, and use that information to affect a rescue. If the PCs succeed in this, they'll make some valuable (and powerful) friends. Failure, on the other hand...

EXTRACTION

The PCs are hired to locate and remove an employee from corporation A and deliver him to corporation B. They can try to take him at his place of work (risky), his home (safer), or while he's out on his own (safest). The employee might be alone, he might have guards, or he might even have some combat skills himself. The reasons for the extraction are many. The employee might want to defect (and thus help the PCs), Corporation B might want him for his knowledge, to slow corporation A's production of product, or as leverage against corporation A. The individual might not even be an employee, but might be the child or spouse instead to be rescued or used as a hostage. In any case, it's imperative the PCs bring him back alive and unharmed.

The reverse of this is also possible, where the PCs are asked to safeguard an employee who's at risk of being grabbed. They'll need to be vigilant while still remaining mostly unobtrusive. It's also possible the PCs may be asked to escort the employee to somewhere safe — say another part of Neo York, or even another country.

GANGS OF NEO YORK

The lieutenant of a major Neo York gang has been brutally murdered and now his fellow gangers are out for revenge. They're on the move, fanning out across the city, looking for whoever did it, or whoever they think did it. Although looking for rival gangs to take their mad out on, the gangers aren't going to take any lip from anyone, and will vent their frustrations on anyone, be it a regular citizen or NYPD, who crosses them. And since any gangers they do find probably had nothing to do with the initial hit, all the gang is succeeding in doing is setting up a vicious cycle of retaliatory strikes that will explode across Neo York in an orgy of violence.

While the prospect of Neo York's streets gangs eliminating each other in a roaring rampage of revenge has a certain appeal, the collateral damage will be catastrophic. The PCs need to nip this in the bud and they need to do it quick. They need to find out who committed the hit and point the gang in the right direction (and then stand back). While it's a messy way to resolve the issue, the PCs might discover the gang feels they owe them a favor.

If you really want to complicate matters, the culprit isn't another gang (or if it is, they're acting on the orders of someone else). So now the question is: Who would gain by sparking off a major gang war? And what would they gain?

JINSEI INVADES THE ZONE

As described on page 304 in the section on future events, Jinsei launches a mass invasion of the Zero Zone. The PCs can be involved in any number of ways: they could be Jinsei troopers tasked with clearing out buildings and combating Zone residents; they could be sent in to rescue important corporate executives before Jinsei finds them; they could be smuggling in equipment for Zone residents to use against Jinsei; they could be spying on Jinsei; or they could be Zone residents fighting for their lives and land. If they learn why Jinsei has invaded (to gather up as many young espers as possible), they may end up joining forces with Raven to first free captured espers and then smuggle them out of the Zone and to a safe place in Australia.

The PCs will need to track down the slavers themselves (not an easy task), defeat them and their guards, free any current captives, and if possible, try to free ones who have already been shipped out. The slaver's hidden location could be anything, but a good suggestion is to use an abandoned school — it's roomy enough to house the slavers, their captives, any "behavioral modification" rooms, and even an operating room.

Following this scenario, the PCs might embark on a quest to free those slaves who were shipped out before the PCs arrived. Doing so won't be easy, as they're probably being held in various executive residences and holdings. In addition, some of the captives may have been killed by their owners, some may have been killed trying to escape, some may be inaccessible (such as out of the country or off-planet) and some many have been programmed so well they may not want to leave.

THE MOST DANGEROUS GAME

A variant of the slavers scenario, this plot sees well-armed groups of "sportsmen" enter the Zone in search of human prey. The object of their hunt could be unsuspecting Zone residents, criminals procured from local prisons, or corporate competitors. For an extra ghoulish touch, these hunts are filmed, either for later review and enjoyment or for sale to select buyers.

The hunters are armed with powerful weaponry and travel in lightly armored vehicles. If using the movie option, a camera truck will follow the hunt. A welcome change from intense investigation scenarios, this one should result in a no-holds-barred shoot-out. Of course, stopping this hunt may not stop all of the hunts, or it may make the PCs targets for other hunters.

ONE OF OUR CYBERDROIDS IS MISSING

An experimental hunter-killer cyberdroid has turned up missing. It's possible it was stolen, but unlikely. A more chilling explanation would have the droid activated for testing and then executed certain programming features without the safety interlocks activating., which would explain the corpses in the testing labs.

The HK cyberdroid (use the one on page 202) is now loose in the city, with unknown objectives. If the PCs are lucky, it's reverted to its most basic programming (hide) and is waiting for further radioed instructions. If discovered, the HK will kill its finder (and other witnesses), then attempt to hide itself again. If the PCs aren't that lucky, then the HK is attempting to follow an unknown instruction set. It might be simply trying to seek out a certain target as a test of its tracking skills (but what will it do when it finds its target?) It might be trying to gain entry to a specific location as an infiltration test. Or, it might be waiting until a set moment to engage in a search-and-destroy mission, with the entire city as its potential targets.

If the PCs have faced an HK cyberdroid before, then this one should be different from the regular model. It could be faster (more DEX), have a better targeting system (more Combat Skill Levels), an improved processor (add EGO to the Cyberbrain, increase the Attack Barrier, and increase the INT), more arms, Clinging (defined as enhanced climbing), or even a new cooling system that makes it virtually invisible to infrared.

REPLICATE REVOLUTION

What if Temple (page 238) wasn't made to go against Poseidon Interactive (page 190)? What if she were set-up to target R Scott or Mitsumi instead? What if her virii are designed to alter the programming of replicates (and even cyberdroids) and remove their personality governors? What happens when replicates start to refuse to work, possibly even turning on their owners in the process?

This is more of a campaign arc than a scenario, but it can make for some world-changing events. Replicates may "wake-up" *en masse* either fleeing for the Zone, or lashing out at the world around them, becoming belligerent and destructive. Player Characters who investigate will find only one model has been affected, as well as only those who've been delivered after a specific date. In addition, only one production center seems to have been affected. If they can determine when the replicate programming process was compromised, then they can hopefully determine who had access and find their suspect.

Of course, this presumes Temple is idle while all of this is going on. She might try to infect various models, in various stages of development, and in various production centers. She might even try to strike at different companies, although it will be hard for a Lynx to gain access to certain replicate manufacturers. And once the PCs manage to determine who's responsible, they still need to find out where Temple is. And even then, what if she has her own army of free replicates who wish to remain free? And even cyberdroids? Will the replicate

uprising change the way people think about the creation and sale of replicates? If the replicates really are free of their personality governors, then doesn't that make them truly independent thinkers and not simply organic robots?

As stated, the replicate revolution can have far-reaching campaign consequences, and must be carefully evaluated by the GM before being set in motion. The GM should also ensure his players are willing to participate in this scenario (as well as any others described here), and will be able to accept the situations presented in a mature manner.

TAKEN!

People are vanishing in the Zone. This in itself isn't unusual, people vanish all of the time in the Zone. Some do it on purpose, others fall prey to gangs, or harvesters, or retrievers. But in this case the people are disappearing from relatively "safe" areas, like Zone City and the Entertainment District. They're also almost all young (late teens to early twenties), healthy, and reasonably attractive. Almost all of them have been female, although a few men have vanished as well. People are beginning to talk of the possibility of a serial killer and tension is running high.

The disappearances are the result of a slavery ring. Armed with a list of requirements for their next grab, they patrol the streets of the Zone looking for a likely target. Once they find one, they capture their victim using non-lethal methods and haul that person off to a location hidden deep in the Zone. There, they subject their captives to brainwashing and conditioning in order to make them subservient and docile. Once the treatments are finished, the victim is shipped off to a corporate arcology and a new owner.

Why do they do this? Why would the slavers go through the trouble of kidnapping people when their clients could buy a made-to-order pleasure replicate? The reason is simple: pleasure replicates are too perfect. They look and act exactly the way the owner wants, and don't have fully independent emotions and feelings. The slaver's clients don't want someone who submits to their will because they were programmed to, they want to experience true power over another. They want someone who submits because they truly own that person, body and soul.

The PCs will need to track down the slavers themselves (not an easy task), defeat them and their guards, free any current captives, and, if possible, try to free the ones who have already been shipped out. The slaver's hidden location could be anything, but a good suggestion is to use an abandoned school — it's roomy enough to house the slavers, their captives, any "behavioral modification" rooms, and even an operating room.

