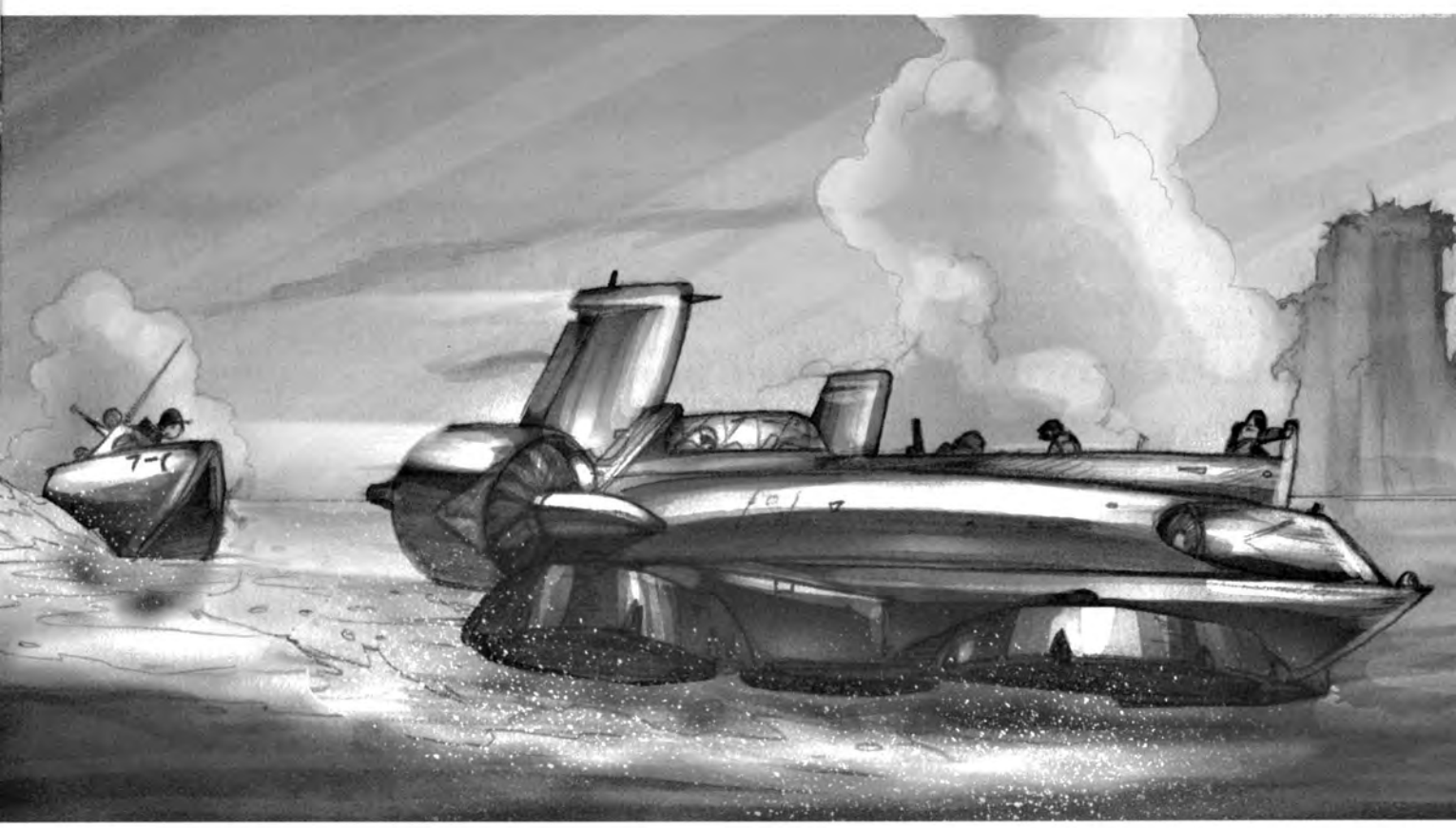
FRONTIER JUSTICE

blue planet V2™

CRIME AND LAW ENFORCEMENT IN THE WORLD OF BLUE PLANET



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Printing
Quebecor Printing, Inc.
Printed in Canada.

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER 01	crime on poseidon	7
CHAPTER 02	organized crime	24
CHAPTER 03	the law on poseidon	38
CHAPTER 04	criminal conspiracy	94

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

"Negative, Benthic Universe, negative. We are currently, ah, under attack and there are no harbor escorts available. Your vector is 270 true. Speed is five knots, depth zero. Benthic Universe, you are directed to consider this facility closed until otherwise notified. Contact the harbormaster on gold for piloting, and please proceed to Offshore-B. We're sending some barges out to you so you can start unloading, Universe. How copy?"

"Roger, al-Mamlakah Control. Copy good. Glad we don't have your problems. Vector 2-7-0, speed five, depth zero. Will contact harbormaster. Have a good day."

Harbormaster. Right. Like there's actually anybody over there, what with all the shooting going on. And like you'd be talking to a pilot—even if there was one—if you called on that frequency. Probably should have read the Notice to Mariners, pal.

Okay, so a quick adjustment and answer the call. "Roger, Benthic Universe, read you well. Do you require piloting assistance?" Damn. I sound good as a woman. I'm gonna have to use this voice patch more often.

"That's affirmative, harbor control. We were told by the approach controller that we could have some barges to start cargo unloading?"

"That's correct, Universe. Three GC rigs. Assume you are using standard manifesting?"

"Affirmative, harbor control. Can you assist with offload?"

"No problem, Universe. And the good news is, your offload fee is waived because of the...er...incidents downtown." I think I can probably foot BU's offload fee with what three cargo barges full of product straight from Atlas's number-one processing facility will bring in. Mighty generous of me, don't you think?

There are people who will tell you that Man is the animal that uses tools. Whale puke. Otters use tools. Bowerbirds use tools. Then Man must be the animal that makes his own tools. Bzzz. Wrong answer, monkey boy. Chimpanzees make tools out of sticks, and then teach other chimps to make them. We're nothing special in that respect.

But I will agree to this—Man is the best tool user.

I am not a chimp, in any sense of the word. And I am the number-one tool user.

"Benthic Universe, prepare to receive pilot AI on gold-2."

I'm not kidding. I seriously sound great as a girl. For now, send the file and switch frequencies and voices. "Team 1, prepare to withdraw. Team 2, open fire." The appearance of a second squad of bad guys ought to keep al-Mamlakah Public Safety off balance for a few minutes or so, and if I need that long, it's time to retire. Now, switch channels again, and I'm looking out the jumper's front cameras at green and brown grassland. Commands here, here, and there, and the fans start spinning. Engine gauges flash to life and quickly settle into the normal range.

The shell of a standard harbor-pilot program passes right through the basic security checks of Benthic Universe's simple computer system. Unfortunately for them, so does the core program, an elegant piece of programming, courtesy of yours truly. It isn't easy to mask a devilish piece of highly illegal software designed to hijack the giant sub's brain with the simple mug of an everyday, ordinary harbor pilot, but hey, I'm pretty good. Fortunately for me, the security manager neglects to notice that the harbor pilot expert-system program is somewhat larger than it really ought to be.

It should only be a few moments before Benthic Universe activates the pilot, which will direct the sub over to the cargo barges. Of course, it should also begin an exhaustive search of the manifest for the most high-yield cargo and start the automatic sequences to prepare the boat for off-loading. It will also instruct the communications manager to acknowledge any incoming calls, and then promptly dump the call, in case Public Safety gets any bright ideas.

Next step. "Purple Mama, this is Operator. Cargo delivery is on schedule."

Used to be, if you wanted to do something—run to the market, open a door, spy on your next-door neighbor—you had to go and do it yourself.

Terribly wasteful of energy, if you ask me. Then, some genius created the NIC, the neural interface chip. Now, reaching out with your consciousness to a floating 3D camera or the family car is easier than clicking those ruby heels three times and thinking of Kansas. Want to write a program, compose a sonnet, pick up your kid after hydroshot practice? The NIC lets you do it all from the comfort of your own brain. When everything is run by a computer and any computer can be run by a thought, anybody who bothers to think about it can do almost anything, anywhere, anytime. It's telepathy, it's telekinesis, it's tele-everything, and to me, it's my own personal genie. What's your wish?

I'm really getting to like that voice. "Roger, Benthic Universe. Acknowledge GC barges alongside and start offload procedures. Work fast, boys. There's a good-size storm on for tonight, and I hate being seasick. Besides, I get off at 2300, and it gets boring around here without some good company." Shameless, I am. Shameless.

A few more commands, and I can feel the jumper lift into the air above the prairie. The tall stalks bend and whip in the gale as the fans tilt, the nose drops, and the jumper accelerates toward town.

"Operator for Team Three, open fire. Operator for Team Two, withdraw to extraction point. Operator for Team One, light it up. Light it up."

"Two for Operator."

"Go, Two."

"Operator, we are being flanked by a PS squad and are cut off from extraction route. Can you provide a strike?" The Team Two leader sent me an image of four or five... five Public Safety goons in a storefront with great shots at the backdoor Team Two would need to make it to the LZ.

"Wait one, Two." That sounds weird. Okay, a quick dive into al-Mamlakah Traffic Control. You know, it's really a terrible thing when just anybody can dive in and do something like this. Neighborhood has gone downhill. Nobody has any... respect... for ...common ...bingo. A quick sort through TraCon shows a likely candidate three blocks away. A nudge here and a poke there, and a 12-fan hover loaded down with beach sand headed for the al-Mamlakah Executive is barreling toward the PS goons at 60 kilometers an hour.

"Operator for Two, your diversion should be there in 30 seconds. Get ready to move. Operator for Three, suppressing fire at the northwest corner. Operator for One, say status."

"One for Operator, lit up. Repeat, lit up."

Switching my attention back to the jumper, there is a moment of vertigo as I get readjusted to the blast of the slipstream and the delicate balance keeping the craft upright. Search the rooftops ahead, and I can see Team One's bright orange target indicator. I kick the jumper into a skid and fire off a burst at the storefront where the goons pinning Team Two should be and another at the hostiles Team Three is occupying.

I get three separate warning messages. One comes from a traffic sensor, convinced that such a large transport really shouldn't be going that fast in the middle of downtown. A second comes from the truck itself, and a third from the company that owns the truck, telling me that it is no longer responding to TraCon commands. No kidding. The

camera mounted in the front of the 12-fan gives a great view of the PS troopers as they gape in shock at the oncoming load. Then, blam.

"Two for Operator."

"Go, Two."

"Good shot. Two heading for LZ."

A quick blast of the jumper's fans stops the skid, and it settles onto the roof as I cut power. Team One pounds up the ramp and settles into the front-most seats.

• • •

It's an older rig and not up to modern standards. This isn't an excuse for slipshod maintenance, though: hatch covers whose edges had become brittle with age, fuel cells whose casings and feeder lines leaked abominably. It was cheaper to throw a patch on it, goop on some sealant, or pump in more gas than to actually replace the broken parts.

I suppose it was bound to happen sooner or later. A series of mistakes in design and operation all adding to the incident pit. I was just unlucky enough to be in the right place at the wrong time. Tape up a gas line enough times and you get little pockets of explosive mixture under the surface of the tape. If they start leaking, the air around them can become volatile. Get even a tiny spark in the room, and the air goes up. Then those little pockets of gas under the tape around the line explode. Then the fuel line explodes. And if, for example, you put the fuel cell in the compartment next to the airlock, and the airlock hatches are too old, then you've got the ocean for a bunkmate.

Of course, even old mining rigs have watertight bulkheads for emergencies. But if you're on a really old rig, the bulkheads are the kind that drop from the ceiling rather than the nice rotating kind. Here's a piece of advice: If your best friend is on the wrong side of a bulkhead coming down, leave him there. Those suckers come down hard. Hard enough, say, to cut off both your arms.

"Operator for Two."

"Go, Operator."

"Two, I want everybody in seats. No door gunners."

The jumper's cameras show Team Two pounding up the loading ramp and into the rows behind Team One. A quick burst on all four fans, and the bird is airborne before the ramp is closed.

Piloting a jumpcraft is like trying to slide on your butt across a frozen pond. It takes a lot of work to keep going in the same direction, and the front part doesn't always have to go first. I lift the jumper just high enough to clear the building's roof, and kick it around a hundred and eighty degrees, coming into the second pickup backwards. This allows Team Three to run right up the ramp and into the cabin without exposing themselves to the PS goons. It also allows me to point the nose gun more or less directly at those same PS goons. Somebody manages to get off a lucky shot and shatters one of the forward cameras, cutting off my view of the target. So I just whipsaw the gun back and forth across the storefront, while the four members of Team Three sprint up the back. Again, I pour power into the fans and we're airborne, getting the hell outta Dodge.

By the time we're far enough away from the city to know we aren't going to be attacked in the next few minutes, the troopers in back have shucked their fatigues and helmets for work shirts, coveralls, and sun hats. Yep, just a bunch of migrant farm workers, that's us.

One of the troopers sticks a dataspike into a slot on the jumper's auxiliary panel, and I register the download from the harbormaster's workstation. We'll save that for later.

I drop the jumper down in a clearing on the edge of the grasslands. The troopers hop out and begin dragging camouflage netting over the bird. After that's done, they split up among five separate utility trucks and head off in different directions. I make sure the engines are shut down and the area looks more or less clear, then switch off.

Now, a new channel. "Al-Mamlakah Harbor Control, this is Morgan Transport Services with three GC barges at Offshore-B for transfer to MV Owen Glendower, over."

"Reading you, MTS. This is al-Mamlakah Public Safety. Harbor Control is currently shut down due

to local emergency. Be advised, Harbor Control is currently unable to provide any pilots."

"Affirmative, al-Mamlakah control. We're okay in the pilot department. Just need clearance for our barges."

"Very good, MTS. You are cleared to transfer to Glendower."

Suckers. Tell 'em what they want to hear, and they'll go for it every time.

"Purple Mama for Operator."

"Go, Mama."

"GC barges alongside, offloading begun. Estimate three hours to finish."

"Roger, Purple Mama. Please provide updates every fifteen, if you don't mind."

"That's fine, Operator."

"And please contact Purple Peak and request they execute Step Two. Thank you."

"Roger, Operator. Purple Mama, out."

All in a day's work.

LAW AND CRIME ON THE FRONTIER

Frontier Justice is the third supplement in the **Blue Planet v2** roleplaying game line. It is a campaign sourcebook that details law enforcement and criminal activity on Poseidon. The book provides all of the information players and moderators need to run exciting and compelling campaigns featuring law enforcement and the criminal underworld.

Frontier Justice describes the Marshals who are the GEO's highly trained and biomodified personifications of law and order. It details the organization, training, and activities of the GEO Patrol, the rank-and-file cops and detectives who enforce the law and investigate crimes in the colonial settlements. It covers the Native Patrol, whose officers try to forge new ties between the GEO and the native communities. The book also provides detailed guidelines for the conduct of investigations, from crime scene techniques to autopsies to DNA analysis.

Frontier Justice also offers detailed coverage of Poseidon's criminal underworld. The major players —the Russian Mafiya and the New Rastafarian posses—are thoroughly discussed, including their history, organization, personalities, and activities. Independent criminals are also described, from small-time dealers to professional crews who specialize in high-stakes armed robberies.

This campaign book will be helpful to both players and game moderators. Players will find a wide variety of information that will help them to more effectively play their characters, whether they are setting up a real-estate scam to launder drug money or searching for evidence of fire accelerants in the course of an arson investigation. For moderators, details such as these—and many more—will help to bring a law enforcement or criminal campaign to life in vivid detail.

CRIME ON POSEIDON

CHAPTER 01

SHOPPING SPREE

There aren't that many people who read anymore. Well, okay, most people can read. But it's all spoon-fed to them in little tiny bits on their bodycomps and personal networks. Never have to try and hold more than a page at a time. And have you ever watched somebody reading these days? They sit there leaving butt prints in the sands of time. Don't even move. No interaction at all. They just stare at their comp, hoping that some of its pretty pictures will coalesce into wisdom and sink in through their shiny new ports. And you never, never see anyone with a book.

That's a sticking point with me, see. Because that's what I do. I sell books. A whole great big shop full of them. And I've got a little café in the basement. But mainly, I've just got rack upon rack upon rack of books. I know where every single one of them is. I know what condition it's in. I know where it was printed, who shipped it here, what it's worth, from whom I bought it, and what it cost me. If it's been damaged, I know how badly and where. I know how old it is, where it was printed, and I have a pretty good idea of how much it originally sold for. Books are my life.

Okay, so I lied. Hacking is my life. But if books paid better, they'd be my life. Really. They're much cooler to work around.

I've got 11 different piles in front of me, all different sizes and different colors. Most of them are funny shapes, too. I know that the yellow-white rectangle is a stack of Long John wafers in a warehouse in Haven. The pale-blue cylinder is a container full of antibiotics on a cargo ship bound for Fort Pacifica. There's a flat-green sheet that represents several different corporate currencies. The rest stretch out in different directions.

I can also see white-gold sparks that are the core ghosts who I know will come to hunt me. I can follow faint blue routings that trail into the darkness, some only to wind up as dead ends in antiquated satellite relays or failing native school comps. Others steadily widen into rivers of information a billion channels wide, space enough and more for me to hide in.

A clock in the corner of my vision clicks over. The electric grids settle over me, disguising me, and I start to slide forward. It's time.

• • •

The door chimes, and I can feel my day getting worse the moment she walks in. She is either way too new at this, or way better at it than I am. I guess we'll see. She looks around the shop a little nervously, which is again either a giveaway or great acting. Very few people in this neck of the water have been around this much material wealth before. My customers—they're more like clients, really—come in here knowing what to expect. They walk in and look as if they've found the express lift to heaven. Everybody else, they just look nervous, like they're afraid to touch anything lest a 500-scrip book fall apart in their scaly hands. Good. They should feel that way.

• • •

The first thing to go are the corps. They get dumped into the Haven Currency Exchange at a painfully large discount. The individual sales aren't much, but together they'll show up as a momentary blip on tonight's financial recaps. I dump all of them on staggered sell orders, exchanging them all for Atlas, biggest buy orders first. Atlas had been doing well today, but my rather large order sends them up. Fortunately, by the time the last sell order has been executed, Atlas' price has risen enough that I recoup most of the loss I took on the discount. The Kansas grain futures and the Dyfedd timeshares also go into their respective exchanges, all sold for stacks of Long John.

Next to go are the antibiotics. I let it be known that they are for sale, and then immediately use them as collateral on an extremely short-term loan from Hanover Colonial Bank for their estimated street value. After the term of the loan expires—fifteen seconds—the bank forecloses on the loan. In the process, it notes that the antibiotics have already been offered for sale, and sells them to a GEO agency, which was expecting to buy them anyway. The GEO buying from itself, cutting me out of the loop—which is just fine with me.

• • •

With my back turned, I watch her as she walks up to the counter. I'm not going to tell you where the cameras are, but let's just say you'd have to search a long, long time to find all of them. I'm working on a book under a large magnifying lens at a restorer's bench behind the counter as she walks up. I want her to see my arms slowed all the way down. She coughs softly after a second, trying to get my attention. When I turn around to look at her, my arms are just beginning to catch up with the movement. It's disconcerting, the first time you see it. Doesn't look right, and it almost always makes people uncomfortable.

"Uh, hi. I'm looking for somebody?"

"Right. Who're you trying to find?"

"Ah, the owner? Somebody named Ashworth?"

"Oh, okay. Hold on a second." My arms don't normally whine, but last year I opened one up and put a little wheel on one of the wrist servos so that I could make it whistle when it turns. I can, of course, turn it off. I painstakingly put the Miller down on the bench and close the lid over it. Salt air really isn't good for it and I haven't found out whether or not the salesman really died yet. When I turn back and stick my hand out, she is caught off guard.

"Hi. I'm Anthony Ashworth. Tony. I'm the owner." It takes her a moment to recover, still staring at my hand.

"Sorry. I'm Kea."

"Kea?"

"Yeah. It's actually Kealoha a'Anuradha Tatau, but Kea's a lot easier."

"Right, so what can I do for you, Kea?"

"I was told you might have something I was interested in? I'm looking for a book on... er... about whales. A whale. Whaling, I guess." I suppose it's not surprising that the only people who have read Moby Dick in the last 200 years are either racists of the sickest sort or history geeks like me. That's why it makes such a great little secret password. I have to give her full points for actually coming in and asking for it, but she is taking the wide-eyed act a little far

"I think I might be able to help you. Would you like to come downstairs for a moment?"

• • •

There are accounts open in seventeen different names all around the planet, and two in orbit. I string together a chain of wire transfers from one account to the next, and let it go. The minute it starts to move out of the originating bank, though, I leap ahead into the first gate. As it enters, I slap a new header onto the train of data, slightly altering the face it presents to the network. A subtle redirect, and then the altered wire transfer is shunted around Poseidon. It leaps through another seven nodes before winding up at the next bank. Repeating the process adds to the confusing trail. I'm laying smoke, wiping away my tracks, doubling back through the stream, making it more difficult for anyone who wants to follow me.

• • •

I really do work out of my office, and sometimes it looks it. I've seen hackers who insist that absolutely everything be exactly where it's supposed to be. Breathe on their stuff, and they'll know. Not me, man. All the important stuff I need is in my head. You start getting too organized around me, and all that order becomes distracting. I don't know what to do with it all. I scrounge around for a chair that won't collapse on her and chase a spider remote out of mine.

"Okay, Kea. Let's cut through the crap. Your name, apparently, really is Kealoha a'uh... whatever. Your last three vid rentals were "Denial of Love," "The Boxer Search," and—although only God knows why—"The Best of Love That Dolphin." You have an account at the Hanover Colonial Bank, the passcode for which is a nine word phrase that includes the words "daisies" and "center." You also have an account with the NIS that is keyed to a pheromone lock, the sequence for which has been in the shop computer since you put your hand on the door. You arrived on-planet 18 months ago, and for at least a portion of that time, you've worked as a troubleshooter for Lavender Organics. Now, what can I help you with? The book, by the way, is called Moby Dick. You ought to at least know that."

She is a little taken aback, but certainly recovers very quickly. I watch her face go through a remark-

able change. The hexaboar-in-the-headlights demeanor disappears, and without changing a thing, she suddenly looks very much older, and very much in control.

"Very good, Mr. Ashworth. You seem to know quite a bit about me. I think that remarkable acumen could probably tell you why I'm here. And I knew the name of the book, but like normal people, I just don't like to talk about it much. I find it distasteful." She takes an ornate rectangular chain beetle shell case out of her coat, shakes out a smoke, lights it with a little blue flame that pops out of one corner, and sets the case down on my desk.

Normal people?

"Well, let's see. I just handed Lavender Organics 165 metric tons of ore, and LavOrg now owes me something in the neighborhood of 25 million scrip. I'm guessing that you're here to tell me where I can pick it up."

• • •

After about three minutes of work, all my original piles have been completely changed. Of course, the shapes and colors are just reference points, things to make it easier to remember and to handle the information. The pink octagons are really a collection of paintings done by the dolphin artist Revealer. The blue sphere is a block of apartment buildings in al-Mamlakah. But the point is, the trail from them to me is fading even now. Within moments, the steady erosion of the data stream will have erased all traces linking me to it.

After spending a full minute checking for pursuit, I sell all the apartments and the entire collection of paintings. The payments are sent to an account with Hanover that was opened only moments before the proceeds arrived. It exists only long enough to disperse 27.286 million scrip to 111 different accounts—all keyed to me—throughout the archipelago, and then closes itself out.

• • •

She smiles. "Do you have a standard optical interface around, Mr. Ashworth?" She looks around at my piles like they are last week's fish guts. Hey, it's my mess, leave it alone.

"Right beside you." A really stunning volume, coptic-bound in sunburst hide, with a clasp and hinges made from Poseidon bluewood, stands up on six spindly legs and skitters over.

"Look underneath." The bottom is a maze of plugs, cables, jacks, and adapters. As the book-shape remote springs over to Kea's chair arm, it trails a tiny fiber optic cable that connects directly into the shop's system. After eyeing it for a moment with a mixture of revulsion and curiosity, she picks it up and flips it onto its back. She sweeps the cigarette case off my desk, does something to it, and plugs the now-exposed optical interface into the remote.

"Is there an audio pickup in the room?" She cranes her neck around again, hunting for the exposed mics.

"Just talk into the remote."

She begins a sing-song recitation of something. It sounds sort of like the Nota forms the natives like to write in, but what do I know. I do catch the line "The sun goes down, waving golden daises to my center." I really don't like poetry at all. She finishes, looks up at me, and coughs once. The poetry, her voice speaking those words, has been the trigger for whatever's inside the case. It comes to life, and begins feeding the shop computer.

In my head, I can hear the remote begin to recite account numbers, opening balances, wire transfers, deed registration numbers. Kea speaks.

"That's it. It should all be there."

Anybody want to go shopping?

THE CRIMINAL ECOLOGY

Any ecology can be broken down into energy producers and energy consumers. Regardless of the biome, there are always organisms that put energy into the system—the plants, the phytoplankton. There are also organisms that take energy out—the predators, the eaters of dead flesh. The ecology of humans, as sanitized, shrink wrapped, and digitized as it is, is no different. Poseidon, so rich in animal diversity and so vicious to the unwary, is just as unforgiving where humanity is concerned.

According to native folktales, corruption on Poseidon first took root days after Planetfall. Native folklore mentions a colonist exiled for hoarding and profiteering. As the human presence on Poseidon has expanded, so has the incidence and variety of crime. The boom economy of modern Poseidon coupled with its anemic law enforcement presence has left the colony world wide open to criminal activity. The entire criminal food chain is active, from simple smash-and-grab larceny to protection rackets to Byzantine money laundering schemes, frequently with only casual efforts to avoid the prying eyes of the GEO.

At the center of this criminal underworld are two major organized crime outfits. The New Rastafarian Movement functions as the de facto government of the city of Kingston and is extremely active throughout the Zion Islands. NRM posses, primarily comprised of brash young men from the poor parishes of Kingston, provide basic services for the citizens of Kingston and represent a sort of anti-police force. Through their swift, often bloody reprisals and their elaborate protection rings, they have kept violence against the city's native population to an amazingly low level in recent years. Violence between posses and against outsiders, though, can occasionally resemble a feeding frenzy in the territorial waters of some of Poseidon's most dangerous predators. New Orleans-style jazz funerals are a daily occurrence along the shores of Annotto Bay.

In every ecosystem there is an organism that lives only in the shadows, grows fat on the sick and weak, and attacks without warning or mercy and with legendary ferocity. In Poseidon's economic ecosystem, this creeping killer is the Gorchoff crime family. Headquartered in Haven, the Gorchoffs have spread cells to nearly every settlement on the planet like a metastasizing cancer. Whereas the NRM has a well known political agenda, the Gorchoffs exist for one reason and one reason only—the accumulation of wealth and power for family *vors*. The Mafiya is perhaps the most ruthless criminal organization in history. It is widely feared and respected, and justifiably so.

The criminal underworld on Poseidon, however, is not the exclusive domain of the large syndicates. The waterworld is full of small-time crooks, hustlers, camp followers, posers, and opportunists who exist on the fringes of law and conscience. There are financial wunderkinder up to their bodycomps in financial scams, fast-finger men with their pockets full of tourist jewelry, and stick-up artists hiding in every dark corner.

Add the countless species of bottom-feeders and parasites to the two higher-order carnivores and the criminal ecosystem becomes as complex, as unforgiving, and as fascinatingly intricate as any in the natural world.

PROFESSIONAL LARCENY

Professional thieves have become some of the most successful and prolific criminals on the colony world. Whether because of under-funded law enforcement, loose financial regulations, or some unknown factor, professional theft has become big business on Poseidon.

In many ways, things have changed remarkably little in hundreds of years. Vehicles are still among

THE COURTS

The GEO legal system is fairly simple. Lower state and city courts hear cases within their jurisdictions. All trials and suits must be brought before the authorities in the sector where the crime or incident occurred.

In civil cases, all judicial and administrative remedies must be exhausted before a suit may be brought. This route generally begins with the Office of Dispute Resolution (ODR), moves through district courts, and then is heard by a Deputy Magistrate.

The Office of Dispute Resolution was established to reduce the caseloads of district courts. Many times, conflict resolution activities can address the problem before it is taken to court. Trained referees are used to foster mutual respect between parties. The ODR also encourages partnerships built on diversity, works to prevent hate crimes, and offers victim-offender mediation. Many fraud and property crime cases end up in mediation rather than in court.

A civil suit may be brought to court if any law or action by authorities violates an individual's rights guaranteed under the GEO Charter or federal laws. Only the parties who are directly affected may bring a suit. Individuals cannot file criminal charges. Criminal suits are initiated by a local, district, or GEO representative, usually a district attorney.

A party who is dissatisfied with the judgment of the court may lodge an appeal with a higher court. He is permitted to lodge further appeals if he is still not satisfied with the judgment. Each court renders a decision independently, but a ruling of a superior court is binding on courts below it.

The State Court is the highest "open" court, meaning anyone can bring a suit before a justice. Only special circumstances allow a suit to move into the High Court.

The High Court is presided over by a Magistrate or Deputy Magistrate. Lower courts may or may

the most vulnerable, lucrative targets, although the Jefferson Overland hovertrains are considerably harder to rob than a prairie steam locomotive. Nevertheless, descending on a target from all sides with high-speed transport, blowing open the doors to a secured cargo car, and making off with the contents as fast as possible remains a workable plan. Although Jefferson Overland has only been successfully robbed three times in nine years, the average take has been more than two million scrip. Likewise, commercial hijacking and maritime piracy are even more common on Poseidon than on Earth.

In general, though, the crimes of burglary, breaking and entering, and larceny have taken on a drastically different character. The modern safecracker is more likely to have a keyboard under his fingertips than a file, and more likely to be plugged into a tiny remote with audiovisual pickups than a stethoscope. In 2199, almost no major theft goes down without significant technological support.

An excellent example of the modern bank robbery was recently committed by Dinh "Junior" Tan. Tan put together a crack team and hit the Hanover Colonial Bank for more than seven million in cash and bonds. It took more than a month for analysts to reconstruct how the job went down. In the end, it showed a remarkable amount of planning and impeccable timing.

While paper scrip is more common on Poseidon than on Earth, banks do not usually have enough on hand to justify a professional robbery. Tan timed his robbery the first business day after Founder's Day when the bank's vaults were swelled with tourist cash from local vendors and entertainment establishments.

Tan arranged for the bank's systems to fail some hours before the job was scheduled. Without the environment manager operating properly, lights went on and off at random. The heat and air conditioning battled at peak output, as music and ambient sounds cycled from inaudible to ear-piercing levels several times per minute.

Tan's hacker team intercepted the outgoing call for repair services and promised a response within minutes. The team compromised the bank's central computer and reprogrammed it to open the primary vault. The bolts released just as Tan and his

gang, dressed in their techs' coveralls, set up at several terminals to "repair" the faulty systems.

The hackers immediately began paging through vault records to find paper scrip. In two minutes, they transmitted a list to Tan. At the same time, a shooter around the block used a grenade launcher to blow up a truck one street over from the bank. The explosion set off alarms for three blocks, swamping Patrol resources. Consequently, when Tan and his team revealed themselves to the bank's personnel, the staff's report of a robbery in progress went unnoticed. The first human being to see the report did not figure out the truth until Junior Tan was walking out the front door with a duffel bag full of scrip.

As flamboyant as it was, Tan's operation serves as a general model for the professional teams active on Poseidon. Elaborate preparation is an essential element, with many teams expending more effort and capital on obtaining blueprints, passcodes, access keys, network maps, and the like than in actually performing the job itself.

Inside operations also play an important role. Tan's robbery would have been impossible without someone actually going inside the building. Occasionally, jobs can be arranged in such a way that the thief need not actually expose himself, but these are rare. Many local networks require access from a particular terminal for root-level privileges. Human receptionists and guards are still the most discriminating available. These factors combine to make a competent inside man indispensable.

In cases of so-called "cat burglary," the inside man is highly skilled and well conditioned. Most inside men are heavily modified, either electromechanically or genetically. Skilled remote operators are also important players in most pro crews. A well-armed hover remote can act as a rearguard, allowing an escaping team to avoid a potentially deadly firefight. Remote constellations, when controlled by a trained operator, can provide unparalleled overwatch for a roof or window entry. Micro-remotes can be planted to support a team inside a target building. They can also be used to steal passcodes, monitor traffic, or programmed for nearly any other information-gathering job imaginable. Computer support is always critical. Often, the lead hacker will be the one overseeing the entire operation, giving commands and making tactical decisions. As a job goes down, talented hackers

not use juries; the High Court does not. There is no automatic right to have an appeal heard by the High Court and parties who wish to appeal must persuade the Court in a preliminary hearing that there are special reasons to cause the appeal to be heard. Any decision made by a lower court may be appealed, but decisions of the High Court are final. The Magistrate's decision is binding on all other courts.

The High Court only considers cases or appeals if the case involves an important question of law, where it has to mitigate a dispute that cannot be addressed in any other court, or when the question hinges on interpretation of the GEO Charter.

If the Magistrate agrees to hear a case, a writ of certiorari is issued requesting the lower courts to send records of the case up to the High Court.