Following this scenario, the PCs might embark on a quest to free those slaves who were shipped out before the PCs arrived. Doing so won't be easy, as they're probably being held in various executive residences and holdings. In addition, some of the captives may have been killed by their owners, some may have been killed trying to escape, some may be inaccessible (such as out of the country or off-planet), and some many have been programmed so well they may not want to leave.

THINGS TO DO IN NEO YORK WHEN YOU'RE DEAD

Ambushed, defeated, and left for dead, the PCs must track down their assailants and discover who ordered the hit and why. Was it an old enemy? Or a new one, who decided to save time by striking first? Or is someone "cleaning house" in an effort to rid Neo York of troublesome busybodies before something major goes down?

An excellent start to a new campaign, this scenario gives the PCs a long-term goal (discover who's responsible) as well as a strong reason to stick together (there's safety in numbers). All the GM needs to do is decide who did it and why. Actually, he doesn't even need to go that far — all he needs to decide right now is what the PCs will turn up in their initial investigation. Similar to peeling an onion, all you need to do as GM is determine what the next layer is. The end result can develop on its own over time.



the future of kazei 5

The Empress is dying.

Vivian Clark mulls this over standing at the bottom of an access shaft before pushing off against the ground with her mind. As she drifts upwards, toward the low-gravity center of Genesis Station, she tries to imagine life without Madame President Shion Nys. It doesn't seem possible. Shion, her godmother (and godmother to thousands like her), always has been, and to her twenty four year old mind, always will be. At 246 Shion's the oldest person Vivian knows, older by far than any of her grandparents (she's given up on keeping track of all the "greats" — anyone in her family line who isn't her mother or father is a "grandparent.")

To Vivian, Shion has always been tall, strong, and beautiful, with thick white hair and impeccable fashion sense. She's also one of the most powerful espers Vivian has ever known, which is saying something when one considers Vivian comes from not just from a family, but an entire nation of espers.

Shion was there when the idea of Genesis Station began, back when espers were scattered here and there across the Earth, a resource to be exploited by the massive multinational corporations. And she wasn't alone, there was Raven Clark (one of Vivian's ancestors), Vivian Lau (another of Vivian's ancestors and her namesake), Anton Manneck (who may have been Shion's lover for years — she can't recall), Mayumi Kishiyama (who lived for over two and a half centuries tending her shrine, until she passed away at the incredible age of 264), and even Ran, the nigh-mythical "super-esper weapon" who (rumor has it) eventually became one with his Power and transcended mortal form.

Shion was there during the Second American Civil War and the Third World War, two events that served to totally reshape the political map of Earth. She could remember the first replicated humans, the first genetic upgrades, the first cyborgs, the first trans-humans and post-humans. She could recall a time before bio-links and nano-weaves, before pocket replicators, antigravity, and hyperspace shunts. She was, in some ways, a living time machine, able to verbally recreate the past in almost perfect detail.

And now she was dying.

— Genesis Station, 2248 A.D.

What happens in the years after 2030 is up to each and every GM. It's your campaign, so it's your decision how you want your game to play out. That said, here's a suggestion for a series of connected events that could happen in your game, if you so choose.

Jinsei Invades The Zone

On January 1, 2034 Jinsei launches a full-scale invasion of the Neo York Zero Zone. According to plans they've developed with the Neo York City Council, Jinsei intends to clear the Zone of "undesirables" and start a massive reclamation project. While initially a success, the invasion quickly becomes a quagmire as resistance turns out to be greater than initially thought. To make matters worse, rival multinationals start smuggling in arms to the Zoners in an effort to force Jinsei to bleed themselves dry of men, machinery, and money. The UNA watches, but doesn't interfere — what happens in the Zone isn't any of their concern. Besides having a corporate war in the Zone is a lot safer than having one in downtown Manhattan.

Eventually Jinsei establishes a beachhead and creates a secure perimeter. Cyberdroids are brought in to demolish the buildings and start clearing land for a new Jinsei arcology and manufacturing facility. At the same time, Jinsei carefully examines the hundreds of Zone residents captured in the assault, looking for those with any trace of esper talent.

How this plays out is up to you. If Ran has stabilized, he'll oppose Jinsei in a logical manner, otherwise he might simply run or lash-out blindly. Once word gets out about Jinsei's real intentions, Shion, Takeda, Raven, and others may seek to oppose them, finally uniting against a common foe. Which brings us to our next future event...

The Esper Institute

Several years after the Jinsei invasion, Anton, Raven, Shion, Takeda, and anyone else you wish gather at Mayumi's shrine to discuss the fate of espers in the world. Will they remain as they are, separate individuals and easy pickings for the multinationals, or will they do something about it, banding together to present a unified political front to the corporations and governments of the world? The vote is to create the Esper Institute, a research facility dedicated to helping espers unlock and control their powers. It also intends to eventually act as a "talent agency" for espers, a place companies can go to hire espers for specific projects. The start-up is slow, but as Shion notes, many of the espers present at the first meeting are aging at a greatly reduced rate and time is on their side.

The Institute eventually establishes itself as the premier research center in the world for the investigation and exploration of esper powers. Headquartered in Los Angelus, the Institute assists nascent espers from across the world in learning how to control and live with their Power. As time passes, and the number of espers grows, and the Institute starts to build....

Genesis Station

An immense space station, Genesis is an L5 colony, a cylinder five miles long capable of supporting 350,000 people. In 2134 the United Nations recognizes Genesis as an independent nation, with Shion Nys as its first President. She remains President until 2142, when she steps down to take a well-deserved break. She lives on Genesis until her death in 2248 at the age of 246.

Nanofactories

Nanotechnology evolves beyond the need for a liquid medium to sustain the factories or the finished product. Now they can be used like 3-D printers, capable of creating just about anything out of anything (provided it's been properly broken down first). Landfills are a thing of the past — man can now recycle everything.

Trans-humans

As bioware starts to replace cyberware as the implant of choice, you get “trans-humans,” people who are attempting to artificially correct the evolutionary flaws found in the human body. Trans-humans also start a campaign to improve the human body through genetic augmentation and alteration.

Post-humans

Once the trans-humans finish their program of genetic tinkering, you end up with post-humans. No longer needing bioware, post-humans breed true, passing their altered physiology to their descendants. At this point, humanity has begun to diverge into separate (but mostly inter-fertile) races.

Bio-links and Nano-weaves

You're on your own now. In all seriousness, the terms were used because they sounded “right,” there was no real meaning behind them. However, a bio-link is probably an organic computer, similar to a datalink. A nano-weave is probably some sort of nanite mesh found just below the skin. It could allow the user to change color at will and grow hair quickly (allowing for multi-colored pelts), or serves as a defense against cuts and abrasions, repairing such wounds almost instantly.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Some possible fates for various NPCs.

Lora Doubet

Lora helps Raven escape from SSCP. However, she's damaged in the process and ends up in the East River. Her body shuts down and her brain goes dormant for some time. Ran, able to detect Lora's faint esper signature, finds her and not knowing what else to do, brings Lora to Mayumi Kishiyama. Mayumi then contacts Raven and Lora is reunited with her friend. Lora is rebuilt as well, but with a much less powerful body.

Marta And Zhen Zhen

Their civil union lasts for 10 years, from 2034 to 2044. Marta is killed in a Triad assault on the 88 Exchange, buying time for Zhen Zhen to escape. Shion, once she learns of this, arrives in Hong Kong and effectively erases the Triad in question from existence. Zhen Zhen then goes on to work as Shion's administrative assistant, and helps found both the Esper Institute and Genesis Station. Zhen Zhen dies in 2189, aged 192.

Noriko Kobayashi

Eventually ends up an assistant director of ESWAT, overseeing the recruitment and training of esper officers. She never reconciles with her father.

Paolo Zanabria

Too good a cyberneticists to stay in the Zone, in time he's given the chance to leave. Gaining a new name and new identity, he starts a new life as a cybersurgeon for a small company

Ran

Spending time with Mayumi helps him recover his sanity and stability. He gains even greater control over his Power, eventually leaving the physical world behind to become a being of pure esper thought.

Raven Clark

Raven manages to rescue a score of esper-talented children from the Zone and brings them (and Aunt Lydia) to the Australian Outback to live. They form the core of the initial Esper Institute.

Sandra Blackmore

Eventually able to escape the Zone for good during the Jinsei invasion, Sandra ends up writing a book about her experiences. Titled (appropriately enough) *Escape From Neo York: The Life and Times of a Real Street Sam*. It sells quite well.

Sarah J Ferrari

Sarah remains stable for years, her cynicism the perfect defense against the world around her. Their testing a success, R Scott launches a new line of replicants, all with made-to-order memories and backgrounds. They're extremely popular.

Takeda Johnson

Takeda assists Shion in striking back at Jinsei and their esper clone project. Afterwards he spends some time walking the Earth, before assisting in the foundation of the Esper Institute.

WALKING THE EARTH?

Yeah, you know, like Caine in Kung Fu.

Timeline of Kazei 5

This timeline places many of the events described in this book in chronological order. However, many events are still glossed over (allowing GMs a lot of leeway as to when certain events occurred or certain technologies appeared.) For more in depth coverage of different aspects of the Kazei 5 setting, please read the relevant sections (particularly Part IV).

Circa 1850 to 1900

Appearance of some of the first documental espers, known as "spirit mediums." They powers include simple feats of levitation, telekinesis, clairsentience, and in some cases, the apparent ability to speak to the dead.

1914-1918

World War I. "The War To End All Wars," World War I marks the introduction of a host of new military developments, including: airplanes, machine guns, poison gas, and tanks.

1931 Dr. J. B. Rhine of Duke University starts his investigations into parapsychology. He also founds the Duke parapsychology lab, documents the existence of a number of paranormal powers and coins the term ESP.

Charles Fort introduces the term "teleportation."

1938-1945

World War II. Truly a world war in scope, the Second World War brings devastation on an unprecedented scale, along with such new innovations as amphibious assaults, the jet fighter, long range rocketry, mass bombing raids, and mechanized warfare. The war ends with the dropping of two atomic bombs on Japan. Earth enters the Atomic Age.

1943 Colossus, the world's first electric digital computer, is brought on line in an effort to crack the German's Enigma code.

1950-1953

Korean War.

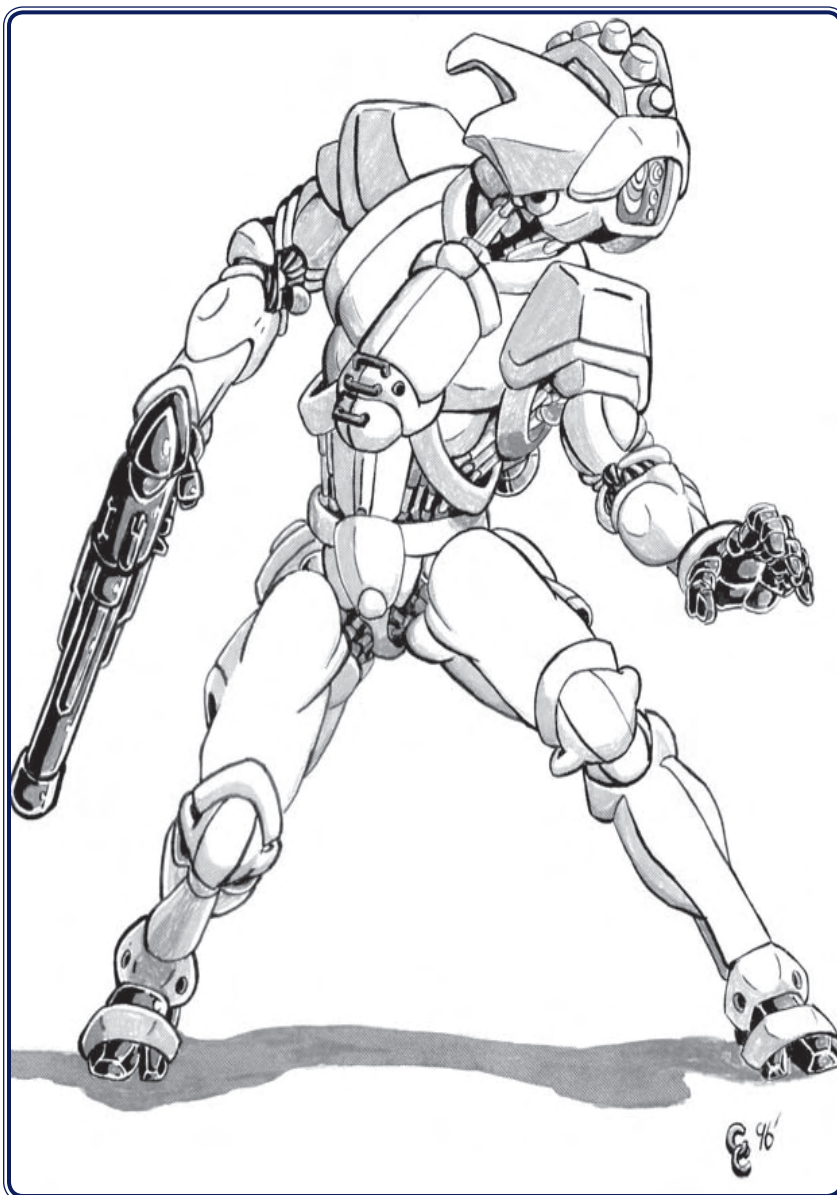
1950 Project BLUEBIRD, the first of many CIA projects dealing with mind control and esper powers. BLUEBIRD becomes Project ARTICHOKE in 1951.

August 20, 1951

The CIA implements Project ARTICHOKE, which investigates hypnosis, drug addiction, and chemical manipulation in an attempt to "control" another's mind.

1952 International Business Machines (IBM) decides to add computers to its product line.

1953 Francis Crick and James Watson discover the structure of DNA.



April 13, 1953

Project ARTICHOKE becomes Project MKULTRA. MKULTRA conducts extensive experiments in mind control and chemical-based interrogation. It also researches chemical augmentation of esper powers as well as chemical-based activation. Many of these experiments are conducted on an unsuspecting American public. The program ran at least until 1975, but it's strongly suspected it existed up until the 1990s.

1956-1975

Vietnam War. Although the French have been fighting in Vietnam since 1946, American troops don't arrive until 1956. Originally they are there simply to train and advise the army of South Vietnam, but as the fighting gets worse, the United States, leery of a full-scale Communist invasion and takeover of Southeast Asia, increases its military presence. The war is a long drawn-out affair, costing millions of dollars and hundreds of thousands of lives, and severely divides the United States both politically and emotionally.

October 4, 1957

The Soviet Union launches Sputnik, ushering in the Space Age.

Circa 1965

As part of Project MKULTRA, the CIA develops an esper activation drug and secretly tests it on an unsuspecting American populace.

Circa 1965-1967

The CIA and KGB plant radio listening devices in cats and dogs.

July 20, 1969:

Apollo 11, Buzz Aldrin and Neil Armstrong land on the moon.

Circa 1970-onward

Corporations begin the trend toward multinationalism. During the 1980s, multinational corporations will flourish at an unprecedented scale, eventually reaching a point where certain corporations are so widespread throughout the world as to no longer bear allegiance to any one country.

1972 Esper testing becomes widespread. Great Britain and China are among the nations who launch extensive esper research programs.

1975 Micro Instrumentation and Telemetry Systems, Inc. releases the Altair 8800, the first personal computer. It can be bought pre-assembled or as a kit, doesn't include a monitor, keyboard, or a printer, and can't store data.

1977-1995

Duration of Project STARGATE, in which the US Military investigates the capabilities of esper weapons in combat situations. Esper weapon assets from this Project are credited with rescuing Americans during the Iran Hostage Crisis.

1980 Jimmy Carter wins a second term in office. He spends much of his term attempting to improve America's treatment of the environment and reduce her need for foreign oil.

Circa 1980-onwards

The number of "free" (i.e. unknown or undetected) espers grows as the 1960's experiments of the CIA and the KGB reach fruition. Many of these free espers are born to parents who participated in the earlier experiments, often unknowingly.