Before a hearing, the entire case—including evidence and statements by witnesses—is presented to the Court through briefs issued by the defense and prosecution. Every motion to the Court must clearly state its purpose and the facts on which it is based. During the hearing, attorneys representing the parties present their arguments orally to the Magistrate. Each side is permitted 40 minutes to speak to the court and answer questions.

A decision is usually issued within 90 hours. High Court decisions are immediately recorded on CommCore's legal database.

In native villages, dealing with criminals is not a simple matter. An arrested criminal is confined in a single cell within the Native Patrol headquarters until a Marshal or traveling GEO Patrol officer can transport him to the nearest court. In some remote villages, this could easily take months.

monitor the communications of law enforcement and security personnel, access and hijack the target's computer systems to unlock and lock doors, shut off alarms, activate and deactivate lighting and monitoring systems, and perform a myriad of other tasks.

Today, the GEO is undertaking a number of efforts to control the wave of professional theft sweeping Poseidon. Unfortunately, a number of factors conspire to make this criminal activity very difficult to police. The most successful teams are also the most professional and are rarely guilty of the amateur mistakes that so often make successful investigations. These teams operate independently and rarely stay in one place for long, moving from town to town, job to job.

COMPUTER CRIME

To understand the crime of data piracy, it is first necessary to understand something about the structure of the world in which it occurs. Poseidon's CommCore is made up—in the barest essence—of less than a score of giant servers. These giant supercomputers, monoliths of processing power known as mains, use the computer industry's most advanced neural-network and parallel-processing technology. The mains supervise the linkages within the network and monitor the largest and most important data transfers. These machines store control and access codes for the rest of the distributed CommCore network.

The workhorses of the network are the countless, fixed servers linked to the mains through a maze of fiber-optic and wireless connections. These machines, the second layer of the CommCore pyramid, called nodes, handle millions of communications, operations, and transactions each day. This secondary tier of the network is highly redundant, with the data and functions of one node duplicated on several systems.

Each node is connected to a variable number of gateways. Satellite data relays that handle uplinks from bodycomps, maincomps that host local- and regional-area networks, and data service providers all act as the first level of interface between a user's computer or personal network and CommCore. The gateways handle requests for information and route packets of information to the appropriate systems.

Since the gateways are the first site through which all data must pass, they are also prime sites for hunter programs to wait and grab critical packets. If a hacker wants to intercept a target's mail, steal coded information, or halt a stock sale, the program he uses to do this will typically be hidden in the shadowy recesses of the gateway. Of course, gateways are just as closely watched by the GEO Patrol and Marshal Service. Hundreds of separate patrol programs, generally known as watchdogs, prowl the CommCore gateways sniffing for code that might suggest a hacker's hunter code.

Most of the work of data piracy involves acquiring access to the data in the first place. There are three essential ways to do this. As mentioned above, the first way is to intercept the desired data as the packet passes through a gateway. Multiple strains of hunters can be set to stop and then hide inside a gateway. These routines have different mechanisms for hiding from gateway security and for analyzing information as it passes through the gateway. They also have different techniques for dealing with the target data when it is found. Some simply register the passage of a packet from the target and record its destination. Others sabotage the packet as it passes, either deleting it or altering its contents. Sophisticated hunters can be programmed to reroute packets to a new destination—usually one of the hacker's hidden datastores. These hunter programs can be set to delete themselves after a single use or can remain in a gateway indefinitely.

Monitoring packets that pass through a gateway is the least dangerous method for hijacking data, but it is also the least likely to succeed. When stealing information is critical, the hacker must mount a direct attack on the host computer itself.

The type of piracy that gives the hacker the most control, but is also the most dangerous, is a system crash. Also called "icebreakers" and "B&E" (for "break and enter"), system crashes are nearly guaranteed to get the target data, but are just as likely to attract the attention of the target computer's defenses and monitoring law enforcement agencies.

A B&E involves sending millions of requests for access to the target computer faster than it can

process them. As the requests back up, the communications and security features of the target computer expand and replicate themselves, attempting to handle the traffic. Eventually, the demand on computing power becomes so great that there is none left to maintain the massively swollen communications and security managers. The managers themselves are shut down or reset, and the target computer is left open to attack.

At this point, the hacker is likely left with root-level access, the ability to copy and modify any file available to the target computer. The hacker can copy the entire contents of onboard storage, lock out a primary user, change control codes, dive into databases the target computer has access to, interact with devices and vehicles linked to the target, and so on. Security managers, though, are no pushovers. Although cheap, second-rate programs might be easy prey to an attacking hacker, most are formidable obstacles. Sophisticated security programs are programmed to notify users or supervisory systems when an attack is in progress, allowing for swift response. As a rule, icebreakers will be detected. The only questions are by whom, and whether the hacker can finish the job and get out before being caught.

Unfortunately for hackers, law enforcement is often the least of a data pirate's worries. Core ghosts are autonomous expert systems designed to counter attacks detected by a security manager. Core ghosts respond to a security manager's call for help, locking open pathways from target computer to gateway, to node, back to gateway, and eventually to the intruding hacker. Once the connection is frozen open, core ghosts launch worms and viral code designed to corrupt the hacker's system.

Core ghosts that cause direct physiological trauma to the hacker in a variety of creative ways are a persistent urban legend. Implanted computers and neural interfaces will simply become inoperable before executing any functions that would harm the user. Otherwise, no one would ever use them.

A more subtle method of hacking that can occasionally provide nearly as much information as a B&E, but has the potential for going undetected, is referred to as a sneak.

As may be expected, sneaks require considerably more finesse and skill than a simple B&E. In order to remain hidden, a sneak requires that the hacker fool the target computer into thinking he is an authorized user. This often requires that the hacker access the target system from a specific location, such as a terminal inside a secure building. These terminals are usually protected by defined authorizations, often using pheromone keys or alphanumeric passcodes.

Of course, no security measure is perfect. Most security systems are fairly simple—the more complicated they are, the more trouble they are for authorized users, and the more likely they are to be deactivated. Password-protection is the most common electronic security protocol, and it is very easy for a skilled professional to defeat. Passcodes can be stolen, authorized users can be coerced into revealing them, and cracking software can be used to discover or bypass them.

Importantly, not all passcodes are created equal. In the typical mid-size Incorporate network, roughly 90% of all functioning passcodes will be "user" level. User-level passcodes allow the hacker access to data files and networks connected to the target computer, as long as they are not particularly sensitive. User-level access is generally adequate if the hacker knows exactly what he is looking for and knows where to find it. More sensitive information or more extensive searches may require a higher level of access. Eight or nine percent of passcodes in a typical network will have administrator-level access, allowing users privileges that are not generally available to standard users. Administrators usually have the ability to alter or reprogram sensitive functions of the target computer or network itself. Finally, root-level access turns even the most secure machine into an open book.

Of course, the computers most CommCore users have the most interaction with is their own. Ironically, bodycomps are frequently the least well-protected computers around. Bodycomps generally do not have sophisticated security managers. Most feature only the default security provided by the manufacturer-installed familiar program. Data stored on a typical personal system is not encrypted, and there is near-constant communication between a bodycomp and hundreds of other computers, networks, and CommCore gateways each day in crowded urban areas. The quantity and quality of data available from a successful bodycomp hack can be staggering.

Implanted computers are almost polar opposites—the data stored on an implanted computer is encrypted using the latest techniques and security programs are nearly always first rate. Although implants provide an unprecedented level of interaction with CommCore and the much-reduced response time essential for first-class hacking, the level of exposure to system attacks by core ghosts is greatly increased. As a result, many hackers work through cheap, firewalled computers that can be easily replaced if they are corrupted or damaged.

DRUG TRAFFICKING

The drug trade has been the most lucrative criminal industry on Earth for 300 years. United Nations officials had hoped that, with the relatively tiny population of the Athena Project and the planet's isolation, this industry would fail to take firm root. During the first 10 years of the colony effort and much of the Abandonment, this was definitely the case. Drug use among the original colonists was either nonexistent or limited to personal crops of mild narcotics. Recontact and the Long John rush, though, have brought new criminal elements to Poseidon and the drug trade is flourishing.

A wide variety of controlled or proscribed substances are consumed illegally on Poseidon. Traditional drugs such as heroin, cocaine, and marijuana are common in the upper-class and Incorporate populations. Since the opium poppy has so far been resistant to cultivation on Poseidon and the laboratory equipment necessary for synthesis is bulky and expensive, heroin especially is a drug reserved for the rich, privileged, and connected. Marijuana, so easily cultivated on Earth, fares only poorly in Poseidon's thick, verdant jungles. However, when grown in greenhouses or soil engineered with specialized microbes, it does quite well.

Native products are far more common. GHTF, more commonly known by its street moniker, glitter, is an engineered neurotransmitter that can be concocted with little more than the contents of a child's chemistry set. Its characteristic tranquil high is particularly favored by musicians, dancers, and artists. Numerous semi-professional labs crank out a variety of custom mood-altering drugs packaged in inhalers. These doctored molecules can tickle the nerves of the olfactory cortex into producing nearly any emotion—from sexual desire to detached intellectual interest to naked berserker rage.

Poseidon's drug of choice has been—and likely will continue to be—pharium. Grown in grottos, clearings, and paddocks all over the archipelago, the inhaled form is particularly powerful. Several CommCore dramas featuring the practice of "shotgunning," exhaling a lungful of smoke into a partner's nose and mouth, romanticized pharium use for a whole new generation of newcomer youth.

The drug trade depends on three essential industry tiers. The first, production, is largely controlled by organized crime, and consequently is not discussed here. The tier with the greatest potential for payoff for the law enforcement community is distribution. In this process, large quantities of product are taken from a central manufacturing site and delivered to individual dealers. The mechanisms have become enormously varied and creative. Some examples include:

- Cetaceans pulling specially designed "monkey harnesses" loaded down with pharium or other drugs.
- Secreting packages in the flood tanks of submersibles and fuel tanks of aircraft, GEVs, and VTOLs, especially in drop tanks that can be jettisoned at the first sign of trouble.
- Chemically mixing controlled substances with homegrown bioplastic. Digestive enzymes can then be used to remove the plastic, leaving the drug untouched.

The final tier is retail—dealing the drugs to consumers and addicts. There are nearly as many different ways of attracting the attention of a prospective dealer or buyer as there are individual dealers and buyers. Pharium is most often sold in bars, dens, and seedy clubs, and only occasionally on the open street. Glitter, juice, and other major hallucinogens and narcotics can be purchased on the street in poor, often dangerous neighborhoods of the major settlements. The inhaled mood alterers, on the other hand, are often easily acquired in upscale, trendy dance clubs, since penalties for possession and even distribution are relatively minor.

Major dealers are almost always connected to one of the crime syndicates—generally the Russian Mafiya or the NRM. The distribution and sale of illegal drugs requires organization: A dealer needs access to reliable suppliers, and the syndicates control most of the production sources. Dealers also often need protection, and the syndicates can provide that as well. There are small-time pushers who work relatively independently, but they risk making powerful enemies and few enjoy a generous life expectancy.

There are costs—and profits to be made—at each one of these tiers, and they all add to a drug's street value. For example, glitter might cost 10 scrip per kilogram to manufacture, perhaps even less for a large operation. The product must then be shipped to distribution centers and allocated to dealers or middlemen before it finds its way to the street. Every hand the product passes through in the process takes a cut. On the street, the dealer might cut that kilo into one-gram hits and sell them for 10 scrip a pop. The kilo's street value is therefore 10,000 scrip and a sizable percentage of the markup is pure profit for the organization that controls each tier of the trafficking network.

MONEY LAUNDERING

Since before the Sumerians, governments have tried to regulate the flow of money. This has created an additional challenge for the criminal element: They must not only acquire illicit wealth, they must also hide it from regulators and law enforcement.

The phrase "money laundering" is an old one. It refers to any attempt to take "dirty" money—money obtained through illegal or proscribed activities—and make it "clean" or indistinguishable from money obtained through legitimate activities. Money laundering typically occurs in three separate steps. Although there are infinite variations on the steps, a good soaker will pay careful attention to each, and each provides an opportunity for the astute investigator to break the scheme. In order, the steps are placement, layering, and integration.

In the placement stage, the soaker enters the money into the financial system. This is where most money laundering attempts are stopped. GEO and Incorporate banking regulations frequently require reports for deposits exceeding a certain level, usually 50,000cs.

Although this may sound substantial, it presents some important problems. If a major dealer has just made 3.5 million scrip in small bills trafficking pharium, how does he disguise 70 such deposits? Three and a half million in cash in small denominations weighs more than a ton and occupies roughly 40 cubic meters of space. The criminal either has to hide the influx of cash or give it a legitimate history.

In the layering stage, the soaker is mainly concerned with financial camouflage, doubling back, and generally making so many transfers, exchanges, purchases, and sales so fast that any attempt to follow the money is nearly impossible. This stage is where shell companies—as the Gorchoff Family's Haven Industrial Development Group is suspected of being—become important. With layering, the launderer's job is to move the money in such a way that it becomes impossible to identify its illegal origin.

PRISON SYSTEM

The GEO Detention and Prison System was established to provide humane care for inmates who have been sentenced to imprisonment for crimes, the detention of individuals awaiting trial, and to ensure consistent and centralized administration of all operating facilities.

The DPS on Poseidon consists of three community corrections institutions, a headquarters, regional offices in most settlements, and a staff training center.

Violent or dangerous criminals are typically transported immediately to the *Prosperity Station* Detention Facility and sent to Earth for long-term incarceration. Non-violent criminals with sentence terms of less than three years serve time at the 150-unit Haven Detention Center in Government Center; all others are incarcerated at the Daly Correctional Facility in Second Try.

The headquarters office provides administrative oversight and support to the institutions. Regional offices handle the temporary jailing of inmates and pre-trial arrestees.

On Poseidon, the DPS is responsible for the custody and care of approximately 1,450 offenders. About 1,300 of these inmates are confined in GEO-operated correctional institutions or detention centers; the rest are confined through agreements with local governments or contracts with privately operated corrections facilities, such as Böse Strand.

The DPS protects citizen safety by ensuring that offenders serve their complete sentences in institutions that are cost-efficient and appropriately secure. The system also reduces future criminal activity by encouraging inmates to participate in a range of self-improvement programs, from institution jobs to vocational training to anger management and counseling, teaching essential life skills to aid them in adopting a crime-free lifestyle upon their return to the community. Research shows that inmate work programs,

For example, rough calculations suggest that Sascha Kamarov's Revolution Lounge should be netting 25,000cs per month, for an annual pre-tax profit of 1.3 million. However, tax records indicate that Mr. Kamarov claimed an income of almost four million for the fiscal year 2198. Business expense records subpoenaed by the Marshal Service indicate that the Revolution Lounge paid between 11,231cs and 19,552cs to each of four food and liquor distributors in the Haven area. Two of these distributors have unusually complex corporate resolutions and an obscure network of partial owners, one of whom is coincidentally Sascha Kamarov. Neither of these organizations have placed significant orders with major importers or producers in the last year, raising the question of where they obtained the goods they allegedly sold to the Revolution Lounge. Current theory suggests that Revo's financial records have been altered to indicate more business than is actually occurring. The shortfall is covered by funds generated by the syndicate's illegal activities. The two questionable distributors may not have, then, actually sold anything to the club at all, instead serving as a holding area for the club's successfully layered cash.

A similar example can be found in the records of recently deceased bookseller and suspected data pirate Anthony Ashworth. Before his death, Ashworth was listed as the partial owner of a block of vacation apartments in Dyfedd. His tax information suggests that Mr. Ashworth's flats were fully occupied during the summer months last year, and that he ran at an average of 87% occupancy over the entire year. However, power and water bills obtained from the Dyfedd authorities suggest that, if more than 41% of these flats were occupied, their tenants used significantly less water and electricity than their neighbors in similar apartments. Indeed, if Mr. Ashworth's 87% occupancy rate is correct, then each of the apartments was without any electrical power whatsoever for fully one day in three.

In fact, Mr. Ashworth's income came from numerous illegal contracts, and the flats lay unoccupied for much of the year, serving as a conduit for "rent money" that would then be fully layered.

The last step in money laundering is known as integration. In this step, the layered money is smoothed into the otherwise legitimate economy. Real estate purchases and scrip exchange transactions are common tactics. Shell companies that the

launderer invested in may make a "dividend payout." These large payouts frequently tip the launderer's hand, as GEO HCTI computers are instructed to look for large claims of unearned, bonus, or investment income. The greed inherent in the launderer's trade will often force him to convert the layered money into liquid assets, triggering alarms.

Money laundering affected an estimated two trillion in normalized corporate scrip last year. Thus, it presents a substantial drain on the legitimate economy, as well as on already scarce law enforcement resources. The GEO depends on highly trained and creative members of the legal community to protect the integrity of the financial system and ensure the health of the economies of both star systems.

SLANG GLOSSARY

B&E: from the phrase "breaking and entering," a particularly brutish but almost universally successful type of attack on a computer system

bag man: courier or runner for organized crime

bandulu bizniss: an NRM racket, a swindle

bolt-on: someone heavily modified with second-rate biomechanical enhancements, derived from the poor appearance or "bolted-on look" of these enhancements.

bowl: pipe used for smoking pharium

bredren: male members of the NRM

brick: one kilo of a drug

bug bag: Rastafarian street wear, voluminous robe or wrap with hidden pockets for concealing weapons and drug paraphernalia

bull: ranking member of the Family who heads a crew of gangsters.

bullet: one-year jail sentence

training, education, and drug treatment reduce recidivism and misbehavior in prison.

Institutional security is ensured through a combination of physical features, technology, classification of inmates based on risk factors, and direct staff supervision. DPS institutions operate at four security levels—minimum, low, medium, and high—to meet the various security needs of its diverse inmate population. Each security level has its own inmate facilities, such as a pretrial detention center, legal library, and medical office.

Soon after arrival at a facility, inmates are required to attend an admission orientation, where they are instructed about all aspects of the institution, including the rules and regulations, inmates' rights and responsibilities, and the DPS discipline policy.

Following orientation, an inmate is assigned to a housing unit—usually a room or cubicle. He is shown the locations of recreation and common areas, staff offices, the library and educational facilities, and the mess hall.

bushbash: to push through a problem without regard to alternative, more subtle means of solving it

button man: one who selects or finds a job or target of a crime; also fixer

candy: jewelry

chiv: crudely made prison knife; also shank

chum: any small-time hood sacrificially left exposed to distract law enforcement or rivals

clean, cleaning job: to murder someone as part of Mafiya business or to send a message, as opposed to personal reasons or revenge killings; also wax, shine, take fishing

cleaner: professional killer, one who does killings for hire; from Pavel Yarberev's original Rovenidzhe Custodial Service

coffee: first drug used in the day

colors: a gang's emblem or identifying colors

consigliere: counselor, close advisor to a *vor v zakonye*, but without any executive authority

cook: heating a drug to dissolve it in water or other solution

core ghost: an expert system designed to counter data piracy or an attack on a computer system by freezing open the connection to the hacker's system and uploading garbage data or damaging agents to it

crew: members of a criminal gang or organization; also, to work for such a group

cush: money

Dillon: GEO Marshal, Deputy Marshal, or member of the Marshal Service

drag: lover or significant other, never a spouse

dread: a person with dreadlocks; also, a member of the NRM

driftwood, drift: stolen goods to be sold through a fence

drop: one who receives stolen goods

engine: paraphernalia for smoking pharium

fishing buddy: one who is in danger of being "cleaned" by the Mob

fish fetish, fish trade: a human who patronizes dolphin prostitutes

floater: body recovered from water

floater freak: a wiseguy wannabe, usually turned on to the idea by the CommCore drama *Floaters*

gow: pharium-pipe cleaner

harness: uniform

harp: ultrasonic hypodermic

hot shot: fatal drug overdose

hunter: a hacker program designed to hide inside a gateway and detect, kill, or reroute a particular packet or group of packets

ice: arrest, throw in jail

icebreaker: see B&E

Jah: the Rastafarian name for God, possibly derived from Jahweh or Jehovah; also, the personification of God in the form of Jah Ras Tafari, Haille Selassie, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, conquering Lion of Judah, Emperor of Ethiopia

K: known, as in KG, known gangster

kit: injection paraphernalia, also outfit, rig

logic: computer, processor, or available storage; used by hackers to indicate corruptible or target resources

love tap: a small drug dose, also taste

Mafiya: the Gorchoff Family crime syndicate

mainline: to inject a drug directly into the vein

marker: gambling debt

mash up, mash down: destroy, hit, kill (Rastafarian)

mermaid: a dolphin prostitute

mic, mike: micrograms

mule: runner or courier

na svobodye: free from prison, "in freedom," in business in the more open environment of Poseidon

nail: conventional hypodermic needle

Organizatsya: the Gorchoff Family crime syndicate, specifically, the inner circle of Family management that decides day-to-day activities and policies

paper hanger: forger of hardcopy, as opposed to electronic, documents

rocket surgeon: a heavily modified contract killer, a professional "cleaner" who is outstanding at his job

rose: discoloration of the skin caused by repeated use of ultrasonic hypodermic

rude boy: a criminal, a tough guy

screw: prison guard, also hack

sink: to kill someone for personal reasons; also beach, tank, hit, whack

soprano: connected criminal who informs to the police

spotnik: unusually gullible mark for a con or numbers game

tattoo: dermal patch used to administer a drug

wash: money that has been shunted through various investments, bank accounts, and transfers so as to be untraceable to criminal activities; laundered money

watchdog: GEO semi-autonomous expert system that searches CommCore computers for evidence of criminal activity

White List: the Gorchoff Family's "ultimate hit list," supposedly, those individuals Vladimir Gorchoff has personally declared war on, the ones he's threatened to "bleed white"

vigorish, vig: loan shark's interest on a loan

vor v zakonye: thief in law; full name of leader of old Russian gang (archaic)

vorovskoi mir: thieves world, the criminal underworld

zapodlo: shady business, underground commerce, black market

GEO JUSTICE COMMISSION
Technical Bulletin #9807-I-94
Recorded Testimony
Manoj Marwanni

Marwanni: Uh... Okay... Is this on?

Sgt. Mayne: Just speak normally, Mr. Marwanni.

Marwanni: Right. Okay. My name is Manoj Marwanni. People call me Zoot. I been a bull for Mr. Reason for the last six years. Before that, I was...

Lt. Zabreski: What's a bull?

Marwanni: A bull... it means I had my own crew.

Lt. Zabreski: A crew?

Marwanni: Uh, hold on. I'll get to that in a minute. Before that, I crewed for Nigel Claxton, running flash.

Lt. Zabreski: I've never heard of that one, have you Mayne?

Marwanni: Anyway, I'm here to testify or something.

Lt. Zabreski: Why would you do that? I thought you guys were all tight.

Marwanni: Why? Because I don't want to go to the Beach, that's why! I shot Lucas DiTripani, and I ordered Anna Chen's execution, and you guys are gonna send me to the Beach 'less I spit.

Lt. Zabreski: You got that right.

Sgt. Mayne: Perhaps if you told us how you first got into the business, sir?

Marwanni: I started out selling cheap stuff, just to sorta make ends meet. Just stuff I found, right? Word goes out that somebody's kicked it, or that somebody's gonna get sunk, you go check out their squat. Nobody there, then nobody's likely to be there later, so why not help yourself?

Lt. Zabreski: You were fencing?

Marwanni: I started out just letting it be known that I could get stuff for people, cheap. It started out small time—bodycomps, nic rigs, and the like. Stuff you wouldn't pay a hundred scrip for, but that was a little pricey for your typical Nomader. Well, I figured this was easy money, but there definitely could be more. So when I found somebody's stash, I'd move that, too.

Lt. Zabreski: Come on, Marwanni. You expect us to believe you were just a little fish?

Marwanni: I was for a while. I had to be. If you stay amateur, don't ever move much, go strictly second rate and don't advertise too much, then nobody notices you. The problem is, if you start contracting out—people paying you X much to boost something flash for them—it gets noticed. Or you're on the drop and doing high volume, it gets noticed. But nobody cares how much business you do in cheap clothes or second-rate electronics, so that's what I started out with.

Sgt. Mayne: But...

Marwanni: But I started hot-sticking people's cars, renting anonymous computer time, selling candy in the back—nothing very big. Nothing hot, but I got along.

Lt. Zabreski: Wait, selling candy?

Marwanni: Yeah, you know, jewelry—diamond rings, platinum bracelets... The kind of stuff you'd buy your lady if you had one. You don't get out on the streets much, do you?

Sgt. Mayne: So how did you keep the business going?

Marwanni: The only way people found out about me was if they already knew about me, or knew somebody who knew this guy.

Lt. Zabreski: Okay, so...

Marwanni: I know, I'm supposed to be spillin' my guts. Let me give you an example, though. You know Junior Tan?

Lt. Zabreski: [grunts]

Marwanni: Yeah, Junior's a big operator now. But 'bout nine, ten years ago, Junior wasn't spit in a storm. He had this idea, though. Figured he knew how to knock over this bank in New Fremantle but that he'd need a local wheelman. So what does he do? He doesn't put an ad on CommCore. Well, one of Junior's crew did a bullet at the Haven lockup —

Lt. Zabreski: What? He was shot at the Haven Detention Center?

Marwanni: [sighs] No, he wasn't shot. He did a bullet—a one-year sentence, okay? Anyway, his cellmate for a few weeks when he first got in worked out of New Fremantle. Junior figures if he can find this guy, he'll know someone who can drive.

So he rolled into town one day and started working the bars, you know, the places where people go. He'd watch people, see how they looked, how they acted. If he didn't get the right waves, he'd go somewhere else. Finally, he finds three or four places that feel good. He starts spending all his time there, and he tips great.

Sgt. Mayne: Tips?

Marwanni: Yeah. Sorta building up good will. Then, one day the bartender says, "So, what you doing in town?"

Junior says, "I got a job, but I need to hook up with a friend of a friend, Lewis Mantle, goes by the name of Lousy."

Lt. Zabreski: Yeah, sure. Come on, Marwanni. We're supposed to be talking about you, here.

Marwanni: You wanna know why you're never gonna ice Junior Tan? You listen. Took him a grand total of three minutes to get the number for the hottest pilot in town. Then, he was a punk. Now, Junior's livin' fat. If he'd barged in the door of some tourist trap, dressed to the nines and sporting more hardware than the Atlas dockyards like you morons, would you have talked to him? Nope. You'd have totally ignored him, and if he'd kept at it, you'd have shot him. I would have.

Lt. Zabreski: I bet you would have. So, about you working for Mr. Reason...

Marwanni: Cute. You don't understand, though, do you? That look is what you gotta be able to pull off if your connections aren't already solid. And you never get the connections in the first place without the look.

That connection is what made me go pro. See, I knew there was more out there for the taking. It's just that certain people get jealous if you start thinning out their accounts, which is what I started doing. I thought I was really getting somewhere. I grabbed four yachts in two months, started a whole new business in CommCore access codes and anonymous data hosting.

Problem was, I was completely on my own. I could get hold of some prime drift, but couldn't move it. So I started to advertise. Let it be know that certain items were available at deep discounts. See, amateurs exist in a vacuum. They don't have sources working for them. They don't have muscle to make sure they aren't boosted, they don't have a boss or a patron or whatever feeding them clients and keeping the real parasites off their back. That's what I was. A parasite. An amateur.

Lt. Zabreski: I'll go along with the parasite part.

Sgt. Mayne: Ah, Lieutenant...

Marwanni: Anyway, as long as you're a little fish, they let you alone. You're chum. You cloud the waters and distract the idiots... er, the law... from the real biz. But if you start getting' too big for your flippers, you wind up either dead or on the payroll. I got lucky. If you live in Haven, they tell you to change your name, but that's just because they want to make it easy for you clowns to tell the big operators from the punks. I was a big operator, but I didn't see the need to piss you guys off more than necessary.

Lt. Zabreski: Yeah, I'm sure. Turn that off, Sergeant.

ORGANIZED CRIME

CHAPTER 02

IF YOU CAN'T STAND THE HEAT...

Things are good. The shop is doing well—we just picked up a whole crate of absolutely ancient stuff that belonged to some rich old Incorporate exec who just kicked off. Some of the books are museum quality. There is a Marlowe that must be 300 years old at least. He'd kept it in a plastic case filled with helium. I'm trying to figure out how to rig up the same sort of thing one afternoon about six months after Kea's visit. I've honestly started to forget about the whole thing.

There's a tickle in the back of my head that is my familiar's way of getting my attention. When Aramis calls, it's generally not a good idea to keep him waiting. I don't have to close my eyes, but it makes it easier to concentrate without the added distraction. As my lids drop, he immediately comes into view.

Aramis gets right to the point. He sweeps off his hat and bows quickly before saying "A thousand pardons, my lord, for disturbing you. I assure you that I would not so intrude were it not a matter of the greatest importance. However, it would appear that we have either been visited by a spirit, poltergeist, or ghost, or—more likely but less fortunate—we have been the victim of an attack."

That gets my attention. "Aramis—no overlay."

"Aramis" is the face worn by my familiar, a program that oversees all my other programs. I really like Dumas, so when I wrote a custom face for my familiar, I made it look, speak, and act like the musketeer, Aramis. Fortunately, when things go to hell, I can turn him off.

"Report—summary."

"Security manager detected an alteration of accounting files 26 seconds ago. A review of access logs suggests this file has not been opened in several weeks, but there are discrepancies. Changes are limited to graphic representations of funds transfers."

"Show me."

Aramis dissolves into virtual pixels, then coalesces into graphic images of several of the accounts to which the funds from Lavender had been transferred. Instead of the usual green polygons, the account icons are tiny red spheres. The message is simple: Somebody good enough to beat shop security has been in the computer and they don't care if I find out or not. Indeed, they want me to know, and they want me to think it was Atlas Materials. Which, given recent events, it probably was.

I back out of the system and see Liesel staring down at me through the sheet of bioplastic I was supposed to be holding, a tube dripping sealant over an otherwise perfectly clear display case.

"You know, Tony, you'd save a bunch if we didn't have to keep doing this six or seven times."

The first thing I do is launch an encrypted directive to my broker's office to have her close out those accounts and convert it all into hard currency. Doesn't matter what—just something that won't disappear in a computer crash. Then Aramis, the security manager, and I sit down for a long chat.

It looks like the attack breached the system piggybacked on some scheduled updates. It wasn't actually a directed attack, but a worm that had slipped past the firewalls divided among more than 50 separate updates and was then compiled and run by a rider stuck on a provenance report for the dead Incorporate guy's books. The little tag collected the slivers of programming, strung them all together, and sent it off to look for certain account numbers and transaction codes. Whenever it found them, it replaced the icon with the Atlas logo. Then it sent confirmation to its creator by latching on to outgoing low-priority mail. My grocery order, a tracking request on scheduled shipments from Earth, and a letter to a charter fishing service in New Fremantle—all transmitted bits and pieces of my financial records, decoded and in the clear, and sent God only knows where.

What happens next?

One of the apartment buildings I purchased in an attempt to hold on to my hard-won cash is firebombed. The attackers use multiple bombs to make sure the job is done right. Interestingly enough, the fire starts at the same time the cops are responding to a 12-fan hover that crashes into a residence across town. That residence just happens to be the

home of six guys who were part of my strike team for the al-Mamlakah job. I have the security manager start patrolling the 37 separate lines in and out of the shop and the nine separate gateways those lines lead to. It discovers evidence of big, ugly bots in three and is attacked by something calling itself "Enigma" in a fourth.

I hire a team of MacLeod rent-a-mercs to guard the store itself. Their sergeant is like a brick wall with arms and completely without a sense of humor. We get along swimmingly. They leave a remote inside the shop that looks tough enough to take on battle armor. I'm very jealous.

Turns out I probably shouldn't have bothered with the hired goons. A week after they show up, somebody pops off a car bomb across the street and takes out two of the troopers. As the debris is settling, a light hover cruises by and spits two Molotov cocktails into the shop. Kurt, Liesel, and I duck out the back. Everybody gets away without a scratch. I'm not too concerned about the shop, either. It's got great fire-suppression gear—has to in order to meet building code. Besides, most of the books on the shelves are just holograms. I keep the genuine articles in a vault.

This is getting out of hand. I spend a good seven hours tied into a rented main, but in the end I have my confirmation. An Atlas manager named Nitta Anantanini signed a memo ordering the original sneak of my accounting files. I try to avoid dealing with "unsavory elements," but the situation is calling for extreme measures. Through a number of cutouts, I get hold of a no-necked psychopath named Gregor. Three days later, Anantanini's body washes up on the beach in front of the al-Mamlakah Executive. Immediately afterwards, I use an anonymous courier service to send Saide ibn-Fahad a note with the names of several investigative reporters at the Colonial Times, the name and Core address of a reputable hacker board, and one of the four routes I've used to get into the Atlas computers. The threat, I think, is implicit: Back off or I go public and expose your weak spots to a horde of guys just like me.

It doesn't work, of course.

They shoot Kurt with a dart painted in shellfish toxin on his way home the next week. That's it. I'm not going to put anybody else in danger and more killing doesn't really appeal to me. Especially if the one being killed is me. The day after Kurt dies, I hand Liesel a million in cash and tell her to get good and lost. Then I call Gregor myself.

"Tony. You're a rather hot item."

"I know, Gregor. And it doesn't look like things are going to get any cooler. I think I made somebody mad. I need to hide out for a while."

"You need to do a lot more than that, my friend. You need to get out of town."

"I worked way too hard to get here to just turn around and bail out, Gregor. Look, I've got quite a bit to offer you. Give me a place to hide out, and I can assure you and your bosses a substantial return on your investment."

"No offense, Tovarsich, but we don't want you. No matter how much you're gonna bring in with you, you are heat we don't need. I think you should let us get you a freezer. How about this: Let us get you a berth on the Bowditch—she leaves orbit next week. We'll have somebody meet you at the other end. We'll set you up in business, same kind of shop you had before, but you do the occasional job for some friends of ours on Earth. What do you say?"

He's right, and I know it. If I stay, I'll just be delaying the inevitable. I sigh.

"All right. Okay. Deal. What do I do?"

Gregor smiles. His self-satisfied grin makes him look even crazier. "Don't worry. Let us do the work. And welcome to the Family."

THE GORCHOFF FAMILY

SMALL TIME

Through a series of historical accidents, the Russians have acquired a natural affinity for the *vorovskoi mir*, the thieves' world. When Ghengis Khan swept down from Mongolia and engulfed central Russia, the horde was the ancestor to the protection racket. "Pay us tribute, and we'll see that nobody burns your village" is only a few steps from "Jimmy Z forgot to pay on time, and now he sleeps with the fishes, see?"

The Czars were only a little more civilized, using the Cossacks as their enforcers to keep the country in line. It was the Communists, though, who really taught the Russians the game of organized crime. Corrupt party commissars were the first to perfect the art of the shadow economy, the *zapodlo*. Budding wiseguys learned these skills under the threatening eyes of the KGB and the Interior Ministry. The strict Party hierarchy—local bosses reporting to apparatchiks to regional commissars to the Central Committee—provided a framework that the nascent Organizatsya would mimic. Over the decades, the small-time Leningrad hoods wound their tendrils of fear and corruption throughout the landscape, slowly metamorphosing into bona fide, hardcore St. Petersburg goodfellas.

The last, ultimate step was the privatization and deregulation of the national economy in the latter days of the 20th Century. When the Soviet Union began to crumble, the Communist Party struggled to divest itself of assets and spirit away all the hard currency it could. Into the vacuum stepped the Oligarchs—a few dozen venture capitalists who grew fabulously rich off the rubble of 70 years of socialist political and economic infrastructure. Eventually, the Mob replaced these men with people it could control. The government of Russia, only half-jokingly referred to as a "kleptocracy" by analysts, became utterly impotent. The true power was the Organizatsya's "council" of bosses.

By the time the Incorporate states arrived in Russia, they were up against a shadow government that had interests everywhere. Every industry of consequence had a "Mob tax" added to its operating costs. Entire resort towns existed to serve the recreation needs of Mafiya *vors* and their lieutenants. According to some social theorists, the Incorporate owed a debt of filial homage to the Organizatsya. In the words of Dr. Edwin Bregers, head of a GEO think tank on organized crime, "The backroom government of the Mafiya paved the way for the smoky boardroom management-government mix of the Incorporate."

A PIECE OF THE ACTION

The modern-day Gorchoffs can trace their roots back more than 100 years to some of the most influential Moscow mobsters of the late 21st Century. Pavel Yarberev started out as a pickpocket, working in the trendy tourist sections of the recently renovated Muscovite fashion district. The talented Yarberev quickly became one of the top producers in the area, winning him praise and notice from several local *vor v zakonye*—the "thief-in-law" mob bosses. Among these was Ivan "Fat Vanya" Zaputin.

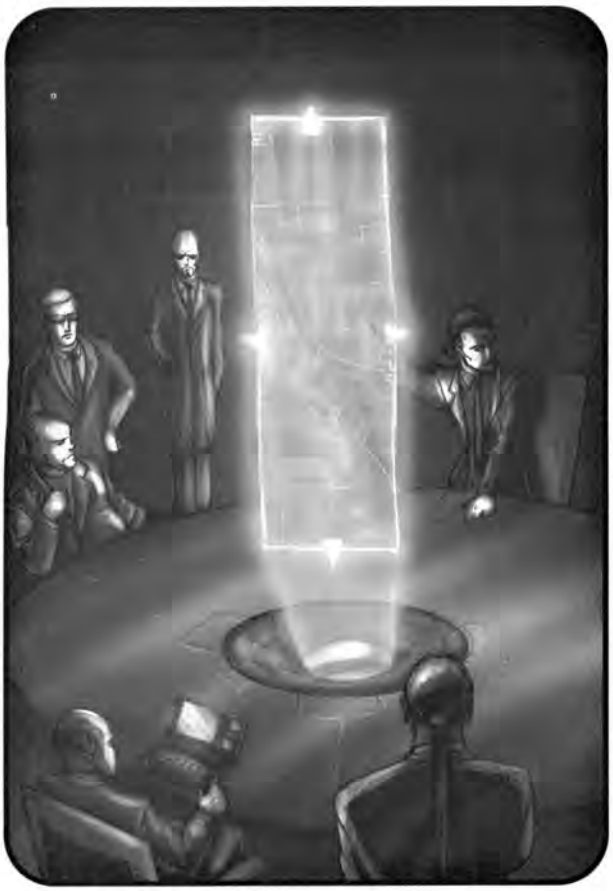
Fat Vanya was one of the five men who ran most of the business in Moscow—and thus in all of Russia. He had his thick strangler's fingers in everything from the booming trans-Caucasus oil supplies to Russia's still-struggling space industry. Soon a part of the Organizatsya's power structure, Yarberev came up with a scheme to steal information from customers' data cards at cash registers in any of the hundreds of department stores, groceries, movie houses, banyas, and travel agencies that Zaputin had an interest in. With the careful movement of thousands of small transactions or marginally inflated bills, the boss netted millions of rubles in the first six months, catapulting Pavel Yarberev into the limelight.

MURDER, INC.

Yarberev was quickly promoted through the hierarchy of the Organizatsya, taking on more and more responsibility and developing a reputation as a tough guy. In the fall of 2136, with much of the world still reeling from the Blight, he helped put together a professional hit squad. Pavel, along with members of Yigal Mahfouz's gang and the Porostrovitch Family, set his gang up as "The Rovenidzhe Custodial Service," an assassination team for hire.

The gang traveled around the planet and even to Luna to threaten, beat, kidnap, or kill just about anybody—as long as the price was right. The "cleaners" often provided their services as favors to other Mafiya bosses. Pavel showed himself to be an effective leader, an above-average tactician, and an absolutely ruthless, relentless killer. The killings themselves brought Yarberev and Zaputin an enormous amount of notoriety, along with something infinitely more valuable—influence. It was during this heady time that Pavel Yarberev met and fell in love with Zaputin's daughter, Elena Gorchov. After a whirlwind courtship, they were married at Zaputin's Caspian Sea dacha. In 2149, Elena gave birth to a son the couple named Vladimir.

It wasn't long before Zaputin, now the top of the Mob food chain, degenerated from heartless businessman to self-important punk. Fat Vanya made the mistake of moving into other bosses' territories and cutting into their revenues. Left with no other



choice, the Council arranged to assassinate the reckless Zaputin.

Heading home to his stylish penthouse suite, Zaputin decided at the last minute to attend a birthday party for a family retainer. Vanya dropped off Leila Dadeev, his fashion-model mistress, in the lobby of his apartment building and sped off to an all-night bacchanal. When Dadeev swiped her keycard for access to the penthouse, a fan blew minute quantities of a designer bacteria into the elevator. While Zaputin was stumbling home the next morning, Dadeev was coughing up bloody, wet shreds of lung in a cold Moscow ICU.

The gangland war that followed recalled Prohibition-era Chicago. In the next four months, 58 wiseguys were shot, stabbed, poisoned, infected, bludgeoned, blown up, tortured, run over, drowned, or otherwise terminated. Pavel Yarberev and his group, though, blew town until the Moscow mob had torn itself to pieces. When things had reached a fever pitch, Yarberev and his crew of hired guns stepped into the vacuum and whacked all four of the surviving Council members. Pavel himself shot his father-in-law in the face.

The next day, he sent couriers to the remaining fragments of the Mafiya power structure, giving them a choice. "Come work for the boss. Or don't work for the boss, and say hello to Vanya." By winter, Yarberev had established himself as the top man in the Organizatsya and "going to see Vanya" became classic Mob slang.

PICK YOURSELF UP, DUST YOURSELF OFF...

Over the years, Vladimir Yarberev grew almost seamlessly into the family business. Like his father Pavel, Vladimir cut his teeth on the Mafiya's more traditional operations. He controlled much of the heroin and designer-drug trade for Eastern Europe and northern Asia. He ran a prostitution ring in Moscow and St. Petersburg that was unmatched in size or complexity. Rumor had it that Vlad even supplied "wives" to some Mafiya members, young girls who would, for months at a time, cook, clean, and keep house while still providing more common services.

Unfortunately for Vladimir, he was not the only one with aspirations on his father's lofty position. Andrey Porostrovitch was one of the original Rovenidzhe Cleaners. According to Porostrovitch, his greater experience and his leadership of the Mob's more-profitable and lower-profile corporate scams meant he should take the helm when Pavel retired.

For several years, the Organizatsya remained divided, with the smart hoods paying homage to both men. In 2188, though, a group of drug producers in Colombia and the Golden Triangle called a summit to discuss policy for dealing with new tactics from the GEO Marshal Service. At the last minute, anonymous tipsters called all of the attending *vors* and warned of an imminent raid—all of the bosses except Pavel and Vladimir Yarberev.

Pavel arrived minutes before his son. Noting the absence of any of the other expected attendees, he phoned Vladimir and warned him it was a drop. However, he did not manage to avoid the raid. The result was a furious gunfight through the streets of Bangkok that left Elena and Pavel Yarberev dead and Vladimir running for his life. In the ensuing months, Vladimir fled to Van Diemen Interplanetary and had himself and a corps of trusted retainers frozen and shipped to Poseidon. Their hope was to begin again on more fertile ground.

In the early days of the colonization rush, security on the orbital station GEO-1 was about as thick as the air outside. Nevertheless, before shuttling down to the surface, Vladimir and his entourage were all required to give their names. Not wanting to tempt fate more than necessary, Vladimir gave his mother's last name, Gorchov. The other gangsters all gave the same last name. The dubious Customs and Immigration clerk recorded the names, but the voice-recognition software on the computer system transcribed the surname as "Gorchoff." The Gorchoff crime family was born.

...AND START OVER AGAIN

Determined not to fall into the same ham-handed traps as before, Vladimir Gorchoff carefully planned his operation in Haven. He and his Family subsisted for more than a year off the capital they brought with them from Earth. During these months, wiseguys and enforcers began to plant the family's roots in the rich soil of the city's criminal underworld.

The Gorchoffs originally took up residence in a failed warehouse west of the Heights, in the neighborhood that would eventually be known as Gorkytown. Vladimir purchased the entire building from its owner and financed the warehouse's conversion to upscale apartments.

The Family frequented many of the restaurants, clubs, and other businesses in the neighborhood, often financing struggling enterprises. When the owners had trouble paying for anything—from insurance premiums to interest on boat loans—Mr. Gorchoff was always there to step in and fix the problem, for a price. In the end, the Gorchoffs had built themselves a moneymaking machine, an engine with which to power future growth.

By 2193, the Gorchoffs were ready to begin expanding in earnest. They muscled in on independent hydrogen producers and began setting the price at which they could sell the critical fuel, always taking points off the top. Vladimir returned to his roots and set up a prostitution racket, luring attractive men and women to Poseidon with promises of jobs in the "entertainment industry" and landing them penniless in Family-controlled brothels. In a particularly sadistic ploy, Nina Gorchoff, whose actual last name was Lazutkin, arranged to have the recruits' IHMS coolers dosed with a designer narcotic, ensuring that each would emerge a hopeless addict, completely dependent on the Family for their next fix.

In 2195, the Family acquired a strong interest in the union of tugboat captains who towed orbital shuttles between Lesear Spaceport and the Dropzone, as well as the warehouse workers responsible for loading and unloading them. In 2196, the Family bought a large block of warehouses on Shuttle Point through a publicly held shell company called the Haven Industrial Development Group. This gave the Family an unlimited source of income in a bewildering array of corporate currencies. Zarya Lazutkin and Mikhail Nabayev, both junior Family members, were sent to Earth to earn degrees in economics. When they returned to Poseidon, they began using the Family's enormous cash reserves to manipulate the corporate scrip exchange market on Poseidon.

HELL HATH NO FURY...

Bruno Gorchoff is among the ranking bosses of the Poseidon Mafiya. One of Vladimir's principle deputies, Bruno handles most of the day-to-day grunt work of running the Family. He is the typical contact person for the bulls—up-and-coming mobsters who manage the crews and actually execute the protection scams, the theft rings, and the distribution networks. Bruno Gorchoff is a very hands-on operator, and his record reflects this. He has been detained by the Patrol more than a dozen times. Marshal Church has interviewed Bruno personally on two separate occasions. The second time, the Gorchoff lieutenant managed to avoid a conspiracy-to-murder rap, but still spent 18 months in the Haven lockup for "obstructing justice."

Bruno Gorchoff got his job—and keeps it—through intimidation. At two meters and 120 kilos, Bruno is an imposing figure. He has been bald since long before his first set of longevity treatments. His bare scalp is a lacy, intricate network of fine scars—some self-inflicted, others not. His left thumb is a cloned replacement, the original having been lost in a knife fight on the streets of St. Petersburg. Although his overactive sense of machismo would never allow him to admit it, Bruno has undergone extensive biosculpting, and much of his muscle mass is bolt-on. Still, he moves with a smoothness and grace that can be simultaneously subdued and threatening.

No matter how fearsome his appearance might be, Bruno Gorchoff's mind is worse. His preferred

weapon is a set of miniscule, three-centimeter diamond knives, perfect for inflicting a myriad of tiny wounds for maximum pain and for killing by bleeding the victim to death. Bruno's favorite negotiating tool is a set of seven-centimeter nails. If two troopers bring an argument to the Gorchoff number-two man and Bruno thinks one of them is lying, he has a tendency to nail the offender's hand to the table. As a result, disputes between Family members are typically handled without official mediation.

AS A WOMAN SCORNED

Bruno Gorchoff's polar opposite is the Family's other major underboss. Pia Gorchoff is a graduate of one of Earth's most prestigious public relations and management programs. With more than a decade of public relations, marketing, and negotiating experience, Pia was approached by the Family through several cutouts to handle an image problem with operations at the spaceport. Pia, possessing a shark's instinct and a healthy dose of street smarts, figured out who was really running the operation and pointed this out in her final report. Impressed with her chutzpah, Vladimir himself recruited her into the Organizatsya. She changed her name in less than two years, rising rapidly through the ranks while exploiting whole new areas of interest for the Mafiya.

Perhaps her greatest success has been the Organizatsya's involvement with the Global Hydroshot League. Originally limited to illegal betting and bookmaking, Pia has forged new connections between the Family's drug-trafficking and money-laundering operations and the hydroshot league. Many of the GHL's hottest stars are addicted to synthetic endorphins and performance enhancers that are invisible to league-mandated toxin scavengers.

With the judicious application of supporting capital or the threat of labor problems, Pia has infiltrated the boardrooms of the Try-Town Tsunami, the Atlantis Volcanoes, and even the league-dominating Haven Colonials. There is some speculation that Pia Gorchoff engineered the race to the 2198 league championship and the sudden, post-season collapse of the previously ascendant Cliffside Cyclones in an attempt to manipulate gambling results.

WE ARE FAMILY

Together, Pia and Bruno, along with a number of other high-ranking Family lieutenants, control cells of Organizatsya activity in nearly every settlement on the planet. Elaborate smuggling and distribution networks ensure that dealers and fences in even the most isolated towns have a steady supply of product to keep them going. Through the two or three tough guys who inhabit even the smallest village, the threatening cloud of Mafiya influence extends over the entire face of Poseidon.

The Gorchoff Family is steadily becoming irrevocably entwined in the fabric of commerce and life on the colony world. Syndicate operations make, steal, sell, and trade nearly every luxury and vice known to man or cetacean. The Family's influence extends from business to pleasure, from natural birth to violent death. As much as they are reviled by some, they are the refuse collectors, the garbage eaters, and the recreational safety valve for a colony on the edge.

ORGANIZATION

As might be expected, the Gorchoff Family has the most traditional, rigid organization of all the crime syndicates on Poseidon. The Family still maintains a very vertical structure. "Uncle" Vladimir holds singular sway over the entire outlaw organization. He is the major decision maker and is responsible for setting Family policy. Significantly, Vladimir only rarely gives orders to street-level operatives, thus preserving a certain insulating distance and plausible deniability. Instead, the elder Gorchoff delegates much of his authority to a number of trusted deputies.

There are two known exceptions to this general rule. In the entire Organizatsya, Vladimir Gorchoff is the only one who can authorize an "official" Family hit. The other task "Uncle Vlad" takes very personally is the "making" or "naming" of new Organizatsya members. Only individuals who have shown their worth and tested their mettle are given the privilege of using the Gorchoff surname. Once Family leadership has determined that an individual is skillful or valuable enough to become essentially a "permanent" member of the Organizatsya, Uncle Vladimir will accept them into the Family. After their "adoption," many will maintain their old identification, accounts, and the like for dealing with contacts, scam targets, and the occasional Patrol officer, but use their new name almost exclusively in other situations. Historically, the

usage of the Gorchoff name by one who has not been made is likely to provoke extraordinary anger by the legitimate members.

In reality, there are likely less than a hundred people with the Gorchoff surname on Poseidon. These individuals include Vladimir and his immediate family. Vladimir's wife, children, and grandchildren are the only persons not actively involved in the workings of the Mafiya entitled to the Gorchoff name. The two persons of greatest importance besides Vladimir himself are Pia and Bruno Gorchoff, the major lieutenants. Between the two of them, Pia and Bruno supervise all of the Family's ongoing activities.

Below these two are a substantial number of "bulls," as well as a few "independents." The independents are Family operatives that work alone. It is believed that this list includes a number of "cleaners," as well as certain individuals indirectly associated with the administration of Family operations, including attorneys and accountants. The bulls each lead a crew of between five and 30 gangsters and enforcers who are responsible for the Mafiya's myriad daily workings. The crews handle everything from bank heists to extortion to drug running, with their respective bulls making sure the work gets done and that individual crews do not get in each other's way. A given crew will typically have a strictly defined area or business of responsibility, with the distinctions being made rather clearly.

THE NRM

Princes shall come out of Egypt and Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.

— Psalm 68:31

GOING BACK TO MY ROOTS

In 1919, Marcus Garvey amassed a following of two million Americans, proposing that black people should, if possible, return to their ancestral Africa. Garvey's slogan "Every nation to their own vine and fig tree" became a popular rallying cry. Recognizing the constraints of reality, Garvey proposed that, barring full repatriation of expatriate

Africans, they should live as independently as possible from the white establishment. The underlying justification of his ideas included Bible verses that specifically referred to blacks or Ethiopians in a particularly favorable light.

Garvey was building on the previous works of such notable figures as Bishop Henry McNeil Turner, who pointed to the ancient Empire of Ethiopia as one of the last areas of black control in Africa still standing against the tide of European colonialism. In 1896, the defeat of invading Italian forces by Emperor Menelik II at the Battle of Adwa gave more credibility to Turner's ideas, and elevated the already mythic status and redemptive symbolism of Ethiopia in the eyes of Africans at home and abroad. Garvey elaborated on this, claiming that the time was near when a king would arise in Africa, ushering in a black-ruled heavenly paradise. Many people believe he was right.

In November of 1930, Ras Tafari, Prince Regent of the Empire of Ethiopia, was crowned His Imperial Majesty, Emperor Haile Selassie I, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, and 225th in an unbroken line of kings that extended from the union of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. Selassie's ascension to the throne coupled with Garvey's populist backing led to the founding of a new theology: Rastafarianism. Founded on the central struggle between the establishment of Babylon and the paradise of Zion, the equality and unity of all mankind, and the importance of simplicity, the Rastafari movement quickly took hold and blossomed over the next 100 years.

CLIMB THE LADDER

When the Athena Project was first conceived and the monumental task of selecting the first 5,000 colonists began, maintaining a broad range of cultural diversity was a key priority. Members of countless different ethnic groups and religions were included. Quentin "Quinn" McDerritt was included on the list partially because of his standout performance as a bioprospector in Central and South America and partially because of his award-winning writing. Quinn held two patents and had discovered 39 new species. He was also awarded a Pulitzer Prize for poetry for his work *Mountain Jam Down*.

Although *Mountain Jam Down* expressed the same sort of populist ideas that are common to Rastafarianism, McDerritt never described himself as a Rasta. Many felt that the selection committee went too far when their internal application summary cited the book as a seminal work of Dread theology. McDerritt, though, ran with the opportunity. Realizing that the committee would be more likely to include him if he could offer some sort of cultural uniqueness, the botanist played up his hometown roots, attempting to pass himself off as a bona fide Jamaican holy man. It may never be known whether or not the selection committee fell for McDerritt's ruse, but it did select him for the Athena Project.

When discussing the beginnings of the African diaspora that started with the slave trade, one Rasta Elder said "Rastafari is a conception that was born at the moment that Europeans took the first black man out of Africa. They didn't know it then, but they were taking the first Rasta from his homeland." Of the *Cousteau*'s journey, it could be said that the New Rastafarian Movement was born at the moment the first black man stepped on Poseidon. He didn't know it then, but he had arrived in his new homeland.

DREAMS OF FREEDOM

Nathaniel Lesear was the first to describe hormone-induced euphoria in 2080. Seven years later, Quinn McDerritt dove headfirst off a dock in the Haven Channel and found out what it really was. McDerritt experienced a vision that engaged all his senses and encompassed his entire reality. In later years, McDerritt would describe the moment as "a sharp-toothed condemnation of my previous life." His overwhelming experience, incapacitating in its intensity, landed him in an observation unit of the Haven infirmary for a day and a half. But this was to be only the start.

McDerritt launched a subtle mini-crusade amongst the Athena colonists. Although he avoided forcing his views on his colleagues, McDerritt nevertheless began to alter the way he interacted with the rest of the colony and with the planet. Turning a deaf ear to the complaints of his coworkers, he moved away from the center of Haven. Over the course of a year, he transplanted his lab to a rocky promontory on Argos Island. He adopted the traditional restricted Ital diet of the Rastas. He spent much of each day in meditation, often accompanied by one of the colony's children on a simple hide drum or by recorded music. It was during this time that McDerritt had what his diary called a "second rev-

elation" that led to his later theories on the true purposes of the Athena Project.

When the aging Rasta packed up his lab and left the Haven Cluster, he took 93 other scientists and engineers with him. Their initial sailing course brought them into the middle of the Haven Current, and then into the branch that would become known as the Jamaica Spur. This warm-water flow carried the Rastas through water teeming with life—sunbursts, sea birds, giant schools of trident fish. Their rapid progress and unofficial escort offered further signs to McDerritt—they were obviously the blessings of Jah, providing for the travelers.

In a short time, the voyagers made landfall on the northeast coast of a chain of islands and established a settlement that would have sent Marcus Garvey into transports of Ethiopianist joy. The travelers created a community that was entirely self-sufficient and made a genuine attempt to live as close as possible to the natural ecosystem. After a time, the pilgrims began establishing a string of settlements throughout the islands. The first and largest they named Kingston, after McDerritt's birthplace. They saw the name as a link to the past, but they viewed themselves as people of the present, renewing their sense of oneness with each other and with the world every day. They saw their spiritual unity as always being brand new and timeless. Hence, they began calling themselves the New Rastafarian Movement.

TALKIN' BLUES

For 70 years, the Zion Islands settlements and Kingston itself did quite well for themselves. The New Rastas managed to achieve positive population growth in an environment that, despite all their good will, was extremely dangerous. There was a slow but steady influx of new settlers from other villages and towns around the archipelago, people seeking the peaceful life they had heard could be found in Kingston.

The early days of Recontact were relatively calm. The reintroduction of technology was met with guarded enthusiasm—regardless of the Rastas' philosophy, living off the sweat of one's brow and the strength of one's back is hard, hard work. However, the government representatives were met with considerably less enthusiasm. The bureaucrats were prepared to set up a GEO extension office. They wanted to know all sorts of things about how the town elected a mayor and how the citizens were represented, how often they voted and how they collected taxes. They were astonished when, after taking what technological assistance *Perry*'s crew could offer, the natives calmly but firmly asked them to leave.

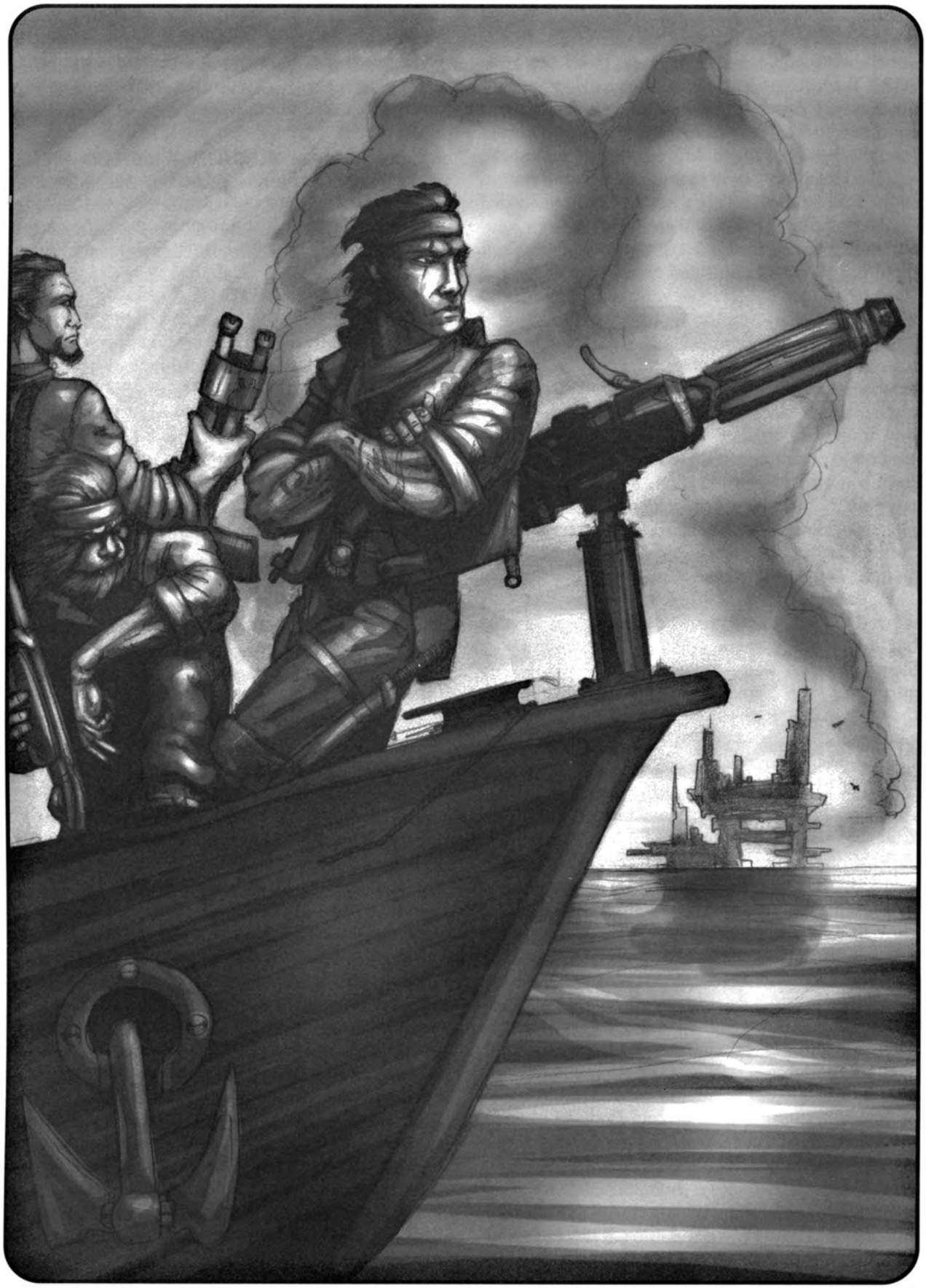
Although Reg Hayes, McDerritt's spiritual successor, had originally proposed that the Recontact mission be met with open arms, he was forced by the great weight of public opinion to change his stance somewhat. New alarmist factions developed in the group. This was Babylon all over again. The arguments that followed were some of the most violent and divisive in the history of the settlement. They eventually wound up costing Hayes his life. But it was too late: The decisions had been made light-years away, and the Rastas, like it or not, were caught in the middle. Civilization was coming to Kingston.

BABYLON BY BUS

Over the following years, the influx of technology and technicians was steady. The comfortable settlement on Anotto Bay became more and more crowded as tensions rose higher and higher. At first, the natives nominated members of the community to represent them in an informal council. For several years it worked well. The citizens would select people they thought were particularly bright or holy, decisions would be made, and things got done. Crime remained low, and punishment—when necessary—was handed out by the entire village. But when Long John was discovered in the Zion Islands in 2188, the carefully balanced system fell apart. There were simply too many people with too much money in too little space too fast.

Tensions reached their boiling point early in 2189 when a group of Long John miners, drunk on cheap beer and the elation of a big strike, beat a 77 year-old mystic nearly to death over his condemnation of their boisterous behavior. That night, young natives began forming vigilante groups called posses, hoping to evoke the spirit of old Kingston tough guys and Jamaican gangs. The posses let it be known that no one would harm a native in Kingston and live to tell about it.

It is suspected that Ian Weiser, former headman of a Cape Fortune posse, led rival Ian Balfour into the jungle and pointed him into the path of a hatchling nest. Whether or not it was an accident, Balfour's death in 2194 brought Ian Weiser to the forefront of the posses just as the GEO began pushing hard



for the establishment of a Colonial Affairs office in Kingston. Weiser was responsible for pulling together a powerful coalition of posses plus many of the more influential councilors long before the vote to reject the GEO was taken. Weiser himself made the motion that Kingston and, by extension, natives everywhere on Poseidon, ought to refuse to recognize the GEO. With the support of two of the major splinter groups—the Locksmen and the Sword of Zion—the measure was assured and Weiser's power was cemented.

THREE LIONS

In the wake of this landmark event, Weiser began consolidating his position. The posses, now fueled more by self-interest than righteous indignation, were eager to follow Weiser's directions. They hunted up dirt on an ever-widening circle of councilmen. Weiser also fought to tease direction of the posses away from the Rasta bredren. Although he still insisted that every posse member espouse the traditional philosophies, he carried on Balfour's earlier work to split the posses away from the theocracy. Eventually he got his wish. In mid-2195, by general acclimation but without anything as divisive as a formal vote, Ian Weiser was elevated to the nominal leadership of the entire New Rastafarian Movement.

Weiser began exploiting Kingston's unique status as an independent political entity free of GEO control. Through a number of contacts throughout the Pacifica Archipelago, the NRM began subtly advertising itself as the universal marketer. "If it's for sale, and even if it's not, it's for sale in Kingston." Weiser facilitated the construction of the Kingston spaceport, creating a port of entry to the planet that was largely free from the prying eyes of the GEO's Customs and Immigration Service. The expanded construction also added a dozen more landing pads and acres of warehouses and cargo storage facilities. All of these assets were, of course, protected by the NRM posses. For a price, naturally.

Although his position at the top of the NRM was remarkably secure, Weiser could not afford to avoid politics. In the long run, he knew he would need allies, ones with deep reserves of wealth and power. Although the conservative Rastafarian Reformation Organization protested loudly, Weiser encouraged Incorporate development in Kingston. He personally approved the construction of the Volkshaus on a platform Hanover Industries planned to build on Cape Fortune. The LavOrg enclave and NIS's Dragon Boy Parlor were not far behind. Although many saw the further encroachment of Babylon into Quinn McDerritt's perfect Zion, the massive influx of capital and resources was difficult to argue with. Virtual rivers of wealth began flowing through Kingston, enriching both legitimate and illegitimate operations controlled by the NRM.

The Locksmen are another branch of Quinn McDerritt's revised Rastafarianism that Weiser has assiduously courted. Like Marcus Garvey before them, the Locksmen advocate a severing of all ties with Babylon. In contrast to the isolationist RRO, the Locksmen identify Babylon almost exclusively with the Incorporate states and the GEO. Indeed, they are some of the most strident supporters of the NRM's reported collaboration with various ecoterrorist groups. On the other hand, many of the Locksmen councilors have been responsible for the organization of the Kingston Music Festival. The Locksmen do not have a problem with newcomers, just "newcomers from Babylon." The RRO, on the other hand, takes an ultraconservative line, advocating a complete closure of the Rasta settlements to all outsiders. The RRO's strongest base of support is in the walled city of Marley, and there is relatively little contact between the two settlements.

The Sword of Zion is the offshoot of the mainstream NRM that is most firmly in Weiser's camp. A small militant group, the Sword is the strongest backer of the NRM's alleged terrorist activities. Sword of Zion front man Jackson LeVant has been closely associated with Ian Weiser since the two of them were troopers in their Cape Fortune posse. LeVant, however, has adopted a more hardline stance toward the Movement's drive to evict the "downpressors." LeVant and his followers firmly believe that the time is coming when the soldiers of Zion will be called to "a voice in the night, crying from out of the wilderness against Babylon."