August 12, 1981

IBM releases the IBM PC, marking the turning point of the personal computer from an expensive novelty to a serious business machine. In the same year, the Osborne 1 is released. It is a suitcase-sized "luggable" computer, and comes prepackaged with software. The Computer Age has begun.

1982 The computer is designated Time Magazine's "Man of the Year."

January 1, 1983

The start of the Internet.

January 22, 1984

Apple introduces the Macintosh computer. It has the first commercially available graphical user interface, and takes the computing world by storm, setting the stage for future icon-driven operating systems.

1984 Ronald Reagan wins the election and commits himself to an anti-Communist and pro-business administration.

1986 Public announcement of "Dolly" the world's first cloned mammal. Research shows that Dolly required some 200-300 failures before a viable copy was born. Research continues to make it a reliable process, as the benefits (and profits) to cattle and sheep ranchers would be immense.

Monty Reed demonstrates the LIFESUIT, the first powered exoskeletons.

1987 Mayumi Kishiyama born. She is considered to be the first of the "World Class" espers.

1989 Introduction of the World Wide Web.

The initial map of the human genome completed. Work begins on ways to genetically alter and improve plants and animals.

Martin Fleischmann and Stanley Pons discover a practical cold fusion process.

April 14-June 4, 1989

Thousands gather in Beijing's Tiananmen Square to protest against the oppressive Chinese government and to call for democratic reform. However, between June 3rd and 4th, elements of the Chinese People's Liberation Army move in and massacre the demonstrators, killing more than 1000 protesters and wounding thousands more. Afterwards, reports have various army units fighting each other. Fearing civil war, China moves swiftly to quell the disturbances.

July, 1989

China reaches the brink of civil disorder as some army units refuse to stand down and fighting between military units of differing provinces escalates. In the "Special Economic Zones" established around Shanghai and in southern China, a degree of order is maintained, rumored to be due to payments to military commanders by large corporations. Resentment of the government's actions during these events brews among the general public for years afterwards.

Circa 1990-onwards

The rapidly growing personal computer industry, combined with the growing internet leads to the coining of the term "The Information Age." Computers grow faster and cheaper at an unprecedented scale, with no signs of letting up.

1991 The first publicly accessible Web server.

February 7, 1992

Signing of the Maastricht Treaty, which creates the European Union and the euro.

1993 Nunavut created.

April 30, 1993

CERN announces the World Wide Web is free for all to use.

1995

The Soviet Union, in financial dire straights for years (but able to hide it well), collapses as it goes virtually bankrupt. Its collapse is heralded by the slow breakup of the Eastern Bloc, ignited by Poland's severing ties with Russia in the late 1980s. By the end of 1995, the Berlin Wall has come down, and East and West Germany look forward to an eventual reunification by the end of 1996.

It is suspected, but never proven, that a human being has been cloned by end of the year.

1995-1999

Rapid development and expansion of the European Union, spurred on by the collapse of the USSR.

1997

Control of Hong Kong reverts from the United Kingdom to Mainland China. An exodus of Hong Kong nationals to other countries, specifically Australia and Canada, marks this reversion. To quell unease, the new ruling council of Hong Kong establishes "Public Order Committees" which supposedly operate to enforce law and order, but which rapidly become an unofficial militia operating in the southern "Special Economic Zone" around Hong Kong.

1998-2001

The "Dot-Com era," which sees immense growth of internet-based marketing. The bubble's bursting in 2001 sees almost 5 trillion in US dollar market value vanish almost overnight.



Circa the late 1990s

Improvements in robotics allow for highly functional artificial limbs.

April 1, 1999

The eastern half of the Northwest Territories becomes the Inuit territory of Nunavut (which means "our land" in Inuktitut).

December, 1999

A team of scientists at the University of California in San Francisco develop a method for "reprogramming" the growth of cells. Initially it's seen as a method for producing replacement tissues for medical use, and the technology is widely licensed.

2000 It's estimated that just over half the homes in the United States of America have a computer. By 2030, that number will be close to 95%.

January 1, 2000

The European Community adopts the Euro. The introduction of a common currency sets the stage for the slow "reinvention" of Europe. There is a marked increase in government cooperation and regulation. For the most part, the EC is conservative and avoids speculative ventures, which results in greatly reduced corporate influence.

2001 Hocoma, based out of Switzerland, develops the LOKOMAT, a robotic treadmill system used to provide locomotion therapy for people with neurological movement disorders.

Scientists in Japan introduce the first "neuro-chip," a microchip capable of being hooked into the human nervous system. Initially designed for use by amputees and paraplegics, the capabilities of the chip are expanded to allow for mental control of external devices. Thus, the first true cyberware systems are introduced, and man enters the Cyber Age.

Africa staggers under an AIDs epidemic that threatens to rage out of control. Foreign aid is minimal, as most nations are too busy trying to prop up their own economies to help anyone else. Estimates state over 25 million people are HIV positive, with 5 million suffering from advanced forms of AIDs. As the decade progresses, these numbers increase dramatically.

June 2, 2002

Shion Nys born. By 2022 she is the most powerful, stable, esper on the planet.

Circa 2003-onward

Global warming goes from scientific theory to science fact as climatic patterns change and water levels rise. One side effect is crop failures worldwide. Another is increased research in genetically altered foods capable of thriving in the changed environment. By 2030 sea levels have risen to such an extent some coastal cities are partially flooded. However, an interesting side effect of this phenomenon is that both Canada and portions of the former Soviet Union

now have longer growing seasons and increased wheat production.

December 26, 2004

An earthquake in the Indian Ocean triggers a tsunami. Most of the Indian Ocean rim is hit, with a death toll in excess of 300,000.

June 24, 2004

CYBERDYNE Incorporated is founded in Japan. Their first product is HAL (Hybrid Assistive Limb).

2005 The first prototype of the LOPES (Lower-extremity Powered ExoSkeleton) is produced.

August 29, 2005

Hurricane Katrina slams into New Orleans. It floods 90% of the city and kills 16,000. A month later, Hurricane Rita floods the city again. The federal government's response to the disaster can best be described as "botched."

2006 The world is stunned by Sweden's public announcement of the world's first cloned human. It is suspected humans have been cloned before this point, but it is never proven. Cloning soon becomes popular a way for the ultra rich to raise a family.

The American housing market collapses, bringing Wall Street down with it. Billions of dollars are lost, many financial and insurance institutions declare bankruptcy, untold numbers are forced out of their homes due to foreclosures, and the savings and retirement investments of millions of Americans vanish.

The "Bird Flu" influenza pandemic. China, Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam are hardest hit, with 6 out of every 10 victims dying of the disease, resulting in a death toll in the millions.

Government mishandling of the Bird Flu pandemic sparks the Chinese Civil War. By the end of the year, China is in chaos.

2006-2007

Following the events of 2006, world-wide financial depression results. Global trade is in a shambles, as the value of the dollar plummets, the standard of living for many First World nations drops as well, and some countries declare bankruptcy.

2007-2015

The Second American Civil War. Starting out as a series of demonstrations against perceived government incompetence and corruption, things quickly turn ugly as the demonstrations become riots. Sending in the National Guard to restore order only makes matter worse. A call for military intervention by the president results in some units refusing the order, which then spirals into accusations of unit commanders violating their oaths. It doesn't take long for various state governors to declare a State of Emergency and martial law and the shooting to begin.

2007 Quebec, in an effort to maintain a civil society, establishes the Three Fundamental Values.

2008 California secedes from the United States of America, eventually forming Alta California.

Utah secedes from the United States of America, becoming Deseret.

North Korea invades South Korea.

2008-2018

So-called World War III. This includes the Second Civil War, the Chinese Civil War, the Mexican Civil War, the Indo-Pakistani Wars, and the Israeli Eradication, among others.

2009 Indo-Pakistani War of 2009.

Los Angelus burns as an angry populous rampages for nearly two weeks.

The Parti Québécois pushes for national sovereignty for Quebec. They succeed in 2011.

Cascadia formed.

The Second Gulf War, which sees Iraq invade Kuwait.

Hong Kong realizes China's current civil war is the perfect chance to escape from under the Communist thumb. They declare themselves to be a free and independent city-state. In order to secure their freedom, Hong Kong places little in the way of restrictions on companies willing to relocate. Chinese forces attempt to retake the city, but their efforts are hampered by a lack of cooperation among military leaders, as well as those who see the loss and attempted retaking of Hong Kong as a sign of weakness to be exploited elsewhere in the country. China is unable to mount a serious offense, as most attempts are sidetracked by covert black operations teams sent in by multinational corporations and foreign governments.