DREAMS OF FREEDOM

LeVant came by his beliefs through careful study of Quinn McDerritt's writing. McDerritt believed that Poseidon, not Garvey's Ethiopia, was the true Promised Land. McDerritt wrote that the Messengers of Jah had entrusted these revelations to him. From his later writings, it seems clear that McDerritt was referring to Poseidon's aborigines. His diary makes mention of extensive contacts with schools of the enigmatic creatures both

around Haven and in Annotto Bay. Quinn wrote of days and weeks spent fasting and swimming in the bay, listening to the "divine music of the messengers." He left records of contacts stretching out over 20 years and descriptions of repeated visions that featured an army of Rastas marching across a barren plain towards Armageddon, the final battle.

Jackson LeVant has taken these writings as literal truth, and has spent much of his life hoping for contact with McDerritt's messengers. Up until recently, he had never had direct contact with the strange beings. This all changed, however, on a particularly dark, steaming Kingston night. LeVant had spent much of the evening in a suffocating dockside saloon's backroom, talking biz with several of the Cape Fortune headmen. The biz left unfinished, LeVant stepped out of the saloon for the short swim across Annotto Bay back to the central part of town.

When he was well out into the bay, McDerritt's messengers came for him. According to LeVant, the messengers whipped the bay into a froth, a sudden storm that left him tossed and disoriented. In the midst of it all, he heard their message. The wind will whip the waves into a fury, and the water will wash the world clean. Will you be our wind, Jackson Jerome LeVant? Will you lash the waves of your people until they batter down the walls? Will you pile their water up, up, up, up to rinse the stain of evil out of the sky? Will you let them pound the deeps, so that the servants of the night are forever trapped in darkness? Armageddon is coming, Jackson, and Zion needs a captain.

In the weeks since, Jackson LeVant has lobbied ceaselessly for more money to pay his MacLeod Enforcement "advisors" and for more and bigger guns. He has presented Ian Weiser with a plan to divert some of their usual weapons shipments, previously earmarked for groups around the planet, to NRM units preparing for the coming war against the Incorporate. Trained Sword of Zion operatives stole an ERT Cormorant ground-effect plane and are retrofitting it for combat work. LeVant has even proposed further negotiations with the Gorchoff family for more powerful, more exotic tools of destruction.

LeVant's tiny operations staff has been working around the clock to develop a list of available Incorporate and GEO targets. He has even started running surveillance on Hanover, LavOrg, and NIS citizens living in Kingston, placing them at the top of his hit list. LeVant is fairly sure that the general NRM leadership will refuse to authorize any of his newest plans, but he is prepared to take action on his own, if he feels the time is right.

Meanwhile, LeVant has stepped up Sword of Zion support for mainstream NRM ecoterrorism activities. Immediately after the last Kingston Music Festival, he assigned a dozen trained fighters to the planned attack on a convoy of GenDiver cargo vessels carrying tons of low-grade ore intended for processing at Santa Elena. With their help, and with the augmented weaponry LeVant has been buying from MacLeod, the convoy was completely wiped out and the Long John dumped over the side of the transports.

This success has earned LeVant considerable prestige with the more militant NRM members. Weiser has been forced to appear supportive of LeVant's activities, since to refute them would be to court political disaster. Weiser is cursed with a dilemma —whether to allow LeVant to continue his crusade and eventually bring down the wrath of the Incorporate on the NRM; to repudiate LeVant, playing false to the memories of Marcus Garvey, Quentin McDerritt, and countless others; or to try to take over direction of the Sword of Zion's activities himself, so that their strikes could be aimed at less controversial sites.

SOUL REBELS

Although Ian Weiser is a gifted leader, he has also been blessed with a number of skilled subordinates. A GEO dossier describes Isaac Mosely as a mid-level pharium dealer of some moderate importance. It is sadly mistaken. Mosely, a lifetime NRM member, was responsible for doing much of the initial development work in setting up the Movement's lucrative narcotics trafficking operations.

Mosely spent much of his teenage years sailing around the archipelago with the tramp freighters that often called in Kingston. These contacts helped the NRM develop a distribution network that reaches every settlement of consequence on the planet. Mosely has also become the Movement's chief contact with the Gorchoff Family. His experiences beyond the NRM enclave have cultivated his ability to deal and work with the "baldheads." Today, Isaac spends much of his time shuttling between island hideouts, meeting

with growers and lab cooks, smugglers and upper-level distributors, keeping the enormous drug-moving machine operating smoothly.

Weiser's newest assistant is Marly Louvier. Marly was brought up by the Blessed Grace Sistren, a group of women living in a females-only commune several kilometers inland from Annotto Bay. The Blessed Sistren believe strongly in the value of education, and Marly had the equivalent of a graduate degree in computer science by the time she left the Sistren at age 21. She immediately went to work for the NRM and quickly became the head-girl for the Movement's communications and information efforts. In reality, she *became* the Movement's communications and information efforts.

The young Louvier was responsible for setting up IrieNet, Kingston's own regional communications network. She ultimately plans for Kingston and IrieNet to become a free data haven. There are no regulations in IrieNet against the development of powerful expert systems, programs designed for the execution of data piracy, or the storage of information obtained in the act of data piracy. A file stored on IrieNet is as close to inviolate as possible and is likely to remain uncompromised forever—or until the storage fees are no longer paid.

ORGANIZATION

The NRM has a number of special challenges, since it purports to be not a criminal organization but a political and religious movement. GEO Justice Commission officers are warned that the GEO does not recognize the legitimacy of the NRM's claim to govern any part of the Zion Islands, and any interactions with members or bodies of the NRM should be strictly as private citizens. Any attempt to interact with the NRM as a governing body will be met with the fullest disciplinary measures available.

It may, indeed, be a misnomer to consider the NRM a single organization. Jackson LeVant's Sword of Zion is a strongly reactionary, highly militaristic organization much inclined to violence and the narcotics trade. On the other hand, the Locksmen tend towards pacifism and are among the most vocal in the Movement's political wing. The Selassians tend to a more moderate position, participating both in political activism and the Sword's more radical efforts. Individual Rastafarians may fall anywhere along this spectrum.

Ian Weiser is the unchallenged leader of the group as a whole. There are also identifiable chiefs and elders who lead the NRM's major factions. Many of these elders serve on the Kingston Council. The lines of influence and balance of power between the Council and its various parties, factions, and splinter groups are confused, probably intentionally. Although there are no firmly established connections between the Kingston Council and the criminal elements of the Movement, prestige and membership in the different posses and splinter groups has been shown to correlate with the political fortunes of specific Elders.

The branch of the Movement with which members of the law enforcement community have the most frequent interaction are the NRM posses. These are frequently groups of 20 to 30 youths with a strong group identity and their own collection of recognition symbols, colors, slang terms, and graffiti tags. Their widely variable politics along with their strongly ingrained sense of bravado make dealing with NRM posses uniquely difficult for members of the law enforcement community. A given posse may be rabidly pacifistic or quietly homicidal, with the difference being nearly impossible to determine from casual interaction. A posse's general character, though, is often reflected in their area of "bizniss." Men who are occupied with growing, harvesting, and smuggling pharium are far more likely to respond with aggression towards the authorities than would be a similar group specializing in protection of neighborhood businesses.

However, each posse's code of hand signals, characteristics of dress, stylized speech, or street art may be equally as complex as the other's. The posses are typically very sensitive to social status and readily take affront to slights, real or imagined, that may totally escape the notice of inexperienced outsiders, including law enforcement officers. Grudges held by an individual are often adopted by an entire posse, and an incautious investigator may find himself the target of 30 fanatical toughs without realizing any cause has been given.

CHAPTER 03

THE LAW ON POSEIDON

STUCK IN TRAFFIC

I try not to be too uptight about things. I mean, what's the point in blowing your top at the poor spotnik flipping jump-jump patties who can't be trusted to make change? He doesn't know any better—probably left a few neurons in the freezer, anyway. You holler at the guy, he spills your noodles, the squid behind you gets irate, your asthma acts up, and you still don't have your lunch. Don't get irate—get on with your life.

Of course, I said I try not to get irate. Didn't say I don't do it.

There really aren't enough people in Second Try for there to be a traffic problem. Heck, there really aren't enough people in Try Town for there to be traffic. Nevertheless, it happens. I am stopped on Mordreaux Avenue, up at the top of the hill, just minding my own business and waiting to turn left on my way to meet Gregor's people. Last stop before jumping up to orbit and out of this life I've carved out for myself. Out of nowhere—blam! Big eight-fan climbs right up the back end and nearly goes through the rear window. Sounds like the car exploded, and his front two fans just tear themselves to shreds on my back bumper. When I climb out, it takes me a minute to get my bearings.

The first thing I look at is the damage this moron did to the back end of my car. The second thing I do is berate myself for stupidity. My arms are running at full speed, and I can feel a tingle in my right palm.

"Working—full—safe." I hear the gun's voice in my head.

After a second, I can see the little spot of red on my shoe. When was the last time you heard of a truck that big ramming a stopped passenger car in town? Hovers that large aren't even allowed in town without a computer backup running. The chances of this being an accident are quickly falling to zero.

"Safety. Thirty standard rounds."

I step back from the front end of the eight-fan and behind my open door. There is a guy getting out of the passenger side of the hover. Where's the driver? There are four or five cars around us, all stopped. This is not particularly surprising, since we're effectively blocking the intersection of Mordreaux and Weyland. Nobody gets involved in traffic accidents. What's the point? Must be at least three or four public cameras that caught it. So why are these idiots getting out of their cars?

The circle of light on my foot is green now, and the gun says "Warning—safety off—warning." The factory settings were the other way around—green for safe and red for ready, I guess. There's nothing worse than screaming at the gun for five minutes to shoot, dammit, shoot, only to stop and realize it's calmly telling you safety... safety... safety... safety... safety." Did that once, and figured I'd have to change those colors.

Second Try is well policed, which came as a bit of a shock to me. I know, you've seen all these shows on the cube that say Poseidon is this wide-open place, where whoever draws first is probably guilty and it's okay to shoot him. Generally, he's guilty of something, whether or not it's what you think. In many places, dropping a bad guy in his tracks is considered a public service. But in Poseidon's Second City, the town manager has a vested interest in keeping the place running smoothly. So, Second Try has its Patrol officers and Peacekeepers, and they even have a decent budget.

There's a siren in the distance, and there's some cheap Northwind knock-off diagonal across the intersection from me. The driver has stepped out. He looks way too tough to be driving a Northwind. When the siren starts up, he jumps a little, looks around, and starts heading towards me. I don't really want to go to jail, but I think it might be better than letting Atlas get their paws on me. Those cops might be my saviors.

The passenger of the truck yells over to me. "Hey, compadre. Sorry about your car. I can pay you for it, or for the damage."

He beckons to me. I decide to give him one last chance. "No, thanks. I'd like to wait for the police to decide. It's probably my fault." He shoots a look over at the Northwind driver.

Amateurs. I turn and dive into the front seat of the car. It takes him a second, but the truck guy does exactly what he's supposed to—he whips out a machine pistol of some sort and chews the driver's door to shreds.

I take a moment to drop into the car's onboard system. The front cameras show two people crouching behind a parked Mistral on the far side of the intersection, fiddling around with something big. Left side cam is clear. Rear cam is smashed. The right side shows an oddly distorted view of the tough guy from the Northwind still walking towards me. He's going to be a problem, I think. I really don't want to shoot this guy, not on camera. On the other hand, who said the gun was my only weapon?

I'm trying to get into Try Town's traffic-control system. It takes a while, and then more than a while, then way too long. I'd like to find the registry number of this big hover that ate my car. A tiny corner of my brain is still watching this guy walk towards my car, and now I can see he's got something in his hand. The camera is supposed to be used for parking and the like, so its picture is terrible. Where's the damn gate into TraCon? And then it's obvious. There isn't one. Of course. They knew they were going after me, so why give me more of an advantage than they have to? Maybe not so amateur.

I leave a bot in the Try Town net and tell it to keep looking. Guess I'm going to have to do this the hard way. I kick open the passenger door, but then roll over and dive back out the driver's side. The guy behind the car takes the bait and turns the machine pistol on the passenger door. As the upholstery disintegrates, I see my green dot settle on his chest.

The gun says, "Warning—full—armed. Full. Armed."

Fire three! I think at the gun. I watch the rounds walk up his chest and into his face as the still-firing machine pistol arcs into the sky.

The left-side camera shows the Northwind driver drop to the biocrete as his colleague collapses. I take the opportunity to scuttle forward, past the wreckage where somebody smashed my favorite car.

Fire two, shooting into the sky, hoping it's enough inducement for everybody else to keep their heads down.

Hiding behind the settled hover, the bot calls me back. That Enigma, whatever the heck it was that attacked the shop's security manager, has settled over this entire area, blocking off all access. I'm effectively locked out. I might be able to find a satellite they missed or something, but for the moment, I'm really screwed. Maybe amateurs, maybe not. The tough guy has left the Northwind running.

I'm really screwed.

• • •

Cloned organs are a big deal. There's all sorts of genetic testing, there's the stem cell harvest, there's the cost. Usually, most Incorporates will bear the cost of major medical treatment for their citizens. It's standard in most citizenship contracts. But if you sneak onboard a corporate transport and start mining with all the rest of the grunts, you don't likely have a citizenship contract. The upside is that you don't have to turn in any little goodies you find. Find a nodule of Long John, and it's yours. The downside is that you're pretty much on your own if something goes wrong. Oh, the corp you've been freeloading off of will have to give you basic medical treatment—stabilize you, keep you from dying. But there's nothing that says they have to be extra nice about it or do anything to shorten your stay in the hospital while the bills mount.

So, when something bad happens, it can take your whole stake just to buy a remote with a tiny little miniature manipulator on it. You may have to resort to small-time hacking to pay the rent and the hospital bills. Of course, you may find that constantly not having arms to use frees up that part of your consciousness to go and do other things. You may find that it turns you into one heck of a potential data pirate. If you take your time, learn your lessons, move slowly and deliberately, you may just carve out a niche for yourself. And if, over the years, you manage to scrounge together enough drift to pay for cybernetic replacements and open a little shop as a cover for your increasingly normal lifestyle, you may find that Poseidon really isn't all that bad a place, after all...

...until you forget to respect it.

• • •

The sirens are getting louder. The bot I left in the Try Town net is feeding the Patrol our exact location, as well as the scenes from the left camera. The dillons ought to be here any minute, now. I hope.

I take a deep breath and give the car a series of commands. The first walls off a tiny segment of its onboard processor. The second plants a command into that tiny cell: Honk the horn. Keep honking the horn, and don't stop. The third starts wiping the rest of the onboard memory. No sense in leaving the cops more than I have to.

As soon as I hear the horn start to beep, I'm gone. Sprinting around the back of the crashed hover and digging for the sputtering Northwind, I don't even look at the thug or his two friends across the street to see if they've been distracted by the noise. I don't even glance at what the left camera is showing me. I am concentrating on the front of the Northwind, reaching for it with everything I have.

It feels like a million years before I dive over the front end of the little trike and roll on the biocrete. My face is going to look like hell. Now I spare a thought for the left camera. The tough guy is pointing a long, nasty looking handgun at the front of my car, but he's looking over his shoulder at where the geeks behind the Mistral are pointing. That is, right at me.

I throw the weather shell of the Northwind up and slam on the gas before I'm even completely in the seat. I don't even look behind me, but I hear the back window shatter as a round blasts through it. I'm trying to shove my foot through the floor as the little trike wheezes over the crest of the hill and down the precipitous drop on Weyland. There's a moment when I think I might be free, but that's right before a tree explodes 30 meters in front of me. Then the car dies.

A grenade launcher. Those bastards went after me with a grenade launcher. I dive back into the net, looking for something, anything that will give me the registration number to that Mistral that's sitting back at the intersection. I take a chance and throw everything I have at a little public library gateway. Anything that will get me out into the rest of CommCore so that I can call for some help. Meanwhile, I'm hunting for the ignition. There should be a switch or something to start the damn car. I can see in the camera where the three guys behind me are piling into the Mistral, and it's heaving itself up onto the charcoal gray skirt.

Of course there's no ignition switch. It's remotely operated. And Enigma has locked me out. I get out of the car, run across the open street. I run toward

the blazing tree, for reasons that either don't exist or that I will never know.

I'm half way there when it hits me. The library was a trap. It's full of countermeasures. It's a nest of core ghosts, and they're all screaming for blood—mine. I see them diving straight down the open connection between us. My hardware breakers activate and firewalls flash red. Just like that, the part of my consciousness that has been hardwired to the implant computer as long as I can remember is orphaned. The implant is a black spot in my brain that I can't access, and wouldn't want to even if I could.

I'm blind.

I'm dumb.

I'm dead.

GEO JUSTICE COMMISSION

The Justice Commission's duties are to enforce GEO laws, investigate violations of those laws, serve as a judicial body, and protect civil rights. Its jurisdiction covers all nations and locations with the exception of some independent nations and Incorporate city-states and company towns.

The current High Commissioner for Justice is Sterling Cope (MG 231). Located in Geneva, Switzerland, along with all other GEO High Commissions, Cope's office administers and interprets GEO law on Earth and Poseidon. His responsibilities include appointing Magistrates and directing the many agencies under the Justice Commission's umbrella, from the Marshal Service to the Criminal Custody Division.

Unfortunately, the law has a hard time keeping up with crime, and the HCJ is perpetually short staffed. On Poseidon, Armed Forces has authorized select Peacekeeper units to assist the Justice Commission where law enforcement resources are inadequate.

Among Cope's biggest headaches is a bill approved in 2166 by the General Assembly that applies all GEO laws equally to Poseidon and Earth. Issues such as native rights to property, the legal standing of aborigines as sentient beings, and drugs found only on the waterworld are not addressed in the current statutes. Cope is pressing for amendments written specifically for Poseidoners, but has yet to convince a resistant Executive Council of the necessity of such a move.

Cope is also responsible for appointing Magistrates. This is not a responsibility he takes lightly and each candidate is considered at length before a vacancy is filled.

Deputy High Commissioner for Justice Sharon Webb (see page 89), based on *Prosperity Station*, frequently runs interference for Cope and the Poseidon Magistrates with the Executive Council on Earth. Deputy Webb is credited with improving native relations with the GEO and assisting with the development of the Native Patrol program.

There are 42 offices within the Justice Commission serving specific needs and goals. Among these are the Administration Division, Legislative Planning Council, and Fiscal Support Office.

The Office of Operations handles media, employee, and community relations; manuals and orders; employee training, evaluations, and records; and legal issues. The Training Bureau insures that every person affiliated with the Justice Commission receives the highest quality training available. All law enforcement personnel are required to attend 150 hours of Continued Training courses a year. These range from basic medical assistance to bomb making to hostage negotiation and are designed to create well-rounded officers. Individuals may take any classes desired, as long as the total hour requirement is met by the end of the year.

The Communication and Traffic Coordination Division is responsible for insuring that an officer responds to requests entered on the GEO Justice/Emergency site on CommCore, maintaining a fleet of reliable and ready vehicles, and locating and dispatching back-up personnel or additional resources when needed. In theory, this department keeps track of every officer and acts as a dispatch center. In reality—especially on Poseidon—a shortage of police officers means some requests are not answered very quickly. In fact, some remote villages on Poseidon can expect a week or more response time, depending on the nature of the crime. This is known as prioritized law enforce-

ment. The result is that response times and resources correlate directly with population.

The Justice Commission's Information Resources Division controls identification, property, evidence, and criminal records. IRD administers the Criminal Information Center, an archived database with analyses of criminal intelligence and investigation data, evidence and reference samples for comparison purposes, geographically coded crime statistics, records on stolen property, hair and fiber references, vehicle identification numbers, paint and plastic components files, firearm characteristics, mug shots, outstanding warrants, unidentified and missing persons, criminal histories, and DNA, medical, and fingerprint records of most citizens.

This division also keeps track of specialized equipment on loan, administers informant funds, and provides technical assistance and specialized training to officers. The CIC is accessible by any licensed law enforcement officer, including the Native Patrol.

The Department of Behavior Studies carries out research on criminal behavior and develops new methods of crime prevention. Criminal behavior profiles are especially helpful in identifying crime patterns. The Drug Abuse Forecasting program has been extraordinarily successful and was recently expanded to include studies of how and where drug-related crimes are growing, allowing the Justice Commission to shuffle police to areas where they are most needed, and allowing them to focus on reducing criminal activities and drug sales at the same time. This department also sponsors research and development programs to improve and strengthen the criminal justice system, developing new technologies to fight crime. Evaluations of the effectiveness of current programs help identify techniques that promise to be successful if continued. New and promising research directed towards Poseidon is exploring key issues in community policing, violence against natives, and more efficient use of resources.

The Justice Commission's Forensics Labs are located in every major Earth city occupied by the GEO. There are six on Poseidon—in Dyfedd, Haven (see page 80), Second Try, Atlantis, Hollywood (Endeavor Island), and Ree (Ile Kerguelen)—and they are always busy. Not only does the crime lab examine and store evidence, but four full-time employees in each lab produce detailed, formal reports on every fiber, bioplastic chip, and blood stain that comes through the door. This information is sent to the Information Resources Division and posted on CIC. Evidence is stored in heavily protected vaults to prevent damage or sabotage to pending cases.

The Special Investigations Division looks into suspected conspiracies, explosive-related crimes, gangs and organized crime activities, and carries out surveillance on active criminals. Corporate and computer crimes and acts of industrial sabotage also fall under the SID. Due to staffing shortages, this department's responsibilities are often shared with the Marshals.

The Criminal Custody Division manages the jails and prisons. Upon sentencing by a Magistrate, offenders are transferred to an appropriate facility for the duration of their incarceration. Because maintaining a long-term prisoner on Poseidon is so expensive, violent and particularly dangerous criminals are transported to prisons on Earth. Crews manning the return transports often take less care with these particular passengers, but the receiving authorities are seldom concerned: Most prisons are filled beyond capacity. In fact, a few enterprising Incorporate states have established private prison contracts with city councils or other Incorporate states to accommodate their convicted felons. The GEO approves of this move as long as the prisoner's entire sentence is properly served.

Among the most successful of these private facilities is Hanover Security Service's Böse Strand Correctional Facility on Poseidon (MG120). Two-thirds of the 245 prisoners at Böse Strand are non-Hanover criminals. Concerns mount, however, about poor living conditions and alleged human rights violations at the prison. As the GEO's influence over Haven and the city council increases, the Justice Commission is applying quiet pressure to sever Haven's relationship with Hanover.

The Justice Commission plans to expand the GEO's law enforcement presence as soon as resources become available. Poor results on psychological tests cause many applicants to be turned away from the academies; funding is diverted to other GEO organizations, and in the past three years the General Assembly has focused on the success rates of officers on both planets, overlooking the fact that many crimes go uninvestigated due to personnel shortages.

CRIMINAL INTELLIGENCE

Criminal intelligence, or crime analysis, is the identification and interpretation of the relationships between crime data and other potentially relevant data. It involves collecting information on the actions of criminals, identifying series of related crimes, understanding criminal networks, and detecting patterns of criminal activity. The goal is to know the enemy.

Crime analysis in the past was used by law enforcement with varying degrees of success. The formation of the Criminal Information Center database pooled all of the existing data and allowed any policeman in any location to access information such as crime statistics, probabilities, key names and locations, and known MOs.

The Justice Commission's Information Resources Division employs analysts who look at vast, seemingly unrelated sets of data to expose incriminating connections and patterns. These analysts conduct research into violent crime, learning how the offenders commit their crimes and avoid detection, apprehension, and conviction. By gaining insight into criminal thought processes, motivations, and behavior, police can revise their investigative techniques.

The IRD provides police with links between suspects and events, places, or other suspects, and identifies the key players in a series of crimes, saving investigators time and effort as well as focusing their concentration on setting priorities and planning effective actions.

The advantages of crime analysis are many: Policy makers use statistics to support new laws and crime-fighting programs. Law enforcement has always sought ways to identify links between crimes, individual's roles in criminal activity, associations among criminals, and the relationship between crime and other factors such as location or socioeconomic status. Police are able to establish enforcement priorities and policies based on analyses of the nature of a type of crime or criminal, crime patterns, and projections of growth in certain types of crimes.

GEO MAGISTRATES

All Magistrates report directly to the High Commissioner for Justice, Sterling Cope. On Poseidon, there are three Magistrates, each controlling a sector composed of eight districts. Within each district is one Marshal, several Deputy Marshals, GEO Patrol officers, Native Patrol officers, and the resources associated with those personnel.

Magistrates are responsible for interpreting GEO laws and supervising the administration of the Justice Commission within their sectors. Because of their isolation from Earth, Magistrates on Poseidon are quite independent. Surrounded by a support staff, they mete out justice on a planetary level, serving as federal court justices and overseers of law enforcement operations. Magistrates must be honest, unbiased, dedicated, and sensitive to the needs of the citizens they serve.

Magistrates resolve legal conflicts and interpret or apply GEO law to special circumstances not directly addressed by the law. For Magistrates on Poseidon, challenges to the law are a constant issue: The GEO Charter and statutes were written for the people of Earth and some are difficult or impossible to apply on the waterworld. Other concerns arise from the lack of GEO laws governing situations and activities limited to Poseidon, such as the legality of pharium.

Sector One, covering most of the Pacifica Archipelago, is governed by Magistrate Emmett Skalford. Law-abiding citizens in his region respect and like Skalford; those who pursue illegal trades find him troublesome. He supports his Marshals and takes a hard line on violent crime, typically refusing appeals from those accused of such offenses.

Magistrate Benjamin Shore's jurisdiction is Sector Two. He is the Magistrate at Large, presiding over all areas not covered by the other two Magistrates, including *Prosperity Station*, Poseidon's moons, and the Serpentis Belt. Shore's main office is on *Prosperity Station* and he relies heavily on his Marshals to keep him informed of activities downside.

Cope's most recent appointee, Elizabet Bell-Aarp is now in charge of Poseidon's Sector Three, also

known as the El Mar Del Sur region. Cope is familiar with Bell-Aarp's somewhat unusual ideas about law enforcement and hopes her activities will bolster his campaign for independent statutes for each planet.

The size of each Magistrate's staff and extent of responsibilities vary depending on location. All Magistrate offices have at least three district attorneys whose primary responsibility is to prosecute felons under GEO law; a Chief of Operations, who manages the Finance Office, the Records Division, and the Personnel Office; and individual offices dealing with organized crime, special investigations, career criminals, major fraud, consumer protection, and environmental issues. These offices support investigating Marshals by providing additional personnel, equipment, training, and funding.

The Executive Office directly supports the Magistrate in his work and includes the Communication and Public Relations Office and the Technical Adviser's Office. Financial matters are the responsibility of a Financial Controller, whose task is to prepare the budget and ensure that, once adopted, it is implemented properly.

The Criminal Intelligence Bureau is responsible for centralizing police information. It deals with the processing of criminal records and organizes conferences on specific cases or special topics. All crimes—property crimes, violent crimes, organized crime, terrorism, fraud, counterfeiting of currency and travel documents, and drug trafficking - must be entered into the database. The Red List—a daily issued most-wanted bulletin—and missing persons notices also come from the CIB.

The Magistrates theoretically have complete access to information, equipment, funds, and personnel—including GEO Peacekeepers. In reality, Poseidon Magistrates are sometimes forced to resort to creative measures. Information that is instantly available worldwide on Earth is sometimes garbled during transmission; keeping equipment in good repair often requires shipping parts or even technicians; and funding has a way of never being quite adequate, subsequently making it more difficult to recruit and train additional personnel.

A Magistrate's jurisdiction is his sector. In areas such as Nomad, where the GEO has no official presence, clandestine information-gathering missions are underway. Agents in these positions

report to the Deputy Magistrates in their respective sectors, keeping detailed records of activities and key individuals.

The Magistrates and Deputy Magistrates travel to hold court in each major settlement on a regular rotating schedule. Civil matters and most criminal trials are conducted by lower courts, leaving major trials and appeals for the High Court. Most of a Deputy Magistrate's work involves hearing appeals of decisions of other courts. Magistrates will hear a case only if it involves a matter of public importance or if it raises an important question of law.

The Magistrates meet once a year for four days to discuss all major decisions affecting general policy, resources needed, finances, and programs.

The following is a list of Magistrates and Marshals organized by sector and district. The moderator is encouraged to modify this list if a Marshal or Magistrate player character is active in his campaign.

Sector One: Pacifica Archipelago Region: Magistrate Emmett Skalford

1. North New Hawaii/ Neptune's Cluster: Marshal E. DiPiazza
2. South New Hawaii/Mandalay: Marshal H. Stack
3. The Highlands/ Channel Islands: Marshal F. Baker
4. Haven: Marshal G. Scaff
5. Haven: Marshal P. Church
6. South Zion Islands: Marshal L. Burleson
7. North Zion Islands: Marshal S. Chatterley
8. Sierra Nueva Cluster/Isla Verde: Marshal V. Eng

Sector Two: Magistrate at Large: Magistrate Benjamin Shore

9. *Prosperity Station*: Marshal C. Harrison
10. *Prosperity Station*: Marshal J. Dunn
11. East Endeavor Islands: Marshal F. Valentine
12. West Endeavor Islands: Marshal K. Chavez
13. Galapagos Islands: Marshal G. Ricci
14. North Poseidon's Reach: Marshal V. Hayes
15. South Arc of Fire: Marshal R. Fine
16. North Arc of Fire/ Nui Islands: Marshal P. Black

Sector Three: El Mar Del Sur Region: Magistrate Elizabet Bell-Aarp

17. Perdition: Marshal T. Baskerville
18. Dyfedd: Marshal L. Jiminez
19. Dyfedd: Marshal A. Perkins
20. Second Try/Newport: Marshal T. Larsen
21. Southern Hope Chain: Marshal M. Rutherford
22. Westcape: Marshal A. Next
23. Prime Meridian North: Marshal T. Despardin
24. Prime Meridian South: Marshal H. Pepper

GEO MARSHAL SERVICE

History shows that two factors tend to hamper cooperation between law enforcement agencies: The structures of different police forces often make it difficult for others to know which particular department can assist with a case or supply information, and the considerable diversity of legal systems often serves to cloud questions of law and jurisdiction.

Prior to the Blight, the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) attempted to address these issues by having the governments of each member state appoint one permanent police department to serve as a single agent for international cooperation.

In 2095, the UN took this idea one step further, creating the Marshal Service to act as a world police organization. By taking personnel and resources from established organizations such as Interpol and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, a powerful federal police organization was established for Earth—and later—for Poseidon.

Member states were soon bound by the GEO Charter, and the Marshal Service became the enforcer of that charter. Careful screening of applicants and superior training now turns out a cadre of dedicated police with extraordinarily high standards. Marshals are empowered to search, seize, and arrest at will. It is said that they wield the powers of judge, jury, and executioner, and their Magistrates have the utmost trust in them. They are required to adhere to the principles of compassion, fairness, and respect for the dignity of all those they protect.

Today, on Poseidon, there are Marshal Service offices in all major settlements. Marshals act as liaisons between the citizens and the GEO, protect civil rights, and investigate high-priority criminal cases. They also investigate alleged infractions of GEO statutes by member states, including the Incorporate.

Marshals primarily investigate violations of certain GEO statutes and collect evidence in cases in which the GEO may be an interested party. Organized crime—gambling, loan sharking, infiltration of legitimate business, racketeering, money laundering, arson- and killing-for-hire, extortion, and smuggling—is a major focus. Other activities a marshal may be involved in are tracking and apprehending prison escapees; investigation of illegal cultivation, manufacturing, and distribution of controlled substances; surveillance; infiltration; and investigation of terrorist acts.

Each marshal commands one or more deputy marshals and has complete authority over local patrols. Territorialism is not generally a problem between Patrol officers and marshals, since a marshal, as a rule, will not become involved in an investigation unless invited. There have been two recent exceptions, both concerning the same GEO Patrol officer, who refused to request assistance on a major arson investigation. (He has since been relieved of his duties.)

Marshals are assigned semi-permanent living quarters on *Prosperity Station*, though few ever see them. The GEO provides each marshal with a modest house or apartment near his largest district station.

Most marshals serve as GEO Peacekeepers before applying to the Marshal Academy, which is located in Geneva. The academy complex is situated on 450 acres of land and is completely self-sustaining. Facilities include barracks, administrative offices, a lab and research facilities, and an entire mock city, known as Tyro City.

The academy is capable of handling up to three cetacean trainees at one time, but few have applied and none has passed the psychological assessment.

The marshal training program is 26 weeks long, and is designed with two goals: to fully educate each student so that he can function independently upon completion, and to eliminate those students who are not marshal material.

Potential marshals must pass an extensive psychological battery and physical endurance test. A comprehensive background check includes interviews with family members, employers, and former coworkers. Marshals must be willing to accept assignments anywhere upon appointment.

Marshal Academy instructors conduct a wide variety of both physical- and classroom-oriented instruction. Fitness training is rigorous and emotionally draining as well as physically challenging. Endurance tests, classes in self-defense and fighting tactics, survival, and firearms training make up the physical skills section of a marshal's preparation. The program is designed for unmodified cadets; those who were formerly Peacekeepers—and therefore often heavily modified—enjoy a distinct advantage.