2010 New York creates the New York Zero Law-enforcement Zone.

Advances in cybernetics allow for the first cybergraft upgrades, while advances in cloning technology allow for the first replicated humans. The first genetic upgrades are created.

2011 Indo-Pakistani War of 2011.

Nanotechnological "cell factories" are perfected, allowing for the rapid growth "synthetic" life-forms. The mass production of certain animals (such as chickens, shrimp, and fish) begins.

Rising sea levels flood some parts of Tokyo while subsidence and rising groundwater cause utilities such as power and water to fail over large areas. Displacement of the population drives property prices sky-high. The Jinsei Corporation acquires large areas of land affected by flooding very cheaply and negotiates tax benefits from city government in exchange for flood control. It then builds a self-contained complex containing

its own utilities, accommodations for workers, business facilities, and shops. Unaffected by the flooding and largely independent of the city, it is essentially a corporate city: the first arcology. Other corporations in cities threatened by flooding rapidly follow suit.

2014 With labor problems reaching an all-time high, several biotechnology firms introduce the first replicated humans. These early synthetic humans are hairless, sexless humanoids used mainly for manual labor.

2015 Indo-Pakistani War of 2015.

Iran, Lebanon, and Syria ally for the Israeli Eradication.

The end of the Second Civil War. Texas and Oklahoma declare themselves the Republic of Texas.

2016 Introduction of the first cyberdroids. They are military models, and used extensively for border defense and patrol.

New York renames itself "Neo York." The New York Police Department becomes the Neo York Police Department, Incorporated.

2017 Indo-Pakistani War of 2017.

2018 The large number of wounded and maimed survivors of the Second Civil War become the perfect test subjects for those corporations who make cybernetic and biological implants. Cybernetics (i.e. cyberware) becomes common place, and in many areas commonly accepted.

The next models of synthetic humans arrive. They come in both sexes, have hair, and are designed with a wider range of emotional responses. These new model synthetics are incredibly popular, especially as escorts and assistants to corporate executives.

2019 Australia, seeking to stem the tide of replicants being brought into the country for use as unpaid laborers, passes a law stating replicants are to be accorded all the same rights and privileges as natural born humans. Initially, this means all replicants brought into the country are required to have work visas, must be paid a fair wage, and this wage can and will be taxed. Eventually, this law is interpreted to mean replicants grown in Australia are to be considered Australian citizens, and those who escape to Australia can ask for asylum and citizenship.

Experimentation begins with full-body (i.e. "full conversion") cyborgs. Using technology developed initially for cyberdroids mixed with stimulus feedback systems, the first true cyborgs are large, heavy, slow, and plagued with crippling insanity. Research continues, however, as the advantages of a human mind in a cyberdroid body are obvious.

Circa 2020

The world population is estimated at 5 billion persons, down from 6 billion as of 2000.

Genetic upgrading becomes quite popular among the upper class.

2022 Formation of United North America.

A Jinsei psychokinetic research station in Chiba, Japan vanishes in a titanic explosion, leaving little more than a crater. No explanation for the event is found or given. Popular speculation places the blame on an out of control esper activation. Rumor states Ran was responsible.

2023 A series of specially designed cyberdroids land on the moon and begin excavating what will eventually become the International Lunar Station.

2030 The average Kazei 5 campaign begins. Events after this date are optional.

January 1, 2034

Jinsei launches a full-scale invasion of the Zone.

2034 Marta Nys and Zhen Zhen Li are joined in a civil union.

2037 Creation of the Esper Institute.

2044 Marta Nys dies in a Triad attack on the 88 Exchange.

2088 Construction begins on Genesis Station.

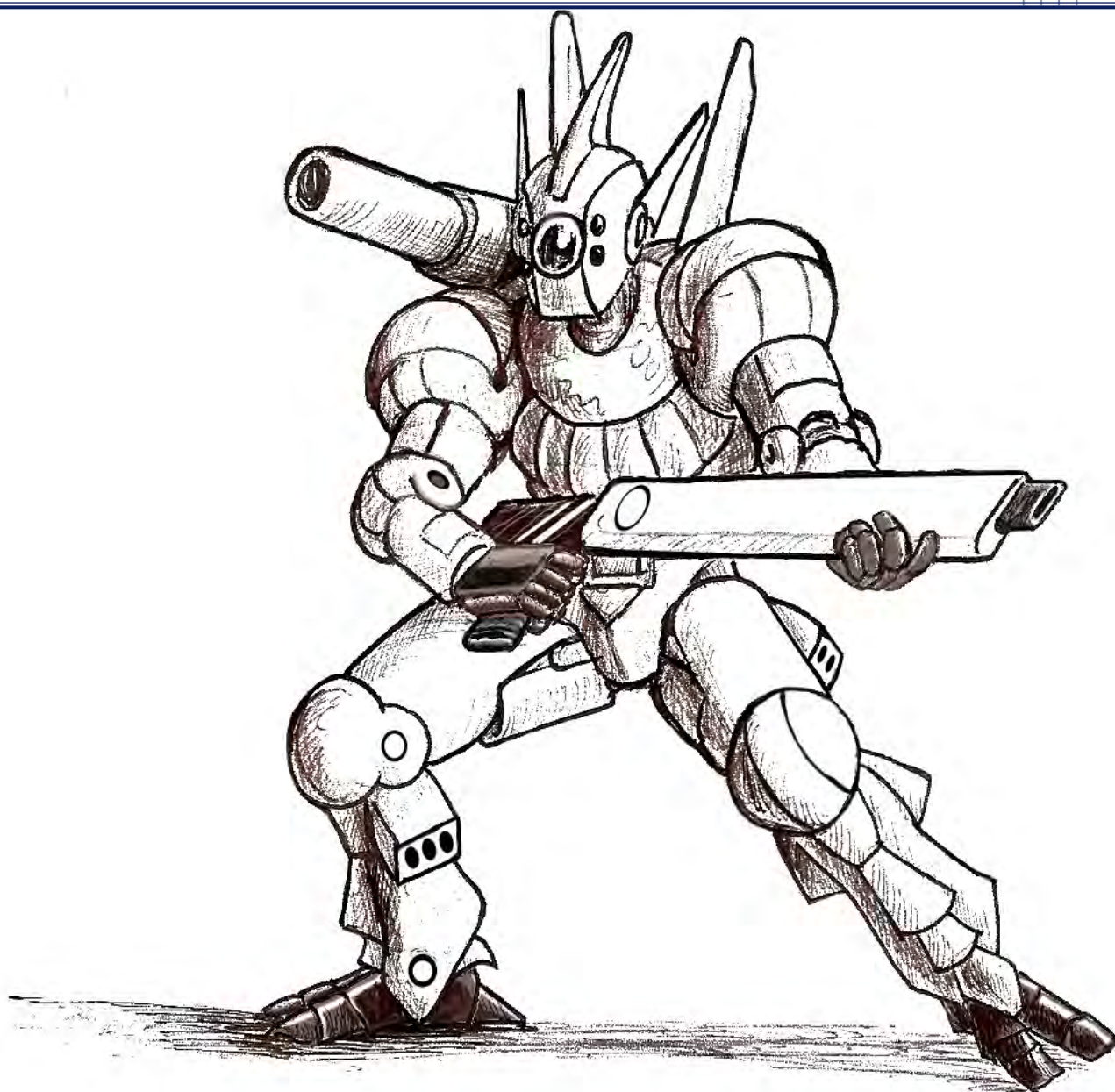
2134 Genesis Station recognized as an independent nation.

2134-2142

Shion Nys serves as President of Genesis Station.

2189 Zhen Zhen Li dies, aged 192.

2248 Shion Nys dies, aged 246.



APPENDICES

GLOSSARY

'borg: A cyborg.

'borged: A cyborg with extensive combat-capable cybernetics.

'ware: Cybernetics/cyberware.

AP: Artificial Person.

APE Suit: Military APEX Suit.

APEX: Armored Personal Exoskeleton.