A physical aptitude test is administered to each student during the first, sixth, 14th, and 21st weeks of training. A minimum of 80 points out of a possible 100 is required to pass each test. In addition to the PA test, a Defensive Tactics test is given in the 16th week. This test focuses on disarming techniques, restraining a subject, grappling and fighting, conducting a body search, and weapon retention.

Marshals receive classes on the identification and use of handguns, shotguns, automatics, and other weapons. Students must pass fundamental marksmanship, combat survival shooting, and judgmental shooting with scores of 75%. Academy facilities for firearm training include an indoor range, 20 outdoor firing ranges in a variety of settings, and three rifle ranges.

Cadets also receive classes in defensive and offensive driving, vehicle dynamics, evasive driving techniques, and piloting tactics. Most students discover they are more skilled with one or two vehicle types, which they may choose for their proficiency test.

Coursework for basic trainees includes civil rights, ethics and integrity, stress management, documentation and photography, criminal forensics, informant handling and debriefing, interviewing and interrogation, behavioral science and profiling, homicide investigation, undercover operations, organized crime, counterterrorism, crisis management, mock court training, and tactical-operations procedures.

The final five weeks of GEO Marshal training utilizes all of what the trainees have learned. In exercises designed to simulate real life, criminals overrun Tyro City, setting explosives, kidnapping citizens, and leading high-speed chases.

Tyro City offers students the opportunity to practice techniques learned in the classroom. Working from a mock district office, Marshals-in-training are required to respond to and fully investigate a murder, a suspicious fire, a kidnapping, or a bomb threat. Some scenarios require undercover operations; others take place in the jungle or heavily populated urban settings. The student must use proper surveillance and arrest procedures, as well as demonstrate tactical street or woodland survival techniques. He will take his prisoner to a simulated court and present adequate evidence to convict the suspect.

During the entire training period, the staff evaluates the suitability of each trainee to be a GEO Marshal. If at any time a supervisor feels that a student is not performing satisfactorily, the student can be summarily discharged.

Before graduation, trainees are paired with a deputy marshal from the office where they will be stationed. This mentor program helps smooth the transition to the field office. When a potential marshal successfully completes the training program and demonstrates uncompromising personal and professional integrity, he is rewarded with the silver star of the deputy marshal. A probationary period of three years working with a veteran deputy marshal helps the rookie develop confidence in his abilities, and exposes him to the real world of the GEO Marshal. While the academy does an admirable job imitating life, the training environment tends to give trainees a sense of security. Out on the streets and in the Free Zones, the threats are genuine.

Cadets designated for service on Poseidon are required to complete an additional three weeks of training. Diving, underwater operations, colonial and native culture and history, and underwater shooting are among the curriculum.

Shortly after a marshal graduates the Academy, he is sent to the LavOrg city-state at Adelaide, Australia, for genetic and cybernetic modification. A contract with LavOrg allows GEO doctors to utilize the best and newest technology in biomods and gene therapy on the planet. Marshals are heavily modified and no cost is spared in making them the very best police units possible.

On Poseidon, a rookie deputy marshal is assigned a station and reports directly to the marshal in charge. Many marshals oversee the operation of several stations, leaving some posts technically vacant. This is the case in Second Try, Al-Mamlakah, and Atlantis, though the deputies at those posts are certainly capable of handling most situations.

All marshals choose areas of specialization, according to their interests. Some may choose organized crime, arson investigation, or interrogation. These specialties are made known and it is not uncommon for an investigator to consult with one of these highly trained marshals, or even for one marshal to contact another with a particularly complex problem.

Using the foundation of basic coursework, the Academy offers extension classes to build on core topics and develop areas of specialization. Marshals and Patrol officers are invited to take these courses, either at the academy or by computer correspondence. The most popular among them are forensic analysis, firearms and toolmark identification, and drug enforcement.

Most marshals have several investigations going at once. They also circulate between their district offices, checking on the deputies and local law enforcement below them. Some engage in short-term undercover operations, infiltrating drug rings and crime families. This provides a first-hand look at what the marshal is combating, as well as allowing him to collect valuable intelligence on operations and criminals.

The Poseidon Marshal Service has several support offices, most of which are located in Haven. Among these are the typical administrative offices, the Bureau of Contraband Investigation and the GEO Department for Counterterrorism (see page 74, 76).

Recruiting, training, personnel and payroll records, citizen complaints against personnel, public service announcements, and arrangements for visiting VIPs are handled by the Administrative Office. The Marshal Service's Organized Crime Task Force maintains intelligence information related to organized vice activities, conducts electronic surveillance and investigations, provides assistance to local law enforcement when needed, and investigates violations of gambling and bookmaking laws.

Two Haven agencies falling under the Marshal Service that are of special note are the Computer Analysis Team and the Evidence Discovery Squad. The Computer Analysis Team, made up of computer specialists and a network of electronics experts, provides assistance to any officer in the search and seizure of computer evidence. Evidence Discovery Squads—known as Ed Squads—are highly trained and well-equipped personnel who are attached to each district office. These people are on-call to respond to major crime scenes where remotes would take too long or are impractical. Ed Squads specialize in organizing and conducting

major evidence recovery operations. They identify, collect, and pack evidence at crime scenes using the most current techniques, procedures, and equipment to ensure that critical evidence is gathered for forensic analysis. A squad may consist of five to 60 members, depending upon the scope and nature of the crime scene. Members undergo constant training to develop and maintain their organizational and forensic skills. The captain of a responding Ed Squad is available to provide logistical support, request equipment, and insure that protocols are followed. Each technician has a designated responsibility: photographer, evidence custodian, evidence collector or processor, and specialists such as bomb experts or forensic entomologists.

Many district offices are home to several smaller offices. The Detectives Division, made up of one or more deputy marshals, investigates arson, fraud, forgery, high-stakes robbery, flight from prosecution, homicide, and large-scale drug violations. The Field Operations Office takes care of general law enforcement and patrol issues, dispatch, finding additional resources and personnel when needed, and setting up witness protection. Technical Services maintains vehicles and equipment, operates telecommunications systems, prepares reports, and offers technical support when needed.

Special Services is home to the Hazardous Materials (HazMat) team and a Crisis Negotiation Team that is specially trained in crisis situation psychology. Composed of one deputy marshal and two Patrol officers, the CNT responds to suicide attempts, hostage situations, and barricaded suspects. Special Services is also responsible for maintaining liaisons with labor groups and investigating crimes arising from labor disputes, with the exception of homicide, bombing, and kidnapping.

The Marshals Information Bureau keeps track of potential and current informants, fills confidential information requests from Patrol and other police agencies, develops appropriate tactical and strategic intelligence relating to crime, identifies criminal networks, and expedites contact between experts and investigators. Complaints against marshals and Patrol personnel are fielded by the MIB.

All of these sub-organizations keep the Marshal Service operating efficiently. GEO Marshals have access to all resources and are permitted to commandeer personnel, funding, or equipment as needed. They communicate directly among themselves and keep their Magistrates informed of their investigations.

GEO PATROL

Patrol officers are the most common GEO law enforcement personnel. Acting as beat cops and municipal and state police, Patrol officers enforce the law in GEO-governed settlements, towns, and cities. In large, sparsely populated territories, the Patrol is often the sole legal authority.

Patrol officers have diverse roles depending largely on locale and jurisdiction. Daily activities might include identifying suspects, apprehending offenders, deterring crime through patrol, aiding those in danger or need of assistance, supplying emergency services, resolving conflicts, and promoting civil order. In very small, low-crime communities, a roaming Patrol officer may be the only police official citizens see.

Cetaceans are not uncommon in the Patrol; there are several cetacean Patrol officers on Poseidon and dozens on Earth. The Justice Commission has applied for funding to increase the cetacean Patrol presence in isolated areas of Poseidon.

The basic organization of the GEO Patrol follows a traditional hierarchy. Every large settlement has a chief based at a Patrol headquarters. The chief oversees the administration of all the precinct offices in his city or town, called a district. A captain and at least one lieutenant command each precinct office, with sergeants below them heading up teams of Patrol officers. Some of these teams are highly specialized, particularly in areas with dense populations. Every Patrol employee is accountable to a single supervisor, creating an uninterrupted chain of command and increasing individual accountability, ease of coordination, and cooperation between staff members.

Patrol headquarters is also responsible for the administration of the district. Patrol supervision, budget planning, legal advising, personnel, recruiting and training, intelligence, inspections, public relations, and payroll are located in the HQ building. Headquarters is the location of the Custody Division, which operates the jail, and other auxil-

iary services, which typically include technical services, a crime lab, and community and media relations offices. Complaints against personnel and Patrol requests for additional manpower and financial and equipment resources are submitted to headquarters. A deputy chief is not uncommon in larger settlements, while some settlements may find their chief acting as records clerk, traffic investigator, patrol officer, and peacekeeper. In small departments, officers perform several functions instead of having specialized personnel to handle each one.

Within each precinct office are several divisions, which vary in scope according to personnel resources. A typical office features an Operations Section, Patrol Services, and Patrol Support.

The Operations Section is made up of Traffic Investigation, the Detectives Division, and mobile and marine patrols. Traffic Investigation deals with accidents and vehicle theft. The Detectives Division is further broken down by area of specialty. The Major Offenses squad works with the fire marshal to investigate arson cases and with the medical examiner's office to look into unusual deaths or injuries. This includes acts of criminal violence, accidents, suicides, drownings, and suspicious deaths. Surveillance and investigation of known or suspected robbers and burglars are handled by the Robbery/Burglary squad. The Special Investigations squad works cases with high media interest and maintains files on known terrorists, organized crime figures, and sex offenders. Missing persons, swindles and con games, and embezzlement are also handled by Special Investigations detectives. The Vice Squad investigates illegal gaming, drug-related crimes, and organized crime. The Marshal Service tends to get involved in investigations of organized crime and terrorism, as well as bombing, kidnapping, and homicide, but the initiation of any investigation is the responsibility of the Patrol assigned to the precinct where the crime takes place.

GEO Patrol officers have jurisdiction almost anywhere, allowing detectives to track down and arrest mobile suspects. The exception to this rule applies to Incorporate states, where some treaties between Incorporate entities and the GEO require the Patrol officers to secure permission from the Incorporate government before exercising GEO authority.

The entertainment industry heavily romanticizes the work of detectives. The time spent actually investigating a case is a small percentage of hours on the clock. Duties include filing reports on every aspect of an investigation, tracking down relevant information through and submitting data to the Justice Commission's Criminal Information Center, analyzing potential suspects, and working with witnesses, who are sometimes hostile or unreliable.

Regular Patrol officers are the main physical and visible presence of law enforcement in most communities. They are responsible for preventing crime on the streets and serve as the backbone for all other Patrol activities. Uniformed Patrol officers perform basic mundane functions. Assisting stranded persons, responding to citizen requests for help, identifying and arresting criminal suspects, investigating incidents of battery, theft, burglary, assault, and other legal infractions, testifying in court, and writing citations are all part of a day's work. When an explosion occurs at a warehouse, the wind sets off a burglar alarm, or a person threatens his neighbor with a shotgun, Patrol officers are called to respond. A foot or mobile officer quickly gains an intimate familiarity with his beat and the individuals on it. He is the first responder to a crime scene and is responsible for insuring the safety of victims and witnesses, locating and arresting suspects, protecting the crime scene from weather and onlookers, communicating information from witnesses to the precinct station, and determining whether backup or other resources are needed. An officer may be required to collect and secure evidence threatened by weather, fire, or curious bystanders. The success of an investigation directly correlates to how well the Patrol officer performs upon arrival.

Ideally, an officer is capable of handling every call that comes to him during his 10-hour shift. In reality, however, many incidents go uninvestigated because of understaffing. The public expects police to uphold every aspect of the law and always catch the crooks, but in practice they must be selective. Violent crimes generally get the full attention of the Patrol; drug peddling, cat burglary, and vandalism are less likely to merit a response.

Patrol Services handles records and identification, data processing, communications, the crime lab (see page 80), temporary detention, supply, and maintenance of equipment and vehicles.

Patrol Support consists of Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT), the Property Squad, and the Bomb Squad. The Property Squad maintains friendly contact with pawnshops, black market operators, and fences in an attempt to recover stolen property. The Bomb Squad enforces laws concerning explosives and dangerous chemicals, defuses bombs, and investigates injuries related to explosions. The squad also maintains and operates equipment associated with its responsibilities, including specialized robots and remotes, portable sensors, bomb freezers, and special explosive-proof transports.

Patrol officers may also request assistance from the Marshal Service's Hazardous Materials (HazMat) team or Crisis Negotiation team (see page 49).

Patrol officers occasionally perform additional duties on an as-needed basis, such as crowd control at large public gatherings, monitoring VIP events, transporting prisoners between custodial facilities, and acting as court bailiffs.

The ratio of Patrol officers to citizens is roughly one to 500 in most areas. Patrol officers number just shy of 1,000 in Haven, Second Try has 75, New Fremantle has 40, and *Prosperity Station* has 27. Alderberg has just two.

When a crime is reported or a request for police assistance is entered on the GEO Justice/Emergency site on CommCore, dispatchers at the Justice Commission's Communication and Traffic Coordination Division route the call to the appropriate headquarters. Patrol Services dispatchers triage requests and send them to the Patrol precinct offices, where the officers on duty are listed on a roster. When a call drops (a request for response is received), the first officer on the roster takes the call. The order of the names on the roster rotates daily.

Resources for the Patrol are generally good, though not as easily acquired as they are for Marshals. They have limited access to various Justice Commission databases, can request—but will not always receive—additional personnel, and are provided with excellent basic equipment such as vehicles and weapons. Specialized equipment—a portable forensics lab for large crime scenes, for example—is often shared by several districts.

GUNSHOT WOUNDS

The average citizen, upon viewing a shooting victim, makes many incorrect assumptions about the nature of the shooting. For instance, a large-caliber bullet, which may very well pass cleanly through a body, is not necessarily deadlier than a small-caliber round that is likely to stay inside.

When a gun is fired, flaming gas, soot, unburned propellant, and a bullet come out the barrel. Each of these can help an investigator determine the distance between the gun and the shooting victim. Gunshot wounds are classified as contact, close, intermediate, and distant range.

Flaming gas travels less than 100cm and produces a distinctive burn. A contact wound is made when the gun barrel is held directly to the skin. The gas is forced into the opening, causing a pocketing effect under the skin, which bursts, leaving a stellate (star-shaped) entry wound. A muzzle imprint from the weapon's recoil might be seen as well.

If the gun was held close, but not in tight contact, the burn may be evident without the stellate wounding. Soot, or burnt propellant residue, travels a little further—150 to 175cm with most handguns—and will create a mark or smudge that can be wiped off.

Unburned propellant travels for up to a meter and produces stippling or tattooing. "Powder burn" is an archaic term that was generally inaccurate even when gunpowder was the most common propellant in firearms, since the powder was forced into the skin, not burnt. The same kinds of effects are evident, however, with modern binary propellant firearms. If there is no soot, the shot probably was fired at this intermediate range. The area of stippling will depend upon the distance from the muzzle; the more spread out it is, the greater the distance between the victim and the gun.

Distant range wounds lack propellant stippling and typically exhibit a hole roughly the caliber of the projectile fired.

Training, however, is top-notch and available in all areas of law enforcement, either through the Justice Commission Training Center or by CommCore correspondence offerings. Many rookie Patrol officers choose areas of specific interest to earn themselves support positions on specialized teams or, later, as detectives.

Patrol officers in Magistrate Bell-Aarp's sector are testing a concept for small precinct offices that cover large geographical areas. In the team policing approach, a team of officers supervised by a sergeant and lieutenant is assigned to patrol and investigate criminal matters within the district. The sergeant and lieutenant have a great deal of discretion in managing the district and officers. Instead of assigning a detective to follow up an officer's report, the patrolman dispatched to a scene works the crime from its beginning to its conclusion.

The Patrol in the colonial settlement of Southport, on Prime Meridian, has demonstrated how promising this system is. Officers Lewis Cjeka and Charlie Schwann worked full time for five months gathering extensive intelligence on a series of deadly robberies of supply hovertrains and transports running to the Lucky Strike Mines. Nine people were executed during these robberies. Cjeka and Schwann collected enough evidence to successfully arrest and convict 17 people involved in the operation.

A good Patrol candidate exhibits certain traits. He is alert, motivated, incorruptible, unemotional, efficient, difficult to provoke, tolerant, stable, dedicated to upholding the law, and shows good intuition and high integrity.

Every Patrol officer attends 16 weeks of instruction at a Justice Commission Training Center learning the legal, ethical, organizational, and operational facets of police work. There is one JCTC on Poseidon, in Haven. Patrol curriculum is patterned after the Marshal Academy program, only less intensive. There are 700 hours of instruction in five areas of concentration: academics, firearms, investigation, physical abilities, and defensive tactics. Classes address legal issues, communications, police ethics, different types of crimes, evidence, and public relations. Rookies reach their first assignments prepared to handle any basic police situation.

Before a Patrol officer graduates from the JCTC, he must demonstrate proficiency with his weapons, respond appropriately to a series of mock emergencies, interview a witness, interrogate a suspect, collect evidence properly, and display an even temperament and fair judgment.

Training does not end upon completion of the structured training course. A field training program pairs a senior Patrol officer with a rookie for a 10-week period. The program was developed to provide on-the-job training and encourage confidence and good relations between officers.

Patrol officers will find that biomods such as a neural jack, improved blood oxygenation, and a symbiote are extremely useful, but the GEO cannot afford to outfit every patrolman with them. Cost-sharing programs are available so police can acquire them at a significantly reduced cost. Certain biomods, such as multiglands, sensory recorders, or night vision, are approved and financed by the Justice Commission for senior officers in specialized fields.

A new graduate from the JCTC becomes a regular Patrol officer. Some prefer to stay on the streets where they feel most effective; others want to rise in the ranks. After serving a two-year probationary period, Patrol officers can take the sergeant's exam, which covers police management, Patrol operations, investigation coordination, and basic law. The exam is offered once a year and promotions are offered as openings are made available.

Sergeants may attend classes in search and seizure, interviews and interrogation, weapons and tactics, criminal psychology, drug issues, street culture, informant development, and investigative procedures of accidents, burglary, robbery, sex crimes, organized crime, or homicide. Depending on the officer's goal, these courses qualify him to move laterally into the Operations Section, Patrol Services, or Patrol Support.

In the Operations Section, all sergeants must know how to develop informants and effectively interview and interrogate suspects. Traffic Investigators must be able to drive defensively and offensively, as well as identify vehicles on sight. Major Offenses detectives must learn arson and death investigation. Robbery/Burglary detective candidates should be adept at surveillance and theft investigation. Special Investigations sergeants

When a bullet enters a body, it scratches the skin surrounding the entrance, producing an abrasion ring. This ring is not found on an exit wound.

Like glass, a skull or other thick bone shows beveling, or coning, away from the point of impact from a projectile. Examination of a skull that has been shot through and through will show coning on the entrance and exit, with the wider ends of the cones oriented towards the exit.

Shoring of an entrance wound occurs when an object—a door, for example—is pressed firmly against the skin and the shot comes through the object first. Shored wounds have a greater diameter and exhibit more abrasion, due to the extra material carried into the wound.

As a bullet passes through a body, its energy is dispersed in radial fashion. Hot gasses preceding and surrounding the bullet create a temporary cavity with a diameter many times that of the bullet. It only takes 0.005 to 0.01 seconds for the cavity to collapse, but that is long enough to cause significant tissue damage.

Bullets tend to slow and tumble while passing through a body and some are designed to expand. This means that exit wounds are generally larger than entrance wounds. They may be stellate, tearing the skin as the projectile leaves the body.

Exit wounds will not necessarily appear directly opposite entrance wounds. The bullet may have fragmented, producing secondary projectiles, one or more of which may cause exit wounds. Bone or other solid tissue can divert a bullet from its path, causing it to bounce around inside the body before exiting. Some small-caliber projectiles do not have enough energy to carry the bullet out of the body.

A good medical examiner may be able to establish the sequence bullets were fired into a head. Each impact causes a fracture line in the skull. Subsequent fracture lines will not cross preexisting ones. An observant person can follow the fracture lines to determine the order they were made.

need to have training in media relations, counter-terrorism, organized crime, white-collar crime, and sex offenses. Vice detectives also must know about organized crime issues, as well as gambling and drug investigation.

Sergeants who desire to work in the crime lab, jail, or identification unit within Patrol Services are required to demonstrate familiarity with communications, lab operations, detention methods, and forensic identification techniques. They are also eligible to supervise precinct Patrol operations.

Major Offenses and Special Weapons and Tactics draw more applicants than all of the other areas of policing combined. SWAT members must pass a rigorous physical exam, demonstrate proficiency with four weapons, and be familiar with tactical situations. Members of the Property Squad are generally less-motivated sergeants who prefer the predictability of that particular job. The Bomb Squad is made up of one lieutenant and at least five sergeants, plus two to six regular Patrol officers. Sergeants are required to pass classes in explosives, chemistry, bomb making, raids, and structural assessment.

Four Patrol officers of sergeant rank or higher are assigned to the Marshal's Crisis Negotiation team. This post requires extensive training in psychology, crisis management, and communications. This is an on-call position and is best suited for someone who works in the office, rather than the field, to insure that he can be reached when needed. Two officers respond to a call, reporting to a deputy marshal.

Sergeants can apply for the lieutenant's exam after three years in the same position. When an opening is available, newly promoted lieutenants receive better living quarters, comprehensive supervisory training, and a department vehicle.

Three years after becoming a lieutenant, an officer may take the captain's exam. This is a very difficult and focused test, covering all of a precinct's operations, as well as specific scenarios and the appropriate responses. Captain's positions rarely open up and competition for them is ferocious.

Becoming a chief requires seven years as a captain, training in administration and headquarters operations, and a nomination from the Marshal in charge. Chiefs are appointed by a Magistrate, based on the recommendations of the Marshal. A qualified applicant has a clean personnel file with few or no complaints, exceptional annual personnel reviews, and a good supervisory record. Interviews with superiors and coworkers are used to determine the best candidate for the job.

Regular Patrol officers are provided with a small house or apartment near the precinct office. Street patrolmen sometimes move into better housing and offer their presence as on-site security in exchange for reduced or free rent.

Private constables take that idea one step further. In some districts, citizens in upper-class neighborhoods hire off-duty officers to patrol their streets, creating a visible police presence. Those officers report to a security coordinator—a homeowner chosen by the local civic association to act as a liaison with the Patrol office. Private constables earn fairly good money on the side for easy work.

Retired Patrol officers often become private investigators. Using contacts and resources established while on the job, private eyes are able to cross into the gray area of policing where cops bound by GEO laws cannot tread.

Citizens rely on GEO Patrol officers to protect them from crime, assist them when needed, remove criminals from the population, and maintain the peace. Most police do this job admirably and the communities they serve benefit. Occasionally, though, an officer acquires a bad reputation. Other cops call this a jacket because the reputation is worn on the individual for all to see. Dishonesty, reluctance to assist other officers, showing disrespect to innocent citizens, or laziness will quickly earn a policeman a jacket that is almost impossible to shed.

NATIVE PATROL

The High Commissioner for Justice has been faced with a serious shortage of law enforcement personnel on Poseidon ever since Recontact. Some natives accepted the presence of the GEO Patrol in their communities while others angrily refused to acknowledge their authority.

Magistrate Bell-Aarp, appointed to the El Mar Del Sur region in 2192, came to her position with extensive experience with the natives of Westcape and the Southern Hope Chain. Prior to her appointment, Bell-Aarp represented criminally charged individuals from those areas in the High Courts. Her familiarity with the native culture and her compassion for their situation impressed High Commissioner Cope. He has been even more impressed with Bell-Aarp's results since she accepted the Magistrate post.

Exactly one year after her appointment, Bell-Aarp proposed and initiated the formation of the Native Patrol. Working closely with Deputy High Commissioner Webb, a strategy was developed to finance and outfit natives to fill law enforcement positions in settlements where the GEO was unwelcome. The Justice Commission, seeing a way to maintain a GEO presence without increasing the hostility of the natives, approved of the plan. Also, because of the relatively low crime and small populations of native settlements—anywhere from two dozen to a couple thousand people—the cost of staffing and operating offices is much lower than for the regular Patrol.

An additional and unforeseen benefit was the interest cetaceans took in joining the Patrol. Currently, 63 dolphins and orcas on the Native Patrol payroll police the waters of Poseidon.

A typical Native Patrol officer works from a small headquarters building within the boundaries of his village or settlement. Headquarters usually consists of an administrative office, a cell to confine prisoners until the Marshal or a GEO Patrol officer can transport them to the nearest jail, an evidence storage area, and private living quarters for the captain.

The captain may work with a support staff to handle administrative and maintenance issues, but in many cases, a single officer *is* the entire staff. Organization within the Native Patrol is much looser than in the regular Patrol, but the structure is supposed to be roughly the same, with a captain overseeing the administration of the staff, a lieutenant supervising sergeants, and sergeants directing teams of Patrol officers.

Promotions are handled somewhat differently than in the regular Patrol, where it takes a minimum of eight years to rise from rookie patrolman to captain. Classes and examinations are still required for

each promotion level, but the competition for positions found in the GEO Patrol is virtually non-existent in the Native Patrol, and a shortage of personnel in leadership categories has led to shorter time requirements between exams. A Native Patrol officer fresh out of the Justice Commission Training Center can make captain within four years if he completes the required coursework.

Every Patrol office, according to statute, must be headed by an individual of at least captain level. The first Native Patrol offices in 2193 were staffed by brand-new graduates promoted to acting captains while they studied for the series of examinations that would make their positions official.

Justice, a dolphin, was the first cetacean to apply for the Native Patrol. Seeing the job as an opportunity to have a native and cetacean presence felt within the GEO, Justice proved to be an excellent example for other cetaceans. He is currently the captain of the Port Hope headquarters on Westcape and commands three other Native Patrol officers. The team has been working hard to eradicate caneopoise poachers and has to date effected the arrests of nine violators. Justice's success has

inspired other cetaceans to consider careers with the Native Patrol.

The officers of the Native Patrol are natives first and GEO law enforcement second. They are fiercely dedicated to their communities and frequently find themselves in personal conflict between their pledge to the government and their loyalties to the villages they serve. This case is well illustrated by the situation in Nomad.

Natives represent a significant percentage of Nomad's permanent population. However, the town has long been overrun by smugglers, pirates, black market distributors, organized crime syndicates, and other criminals. In 2197, six GEO Patrol officers were hired to clean up the streets. The Patrol focused their attention first on eradicating ecoterrorists from the town. Many of Nomad's natives associate with ecoterrorist cells and several were arrested for their involvement. This caused a tremendous outcry of discriminatory treatment from native communities as far away as New Hawaii, so Magistrate Skalford replaced the Patrol with four Native Patrol officers in an attempt to keep the peace. These officers were less interested in eliminating crime throughout the town than simply protecting the native citizens from everyone else, however, and Skalford, recognizing the futility of policing Nomad with a small force, closed the Patrol headquarters with plans to reopen it in the future with a larger budget and personnel from both Patrol agencies.

Native Patrol officers receive the same training as the GEO Patrol. They are authorized to request GEO assistance through the Marshals or other Patrol officers. In principle, they are equal in status to the GEO Patrol. In reality, however, resources, additional personnel, and funding are limited because of the remoteness of many native settlements.

Biomods are helpful to Native Patrol officers, but not as important to success in the job as they are for regular GEO Patrol officers. The same cost-sharing and financing programs are available to all Patrol officers. Neural jacks and sensory enhancement are the most popular among human Native Patrol officers. Sonic trodes are a favorite among cetacean police.

All official crime reports and requests for police come through the GEO Justice/Emergency site on CommCore. Unfortunately, weather and distance disrupt transmissions from dispatchers at the Justice Commission's Communication and Traffic Coordination Division. Native Patrol officers receive a fair share of garbled messages—and miss quite a few completely.

Officers often receive news of a problem by word of mouth: Settlements are small and word travels quickly. Many a sleeping officer has been awakened the instant trouble breaks out, giving him a better response time than most regular Patrol officers. Because the officer is a native, most citizens trust and maintain high confidence in him. They offer detailed information where a regular Patrol would find them uncooperative and coldly silent. Native Patrol trainees are amused by the amount of classroom time dedicated to developing informants.

The Native Patrol observes a code that encompasses GEO standards as well as those of the original colonists: Respect the rights of all living things, commit oneself to one's responsibilities, act with integrity, and aggressively protect those who cannot defend themselves.

Native Patrol officers investigate all crimes that occur in their areas. As with the regular Patrol, they have official jurisdiction everywhere on Poseidon except Incorporate company towns and holdings. Serious matters such as murder or terrorist acts are often turned over to a Marshal, who has access to more resources. Sometimes, however, the Marshal cannot respond quickly, and the officer is left to solve the crime himself.

Using the resources available, a Native Patrol officer can do most of the tasks a regular Patrol officer is capable of. A little creativity goes a long way in an investigation, and no one knows this better than an isolated policeman. Defusing a bomb may require the use of information downloaded from the Justice Commission instead of simply calling in the bomb squad, and lab procedures such as DNA profiling must be sent to the nearest GEO Justice Commission Forensics Lab, but the determination of a resourceful Patrol officer almost always produces results.

UN COLONIAL RANGERS

While the Marshals and Patrols are taking care of GEO law, a small but significant United Nations law enforcement unit exists as well. The primary mission of the newly established UN Colonial Rangers (UNCR) is to enforce the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to investigate its possible violations by individuals or governments. They provide non-political enforcement of international law, defend human rights, and protect the innocent colonists of Poseidon from ever-increasing violence. Leaving minor crime, Incorporate squabbles, and environmental infractions to local law enforcement, the UNCR charter is designed specifically to protect settlements from Incorporate death squads, terrorists, violent criminals, predators, and other threats to life.

Backed by the United States government, the Rangers are typically Americans. This has caused rumors that the US has placed its own police force on Poseidon, but a close look at the membership reveals a fair amount of ethnic diversity. Members are drawn from several independent nations, including India and China.

Haven is home to the main UNCR headquarters, which is housed in the UN building. This particular office serves only as an administrative center, however, since Haven is a GEO stronghold and the possibility of jurisdictional battles is high.

Regional headquarters are located in Atlantis and Kingston, while several small Ranger Posts can be found in independent settlements scattered around the archipelago. The staff at each post consists of a captain and the supporting Ranger troop, with ranks including private, corporal, sergeant, and lieutenant. Funding is meager and administration, maintenance, and intelligence gathering is provided by the Rangers themselves. The regional headquarters enjoy more extensive support and administrative staffs.

The outposts are generally existing buildings, either donated or paid for by the UN. Each houses an office for the captain, meeting room, mess hall, troop's quarters, and storage space for equipment. Unfortunately, financial support is limited and supplies are always short.

Other UNCR duties include peacekeeping, humanitarian relief, and emergency assistance. Peacekeeping efforts are wide-ranging and involve

monitoring ceasefires, separating hostile forces, encouraging peace agreements, assisting refugees, and reconstruction efforts. The Rangers offer disaster assistance for civilians in isolated settlements, for everything from cyclonic storms to reactor leaks.

Rangers are authorized to carry weapons and use necessary force in self-defense, or if armed persons attempt to prevent them from carrying out their duties. There have been a few clashes between GEO law enforcement and the UNCR, but no major showdowns over territory have broken out. Essentially, while the GEO publicly and privately frowns on this UN presence, the Rangers are providing citizens with a useful service, saving GEO personnel and resources for other efforts. The GEO monitors the Rangers' activities and until there is a serious confrontation, the leadership will tolerate the UNCR.

WARDENS

Poseidon's GEO law enforcement has its hands full with murderers, thieves, and thugs. Protecting the citizens is a full-time job, leaving precious few resources to address issues such as environmental abuse. As in most stable systems, however, someone fills the niche.

Wardens are the paid protectors of Poseidon. Seeking out poachers, violators of environmental laws, and anyone causing ecological damage, wardens act as freelance bounty hunters. Contracts with the GEO Justice Commission offer 500-scrip bounties for information leading to the arrest and indictment of individuals committing ecological crimes, and an additional 500cs is paid upon conviction. Private interests such as Hydrospan also occasionally contract the services of wardens, and while the pay is usually higher, the work is intermittent.

Some wardens have law enforcement or military backgrounds, while others come from the other side of the law. In either case, successful wardens are excellent trackers, know how to get information, and have good survival instincts. Whether working from information taken from CommCore's ecology news, a tip from an inside contact, or simply patrolling the waters and beaches, a warden's work requires familiarity with Poseidon's geography and ecology, fierce determination, and a love for the planet. Wardens do not get rich from bounty hunting; their sense of duty usually drives them. It is not unusual for a hunter to immediately spend his paycheck on supplies and head right back out to catch another crook.

Wardens are permitted to arrest suspects, but must use caution: Criminal and civil charges can be lodged for assault or false arrest. Wardens typically carry long- and short-range weapons, survival gear, and possibly portable surveillance equipment. Hydrospan offers reduced-cost biomods for registered and licensed wardens.