Artificial Person: Individuals created via a nano-factory (a.k.a. a "Replicated Human"). Most artificial persons are indistinguishable from normal humans.

Battle Walker: Any Exo-Suit designed for combat. Also known as a "Battle Frame."

Beetle: A BTL (Better-Than-Life) simsense chip.

Biochip: A biological processor chip.

Bioroid: An artificial person, also used to describe some cyborgs.

Black Beetle: A simsense chip containing a sequence in which the user can experience someone dying. A "Blue Beetle" contains highly erotic content.

Boosted: To be enhanced by cyberware, usually augmented strength.

Boy (Girl) Toy: A pleasure model replicate, also known as a "Joytoy."

Brainburn: The common term for a variety of esper-related disorders, such as Acute Synaptic Distress Syndrome, Acute Synaptic Hyperfunction, and Psychokinetic Hyperfunction. Also known as a "Terminal Migraine," or a "Nosebleed."

Brain-In-A-Box: A full-conversion cyborg.

BTL: Better-Than-Life. A simsense chip providing such an addictive fantasy the user refuses to (or can't) escape. Extended use can result in death due to dehydration or starvation.

Business, the: Organized crime, also known as "Biz."

CBA: Complete Ballistic Armor.

Chipped: To be enhanced with cyberware.

Chop Shop: Unlicensed medical facility specializing in stolen or illegal cyberware and body parts.

Chromeboy/girl: Someone with an excessive amount of obvious cyberware.

Chromed: To have visible cyberware.

CI/O: Cybernetic Input/Output processor.

Combat Cybergraft Upgrade: A cyborg designed for military applications.

Crack/Cracking: Defeating security protocols (such as serial numbers or activation codes) on software programs.

Cyberbrain: A cybernetic input/output processor.

Cyberdroid: Cybernetic Android.

Cybergraft Upgrade: To be made into a cyborg.

Cyberhack: To override someone's Cyberbrain and/or cyberware, usually with malicious intent.

Cybernetic Organism: Obsolete term for a cyborg.

Darkside: A region in the Neo York Zero Zone.

Empress, the: Shion Nys.

Esper Weapon: An esper whose powers are suitable for combat applications.

FMJ: Full Metal Jacket, an armored full-conversion cyborg.

Frankenstein: Someone implanted with bootleg organic parts.

Full-Conversion: A cyborg whose entire body, except for the brain, has been replaced with cybernetics.

Geek: To kill.

Genner: Individuals who have been genetically engineered. Also known as a "Bruce" after Olympic decathlon champion Bruce Jenner.

Go-gang: Motorcycle gangs noted for their extreme violence and nihilistic attitudes.

Hack/Hacking: To force one's way into a protected or secure data site.

Hard Shell: A cyborg whose body is covered with rigid armored plates.

Hardsuit: Full-body rigid protective gear. Can refer to CBA, LBA, and APEX Suits..

Harvester: People who kidnap and then kill others for their organs or cybernetics.

Iron Angel: A partial-conversion cyborg with cybernetic arms and legs.

Junkman/Junkvendor: One who deals in second-rate or gray market cyberware.

Killer Doll: A cyberdroid designed for infiltration and covert operations.

Lace & Steel: Arguably the world's most popular television show, *Lace & Steel* features female participants engaging in gladiatorial combat while wearing revealingly-cut armor.

LBA: Light Ballistic Armor.

Man, the: The police, or law-enforcement in general.

Mannikin: A domestic-use cyberdroid.

Meme: Elements of popular culture or behavioral actions that normally spread via imitation. The Web is infamous as a creation ground for memes, many of which last for only a few weeks before fading into obscurity.

Mook: Derogatory term for corporate or organized crime soldiers.

Neo York: Although it technically indicates the city itself, when people say "Neo York" they are usually referring to Manhattan.

Net: The internet.

Nipdink: The Neo York Police Department, Incorporated.

Nutrisoy: Cheap food product made from kelp, soybeans, and yeast.

Otaku: Cyberspace-addicted individuals who spend most of their time connected to the Net.

PaPA Suit: An APEX Suit designed for use in hazardous environments.

Partial-Conversion: A cyborg who retains most of his original body (usually his head and torso), with the rest replaced with cybernetics.

Patrol Walker: Autonomous cyberdroids designed to operate without constant human supervision.

PK: Short for “psychokinetic,” an older term for an esper. Now obsolete.

Power, the: Esper abilities in general.

PPA: Personal Powered Armor.

Psionics: The technical term for esper telepathy.

Psychokinesis: The technical term for esper telekinesis.

Razorboy (girl): Heavily-cybered street samurai or other muscle.

Replicate/Replicated Human: An artificial person.

Retriever: A bounty hunter. Specifically one who recovers escaped replicated humans.

Rigger: Someone who has been outfitted with a Vehicle Control Link.

Sarariman: From the Japanese for “salaryman,” a corporate employee; also a “Wageslave.”

Sexroid: A replicate human designed as a pleasure model.

Shalkujin: An “Honest Citizen,” or corporate employee, also a “Suit.”

Shareware: A prostitute.

Simsense: Simulated Sensory Environment.

Skinjob: A replicated human.

Skinsuit: An extremely formfitting full-body sensory suit worn while piloting many types of Exo-Suits.

Slop Doc: A combat or field doctor.

Smash TV: A televised ‘game’ show featuring violent, no-holds barred wrestling, boxing, and assorted other forms of hand-to-hand combat.

Soft Shell: A full-conversion cyborg made to look (and feel) as close to a normal human as possible.

Solo: A mercenary, usually one that operates alone; also used to describe corporate special operatives.

Street Samurai: Street-level mercenaries or muscle for hire. Most attempt to emulate the original samurai honor code, or at least the look.

Surf: To browse the Web without having a specific goal in mind.

Teek: Short for ‘telekinetic,’ another older term for an esper. Also obsolete.

Tin Woodsman: An industrial-use cyberdroid.

Tool: An all-purpose expletive.

UTV: Military acronym for “Unmanned Terrestrial Vehicle.” Used to refer to remotely-piloted cyberdroids.

Vatjob: Someone who has had extensive tissue and/or cybernetic replacement. Also used to refer to replicated humans.

Virii: Cyberspace-specific plural of the word ‘virus.’

Web: The World Wide Web.

Wetware: Biological cyberware.

Wetwork: Assassination or murder.

Wire: Combat-capable cyberware.

Wired: To be equipped with wire.

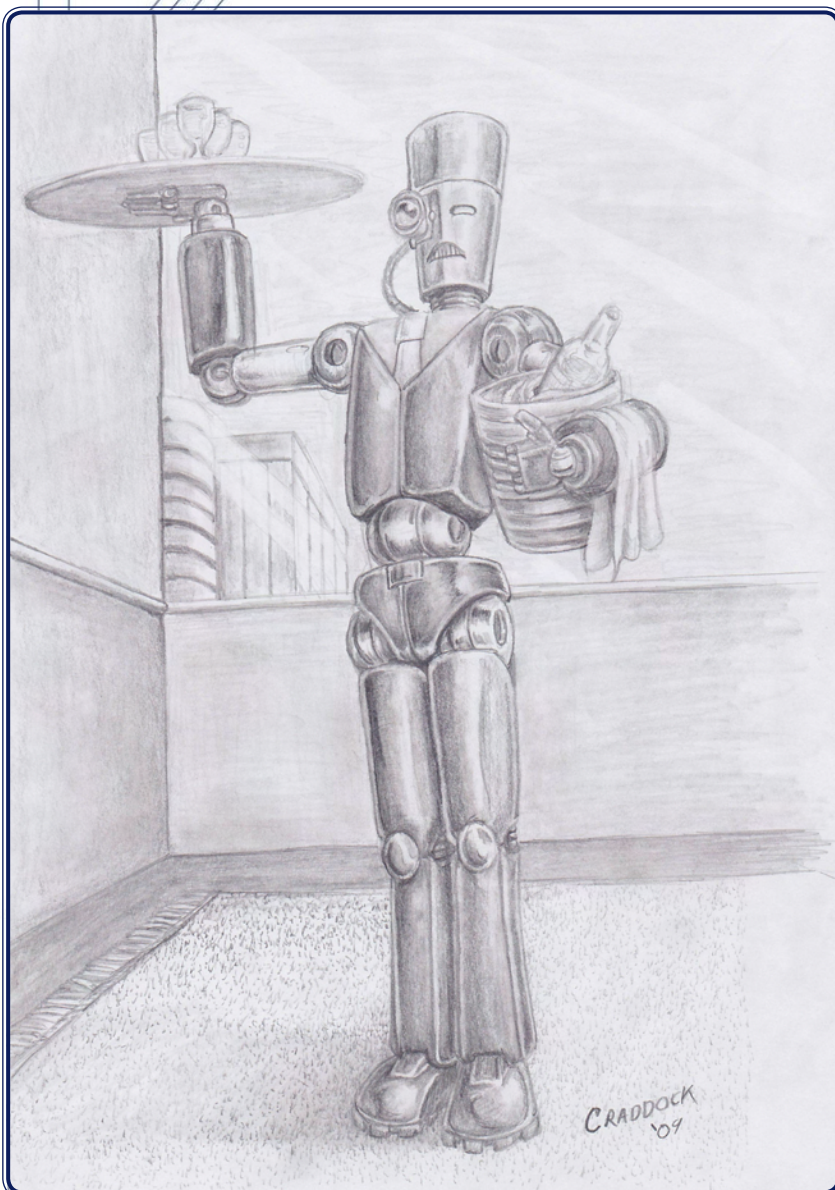
XO: Short for ‘Exo-Suit.’