Many politically active, environmentally sensitive wardens particularly dislike Incorporate polluters such as GenDiver, Hanover, and the NIS. While they work independently, wardens look out for each other and there is much back slapping and toasting when an Incorporate official is arrested on environmental charges.

Some bounty hunters prefer to specialize in a particular quarry, such as sunburst poachers. Others will take any work that comes along. Information about possible lawbreakers comes from local word-of-mouth, contacts within the Justice Commission or media, other wardens, or area law enforcement. The wardens are generally a rough crew but are respected and appreciated—usually from a distance.

INVESTIGATION AND PROCEDURE

When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.

— Sherlock Holmes in *The Sign of Four*

Arthur Conan Doyle was right on the mark with his fictional detective's observation. A competent investigator collects all possible data and then considers it in light of information collected from witnesses, victims, and offenders to develop a theory regarding the circumstances of the crime. If his theory is sound, the evidence will support it.

On Poseidon, one of the main responsibilities of law enforcement officers is the investigation of criminal activity, from burglary to computer fraud to assault to homicide. A quality investigation can mean the difference between a conviction and an acquittal, and the skill with which a crime scene is processed often makes or breaks a case. A competent investigator knows that his best chance to solve a crime comes from his ability to identify, document, and interpret evidence.

The first officer to arrive is responsible for securing the crime scene. Whether a single apartment or an entire mining facility, he has the authority to remove individuals from the area and bar reentry until the scene is officially released. If the crime involves substantial loss of property or loss of life, a Marshal might become involved in the investigation.

The investigator should note his or her time of arrival, the location and condition of the crime scene, call for aid if anyone is injured, and separate suspects from witnesses. A walkthrough is done first to identify what happened and what actions should be taken. If a scene is outdoors at night, special lighting is required or, if possible, scene processing should be delayed until morning. The officer should note the point of entry and escape and whether force was used or not. He should then decide what help may be needed. For example, will the investigator require the assistance of an explosives specialist or a HazMat team?

If the crime occurs outside, the area must be protected from weather and animals that can destroy critical evidence. The entire scene should be photographed from as many angles as possible. Witnesses should be interviewed carefully. Finally, evidence is collected and sent to the nearest Justice Commission Forensics Lab (see page 80) for processing. If there is a body, the medical examiner's office is notified to arrange for removal.

All law enforcement training includes basic investigation techniques. Some cops specialize in certain areas such as arson or homicide.

PROTECTING THE SCENE

Curious onlookers, rain, animals, rescue operations, and even the suspect can destroy evidence. The responding police officer should attempt to determine the entire area of the crime scene, including paths of entry and exit and any places that may include evidence. There are several options in protecting a crime scene: If the scene is large, an officer can request reinforcements or deputize local help. For small outdoor locations, he can cover the area with a temporary shelter (FM 40) and set up an electronic perimeter. Indoor scenes are usually easier, as doors can be locked and weather is not an issue. Underwater scenes are most difficult. Dolphins are usually employed to help locate and recover evidence quickly.

EVIDENCE

Wherever one steps, whatever he touches, the criminal unconsciously leaves evidence as a silent witness against him... Only failure to find and recognize it reduces its significance.

— R. Philip Coltrane, UN criminologist

Once the scene is secure, evidence should be evaluated for documentation and collection. Footwear evidence should be one of the first considerations, since it is easily eradicated by weather, people, and vehicles. Complete isolation of the area is crucial, to avoid analyzing recently made footwear impressions that are not related to the crime scene.

Everything should be recorded. This is heavily emphasized in training and the rare investigator who neglects to do so will find himself looking for a new line of work. Investigation and prosecution hinge on good documentation. Crime scene remotes (see page 77) are fitted with cameras equipped with software that incorporates measurements into the recording. Distance from one item to another, length or height of an object, and direction orientation allow for easy reconstruction of the scene. Thermal imaging is useful—particularly in fire-related incidents—for locating evidence and bodies. A pair of remotes works in tandem, painting the scene with light or lasers to find finger- or palm prints, footwear impressions, body fluids, and explosive materials or fire accelerants invisible to the human eye. Remote Operation skill is necessary to use this equipment to adequately record a crime scene.

A portable numar (FM 12) can be used to identify items not found in the remotes' databases or to discover particles of gunshot residue on a suspect's or victim's hands. When a firearm is discharged, gasses from the propellant escape from the barrel and cylinder (in the case of revolvers), covering the shooter's hand with invisible evidence. The numar will also reveal fire accelerants on hands or cloth-

DNA PROFILING

Comparing a DNA profile with a DNA sample retrieved from a crime scene can establish a suspect's innocence or guilt with a very high degree of certainty.

The Poseidon DNA database, maintained by HIST, is a collection of the DNA profiles for nearly every human, hybrid, and cetacean on Poseidon. Every newcomer is entered in the database. Natives and cetaceans are more difficult to profile, as they generally avoid hospitals, where most of the samples are taken. Anyone who is arrested is checked for a profile and a cheek swab is mandatory if that person doesn't show up in the database. Access to the Poseidon DNA database is restricted to the Marshal Service and certain individuals at HIST who are involved in the collection and maintenance of the data.

DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) is found in all cells containing a nucleus, including those belonging to plants and animals. A DNA molecule consists of two strands that wrap around each other, forming the familiar double-helix shape. The strands are made of sugar and phosphate; the rungs are called bases.

Every base is made from adenine (A) and thymine (T) or cytosine (C) and guanine (G) bonded weakly by hydrogen. These bonded units are called base pairs. The specific order of these base pairs determines everything that makes up an organism, from the function of a heart cell to the enzymes used to digest food.

There are about 3.3 billion base pairs in the human genome, making up physically distinct units called chromosomes. The nuclei of most human cells contain one set of 23 chromosomes from each parent.

DNA is nearly identical among all individuals of a species. In humans, only 0.1%—approximately three million base pairs encoding more than 100,000 genes—differ between any two people. With the exception of identical twins (formed when a fertilized egg splits), no two

ing. General exploration of a crime scene is usually not done with a numar because remotes work much faster and the numar provides information in great detail, which is not always necessary.
All information collected is immediately sent to the Justice Commission's Forensics Lab (JCFL). Latent—or unseen—prints, which were once dusted with powder, lifted with transparent tape, scanned into a computer, and compared by hand, are now found easily with lasers, photographed, and compared immediately to all other prints on file. Accelerants such as fuel or burn powders, as well as components used in bombs, are identified and compared to a list of products from all manufacturer databases. Samples of blood, tissue, hair, semen, saliva, bone, and urine, as well as any other physical evidence are collected by remote, and DNA profiles produced in the lab will be compared to entries in the Poseidon DNA database.

DNA profiling is also possible in nature. A certain leaf may be traced back to one tree and no other. It may be necessary to collect organic materials such as grass, leaves, and plants to later place the victim and the perpetrator together, or place either in locations incriminating to the suspect.

Crime reconstruction involves examining physical evidence—materials left at or removed from the scene, offender, or victim. When two objects interact, there is a mutual transfer of trace materials from one to another. Edmund Locard, the director of the first crime laboratory, in Lyon, France, observed this, thus creating the Locard Exchange Principle. Locating metal filings or shavings, fibers, bioplastic chips, or other similar evidence is made easier with a ChromaTrace remote (see page 77). The remote analyzes the reflectiveness of objects in one-meter square sections. The process takes about two minutes per square and can be very time consuming on large crime scenes. Small remotes follow the ChromaTrace, gathering suspect objects. All evidence is recorded before collection so its placement can't be later disputed. An investigator should be sure to check the shoes and clothing of suspects and victims for evidence.

While recording the scene identifies many items of interest, the investigator will find that some of those items require further analysis at the crime lab. Dry items are collected into airtight containers. The additives in bioplastic used to inhibit fast fungus growth break down some organics, so wet items are vacuum-sealed in ceramic or preserved

in paper wrapping, depending on their nature. Body fluids and tissues are collected by the medical examiner. Each piece of evidence is put into a separate container and an embedded gremlin carries notation of the contents and information relating to the crime scene. These chips can then communicate and share the information with the officer's bodycomp or personal network and the precinct or headquarters network.

Toolmarks are encountered most frequently in burglary cases. The evidence consists of bioplastic chips or minute imperfections from the manufacture or use of a tool that are transferred to another surface. For example, a pry bar used to force open a door will leave an impression of the prying head on the doorframe. Any imperfections—a small nick, for instance—in the pry bar will show up as well. It may transfer material from the tool to the frame or from the frame to the tool. These can later be used to match that particular pry bar to that specific crime scene.

Footwear and latent fingerprint evidence is classified into three categories of crime scene prints: Visible prints occur when an object contacts a medium such as paint, blood, ink, or sauce, is contaminated by it, and then comes in contact with a clean surface. This print can be visibly seen by the naked eye. Latent prints are the most overlooked and are generally found on smooth surfaces. A laser will make these prints more easily seen. Plastic prints are three-dimensional impressions that occur when the object is pressed into a soft surface, such as soft mud, snow, wet sand, or dirt. This type of impression should be visually recorded and then cast. Casts of footwear impressions, toolmarks, and bites are useful evidence. The investigator sprays the marked surface with a catalyst and then adds enough plastic silicone gel to fill in the impression. The gel works in water, on vertical surfaces as well as horizontal, is nonabsorbent, and dries into a hard, white cast.

All materials found at hit-and-run scenes should be recovered because individual fragments may be physically matched with the suspected vehicle. These fragments are often found in the clothing of hit-and-run victims. Bioplastic smudges are frequently transferred from one vehicle to another, from vehicle to object, or from object to vehicle during an accident or a crime. Most colorants are listed in a database and the manufacturer of some plastics can be identified by composition analysis.

people share the exact same DNA composition.

Variability is the basis for DNA profiling. Molecular biologists use enzymes to cut certain sections of those variable regions of DNA into short sections called restriction fragments. The process, called RFLP analysis, focuses on the length and shape of the restriction fragments, which differ widely between individuals. Essentially, a small sample of DNA is given a computerized numeric value that resembles a bar code.

Another form of variability is called VNTR (variable number of tandem repeats). DNA is identified by segments called loci. A locus known as D1S80 is found on human chromosome number one and comprises repeating units of 16 segments. The number of repeats varies between individuals and is known to range from 15 to more than 40. Combining all of the variations, a profile develops that is unique to the individual.

There are a variety of ways to get a sample of DNA, which is found in blood, semen, skin cells, tissue, organs, muscle, brain cells, bone, teeth, hair, saliva, mucus, perspiration, fingernails, and urine. Liquid evidence—blood, semen, wet tissues, saliva—is collected on a sterile swab and allowed to dry in a paper envelope to prevent contamination. Dry evidence—hair, bones, nails—are gathered and packaged individually. Dried body fluids should be submitted to the lab on the surface where they dried, if possible, or a small sample may be scraped carefully into a sterile paper envelope.

Control or comparison samples are best collected with a sterile swab rubbed on the inside of the victim's or suspect's cheek, where epithelial cells are quite thick. A comparison sample identifies whether the unknown sample came from the same person, related people, or non-related people. This is especially useful when an individual's record is not found in the DNA database.

Each sample is placed in a microcentrifuge tube and spun for 45 seconds, incubated at 56°C for eight minutes, then copied for com-

parison or frozen and stored at -20°C for future use.

A DNA profile identifies an individual by his variations and provides a catalogue of traits that only that person possesses. From eye color to temperament to artistic talent, each variation is mapped within one's genes.

DNA profiling is by no means limited to people. All plants and animals have unique combinations of genetic code and the GEO Poseidon Biological Survey (FM 37) database contains basic profiles for the known flora and fauna of the planet, which is helpful in identifying the source of an unknown sample.

The year, make, and model of a vehicle can be determined if a manufacturer's part number is on the trim. Plastics in wire insulation and miscellaneous plastics such as buttons can be compared with known sources.

Anything severed—fibers, broken plastic, torn fabric—can be matched to the piece from which it was fractured, if both pieces are found. A scanning electron microscope, which has a magnification range from 15x to 200,000x, uses electrons instead of light waves to display very detailed three-dimensional images. With this kind of magnification, individual fibers or fractures are visible. Positive identifications are often made with the torn or cut end of tape and the matching roll of suspect tape. Tape composition, construction, and color can also be compared with known sources. Caulks, sealants, and adhesives can be compared by color and composition with known sources.

When taking weapons and ammunition for evidence, the serial number, make, model, and caliber (if appropriate) should be recorded. Recovered bullets and unused ammunition are useful for comparison purposes when firearms are obtained as evidence.

Once all evidence is collected, the packages and vials are stored in a cooled container and shipped to the crime lab for analysis.

TASK RESOLUTION

- Leadership skill is useful for enlisting the help of bystanders in controlling a crime scene.
- Tracking skill may come in handy when attempting to determine how a perpetrator gained access or left a scene.

ARSON AND EXPLOSIVES

Fire and explosions are often used to cover other crimes such as burglary, clandestine drug labs, and murder. Arson and explosives is an area in which investigators can certify. While all law enforcement officers receive basic arson and bombing investigation classes, the courses are intended more to identify the important parts of the crime scene rather than train one to effectively investigate it. A certified investigator will attempt to determine as much as he can about the target and the origin of the fire or explosion. He seeks to find out what materials were used to set the fire or make the device and what skills or level of expertise was required. Where did the materials come from? How was it lit or detonated? The lab may return findings of a specific brand of fuel or fuse that can be tracked down to a particular supplier. In arson and explosion cases, suspects tend to have an agenda, whether it is just to watch the building burn or make a public statement. In the latter case, informants are very useful. In the former case, medical files may indicate prior fire-setting behavior. Arson investigators have access to dossiers on known fire-setters through the Criminal Information Center (CIC) database (see page 79).

Once emergency services (ERTs, firefighters, and crowd-control personnel) have been summoned, the investigator should carefully observe and record all people and vehicles in the area. A good investigator notes any debris and damage to nearby structures. He must determine what changes were made to the scene, including the type of fire suppression techniques used, changes in ventilation and wind, forcible entry for rescue purposes, and utility shutoff measures. He should evaluate the scene for safety hazards such as smoke, chemical, or electrical dangers, and the possible collapse of the building. He should establish what the structure's purpose is and what should be found inside.

Control of the scene must be established immediately and access restricted to essential personnel. A security perimeter should be set up. Fire suppression and rescue efforts can be performed more efficiently and effectively if only authorized personnel

are allowed in the area. Restricting access also ensures the safety of civilians and helps to preserve the scene for the subsequent investigation.
As in any investigation, the scene must be secured and recorded. To determine the scene's boundaries, the police officer should first make a careful walk-through to determine the extent of the damage. He should work from the areas of least damage to areas of greatest damage, always being careful not to disturb evidence. Nearby undamaged areas should not be overlooked. Sometimes toolmarks, bloodstains, fuel containers, or other evidence will be found.

Next, the investigator should identify victims, the presence of evidence, and witnesses. His first concern once the injured have been removed is to preserve potentially transient physical evidence—evidence on victims or that may be compromised by weather conditions. A list of victims and potential witnesses should be developed and their accounts of the incident documented. Among the witnesses, the investigator should include whoever reported the event, the owner and occupants (if any) of the building, neighbors, and the last person to leave the scene. Each witness's relationship to or association with the scene and victims should be established.

Evidence is most easily lost at a fire or explosion scene. Fire suppression activities may wash away or dilute potential evidence, and rescue attempts involve moving or removing potential physical evidence. Emergency personnel and bystanders may unknowingly carry away important evidence on their shoes or clothing.

Recording the crime scene begins with an overall view from above to spatially relate items within and to the scene. The assembled crowd of curious onlookers should be included and all should be identified if possible. Passersby, owners, tenants, customers, and delivery people all may have relevant information. Many arsonists melt into a crowd of curious onlookers to watch their handiwork.

The investigator must ensure that the scene is not released until reasonable efforts have been made to identify, collect, and remove all evidence from the scene for further examination and that all physical characteristics of the scene have been documented. When the scene is released, all biological and chemical hazards and structural integrity issues need to be identified to the owner.

ARSON

Fires, by their destructive nature, consume the evidence of their initiation and progress as they grow. Investigations are compromised and scenes are further destroyed by the activities of the fire service, whose primary responsibilities are to save lives and protect property against further damage.

All fires are considered accidental until they can be proven to be intentionally set. If the cause is determined to be accidental, the scene is released to the owner. If the conclusion is that the fire was purposely set, a crime has been committed and an investigation is in order. Because of personnel and resource shortages, GEO detectives only become involved in cases involving deaths or large property losses.

Fire investigation is likely the most difficult of all a detective's jobs. It involves a meticulous process of elimination, conclusively disproving all possible fire-causing factors until just one remains. The investigator must have a firm foundation in the chemistry and physics of fire, materials used in their construction, and the various ways in which fires are initiated.

Many arson fires escape detection—particularly those started by skilled pros. Amateurs splash accelerants such as petroleum fuel around a scene and throw a lit match on it. Burn patterns for this type of fire are fairly easy to see. Professional arsonists often create short-circuited electrical wiring to disguise their activities. Most pros develop a preference for a specific technique—a particular ignition device or accelerant, for example—and these become that fire setter's signature or trademark.

When approaching a fire scene, first responders should note the volume, color, and direction of movement of flames and smoke; the height and location of the flames; conditions of the structure; weather conditions; and the status of fire alarms, security alarms, and fire sprinklers. Are lights turned on? Is the fire through the roof? Are walls standing? Are doors or windows open, closed, or broken? This information will most likely be collected from witnesses and firefighters, and once assembled, should give the investigator a rough idea of what happened.

Fire requires a fuel source, a heat source, oxygen, and an event that brings these together. Fuels include flammable and combustible liquids, solids, or gasses. Heat can come from open flames, hot surfaces, electricity, friction, chemical reactions, or compression of gasses. If plenty of fresh air and fuel is available, a fire will spread rapidly. Fires with little oxygen will smolder before finally bursting into flames. Smoldering fires are not likely to have been set with accelerants, which burn hotter and faster.

The first thing an investigator should do after securing the scene is determine whether the building or vehicle was intact and secure and if intrusion alarms or fire detection and suppression systems were operational at the time of the fire. This information helps to establish factors such as ventilation conditions, possible fire development timelines and scenarios, and whether vandalism of the property or systems occurred before the fire. To determine the status of security at the time of the fire, the investigator should ask first responders where entry was made, what steps were taken to gain entry, and whether any systems had been activated when they arrived at the scene. The positions of timers, switches, valves, and control units for utilities, detection and suppression systems, and any alterations to those items by first responders should be documented.

It is the responsibility of the investigator to identify the origin (where the fire started) and cause of a fire. Except in the most obvious cases, finding a fire's origin and cause may be a complex and difficult undertaking that requires specialized training and experience. The investigator must either have appropriate expertise or call upon the assistance of someone with that knowledge—a fire marshal is often assigned to assist.

The point of origin is key in determining the cause of a fire because it can rule out natural or accidental causes. If there are two or more points of origin, a lingering smell of fuel, or unexplainable burn patterns, arson is highly probable.

The investigator should search for areas with more charring than the rest—the point of origin burns hotter and longer. He should observe the patterns of crevices formed on burning wood, called alligatoring. Alligatoring becomes smaller with deeper charring, indicating a long burn time. The officer must identify the materials involved, the ignition temperatures and approximate burn times, and locate any draft conditions within the area of ori-

gin. Normal fire patterns are found in a V-shape. A wide V, large alligatoring patterns, uniform overhead damage, and heavy sooting indicate slow burning; a narrow V, small and irregular-shaped alligatoring, extensive damage in one area, and light sooting indicate a fast-burning fire. The origin will be close to the lowest point of the V because fire tends to burn upwards with a lateral spread. Fire that wraps around a wooden beam tends to round the edges on the side furthest from the source. Fire prefers to move upwards, but will burn wherever fresh air occurs.

The investigator should look for plants, which are preparations to set a fire, such as papers or flammable materials, and trailers, materials used to spread fire, such as chemical trails, soaked rags, or flammable liquids.

Smoke color can indicate the use of particular fuel. Petroleum products, rubber, and certain plastics tend to burn with black smoke; wood, some bioplastics, or other vegetable matter create gray or white smoke; reddish-brown or yellow smoke indicates nitrates or nitrate-based materials. The color of the flames tells how hot the fire is burning. Red is the coolest flame, growing hotter as it becomes orange, yellow, and then white. Blue-orange flames are found when alcohol is burned. Pitting, melting, and cracking in certain types of bioplastic are excellent indicators of temperature. There are tables on CommCore with this information. Natural fires burn in predictable patters. Odd odors and a rate of spread not typical for the materials present suggest the use of accelerants.

Other things that point towards arson include the presence of ignitable liquids, fuel sources piled together, the discovery of incendiary or explosive devices, indication of forced entry on windows or doors, evidence of additional crimes, barricades intentionally constructed to prevent rescue, and observations made by witnesses, firefighters, and victims. The officer should look for faulty electrical wiring, igniters, and flammable materials.

Flammable fluids run into cracks and under objects on the floor and cause burning in locations that normally wouldn't burn. These fluids may leave a darker area on the floor where they soaked into wood or rugs. A background check of the property owner may show recent labor problems, a decline in business, heavy competition, living beyond his income, heavy gambling losses, or indebtedness. A paper trail might show more inventory documented than found at the scene, excessive debt, a recent purchase of a large insurance policy, or a history of insurance payouts. If valuables, items of sentimental value, or pets were removed before the fire, this is an indication of arson. If the property is for sale, the detective should determine how long it has been on the market. If the owner was out of town when the fire was set, he might have been building an alibi.

Once the fire is completely out, evidence collection begins. Evidence at a fire scene takes many different forms, some of which are transient, such as evaporating liquids. When a flammable liquid is poured onto a porous material, it rapidly penetrates and is absorbed. After it is ignited, the porous material functions much like a wick. Liquid fuel can burn only at the surface where there is sufficient oxygen. As the vapors at the surface are consumed, more liquid rises, vaporizes, and burns. If the fire is extinguished early or there is insufficient oxygen to support combustion, some of the original liquid will remain unburned. Heat from fire tends to evaporate the most volatile part of the accelerant, so the remaining liquid may differ somewhat in composition from the original. A ChromaTrace may detect flammable fumes and liquids or traces of hydrocarbon solvents. The sooner the equipment is used, the better, since vapors tend to evaporate quickly. The investigator should always check a suspect's clothing for traces of accelerants.

Examinations of debris recovered from scenes can identify chemicals, fuel oils, and specialty solvents. Examinations generally cannot identify specific brands. The investigator should search for the following at questioned arson scenes: candles, cigarettes, matchbooks, Molotov cocktails, fused chemical masses, or any electronic or mechanical devices that may have been used to assist the arsonist. The officer should also search for burn trails on carpeted or hardwood floors and signs of faulty wiring, such as heavily burnt wall insulation.

Lacquer spray is used to preserve delicate papers that have burnt to ash or impressions in ash. A ChromaTrace analysis of ash will determine its composition. If all combustible material is destroyed, the investigator should look for what is there that should not be—tools used for illegal entry, ignition devices, empty fuel containers, etc.

Firefighters often provide valuable information concerning things they saw while battling the flames and they should be consulted before assuming a door or window was broken by an intruder: Fire suppression or rescue efforts may have required forced entry.

EXPLOSIVES

Of all bombing incidents on Poseidon, the top targets currently are residential properties, industrial facilities, and commercial vehicles. Motives of fraud and revenge are cited most frequently. Other motives include profit, vandalism, and concealment of another crime. Statistics reveal that about 35% of bombing victims are the bombers themselves and most bombings occur at night.

The most common types of explosive and incendiary devices are traditional pipe bombs, Molotov cocktails, and other improvised explosive or incendiary devices. The most common explosive materials used in these devices are flammable liquids and black and smokeless powder. Pre-constructed devices are generally used by ecoterrorists or organized crime groups, as their access to such items is not as limited as that of a lone individual.

An explosion is the result of rapid and violent combustion of a material, resulting in pressure and heat. Explosions are classified as low-order (diffused) and high-order (concentrated). The first type is usually accidental, the second deliberate.

Low-order explosions feature slow expansion over a wide area. They are caused by gasses, solvents, certain flammable dusts, vapors, and chemical reactions. Nearby objects are scattered in no particular direction or pattern and resulting deformation of materials appears twisted and torn rather than shattered.

High-order explosions are characterized by rapid combustion and are produced by materials such as Binex (FM 59) and plastic explosives. No oxygen is needed—the compounds used to generate the explosion are high in oxygen content. This produces a large volume of gas expanded by the heat of the reaction. Debris blows out in a radiating pattern from the origin. Shattered or fragmented material from the device will be found near the explosion's point of origin.

The first responder to an explosion should request emergency services from firefighters, EMS personnel, law enforcement officers, the Marshal Service's hazardous materials (HazMat) team, and GEO Patrol Bomb Squad technicians.

The techniques used to investigate bombings and explosions require a basic background in chemistry, familiarity with the materials and techniques used in the formation of explosives, and the various ways in which explosives are interrelated and initiated.

When the investigator arrives, he should identify and mark scene hazards such as reduced structural integrity, dangerous chemicals, and secondary explosive devices. These are designed specifically to kill or injure emergency responders. Suspicious items should remain untouched until skilled technicians can assess them. Safe zones must be designated for victims and evacuees and efforts begun to rescue those who are injured or trapped. The location of victims prior to and after the explosion should be documented.

A scene walkthrough, as with a fire, is necessary to identify witnesses, victims, and the presence of evidence. It is essential to preserve potentially transient physical evidence such as that on victims or that might be compromised by weather conditions.

The seat of an explosion is easier to find than the origin of a fire. By determining the type of explosion, the investigator knows what evidence to search for. If the explosion left a crater, he should collect the debris in it, then dig down under the surface for more evidence, using sifters if necessary. The largest fragments of the bomb are usually found at the bottom of the crater. These may have readable lot numbers or manufacturer information.

In addition to recording blast effects such as structural damage and thermal effects, witnesses, bystanders, and nearby structures and vehicles may also reveal clues. At the medical examiner's office, a postmortem examination includes full-body imaging, which may reveal evidence in the body or clothing of the victim, as well as a complete scan for trace evidence.

The investigator should attempt to determine the method of delivery. If the explosive was hurled into the building, was that particular window or door a random or deliberate choice? Was the bomb left where someone would find it or hidden away on a timing device? Who or what is the apparent

target? What level of expertise does the explosive require for construction? Are there indications of where or when it was made? What is the possible origin of components?

Evidence collected typically includes suspected explosive components and fragments, objects collected from the crater, residue, and other trace evidence. These, and additional items of evidence such as blood, hair, fiber, fingerprints, tire tracks, weapons, documents, tools, and samples of indigenous materials for comparison purposes should be sent to the lab. An explosives expert may be able to recreate the device based upon the components recovered.

Remains of improvised explosive and incendiary devices and hoax bombs should be examined to identify the main charge and components such as switches, batteries, detonators, tapes, wires, and timing mechanisms. Fabrication techniques, unconsumed explosives, and the overall construction of a bomb can point to the creator. Examinations can determine whether the device functioned as designed. The source of a recovered battery or wire or detonator may narrow the field of suspects.

Explosives are hazardous materials and should only be handled by qualified police or bomb disposal personnel. Special packaging for transport is required. Some explosives residue is water-soluble and must be protected from moisture. Other residue evaporates quickly and should be collected as soon as possible. Control samples from the blast site are useful for comparison purposes in the lab.

TASK RESOLUTION

- To adequately record a crime scene, Photography skill is needed.
- Collecting evidence requires a good Remote Operations skill.
- Leadership may be helpful to manage personnel and control a scene.
- Persuasion skill can help get a perp to stick around, or convince witnesses to cooperate.
- Tracking skill is helpful when following the path of the fire or determining entrance and egress points from a building.
- Chemistry skill will help determine whether accelerants were used to start a fire.
- Physics skill is most helpful in determining the path of a fire or trajectories of a bomb. It is also useful in finding the point of origin.
- Demolitions skill is used to identify type and construction of an explosive device.
- Damage Control can help determine how a fire spread, how a bomb affected a structure, and how firefighting efforts affect the crime scene.

PROPERTY CRIMES

For some people, making an honest living is too much work. A property crime is any crime that damages or deprives a person of property with the intent of not returning it. Document fraud, embezzlement, burglary, con games, auto theft, and vandalism fall into this category.

Unfortunately, dealing with property crimes falls low on a police officer's agenda. Police have plenty of violent crimes to keep them busy. Victims often have difficulty providing accurate descriptions of the missing property and seldom can prove ownership, whether for lack of documentation or alterations made by the perpetrator. The lab will generally not examine evidence recovered from a property crime scene unless special circumstances —such as heavy loss or connection with another crime—warrant it.

A victim must prove legitimate monetary value and proof of ownership, and the detective must find evidence of intent to steal. By discovering possible witnesses, determining who had access to the property, and determining a motive, the investigator may successfully catch the perpetrator and recover the goods.

Considering clues from the crime scene, such as trace evidence and fingerprints, information from witnesses, informants, and suspects, and possible motives, a detective pieces everything together to bring the case to a satisfactory conclusion.

The officer must consider several questions: Was a specific item stolen? Were other valuables left untouched? Who profits? Was the technique used that of a professional or amateur? Is the victim telling the whole story?

BURGLARY

Burglary involves typically breaking into and entering a building with the intent to commit a crime inside.

Burglaries are generally discovered long after they happen. They are frequently linked to other crimes such as arson, sexual assault, or homicide. Every burglary has a signature; it is up to the investigator to find it. Some are obvious: A burglar who steals only shoes will stand out more than one who steals jewelry. Breaking and entering, unlawful entry, housebreaking, and criminal trespassing all fall into the category of burglary. Officers are advised to spend no more than six hours total investigating a robbery or burglary. More serious crimes require the attention of investigators and the Justice Commission has determined that a robbery investigation that takes longer is inefficient.

Logical burglary suspects include professionals who deal with a specific type of property, those who have easy access to the location, drug users, and persons in financial trouble. Other possible suspects or witnesses include neighbors and family members of the victim, and fences. Some items are popular on the black market and are likely not to be recovered.

To work a burglary scene, the investigator must locate the suspect or insure that he is no longer at the scene and secure the location. The officer should attempt to determine the MO (*modus operandi*—a pattern used in the commission of a crime) and compare it to other incidents on record. Physical evidence at the scene may include items that can cross-contaminate clothing—building materials and safe insulation, for example. The approach and escape routes should be surveyed for footprints or impressions, drag marks, and abandoned items such as tools, clothes, and open boxes. The investigator should check obstacles surrounding the building—walls, fences, and gates—for fabric fibers and toolmarks. The point of entry should be examined for broken glass, broken tools, blood, finger- and footprints, plastic chips, or wood. *Everything* should be documented and recorded. The officer should inventory missing items with complete descriptions.

A suspect should be thoroughly searched, and cuts, scratches, and bruises should be recorded. His clothing should be collected for further examination. Tears and trace evidence can place him at the crime scene. The suspect may have been familiar with the location if valuables were removed from unlikely or well-hidden locations.

Safes are frequent targets for burglars. They are insulated against fire and resistant to punching, prying, and chopping. Drilling or burning may work on some. Explosives are occasionally involved, but risk damaging the contents, and sloppy use indicates the work of an amateur. Professional safecrackers develop preferred methods, creating a signature that is seen in every job. They use certain types of explosives, particular tools, and distinct techniques. Breaking into a safe requires skills not many people have. When a detective develops a suspect, he should check alibis very carefully.

Popular techniques for robbing safes are a blast job, peeling, ripping, punching, or a carry out. In a blast job, holes are drilled in the safe close to the locking bar area and an explosive such as nitro is inserted. Peeling and ripping involve drilling a hole at one edge of an outer doorplate. The spot welds or rivets are pried up using a chisel, sledgehammer, and crowbar until the insulation is visible. The insulation is removed and the burglar can then easily pry the locking mechanism off. Most safecrackers attack the bottom of the safe where it is usually slightly less reinforced. Punching a safe is one of the quickest methods and requires experience, indicating the work of a pro. A direct frontal blow from a sledgehammer "stuns" the combination dial. A chisel is used to break off the dial ring around the

clock and a drift pin or punch is employed to drive the spindle into the safe. The result is a broken lock and a hole in the center of the safe door, which swings open. A carry out is just what it sounds like: The safe is removed and opened elsewhere.

Most safes use rather dated, mechanical technology. To fulfill its purpose, one of a safe's most valuable properties is its reliability. In most cases, simple mechanical devices are more reliable than sophisticated electronic ones. While electronic locking mechanisms are not uncommon, their fragility, greater complexity, and reliance on power sources is a distinct drawback. Many safes incorporate both mechanical and electronic locking mechanisms and security systems. Electronics skill and specialized equipment is generally required to crack these safes.

Safe insulation transfers to people, clothing, tools, bags, loot, and vehicles. The lab should check for insulation before processing tools for latent prints. Lab examinations of safe insulation can determine the manufacturer, if necessary. Samples should be collected from damaged areas and undamaged areas for comparison.

CON GAMES

Schemes and scams are alive and well in 2199. Nothing-to-lose, too-good-to-be-true, limited-time-offers come along with amazing frequency and just as astonishingly, marks fall for them all the time. Insurance and bank fraud, inspection cons, rigged games, and pyramid schemes are very difficult cases to solve because embarrassed victims lie about their involvement and scammers are anonymous and unpredictable. Unless a police officer has a personal interest in the victim, GEO officials do not investigate crimes of this nature. Private detectives have had some success, but generally the victim has little money left once he has been taken.