Yak, the: Yakuza, either a clan member or the clan itself.

Zero Zone: A Zero Law-enforcement Zone, an area sealed off from the rest of a city and left to its own devices.

Zone, the: A Zero Zone, specifically the Neo York Zero Law-enforcement Zone.

ZoneChic: Fashion meant to emulate the look of a Zero Zone.



BASIC JAPANESE

In a reversal of “Japlish” (itself a curious mixture of English and Japanese) many English speakers in Alta California, Cascadia, and the Neo York Zero Zone have started to sprinkle their conversations with various Japanese loan words. Some of the more common ones are listed below.

(name)-chan: Used as a term of affection for children and small pets. The subject’s name is usually shortened.

(name)-kun: Used as a term of affection. Usage note: “chan” is normally used when speaking to a young individual (especially a young girl), while “kun” is used for boys who are in their teens and have outgrown chan. Kun is also used in the corporate environment, when a superior is speaking to his subordinates (both male and female).

(name)-me: A contemptuous way to refer to someone.

(name) no baka: (Name) is an idiot!

(name)-Sama: Used when speaking to a superior.

(name)-San: Used when speaking to an equal.

(sentence)-ne: Used to ask agreement of a sentence, much like English speakers would use “isn’t it?”

Arigato: Thank you.

Baka: Fool or foolish.

Bakamono: Idiot.

Bakayaro: Stupid fool.

Chotto matte: Wait a bit.

Demo: But.

Desu: Is.

Dewa mata: Bye, see ya. (Informal, said to an equal)

Do itashimashite: You’re welcome or congratulations.

Domo: Thank you.

Domo Arigato: Thank you very much.

Domo Arigato Gozaimasu: Thank you very much (formal).

Doozo: Please (when giving).

Gaijin: A foreigner, usually non-Japanese.

Gomen: Sorry.

Hai: Yes.

Hajimemashite: I am pleased to meet you.

Ho To Ni Domo Arigato Gozaimashita: Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Honto: Really?

Iie: No.

Ike: Go!

Ja mata: Bye, see ya. (Informal, said to an equal)

Ja na: Bye, see ya. (Masculine)

Ja ne: Bye, see ya. (Feminine)

Kakuii: Cool.

Kawaii: Cute.

Kisama: You (insulting).

Kobun: Member of a Yakuza clan.

Kono yaro: What a jerk.

Kore-wa: What is that?

Kudasai: Please (when asking).

Konban-wa: Good evening or goodbye.

Konya-wa: Tonight

Konnichi-wa: Good day or good afternoon.

Kuso: Shit.

Manuke: Blockhead.

Mata: See you again

Matte: Wait.

Nani: What?

Nando: Who?

Nanko: Where?

Ohayo: Hello, good morning.

Omae: You, a common Zero Zone greeting. An insult when speaking to a stranger.

Oyabun: Head of a Yakuza clan.

Oyasuminasi: Good night.

Sayonara: Goodbye, farewell (long-term).

Shine (She-nay): Die!

Shitsurei Shimasu: I have been rude.

Suminasen: I’m sorry or excuse me.

So ka: I see or I understand.

Udo: Oaf.

Yaro (Yaroo): Bastard, also “Konoyaroo.”

Yatsu: Jerk (male).

Yoshi: Alright!

TURNING JAPANESE

Japanese speech is very socially sensitive. Informal speech is used among family members and co-workers, while a more polite manner of speaking is used when interacting outside of one’s own social group. Thus, using informal speech to a stranger can be more insulting than vulgarities. As with many other languages, there are differences in the words used by males and females (as well between younger children and adults), and the meaning of many words depends on context. In general, English users of Japanese loan words tend to use them incorrectly.

白白白白白白白白白白

The following list of anime, manga, films, and books consists of items the author either found useful when initially creating the *Kazei 5* universe, or good resources for those trying to capture the “look and feel” of the setting. To avoid confusion, Western titles have been used for anime and manga. Items marked with an asterisk are highly recommended as the core inspirations for the setting.

In cases where a manga series was made into an anime series (which is quite often), both are listed here since the anime and the manga often differ greatly in content.

FILMS

ANIME

*AD Police Files**
*Akira**
Angel Cop
Appleseed (1988)
Appleseed (2004)
*Appleseed: Ex Machina**
Armitage III
Battle Angel
Black Lagoon 1st and 2nd Barrage (TV series)
Black Magic M-66
Blue Sonnet
*Bubblegum Crisis**
Bubblegum Crisis 2040 (TV series)
Cowboy Bebop (TV series)
Cowboy Bebop The Movie: Knockin' On Heaven's Door
Dominion Tank Police
Genocyber
Ghost In The Shell
*Ghost In The Shell 2: Innocence**
Ghost In The Shell: Stand Alone Complex (TV series)*
Iria: The Animation
New Dominion Tank Police
Silent Möbius (TV series)
Silent Möbius: The Movie I
Silent Möbius: The Movie II

LIVE ACTION

Banlieue 13
*Blade Runner: Final Cut**
*Children Of Men**
The Crow
Dark City
Death Race
Escape From LA
Escape From New York
Gattaca
Heavy Metal
Iron Man
Mad Max
Mad Max 2: The Road Warrior
The Matrix
Minority Report
Nemesis (and sequels)
Outland
Rollerball (1975)
Robocop
Ronin
Strange Days

BOOKS

FICTION

Barry, Max. *Jennifer Government*

Gibson, William. *All Tomorrow's Parties*

— *Burning Chrome*

— *Count Zero*

— *Idoru*

— *Mona Lisa Overdrive*

— *Neuromancer*

— *Virtual Light*

Heinlein, Robert. *Friday*

Stephenson, Neal. *The Diamond Age*

— *Snow Crash*

Stross, Charles. *Halting State*

Williams, Walter Jon. *Hardwired*

NONFICTION

Popular Science. *21st Century Soldier*

Weisman, Alan. *The World Without Us*

COMIC BOOKS

Bubblegum Crisis: Grand Mal (Dark Horse Comics)

Darkminds (Dreamwave Productions)

Dirty Pair: A Plague of Angels (Dark Horse Comics)

Dirty Pair: Fatal But Not Serious (Dark Horse Comics)

Dirty Pair: Sim Hell (Dark Horse Comics)

The Legend Of Grimjack (IDW Publishing)

MANGA

*Akira** (Dark Horse Comics)

AD Police (Viz Media)

AD Police 25:00

*Appleseed** (Dark Horse Comics)

Battle Angel Alita (Viz Media)

Battle Angel Alita: Last Order (Viz Media)

Black Lagoon (Viz Media)

Dominion (Dark Horse Comics)

Dominion: Conflict 1 (No More Noise) (Dark Horse Comics)

*Domu: A Child's Dream** (Dark Horse Comics)

*Ghost in the Shell** (Dark Horse Comics)

Ghost in the Shell 1.5: Human-Error Processor (Dark Horse Comics)

Ghost in the Shell 2: Man Machine Interface (Dark Horse Comics)

Gunsmith Cats (Dark Horse Comics)

Gunsmith Cats: Burst (Dark Horse Comics)

Hyper Police (Tokyopop)

Sakura Taisen (Tokyopop)

Seraphic Feather (Dark Horse Comics)

Silent Möbius (Viz Media)

Striker (Viz Media)

GAMES

Games without a listed company or author have usually been produced by multiple companies in various editions.