VEHICLE THEFT

Ridejackers—offenders who force a driver out of his own vehicle to steal it—risk a variety of charges if caught, from theft to robbery to kidnapping, if a passenger remains inside. This does not seem to deter them from the lucrative business of vehicle theft, however.

Using simple devices such as a code cutter or jackblade, a vehicle thief easily circumvents ignition codes and security systems. As quickly as legal technology creates a way to protect a vehicle, illegal technology finds a way to circumvent it. Sometimes the source of both technologies is the same.

Patrols are issued a daily hot sheet for reported stolens. Vehicles may be located before they have been completely gutted and stripped, and are sometimes found abandoned by joyriders or persons involved in another crime who just needed some transportation. Some vehicles are not worth much themselves, but the accessories, customizations, and equipment that is taken from them earns a thief a decent living on black-market sales. The black-market trade in vehicles and vehicle parts is especially lucrative on Poseidon, where such technology is still relatively scarce.

The GEO Patrol puts rookies on ridewatch, a team of police whose responsibility is to control traffic, investigate accidents, and look for stolen vehicles. The purpose of ridewatch is more to familiarize the new officers with procedure, get them comfortable on their beats, and keep a visible police presence, but occasionally a routine stop or trip down a back alley or canal will result in the recovery of a vehicle from the hot sheet.

All vehicles on Poseidon are required by law to have an electronic identification transmitter, usually integrated with the onboard computer or ignition access chip. These devices automatically transmit the vehicle's identification to the traffic-control network in cities, and to police officers when queried. The identification number must also be clearly displayed on the vehicle for visual reference.

Officers are instructed to look for missing locks or registration numbers, expensive vehicles with unlikely looking drivers (driver profiling), suspicious looking identification numbers, which are frequently obliterated or disguised, or disabled electronic IDs.

Theft is a serious offense that currently receives less attention from police than is needed, due to a shortage of officers and resources. Citizens turn to private investigators for help in many cases, but without GEO backing, a large number of cases remain unsolved.

TASK RESOLUTION

- Economics skill helps the character judge the value of reported missing goods.
- Persuasion skill is crucial during an interview or interrogation of witnesses and suspects.
- Street Culture will help identify who to talk to, what possible motives and disposal methods a thief might use, and who might know something helpful.
- Shadowing skill helps a character follow a suspect unobtrusively.
- Tracking skill may be useful for following an assailant or robber, or reconstructing his method of approach and point of entry to a crime scene.
- Demolitions can help determine what type of explosive was used to open a safe.

VIOLENT CRIMES

Robbery is taking property from a person using force, violence, or intimidation. Assault is an attack on another person in a way that results in bodily harm. Theft and burglary fall under the legal category of wrongful acquisition; robbery, assault, kidnapping, extortion, sex offenses, and murder are crimes that threaten the health or safety of an individual and are categorized as violent crimes.

ROBBERY

Robbery is a theft from a person who would not otherwise surrender possession of his property. It generally takes place in the dark, where identification of the suspect is difficult. Because of the victim's state of mind—he is usually confused and scared—it may be impossible to gather any useful information about the crime. On the other hand, robbers have been easily caught when a quick-thinking victim activated a microcamera or a sensory recorder, capturing the entire event.

When responding to a burglary or robbery call, a police officer should insure that the suspect is no longer at the scene. A trapped perpetrator can be as dangerous as a cornered and injured animal. The location should be secured and the area surveyed for evidence.

Robbery is most often a crime of opportunity. It is easy, quick, and requires little preparation. More than 70% of robbers carry a weapon and one in two victims of robbery are seriously injured. Commercial targets such as stores and clubs are more common—and profitable—than residential or street robberies. The crime is usually—but not

always—committed by a team of two or more people, one who acts as a lookout while the other(s) collect the loot.

Investigation of a robbery requires the careful interviewing of witnesses, a thorough search for evidence, and prompt reporting of the MO to CIC. Fingerprints, blood, security recordings, binding materials such as tape or rope, and trace evidence are likely to be found at the scene.

ASSAULT

Battery, rape, threats of physical violence, and any other attack that results in bodily harm are among the most commonly reported crimes on Poseidon. The GEO statute governing assault is loosely defined, covering anything from brandishing a knife to unsuccessful murder attempts. Degrees are assigned to offenses: First degree includes non-contact menacing gestures and verbal threats; second degree involves contact and evidence of injury; third degree requires the use of a weapon—which can be any object not attached to the attacker's body; and fourth degree assault is charged when the assailant uses a deadly weapon such as a knife or a loaded gun. Unloaded firearms fall into the third-degree category.

A good investigator employs all methods available to collect information concerning an assault. Evidence is sometimes scant or nonexistent and he may have to rely almost entirely on witness and victim statements. Victims should be interviewed as soon as possible, and then again a few days later to insure consistency of the story. Claims of robbery and burglary are not uncommon ways to defraud insurance companies. A background check on the victim can turn up important and interesting information concerning past activities, financial situations, associations, and relationships.

Once the crime scene has been thoroughly searched, interviews are completed, and if it has been established that the offense did indeed occur, an analysis of the event and evidence will lead the detective to develop a profile of the suspect. If he has a specific perp in mind, a well-executed interview and possibly an interrogation will shed light on the crime.

The investigator should be aware of the MO and compare it to other incidents on record in the CIC database. The officer should be alert for items that can cross-contaminate clothing. Obstacles surrounding the building should be checked, and walls and fences should be examined carefully for fabric fibers and blood. The investigator must record the scene and inventory missing items with detailed descriptions. A robbery suspect should be handled the same way as a burglary suspect: clothing should be confiscated, photographs and possibly holographic images should be recorded, and a search for fresh injuries should be conducted.

HOMICIDE

Unfortunately, the paradise the original human settlers of Poseidon found is no more. The age-old motives—greed, lust, power, hate, revenge—have stayed with humanity, while the species has won considerable victories over disease and illness.

Some detectives specialize in the investigation of homicide. In 2199, the word *homicide*, which originally meant "the killing of a human being," now recognizes and includes cetaceans and hybrids. The causes range as widely as the motives but a good investigator knows that the motive and opportunity weigh equally in solving the crime.

Besides following the strategies utilized for other crimes, a homicide detective needs additional information. His best witness cannot tell him what happened; he or she is dead.

The scene search starts at the body area. Are doors and windows locked or unlocked? Are there marks indicating forced entry? What are the dominant smells—gas, alcohol, smoke? The investigator should check the food preparation area—is there melted ice? Rancid food? Have liquid stains evaporated? What are the contents of wastebaskets? Is there evidence of struggle or ransacking? Did the decedent call for help? Are there signs of rescue attempts? What is the condition of clothing and the body? Has someone tried to cover up the crime by burning the scene?

Everything should be recorded: drag marks, impressions, discarded objects, broken branches, disturbed vegetation, articles of clothing, blood spatter, broken glass, evidence of insect and animal activity, wounds, weapons, signs of drug use, the area beneath the body, and damage to objects near the deceased.

Sometimes the victim's identity is a mystery in itself. Fingerprints, modifications, and tattoos or scars can help. Cybernetics have serial numbers

BLOOD-SPATTER ANALYSIS

Some investigators do not have access to the sophisticated remote that analyzes blood spatter at a crime scene and are tempted to disregard that particular evidence. Blood stains offer tremendous amounts of information about the events of the crime, however, and should not be overlooked.

Interpreting blood spatter is an art unto itself. The laws of physics concerning liquids apply; therefore training in physics is useful. Mathematics is also very helpful.

The surface texture blood falls on influences the amount of spatter. Smooth surfaces reveal fewer spatters because there is less surface area to deflect the liquid. Fabric absorbs blood, hard plastic does not, and many outdoor surfaces are water-resistant, leaving no blood evidence.

A drop's velocity, direction, and distance from the point of origin can be determined by its size and shape. As a general rule, the higher the energy of the impact, the smaller the drops are. Free-falling blood has a low velocity, leaving large drops. Impact spatters, found in cases of beating or stabbing, are medium velocity. Additional blows typically knock off blood collecting on clothing, skin, or hair, causing low- and medium-velocity spatters to mark the attacker with backspatter. High-velocity impact patterns appear as a mistlike spray of droplets with a few larger ones mixed in. These are the result of gunshots or explosions.

Impact angle is the angle formed between a blood drop's path and the surface into which it landed. Divide the width of the bloodstain by its length to get the sine of the drop's impact angle.

Round drops with evenly spaced scalloping at the edges indicate that the drop landed on a surface at 90°. As the angle of impact moves away from the 90° point, a drop elongates and one side will show larger scallops or tapering tails. The longer scallops or tails point in the direction the drop was going when it hit the surface.

that are recorded when they are installed. Dental records were once commonly used to identify a decedent, but that method has been outdated for decades. Prints and medical records are available on the CIC database; profiles for the Poseidon DNA database are collected and maintained by HIST.

If CIC reports the submitted fingerprints and DNA are not the victim's, the owner usually shows up on the database, leading the investigator towards a possible suspect. Caution is necessary, though. It is likely that many other people have had very good reasons to be leaving evidence, especially prints, behind. The investigator should use a careful process of elimination when following through on this evidence. The victim's brother may have killed him—or he may have just stopped by to chat and left prints on a table. If the database does not find a match, the perpetrator was either born on Poseidon, immigrated to the planet illegally, or has been altered, which might help narrow the list of suspects.

Next, the investigator should consider the cause of death. Was the victim drowned? Strangled? Shot? Poisoned? Did he fall? Evidence on and around the body will frequently point to a possible cause. The medical examiner is ultimately responsible for finding the cause of death, but the investigator should have an idea of how the crime was committed in order to process the scene and begin eliminating suspects.

The manner of death reveals a great deal about the crime. Was it a professional hit? Did the murder require great strength? Would the killer have gotten bloody? Are there defense wounds on the victim or was he taken by surprise? Is the scene staged to look like a suicide? Could the death have been an accident?

The investigator should extensively document blood spatter evidence. It indicates if the wound was from a blunt object, knife, or gun, where the perpetrator was when wounds were inflicted, how many blows were delivered, and whether the attacker got bloody.

If a firearm was used in the murder, a ballistics analysis can be conducted. If a vehicle was involved, as in a hit-and-run, it is possible trace particles of plastic transferred to the victim can be matched to a specific vehicle. All manufacturers

are required to register colors and chemical components with the GEO.

The investigator should then develop a timeframe of events. What happened just before, during, and after the crime? Witnesses are invaluable sources for this part of the investigation. Was the victim robbed? The murder may have been a robbery gone sour. Was the body moved or posed postmortem? This gives tremendous insight into the mindset and personality of the killer. When did the victim die?

By establishing the time of death, the investigator can narrow the suspect list by eliminating those with solid alibis, and possibly help locate witnesses. Several factors come into play when calculating time of death. A body begins to decompose more quickly when it is warm; putrefaction is impeded considerably in a body in water or the cold. Rigor mortis (stiffening of the muscles), livor mortis (settling of blood due to gravity), algor mortis (drop in body temperature), and changes in vitreous composition (the chemicals in the eye) follow specific time patterns. Death investigators are provided with software that analyzes these elements using temperature readings from the crime scene remote, tension measurements taken on the fingers, arms, and legs, a scan of the lowest areas of the body, and a tiny needle inserted into the eye. The result is an estimated time of death within 10 minutes.

Lack of signs of forced entry could indicate suicide or that the deceased knew the assailant. Crimes in which the body is covered or treated kindly postmortem may point to someone who had a close relationship with the victim. Poisoning is a crime rarely carried out by strangers. Overkill—when the attack appears to be more violent than necessary to kill the victim—is a sign of extreme rage and loss of control. Bites leave impressions that can later be matched to a suspect's dentition.

An examination of the body may reveal the absence of valuables and identification. Indentations or pale areas might indicate where jewelry was recently worn. What is *not* found can often be as important to the investigation as what *is* found.

Sometimes a victim is missing. The crime scene may strongly indicate a murder, yet there is no body. Burying victims is far more common on Earth than on Poseidon. The dense vegetation in remote areas makes digging difficult. Carcasses must be buried deeper than four feet to keep animals and insects from disturbing them. Burials at sea are the easiest and most convenient method of disposal; the oceans are full of hungry creatures and few corpses make it back to the beach.

Once the impact angle has been determined, the point of origin above or away from a flat surface can be found. Using a spatter program—every law enforcement agency has one—the investigator enters the impact angles and distance from the floor or wall of several spatters. Accuracy increases with more data, but it is not necessary to input every drop found. The program will display a three-dimensional representation of the common point of origin, showing the investigator where the victim was at the time the attack took place.

Once the victim's identity, cause, manner, and time of death have been established, the evidence has all been recorded and collected, and the body has been released to the medical examiner, the detective looks at all of the clues on hand and begins a process of elimination. Who had the opportunity *and* a motive? He may already have a suspect in mind, in which case he may conduct an interview to gather more information—or an interrogation to obtain a confession. Witnesses typically remember more details after they are initially questioned and should always be followed up.

The rest of the investigation typically consists of running down leads from informants, re-interviewing suspects and witnesses, and collecting additional evidence, if necessary, to provide a prosecutor with enough material to press criminal charges.

TASK RESOLUTION

- Bureaucracy skill may be necessary to get the Medical Examiner's office to respond quickly in the case of a high-profile murder.
- Persuasion skill is helpful in developing witnesses and informants.
- Street Culture can help an investigator identify potential suspects in a homicide.

- Photography and Remote Operations skills are necessary for recording a crime scene and collecting evidence.
- Forensic Medicine skill is used to identify details surrounding a death.
- Chemistry and Pharmacology can help in cases of overdose or poisoning.
- Physics skill might help an investigator determine time of death, in some cases.
- Tracking can help an investigator identify marks left by a suspect, animals, or insects.
- Zoology is used for forensic entomology.

ORGANIZED CRIME

Criminal organizations are a significant concern for the GEO. Most are involved in shady dealings behind legitimate fronts. The Gorchoff Family is the largest organization, competing in some areas with the NRM. These two are most involved in money laundering, racketeering, extortion, counterfeiting, drug trafficking, murder, corruption of public officials, and the illegal infiltration of legitimate businesses. Two others of note, the Wah Ching, a youth-gang subfamily of the Chinese Triads, and the Japanese Yakuza are much smaller fish but still fairly active on the colony world. Both are known to be involved in drug trafficking and murder for hire.

Because police agencies are so shorthanded and in possession of fewer resources than the crime syndicates and gangs they combat, infiltration is typically a better approach than more overt efforts.

Waterfront operations, labor unions, and restaurants offer opportunities for undercover officers to pose as employees and potential recruits, eventually infiltrating the organization and collecting enough evidence to bring down the leaders. It is nearly impossible to access the top-level bosses, and most damaging arrests are made on the lieutenant level.

Cryptanalysis examinations involve the analysis of encrypted clandestine drug and racketeering documents.

Gambling examinations include the interpretation of records from sports bookmaking businesses, numbers or lottery operations, and other gambling businesses. Most gambling on Poseidon is restricted, rather than illegal. However, many criminal organizations are involved in unlicensed—and therefore untaxed and unregulated—gambling operations.

Loansharking records are examined to determine the amounts of the loans, amounts paid in interest and principal, number of loans, and interest rates.

Money laundering records are examined to determine the scope of the operation, amounts laundered, how the funds were laundered, and any other illegal activities. If investigators can identify, disrupt, and dismantle significant money laundering mechanisms, the cost of criminal activity will increase and the flow of criminal assets will decrease.

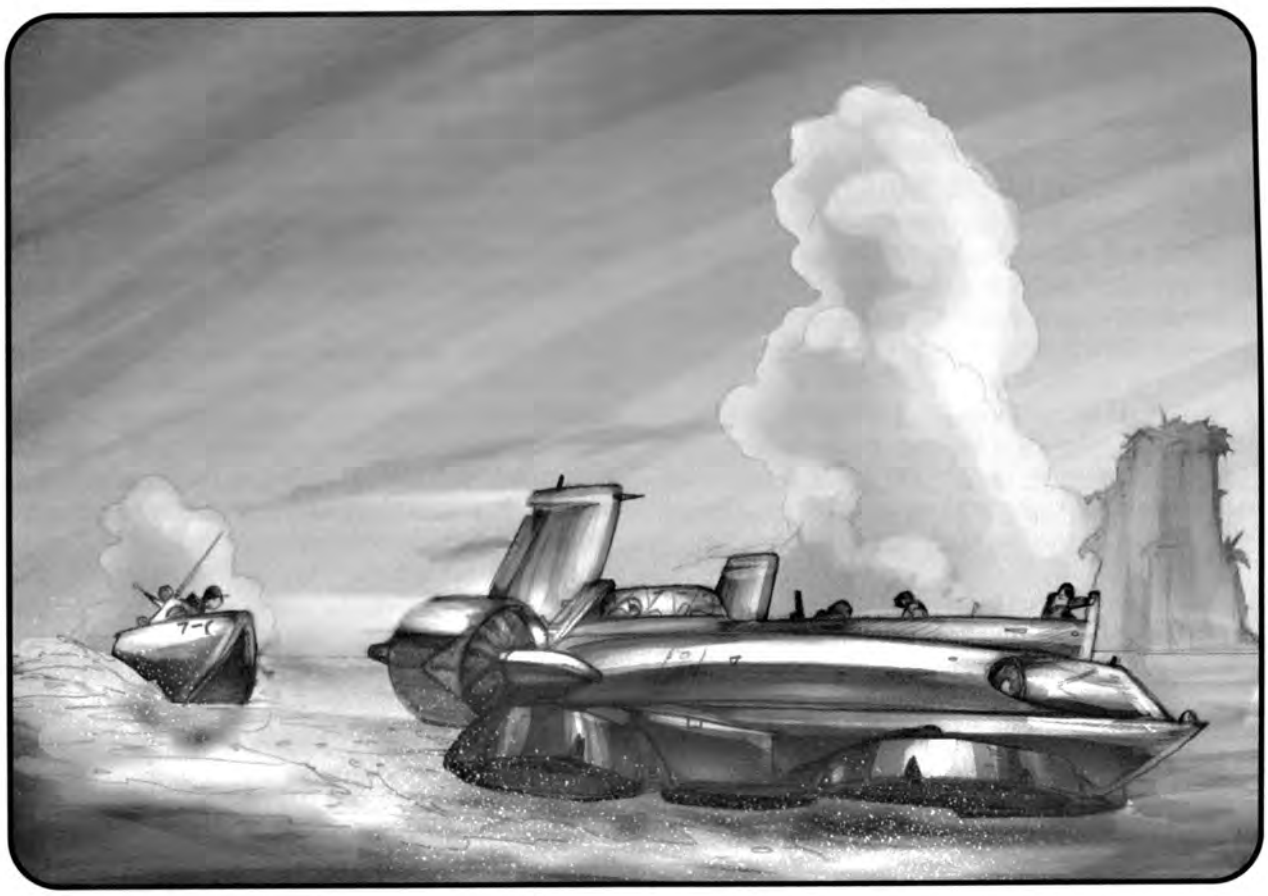
Successful organized crime investigations are the result of investigators' knowledge, skills, luck, and persistence.

TASK RESOLUTION

- Bureaucracy skill will help a detective coordinate and cooperate with other government agencies involved in the investigation and prosecution of organized crime.
- Economics skill will allow a character to judge the value of goods and services and evaluate schemes like money laundering and extortion rackets.
- Leadership skill can be used when working undercover to inspire confidence in others.
- Negotiation and Persuasion skills are useful in cultivating informants.
- Street Culture skill allows the detective to identify the major players in organized crime.
- Acting may be necessary for covert operations.
- Photography may be needed for surveillance operations.
- Shadowing, Hiding, and Sneaking may also be useful in surveillance.
- Bribery may be needed to get information.
- Disguise skill is handy for undercover work.
- Fast-Talk skill is useful for deceiving and detecting deception in others, and may save a character's life if he is ever caught in the wrong place at the wrong time.

BUREAU OF CONTRABAND INVESTIGATION

The Bureau of Contraband Investigation, a branch of the GEO Marshal Service, is responsible for actions concerning smuggling, the black market, or controlled substances. The BCI does not hesitate to prosecute violators to the full extent of the law.



SMUGGLING

Smugglers are exceptionally creative when hiding and moving goods. Most, however, are not clever enough for a sharp-eyed cop who knows what to look for. A person exhibiting suspicious body language, taking frequent vacations or trips not consistent with his claimed occupation or income, driving a heavily modified vehicle, or in possession of a significant amount of cash should motivate an alert officer to look for contraband. Everything from drugs to animal skins to industrial products has a place in the market—and someone willing to procure and deliver it.

On Poseidon, smuggling is largely controlled by the major organized crime syndicates. The Gorchoff Family specializes in drugs, restricted biotech, and stolen technology, while the NRM is heavily involved in the black-market weapons trade and is becoming more active in the drug trade. The Mafiya also deals in animal hides—especially sunbursts—but the NRM as a whole will have nothing to do with poachers. Dens in Nomad, Kraken, and the Wall provide safe havens for smugglers and pirates of all varieties.

The BCI conducts smuggling interdiction efforts worldwide. They also carry out domestic market surveys for the presence of prohibited products, work closely with the GEO Customs and Immigration Service to regulate interplanetary commerce, collect information to identify and shut down smuggling operations, offer information to importers, transportation companies, and retailers regarding regulatory compliance, and investigate potential violations.

DRUGS

Abuse of legal and illegal substances is a common form of recreation on Poseidon. Principal drugs of abuse include natural substances such as pharium and devil's dance (FM 33), legally manufactured drugs such as Clarion and 3-P, and illegal drugs such as SALT and flash, which are synthesized in clandestine labs.

Enforcing drug laws poses a problem for understaffed law enforcement agencies. Most busts target manufacturing operations and drug traffickers, leaving street users to find other sources. Certain chemicals that are available at any feed or drugstore are monitored carefully. A large purchase of

sodium carbonate, for instance, might tip authorities off to a SALT manufacturer—or an innocent soapmaker.

In many cases, crimes of violence go hand-in-hand with drug use. Robbery can pay for the next fix. A local dealer may not like someone moving into his turf and will dispatch the competitor. The very nature of some substances brings out the worst in certain users. And no activity is more profitable than drug trafficking.

Drug trafficking—transporting illegal substances for eventual sale—is a serious moneymaking pursuit. It is the ultimate in pyramid schemes, with one person or group at the top directing ever-widening tiers of laboratories, smugglers, and sellers.

Successful busts require precise planning. Simply taking the low-level dealers out will only result in alerting the suppliers that the heat is onto them. Discovering the point of origin where the drug is manufactured or refined and packaged, then organizing a raid, is the preferred way to shut down an operation.

First, the supplier and connections should be identified. Then supply outlets should be kept under surveillance and informants developed. Once names and faces are known, several officers should discretely begin making arrests from the top of the supply pyramid down, keeping word off the street for as long as possible. Using suspects against each other is a tried and true technique for getting confessions once they are taken into custody.

Along with well-established counterintelligence capabilities and plenty of capital, traffickers have access to the most technologically advanced vehicles, communications equipment, and weapons that money can buy. Tracking the sources of these items may reveal the identities of important individuals in the organization.

Serious traffickers model their operations after terrorist groups, keeping tight control of workers through a highly compartmentalized cell structure that separates manufacture, distribution, money laundering, communications, security, and recruitment.

TASK RESOLUTION

- Economics skill allows a character to judge the street value of drugs.
- Tactics skill may be needed to plan and execute a raid, particularly when other agencies are involved.
- Persuasion skill could encourage a suspect to cooperate.
- Colonial, Incorporate, Native, and Street Cultures, depending on the situation, are helpful in determining the likely kingpin of a drug ring, or possible informants and witnesses.
- Acting and Disguise skills may be necessary for covert operations.
- Photography is necessary for undercover surveillance requiring evidentiary recordings.
- Pharmacology or Chemistry skill is useful in identifying drugs.

GEO DEPARTMENT FOR COUNTERTERRORISM

Kidnapping, bombing, hostage taking, and sabotage are considered terrorist acts. Whether for individual financial gain or to send a message to a certain target, terrorist activities are generally deadly and destructive.

Marshals are trained at the academy in counterterrorism methods such as bomb scene investigation and hostage negotiation. On Poseidon, however, most Marshals observe High Commissioner Cope's unwritten policy of zero tolerance, particularly in hostage situations. Acting as judge, jury, and executioner, Marshals are expected to use reasonable force to uphold GEO law. The interpretation of reasonable force is left completely up to the officer.

Terrorists raised watching action movies on CommCore often rely on the popular misconception that Marshals—and even GEO Patrols—are somehow obligated to strike a deal with them. This idea serves directors well, but many a misguided criminal has discovered his mistake too late. Most Patrol officers and all Marshals are excellent shots and few hesitate to quickly dispatch a terrorist.

The Magistrates fully back up a Marshal's decision when terrorists are involved.

Recently, a class of 15 Deputy Marshals on Poseidon graduated from an intensive course in infiltration. These undercover agents are currently working covert operations, singly or in pairs, to penetrate some of the larger ecoterrorist organizations and gather information. Only the Magistrates know who these people are.

TASK RESOLUTION

- Persuasion skill can be used to negotiate with hostages.
- Colonial, Incorporate, Native, and Street Cultures, depending on the situation, are helpful in determining the purpose of a terrorist attack or possible informants and witnesses.
- Demolitions skill can help identify the components and type of bomb a suspect uses. It may also suggest where the parts were obtained.
- Damage Control skill is needed when an explosion or destructive sabotage is used. This will help identify potential structural problems, the location of the damage or origin of the explosive, and possibly the level of expertise of the suspect.

TECHNOLOGY AND RESOURCES

CRIME SCENE REMOTE

These specialty remotes are used in pairs. One is equipped with a 360° video recorder that produces accurately scaled, high-resolution images. The other also records data from a crime scene, using an assortment of lighting options such as infrared, UV, or laser. The images are combined to create an excellent record of exactly what is at the scene, where each item is located, the physical properties of items of interest, and evidence that is not visible to the average human eye, such as latent fingerprints or certain body fluids.

The user can program the remotes to work within any size perimeter and to focus on or disregard any number of variables. The remotes are waterproof and remarkably stable in windy conditions, though most evidence is not as durable. Certain remotes are designed for use in underwater crime scene investigation, but these are quite rare.

Crime scene remotes are expensive and are generally only used by specialized GEO Patrol units such as homicide or arson squads. There are two older sets available for loan from the Evidence Discovery Squad in Haven.

Dimensions: 20 centimeters, 0.5 kilograms
Power Source: Standard cell
Rigging Value: Standard
Durability: 1
Legality: Restricted
Availability: Rare
Cost: 5,000cs

CHROMATRACE REMOTE

The ChromaTrace is a great investigative tool if an agency can afford one. Trace evidence such as hairs and prints are easily found with crime scene remotes, but other types of evidence such as fluids, ashes, and residues pose the problem of identification and collection.

Working in one-meter squares, a ChromaTrace detects irregularities in surface textures, density, and reflective properties. Software analyzes the irregularity to determine its nature and compares it to known materials in a database. The remote is capable of identifying fumes, liquids, organic

FIREARMS EXAMINATION

In firearms manufacturing, the barrel is made by drilling a hole in a steel bar, reaming it to match the bore size, then adding rifling. This addition of uniform spiral grooves cut into the barrel causes a fired bullet to spin, increasing its stability and accuracy. The metal between each groove is called a land. Grooves and lands acquire tiny imperfections due to metal particles created in the process. These are permanent features of that particular barrel and no other barrel has identical defects.

A bullet is slightly larger in diameter than the bore diameter of the barrel in which it is designed to be fired. When it travels down the length of the barrel, the soft plastics and ceramics of the bullet are worn away slightly by the hardened steel of the barrel, creating an impression of the lands and grooves on the sides of the bullet. This transfer of individual characteristics from firearm to ammunition is what makes firearms identification possible. The marks on a bullet can tell the investigator whether the barrel has a right or left twist, the pitch (rate of twist), and how many grooves it has.

Manufacturers use different techniques in barrel production. This information is available on CommCore. As an example, a search for the manufacturer of a gun with a six/right rifled barrel with a pitch of 1:44—that is, the bullet makes one complete turn in 44 millimeters—would turn up the Shively 7, a small-caliber handgun made by Biedermann Firearms in Germany.

Lands reveal striations that are unique to that weapon: Any bullet fired from that particular gun will have identical markings, called a signature. If a bullet with a matching signature is recovered from any crime scene, investigators can say with certainty that the same gun was used in both crimes. Image data of every recovered bullet is recorded in the CIC database, enabling new evidence to be compared against thousands of case files previously entered in the system. When a firearm is seized, a test round is fired and added to the database.

materials, the composition of ash (fabric, wood, plastic, etc.), fibers, animal or human hairs, dried stains, and most metals.

Once identification is made, a recovery remote is summoned to collect the evidence.

If the crime scene is a suspected arson fire, the sooner the equipment is used, the better, since many vapors evaporate quickly.

ChromaTrace remotes are very expensive. Large fire departments and a few of the GEO Patrol arson investigators have them. They are much larger than crime scene remotes.

Dimensions: 50 centimeters, 1.65 kilograms
Power Source: Standard cell
Rigging Value: Standard
Durability: 0
Legality: Restricted
Availability: Rare
Cost: 10,000cs

RECOVERY REMOTES

These remotes make a crime scene investigator's life much easier. Relatively inexpensive, recovery remotes respond to instructions from a ChromaTrace or crime scene remote, collecting evidence with precise pincers, vacuums, and scoops.

Scenes can be worked with anywhere from one to 15 recovery remotes, depending on the size of the perimeter. All GEO Patrols have access to these remotes; some Native Patrol posts have them as well.

Dimensions: 30 centimeters, 0.5 kilograms
Power Source: Standard cell
Rigging Value: Standard
Durability: 1
Legality: Legal
Availability: Scarce
Cost: 300cs

CASTING GEL

Any impression—from a handprint to hammer strike—can be taken with casting gel. This allows an investigator to study the impression after it has been destroyed and match it to the item that created it.

Impressions in delicate materials such as ash or dust are sprayed with a hardening agent and allowed to dry. Then a catalyst is applied carefully to the surface and silicone gel is pressed into the impression. It dries in a few seconds, producing a positive of the item that created the original.

Dimensions: 1.0 kilograms, liter
Legality: Legal
Availability: Scarce
Cost: 20cs/liter

CRIMINAL INFORMATION CENTER DATABASE

The Justice Commission developed the Criminal Information Center (CIC) database to provide law enforcement access to intelligence and investigation data; evidence collected from crime scenes; records of stolen property and missing persons; firearms, ballistics, hair, plastic, paint, cybernetic, and fiber references; warrant information; criminal records and dossiers; and DNA, medical, and fingerprint records.

Direct access to information on the CIC is restricted in accordance with specific rules and clearance levels, though much of it is accessible by any licensed law enforcement officer, including the Native Patrol. The Marshal Service is authorized to retrieve information for lower-level law enforcement agencies upon request.

POSEIDON DNA DATABASE

The DNA database is a limited-access database of DNA profiles, similar to the GEO Fingerprint Identification database (GFID). Identifications can be made without benefit of a named suspect from samples of tissue or body fluids submitted to the lab for profiling.

This indexing system is installed in every laboratory in the GEO's jurisdiction, though access is strictly one-way, allowing the lab to input information but not retrieve it.

A Marshal or other authorized user can compare DNA profiles allowing him to link events and identify suspects by matching DNA from crime scenes to convicted offenders, other crime scenes, or missing or unidentified persons.

The GEO is attempting to collect a DNA sample from every person born on Earth or Poseidon. The database currently stores the profiles of 3.8 billion humans and cetaceans.

An example of how the Poseidon DNA Database is used: GEO Patrol officers in Haven submitted evidence from a 2198 solved sexual assault case to the PDD. An automatic scan produced matches with three other unsolved cases that occurred in New Hawaii in 2195 and Westcape in 2196. The suspect was eventually charged and convicted on four counts. Without the PDD, it is likely that these assaults would have remained unlinked and unsolved.

GEO FINGERPRINT IDENTIFICATION DATABASE

The Fingerprint Identification database works much like the Poseidon Pheromone Database (PPD), but access is open to all law enforcement agencies. GFID provides the capability to search a repository of more than 95 million recorded individuals' fingerprints.

Fingerprints are typically captured with an electronic scanner and electronically transmitted to the GFID.

POSEIDON PHEROMONE DATABASE

The PPD is accessible only by authorized police officers. Scanners are issued and keyed to one individual; they will not work in the hands of any other user. Pheromone scanners (FM 27) are commonly used by police agencies for identification purposes. Fingerprinting is not nearly as quick and DNA profiling takes about three days to get results because a sample must be submitted to the lab for comparison. Cetaceans are not candidates for P-scanning, however, and many hybrids cause inconclusive readings. The P-scanner is also employed for lie detection, since metabolic rates change and pheromone output is altered due to stress. Because the baseline is already recorded, the P-scanner identifies the individual, then reports variations, which indicate extreme emotion. It is up to the officer to interpret this, as a frightened subject will approach the same range as a deceptive one.