R. Talsorian Games. *Bubblegum Crisis: Before And After*

— *Bubblegum Crisis: MegaTokyo 2033*

— *Bubblegum Crisis Ex*

Blue Planet

Hero Games/ICE Inc. *Cyber Hero*

R. Talsorian Games. *Cyberpunk 2020*

Guardians Of Order. *The Dominion Tank Police Role-Playing Game And Resource Book*

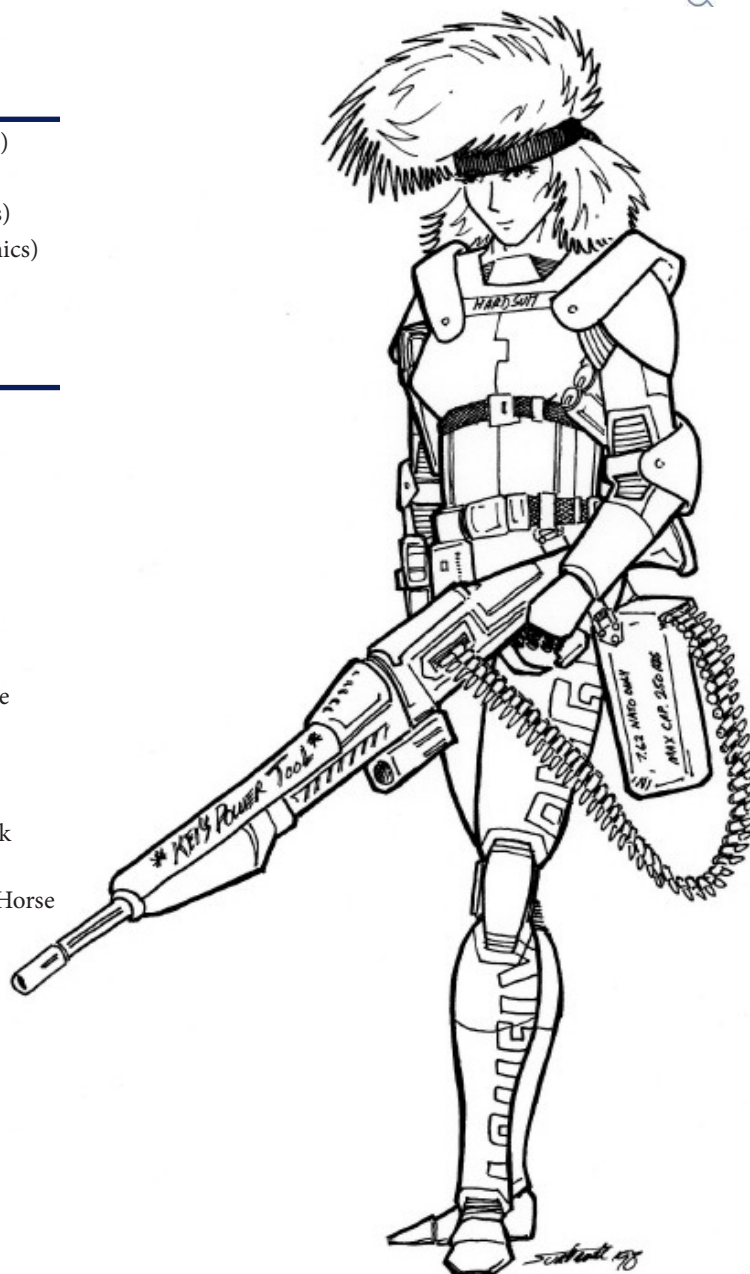
Guardians Of Order. *Ex Machina*

Feng Shui

R. Talsorian Games. *Mekton Zeta*

Shadowrun

Steve Jackson Games. *Transhuman Space*



SOUNDTRACK

At one point I spliced together a soundtrack to play during game sessions. I offer the track list for your enjoyment.

DISC ONE: NEO YORK

"Dawn In Mars"	Armitage III Soundtrack
"The Big Money"	Rush
"Welcome To The Machine"	Pink Floyd
"Exodus From The Underground Fortress"	Akira Soundtrack
"Mad Machine"	Bubblegum Crisis Soundtrack
"Laying Down The Law"	The Law
"NWO"	Ministry
"Juke Joint Jezebel"	KMFDM
"Enemy Within"	Rush
"Epic"	Faith No More
"Spybreak!"	Propellerheads
"Veteran Of The Psychic Wars"	Blue Öyster Cult
"Only Thing That Shines"	Shriekback
"Subdivisions"	Rush
"More Human Than Human"	White Zombie
"End Titles"	Blade Runner Soundtrack

DISC TWO: THE ZONE

"Back To Back"	The Art of Noise
"Welcome To The Jungle"	Guns-N-Roses
"Life Is A Lemon And I Want My Money Back"	Meatloaf
"Life During Wartime"	Talking Heads
"Explosion"	Project: A-ko Soundtrack
"Golgotha Tenement Blues"	Machines Of Loving Grace
"Bad Girl"	Riding Bean Soundtrack
"God Is A Bullet"	Concrete Blonde
"Guilty"	Gravity Kills
"Winds Over Neo-Tokyo"	Akira Soundtrack
"Konya Wa Hurricane"	Bubblegum Crisis Soundtrack
"Hey Boy"	Dominion Soundtrack
"Lunatic Fringe"	Red Ryder
"The Mob Rules"	Black Sabbath
"Mindfields"	Prodigy
"Enter Sandman"	Metallica
"Head Like a Hole"	Nine Inch Nails

DISC THREE: HONG KONG

"Prologue And Main Titles"	Blade Runner Soundtrack (Esper Edition)
"Get The Funk Out"	Extreme
"Clubbed To Death (Kurayamino Mix)"	Rob D
"Twilight Zone"	Golden Earring
"The Blade Of Gu Qin"	Kung Fu Hustle Soundtrack
"Cyber Battle"	Armitage III Soundtrack
"Makai Club"	NJPW
"The Echo Game"	The House Of Flying Daggers Soundtrack
"Bow Whisk Orchestra"	The Matrix Score (Don Davis)
"Ready, Steady, Go"	Oakenfold (remix)
"Mr. Dandy"	Bubblegum Crisis Soundtrack
"Pull Me Under"	Dream Theater
"Ultra"	KMFDM
"Hey Man, Nice Shot"	Filter
"66 Steps"	Black Lagoon Soundtrack
"Terminal Frost"	Pink Floyd

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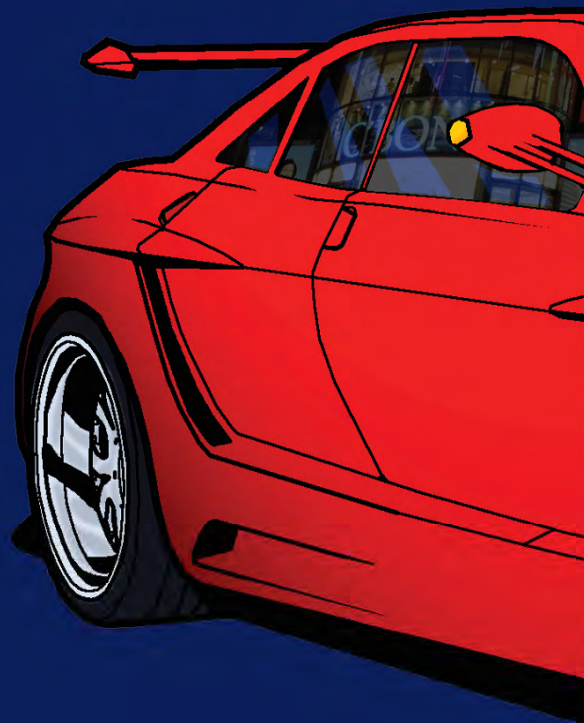
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