PUBLIC RECORDS

Arrest warrants, name changes, business establishment records, fire and health code violations, general criminal histories, birth and death records,

THE MEDICAL EXAMINER

You're a rookie GEO Patrol officer and you just caught your first homicide. Arriving at the address, you find the victim, a young man with several obvious holes in his body. A crowd has already begun to form and you listen to them as you take in the entire scene.

"Looks like bite marks to me," says a voice. You see no sign of struggle.

"Nah, he was obviously stabbed," says another. There is a partial bloody shoe print near the body.

"I was standing right there," says a third, "And never heard any shots. What could it be?" The victim is wearing a plain, silver ring on his right thumb.

You've never seen so much blood and try not to look at the body. You aren't allowed to touch the victim until the meat wagon comes. The crime scene is yours, but the medical examiner has jurisdiction over the kid lying on the road.

Once you've secured the area and notified the ME's office, you begin recording the crowd and the crime scene. Evidence is scant—the bloody shoeprint is about all you'll get from here, unless a witness comes forward.

When the morgue guys come to get the body, they turn the boy face up and allow you to visually inspect him. He has a fresh bruise above his left eye, but besides that and the holes in his chest and back, he looks like your average kid. It's up to the doc to give you more information.

So what happens next?

Bodies of persons dying suddenly, from violence or in any suspicious, unusual, or unnatural manner, are required by law to be taken to the medical examiner's office. This includes any death from something other than disease—apparent suicides, homicides, trauma, radiation, poisoning, heat exposure, cold exposure, and electrocutions. It also covers any death

property liens, military service records, licenses, vehicle registrations, occupational titles, personal property ownership records, real estate sales, and patents are open records, available at any time to law enforcement and by request to any citizen.

GEO JUSTICE COMMISSION'S FORENSICS LABS

The successful investigation and prosecution of crimes usually requires the collection, preservation, and analysis of evidence, which can be crucial to proving guilt or innocence. The Justice Commission's Forensics Labs are the largest and most comprehensive forensic laboratories on Earth —and the only ones of note on Poseidon.

The labs are responsible for analyses of physical evidence, ranging from biological materials to explosives, drugs, and firearms. They perform more than four million examinations each year, accepting any evidence related to violent crimes under investigation by GEO law enforcement.

To ensure timely forensic assistance to law enforcement agencies, labs do not routinely accept evidence in cases involving crimes where there was no personal injury or intent to cause personal injury. This includes vandalism, arson, or explosive incidents in unoccupied residential and commercial buildings and properties; hit-and-run vehicle accidents not resulting in injuries; and fraud, burglary, or theft of less than 50,000cs value. Exceptions are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Laboratory personnel provide a wide range of specialized services: technical support in large-scale investigations and disasters; expert witness testimony in court cases regarding the results of forensic examinations; latent fingerprint identification; DNA profiling; hair, fiber, firearm, toolmark, and document examinations; bomb and explosives analysis; and recording enhancement.

Triage determines the order that evidence is examined. Results are typically available within a week, though an investigator may receive results sooner if he has a friend in the lab or the case is particularly political.

Evidence and comparison samples submitted to the labs are entered into the CIC database, then categorized and stored in vaults until needed for trial.

The labs also develop and validate new forensic technologies and techniques, maintain an impressive forensic science library, and keep a reference file of experts in various forensic disciplines such as anthropology, entomology, and pathology.

The lab's forensic scientists are the leading experts in their respective fields. They often provide valuable suggestions and advice to law enforcement.

Through its labs, the GEO Justice Commission offers advanced training in specialized, forensic procedures to forensic laboratory and law enforcement personnel. Courses include arson, bombing, chemistry and instrumental analysis, computer forensics, crime scene, DNA, documents, fingerprints, firearms identification, footwear identification, microscopy, photography, and quality assurance, safety, ethics, evidence handling, public speaking, and testimony proficiency.

Dyfedd Marshal Anson Perkins has attended nearly every course offered by the JCFL and is often contacted by other Marshals for advice.

INTERVIEWING AND INTERROGATION

Interviews and interrogations are key components of any police investigation. Both involve communication between law enforcement and an individual somehow associated with a criminal event. That individual may be a witness, victim, or suspect.

An investigation relies on the collection of evidence, both direct and circumstantial, along with the interview and interrogation of individuals involved in the case. Interviews with these individuals answer the investigative questions: who, what, where, when, how, and why. The interrogation of an individual is done when he is the target of an investigation or is withholding information crucial to the successful conclusion of the investigation.

The goal of an interviewer is to uncover additional information that will help the investigation; an interrogation is used to elicit a confession. An interview may turn into an interrogation if the interviewee becomes hostile, resistant, deceptive,

that might provide important information about a public health issue. In a typical colonial settlement, about 28% of deaths will fall under the medical examiner's jurisdiction.

A medical examiner is a physician who has received additional training in forensic pathology, the branch of medicine that deals with the diagnosis of disease and causes of death by means of laboratory examination of body fluids, cell samples, and tissues.

The body is received by a deputy ME, who attempts to determine the identification of the deceased, the time of death, and the nature of the instrument used to cause the death, if applicable.

The medical examiner then reviews the crime scene recording and any statements made by witnesses. The body is placed on an examination table and positioned under a scanner that detects crushed or broken bones, penetrating wounds in organs, foreign objects such as bullets, and other damage.

Next, the ME begins a postmortem examination. He will inspect the body externally and then internally. A chemical reader probe is used to analyze various fluids. It looks for elevated or reduced protein levels, toxicology, O2 and CO2 levels, and other indicators of means of death.

Trace evidence, offender secretions, bullets, and other evidence are collected. Sexual assault is documented, if appropriate, and then the ME reconstructs how injuries were most likely received.

The next step is to correlate all the information and form conclusions as to the manner (natural, accident, suicide, or homicide) and cause of death. The ME considers the crime scene, consistency of witness statements, and his own interpretation of injury patterns. A summary is then prepared to report these findings and the investigator is notified.

When examining skeletonized or severely decomposed remains, the ME relies on the assistance of a forensic anthropologist to help establish the victim's identity. If enough of the skele-

ton is recovered, the forensic anthropologist may be able to determine the approximate age, race, and sex of the individual, as well as estimate the length of time since death. Distinct markings on the bones sometimes allow the pathologist to identify the cause of death - knives, for instance, leave nicks on bone surfaces.

In the above case, the victim, who had traces of pharium in his blood, was shot with at least two weapons. The ME recovered nine bullets of two different calibers from the chest and abdomen areas. He noted that the oversize entrance wounds look inflamed rather than the expected abraded appearance, and small fragments of foam wadding and rubber were located in the wound tracks. These materials and injuries are consistent with those used in homemade muzzle brakes, or silencers. The victim also was not carrying any ID, but his prints came up on the Criminal Information Center (CIC) database, identifying him as 15-year-old Scott Putnam.

With this additional information, you might be able to find Scott's killers.

or acts suspiciously. Conversely, a suspect who is cooperative and exhibits no signs of lying may find himself downgraded to witness status and interviewed as such. An interview can take place at any time during an investigation; an interrogation is most effective when all of the information and evidence has been collected and analyzed.

Interviews and interrogations have similar structures. Both are conducted to extract information and they follow the same course. Each begins with the questioner preparing for the interview by familiarizing himself with the case, running a thorough background check, and deciding on the best approach with this particular individual. The actual interview or interrogation requires keen listening skills, knowledge of body language, keeping the discussion on track, and an understanding of questioning techniques and how to apply them.

Interviews and interrogations are always recorded. They are admitted as evidence when pertinent information is revealed, and they are used as proof that officials followed proper procedure in questioning the subject.

THE INTERVIEW

An interview is a formalized and controlled conversation. It takes the form of a dialogue, with the interviewer in a non-offensive position. A preliminary interview is done—usually at or near the crime scene—to determine if an individual has useful information. A longer, more detailed follow-up interview is done shortly afterward.

To show courtesy to the witness or victim, and to allow adequate time to prepare, the officer should schedule an appointment for the interview. He should fully explain the purpose of the interview when the appointment is made.

When preparing, the officer should compile a mental list of questions to be answered. The location of the interview is important. A comfortable, private location is a much easier environment in which to conduct an interview than a crowded street corner or maglev platform. Witnesses should always be interviewed separately to prevent cross-contamination of their memories. No two people will remember an event in exactly the same way, and if they do, chances are very good that one's recall of events has influenced the other's.

At the beginning of an interview, the investigator should put the subject at ease. Tension and nervousness are normal, but can affect recall. Taking time to chat and discuss things other than the crime will usually relax a subject. Finding something in common between the interviewer and interviewee is a good way to build rapport. An investigator might try subtly mirroring the subject's spoken and unspoken behaviors by using the same tone, language, rate, and pattern of speech, as well as imitating some aspects of his posture.

The following are the general steps for conducting an interview. The officer should remain aware of changes in the subject's behavior and comfort level, adjusting the order or level of questioning as necessary.

The interviewer should instruct the victim or witness to reconstruct the circumstances of the event in general, starting with ordinary events prior to the

crime. This usually follows a beginning-to-end-of-the-day format and by starting before the event, the witness is able to recall things that were not mentioned in the initial on-the-scene interview. People tend to hold back information because they feel it is unimportant to the interviewer, so he should ask the witness not to edit anything. The investigator should encourage recall with questions about the weather, time of day, nearby people, and meals.

The officer might ask, "Is there anything else that you remember?" and "What stands out to you?" These questions should be asked many times throughout the interview to highlight the individual's perception of events.

In some cases, asking the interviewee to reverse the order of events will reveal additional information. The officer may start with something that impressed the witness and then move backward. This reversal technique is handy for detecting lies, which are formulated in a logical order. Changing the order of the story confuses the linear path of a lie. Because truth is a matter of recall, not creation, repetition serves as an aid in the memory process.

At some point during the interview, the witness might be encouraged to assume the role of another individual and tell the story from an alternate perspective. This forces him to envision the scene more fully and often results in descriptions of more physical detail. The interviewer should relate emotions to the events. He should ask the witness or victim what he thought or felt when a particular event took place. The memory tends to hang on to details of events that affect people emotionally. A woman who notices an attractive man on the inclinator will remember more about his features and clothing than she will the waiter who served her lunch.

The officer must be careful that the questions dealing only with what is related by the witness are open-ended—that is, they allow the person to elaborate rather than answer, "Red," "Yes," or "To the left." The interviewer should refrain from using technical jargon, unless the subject would have a reason to be familiar with it.

The investigator should allot plenty of time for the interview. The discussion most likely will move back and forth in time, reconstructing the event from many angles. When the interview is complete, the officer should thank the subject for his

time and cooperation and urge him to contact the department if he thinks of anything else.

INTERROGATION

Forget the bare, swinging bulb over an uncomfortable chair in a cold concrete room. Policing tactics are modern and generally humane, and civil treatment of individuals, suspect or not, is the law. As the term implies, guilt is not certain, only suspected.

During an interrogation, the investigator attempts to persuade a suspect to tell the truth and reveal incriminating evidence that will be used in a subsequent prosecution. Generally, all of the known evidence has been collected by this stage and there is not enough to assure a conviction. The goal of the interrogation is to locate more evidence through incriminating statements or an outright confession that leads to a prosecution.

It should be noted that when an interview becomes an interrogation, the suspect must be advised of his legal rights. He is officially in police custody when these rights are administered and therefore no longer free to leave at will.

PREPARATION

The interrogator considers the case, the suspect, and the evidence. He should be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the inquiry and consider whether direct evidence should be used early or late in the confrontation, or if it should be revealed at all. If there are multiple suspects, the "weakest link" should be the first into the interrogation room.

A suspect—or witness, for that matter—is more apt to divulge secrets to a single person in the safety of a quiet, private room than in the presence of five cops in a busy squad room. Interrogations should take place at the officer's precinct house or headquarters in a place with few distractions and little noise.

People are more comfortable telling the truth to someone whom they trust and can relate to, and an investigator should spend the first few minutes developing rapport with the subject. The issue at hand should not be discussed until the subject's behavior reflects a reasonable comfort level, indicated by open body language, longer, more detailed responses, and nodding in agreement with the interrogator's statements.

TECHNIQUE

The investigator should begin the interrogation by identifying the problem without implying direct involvement of the subject. For example, the investigator may say, "To assist in our investigation, I must ask you some questions concerning the bombing." The purpose for the interrogation should be perceived as either beneficial (to resolve his status as a suspect) or as an act required by someone other than the investigator, for example, everyone involved must be interviewed before the department can close the case.

Most people, innocent or not, will agree to be interviewed. If a suspect declines or delays, he should be viewed suspiciously. If the suspect is offered the option of making an appointment, he keeps some control over the situation and is apt to be more cooperative. Even if a subject is suspected of 50 serial murders, he is to be given the same respect as anyone else. The best interrogators know that as soon as the suspect is treated like a criminal, he is irretrievable. The officer should therefore maintain a pleasant, organized, and non-threatening demeanor throughout the interrogation.

The interrogation should begin by establishing rapport with the suspect, using non-threatening questions to accustom the subject to the question/answer format and to create a comfort level. These questions should have some relevance, such as questions about the subject's background or interests. When appropriate, the investigator should ask follow-up questions to keep the subject talking. While this conversation takes place, the interrogator is reading the subject, assessing the normal level of eye contact, communication skills, intelligence, and attitudes. This information helps him to choose an effective technique to employ in the interrogation. He may shift techniques at any time if he decides the current method is not optimal.

When the interrogator senses that the subject is comfortable, he should steer the conversation towards the work that he does, speaking in generalities. He should mention the types of cases he works on and techniques he uses. This allows the interrogator to introduce the topic of the investigation without making an accusation. The discussion of techniques leads most suspects to consider that there may be evidence linking him to the crime.

An interrogator who understands the suspect, his personality, and his motives can create an environment that encourages confession. He must also be aware of predictable phases of an interrogation. The first of these is rejection. When the subject recognizes that his involvement in the criminal act has been discovered, he withdraws and becomes defensive. He may create physical barriers with objects on the table, cross his arms and legs, or move about the room to put distance between himself and the interrogator. He will not deny because there has been no direct accusation made and he hopes that perhaps he is wrong in his assessment of the situation. This is natural and signals the officer to move to the next phase.

Offering understanding and rationalization causes the suspect to reconsider the threat. The interrogator discusses whatever he perceives is causing the subject stress: loss of employment, financial issues, fear of arrest or retaliation, low self-image, or any or all of these. He talks about reasons why people might become involved in criminal acts, selecting rationalizations based on the suspect's comments and background: If he is having financial difficulties, the interrogator talks about the cost of raising children and sympathizes about the stress bills cause. The situations he talks about may not be the exact reasons why the suspect was involved in the criminal act, but they offer him a way to save face. He wants to justify his actions and project his own feelings onto others. *They don't pay me enough. She was asking for it.* The goal is to offer the suspect a way to minimize the consequences of his actions and transfer blame to his circumstances. It is best to remain general rather than specific to the suspect.

The interrogator watches the suspect carefully. If he nods or shakes his head, the officer must be ready to pursue or abandon his present direction. Often this movement is slight and unconscious on the part of the suspect.

When the officer feels he is on the right track, he will ask a question such as, "Did you need the money for bills or booze?" This accomplishes two things: It indicates that the suspect's guilt is known, and it allows him to keep rationalizing by choosing the more acceptable option.

It is now time to put the subject on the defensive. Defense mechanisms produce predictable behavior that give a persistent and patient investigator opportunities to elicit admissions. Guilty people like to believe that they are no different from the majority of the population. By asking questions such as, "How many people, given the opportunity, do you think would steal from their employers?" the investigator throws the suspect off balance. The fictional crime does not have to reflect the crime the subject is suspected of, but rather elicits a certain type of answer. A guilty person often responds with an answer reflecting his belief that a large portion of people would engage in that behavior.

Projection is defined as transplanting blame onto someone or something else. The interrogator should actively seek information as to who or what the suspect blames for his crime. Did the victim make him mad? Was he forced by his accomplice to become involved? Did his addiction make him behave irresponsibly? When a suspect continues to deny his involvement, the use of an imaginary third person is helpful. The officer covers the basic details of the crime and asks why the suspect thinks this third person would commit such an act, projecting the act onto someone else.

When something bad happens, people later express relief that the situation could have been much worse. Criminals use this defense mechanism, which is known as minimization. *No one was killed during the robbery. I only deal pharium, not the hard stuff.* By downplaying the degree of his crime, a suspect admits some responsibility. If an investigator gets to this point, he is close to a confession. The punishment question, generically phrased but addressing the issue under investigation, is an excellent indicator of guilt. By asking, "What do you think should happen to the person who committed this crime?" An innocent subject has little difficulty expressing a harsh punishment. A guilty one, on the other hand, typically delivers a short answer and suggests milder forms of punishment, five years, for instance, instead of life, for killing a store clerk with a pipe bomb.

Topics that the subject avoids or refuses to talk about provide information on areas where strong emotions exist. The officer should tap this area, asking probing questions skirting the issue. He might inquire how the suspect approached the victim, what they talked about, what he did right before and after the crime, etc. The suspect will not likely answer, but he will grow very agitated and anxious. This technique is most effective when the

interrogator remains calm and treats the suspect as if they are having a normal conversation.

While the subject is in this agitated state, the interrogator begins the confrontation. In this phase, suspects generally take one of three positions regarding guilt: admitting the crime, admitting lack of complete recall, and not admitting the crime. In any case, the goal is to build a persuasive argument in favor of a confession. This is the time to present evidence that clearly contradicts the suspect's statements of denial. Starting with the weakest evidence, the officer alternates between discrediting the suspect and suggesting the benefits to confessing, such as reduced charges. It should be noted that the presentation of evidence may show weaknesses in the investigation, therefore the interrogator should be very careful in choosing what to disclose.

The role of the officer in the confrontation should be to avoid forcing the suspect into a position where he must deny, but rather consider the options and consequences attached to each course of action. The interrogator points out the benefits of coming clean, allowing the suspect to interpret facts and make assumptions about what is or is not yet known. A suspect often convinces himself that his guilt is known absolutely, even when that is not the case. The officer's job is to persuade the suspect that his earlier admissions further incriminated him and it would be easier and better for the suspect to confess now.

An interrogation draws and expands a suspect's admission into a legally acceptable confession. The confession addresses the unanswered questions in the case and confirms the detective's assumptions.

ADMISSIONS AND CONFESSIONS

Some offenders admit to and confess their crimes; others do not. An admission is a statement that indicates guilt. A confession is a fully corroborated statement in which the suspect accepts responsibility for committing a crime. Many interrogations result in admissions, but not confessions. A suspected murderer who says, "I'm sorry for what I did," has made an admission. The investigator must further pursue the issue to convince the suspect to accept personal responsibility for his part in the crime.

In most investigations, there is a time when the suspect is most susceptible to a confession.

Unfortunately, that time may occur before the investigation is complete. The investigator must decide whether the value of possible additional evidence not yet collected outweighs the suspect's susceptibility to a confession.

In any criminal prosecution brought by the GEO, a confession—any confession of guilt of any criminal offense or any self-incriminating statement made or given orally or in writing—is admissible evidence if it is voluntarily given. Before such confession is received in evidence, a judge will determine any issues regarding volition.

Suspects make the decision to confess based on their own perception of the situation. If they perceive the evidence against them is damning, that the police will give them a break for cooperating, and that their crime was not the worst crime of all time, most criminals eventually confess. Interviews with convicted offenders reveal their reasons for confessing range from belief that the police could prove their involvement to wanting to "get it off my chest." In fact, most indicate they experience relief after explaining their side of the story.

DECEPTION

There are two types of deception in an interrogation: police and suspect.

Investigators are legally granted wide latitude by the GEO with respect to the use of trickery and deceit during an interrogation. Officers are permitted to exaggerate knowledge of a suspect's guilt, falsely advise the suspect that evidence exists linking him to the crime, and tell a suspect that his accomplice has already confessed. They are not allowed to impersonate an attorney or manufacture fictitious evidence. False verbal assertions are permissible; creating fake evidence is not.

An interrogator should be aware, however, that deception should be used with caution—an investigator's credibility may be irreparably damaged if a suspect calls the investigator's bluff and demands to see the evidence.

Ways around this eventuality are simple. The investigator should not identify the specific evidence that links the suspect to the crime scene, fingerprints or witnesses, for example. Even better, merely implying the existence of such evidence leaves the suspect to manufacture the evidence for the officer. An interrogator may also make reference to the fact that the evidence will shortly establish the suspect's presence at the crime scene. An example of this would be to claim the blood found at the scene is not the victim's and tests are expected any time now confirming a match with the suspect.

An effective and experienced interrogator, however, avoids using such information, since it is as easy to trip up a lying cop as it is a lying suspect.

Denial of a crime is the single most-heard lie in interrogation rooms across Earth and Poseidon. A pheromone scanner, spyware, or similar equipment can be used to detect the physiological symptoms of lying. Many suspects refuse to cooperate, however, and a P-scan or spyware analysis itself is not admissible evidence of lying.

There are many indicators of lying that a perceptive officer can detect. A deceptive subject often introduces his responsibility for the crime as a possibility. *I might have accidentally removed the dataspike.* In the punishment question mentioned previously, an innocent suspect's response is accompanied by characteristic nonverbal behavior, such as making direct eye contact or leaning forward in his chair. He may raise his voice, and his answer is longer, delivered with emphasis and force. A deceptive suspect is being asked to judge himself. He uses conditional language, such as "I guess I wouldn't take it to court unless I had proof." A deceptive suspect might also evade a direct response, refusing to offer a personal opinion.

Forensic statement analysis provides a way for the interviewer to review statements made by the subject after the interview and make observations and assumptions based on the person's own words. This is a specialty field that requires training in linguistics and logic. However, it is a powerful tool when used with recalcitrant criminals. A statement such as, "I put the body in a bag" taken in the context of the interrogation, could lead the analyst to determine that the person being interviewed knew the victim very well.

Deceptive subjects engage in significant behaviors. They tend to avoid direct eye contact, cross or uncross their legs, and engage in various unconscious grooming behaviors. They may attempt to disguise anxiety by repeating questions. Answers

that are not truthful lack details that reality provides.

When a subject's response is accompanied by a behavior indicating possible deception, the officer should pursue the area with follow-up questions in an effort to learn more of the truth.

The easiest lie to tell is one that is based on a partial truth, especially if the truth is somewhat incriminating. An inexperienced interviewer hears an admission and accepts it as the whole truth. This is rarely the case. An investigator should follow up by asking the same question, excluding the admission. For example, he might say, "Except for shooting a hexaboar out of season, have you shot any other animals?"

When a subject's response contains a memory qualifier such as, "I believe," or "As far as I can recall," it is useful for the interviewer to rephrase the original question as a hypothetical one.

A common mistake interviewers make in asking follow-up questions is to modify the initial question, making it more specific. The original wording of the question caused the subject's behavior, and it is that question that should be re-asked.

A good interrogator knows how to read deception. A great interrogator uses that deception against the subject to gain more information.

Successful criminal investigations hinge on physical evidence, as well as witness and victim statements. To be successful, an interviewer needs to collect as much information as possible from the subject while being alert for deceptive behavior and cues. He should always maintain an atmosphere of mutual respect.

INFORMANTS

Canary. Snitch. Stoolie. Beagle. Soprano. The much-maligned informant is an invaluable resource for law enforcement. Investigators invest much energy into developing reliable inside sources in criminal organizations as well as legal-but-suspicious enterprises.

In a perfect society, some say, all citizens assume responsibility for public order. In real life, however, people do not want to get involved, have hidden agendas, fear reprisal, and are too busy to be bothered with police interviews and court testimony.

CommCore provides a public forum for potential informants, presenting information about intriguing or particularly heinous unsolved cases and asking for anonymous tips. Response to this program is steady and many new leads have been established, but the nature of the anonymous tip prevents police from questioning the informant further.

Average citizens—bartenders, PIs, waitresses, cab drivers—make excellent informers because they come in contact with all types of people. Because they are not perceived as authority figures, and are therefore unthreatening, criminals are more free with information in their presence.

Using the technique pioneered by 19th Century French criminal-turned-detective, Eugène François Vidocq, detectives today know that the best way to catch a criminal is with a criminal. The best informants are those currently or formerly associated with a particular criminal element. Usually they are criminals themselves; some are family members.

To develop an informant, a detective must first determine the most likely candidates. Interviews turn up names and connections that can be exploited. Uncovering the motivation of a potential informant helps convince him to cooperate. Motivations include fear of retribution, ego, desire to reform, guilt, financial need, revenge, or fear that detectives have the goods on the criminal. By playing into the motivation, a good investigator finds a compliant and helpful insider.

Unfortunately, criminals are of questionable reliability and credibility. Again, understanding the motivation is helpful in manipulating the person. Offering incentives—cash, reduced sentences, protection—are particularly useful, as long as the promises made are sincere. A detective should never make an offer he cannot reasonably fulfill. Threats are not effective and tend to produce inaccurate information. A full background check and psychiatric evaluation should be run on the potential informant before striking a deal with him. This gives the detective an edge: The informant does not know how much the detective knows about him.

This works to the detective's advantage in two ways. He can drop hints occasionally to keep the informant guessing about the extent of his information; and he can check statements made by the informant against what he knows to confirm whether he is being told the truth.

To avoid allegations of unprofessionalism or unethical behavior, a detective should insure there are a DNA profile, current photo, and fingerprint record on file, as well as a recorded initial interview defining the informant's role in the investigation and specifically identifying what information he is expected to provide.

Managing an informant requires frequent personal contact by one individual. Rapport should be built between the informant and his contact person and meetings should be brief and in varied locations.

Occasionally, an informant's life is endangered by his cooperation. A detective may opt to place him in the Witness and Informant Security Project (WISP), which relocates witnesses to a safe location until after they have testified in court, then provides a new identity, housing, and assistance in obtaining employment in another region. The Marshal Service's Field Operations Office is responsible for protecting the confidentiality of the identity and location of witnesses and informants.

Assignment to WISP is not taken lightly: The Magistrate authorizing the plan considers the person's criminal record, alternatives to providing protection, the degree of threat, how important the witness's testimony is, results of psychological examinations, and the likelihood of securing similar testimony from other sources. Most WISP enrollees have information concerning organized crime.

When a witness is put into WISP, his past life is extinguished. He must be willing to walk away from his family, home, and previous life. Local authorities "find" his dead body and appropriate memorial services are arranged. If a person in the program contacts a former associate or family member, or commits any crime, he is immediately removed from protection. Some detectives hint that if an informant slips, information concerning his whereabouts will be revealed to the person he testified against. This is not entirely inaccurate, but typically it is not the detective who reveals the information. Rather, public records show the former name of the witness as an alias, making him fairly easy to track down.

Recently, two witnesses in a trial against the leader of a large drug ring were put into protection and then found murdered in the same manner soon after. There is concern about an insider releasing information from the Poseidon DNA database. While identities are reasonably easy to change, a DNA profile is not completely alterable. A clever and persistent person could track down the location of someone if he had access to the DNA profile of that person. Because access is restricted to the Marshal Service and a few HIST employees, the financial records of the scientists are being monitored carefully for signs of a payoff.

CONCLUSION

Marshals, Patrol officers, and even private security cops deal with all of these crimes - and many others. While the crimes range from simple assault to outright murder, the investigations are roughly the same, requiring a keen eye, clever mind, and plenty of common sense. Some, such as fire investigation, call for formal training. Others, such as undercover work, demand special skills such as acting. Whatever level of training a police officer has, a conviction is the ultimate goal and the path to that conviction lies in knowing how to competently process a crime scene and follow through on an investigation.

MOST WANTED

DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR JUSTICE SHARON WEBB

Deputy Webb is High Commissioner for Justice Cope's right hand, acting as his eyes and ears for Poseidon.

The stout woman with a larger-than-life voice—and hair to match—is the most adaptable person Cope has ever met. She can be intimidating when necessary, or completely sympathetic if the moment calls for it. Her ideas and passions are what drive her and once she latches onto something, it can take some very heavy convincing to get her to back off. While this might seem tire-

some, it is what makes her the best deputy Cope has ever had. He is constantly amazed at her enthusiasm for a new project, no matter how small or seemingly insignificant.

Her management of the Magistrates endears her to Cope, who did not anticipate so much bickering and arguing between the appointees. Webb seems not to notice that Magistrate Bell-Aarp and Magistrate Shore are barely civil to each other, and she encourages them to speak their minds whenever they wish. Most of what she hears is petty finger-pointing and what borders on name-calling, but she seems to see through this to the true issues at hand. Bell-Aarp wants improved resources and better treatment for native colonists. Shore wants his Marshals to remain as autonomous as possible.

Webb makes appropriate suggestions to both Magistrates, and the air seems cleared for a while. Cope sometimes thinks it is a shame Webb didn't become a negotiator or mediator instead. At Executive Council meetings, Webb often sits in for Cope—sometimes in person, sometimes via telepresence—and handles the entire cabinet marvelously, usually returning with approvals and funding for new programs and resources.

Species: Modified Human
Origin: Urban
Backgrounds: GEO, University
Profile:
Goal Accomplishment
Motivation Professionalism
Attitude Energetic

Primary Attributes: Build -1, Fitness 1, Agility -1, Dexterity 0, Awareness 2, Intellect 2, Presence 2, Will 2

Derived Attributes: Endurance 2, Reflexes 0, Strength 0, Toughness 0

Biomods: Imparted Microcomputer, Multiglands, Immunological Symbiote, Longevity Therapy

Aptitudes: (Superior) Administration, Command, Communication (Strong) Culture, Fine Arts, Human Sciences, Subterfuge, Tech

Primary Skills: Bureaucracy 8, Law 7, Management 9, Leadership 8, Logistics 6, Negotiation 7, Oration 7, Persuasion 8, Colonial Culture 6, Earth Culture 7, GEO Culture 8, Painting 4, History 5, Politics 7, Fast-Talk 7, Computers 4

MAGISTRATE BENJAMIN SHORE

Benjamin Shore is Poseidon's magistrate-at-large, commanding *Prosperity Station* and a lot of open, empty water. He stays on *Prosperity Station* and monitors reports from the planet below, not worrying too much about his Marshals. They are well trained and can take care of themselves.

At the last magistrate conference, which was held in a rather luxurious suite in Haven's upper-crust Heights neighborhood, Bell-Aarp accused him of not taking more interest in the native citizens in his care. Shore reminded her that the meeting was supposed to address policy and resources, not babysitting the general population.

Shore has been in the magistrate seat for 21 years and does not need or appreciate this young upstart telling him how to run his sector. He has heard few complaints from the natives or anyone else, for that matter. Bell-Aarp says she believes he would rather worry about smugglers in the asteroid belt and the quality of imported Terrestrial squid than the natives, and he does not disagree with her. This is how it always is, and Shore thinks they are like a dysfunctional family, part of the same unit but not too cohesive.

He hopes Bell-Aarp will blow herself out soon and relax.

Species: Modified Human
Origin: Urban
Backgrounds: University, Wealthy
Profile:
Goal: Power
Motivation: Duty
Attitude: Arrogant

Primary Attributes: Build 1, Fitness 1, Agility -1, Dexterity -1, Awareness 1, Intellect 2, Presence 3, Will 2

Derived Attributes: Endurance 1, Reflexes 0, Strength 1, Toughness 1

Biomods: Uplink Neural Jack, Body Sculpting, Multiglands, Immunological Symbiote, Longevity Therapy

Aptitudes: (Superior) Administration, Communication, Human Sciences (Strong) Command, Culture, Subterfuge, Tech

Primary Skills: Bureaucracy 7, Law 9, Management 7, Leadership 6, Negotiation 8, Oration 9, Persuasion 9, Colonial Culture 5, Earth Culture 8, GEO Culture 8, History 7, Politics 8, Fast-Talk 8

CAPTAIN MATT NOLAN

As a boy, Matt Nolan wanted to be a firefighter in Kingston. Natives don't want to fight fires, his mother told him, and so he stopped saying it, even though he knew all about the native fire brigades in Haven.

When he was 16, a warehouse next to the repair shop where he worked exploded, the target of an unpaid NRM posse. Matt was badly burned in the fire that raged through several buildings before it was controlled.

Lying in an emergency clinic ward with 18 other people injured by the bombing, he wondered the typical what-ifs: What if I'd stayed home? What if I'd been out in the work bay? What if my face doesn't heal right? Nurturing a good case of self-pity, Matt didn't see a little girl slip into the ward and approach the man in the next bed. That guy had gotten it much worse, and had been moaning and crying since they'd brought him in. The top half of his entire body was covered in bandages and Matt complained once to a nurse that the guy smelled like a pig roast.

The little girl stood wide-eyed, staring at the man, then shifted her gaze to Matt, who'd finally noticed her. She smiled a cute six-year-old's smile, gently slid a pink sand rose under the man's bandaged hand, and sidled up to the edge of Matt's bed. She told him all about her father, the policeman in the next bed, who'd been burnt over 60% of his body. He'd just gotten off the morning shift and was on his way home to take her out to her first hydroshot game. He'd given her the tickets for her birthday the day before and she was so disappointed when he didn't show up and they missed the game. Then she patted Matt's hand and slipped out of the room, presumably to find her mother.

Matt stared at the man in the next bed for a long time. *If that guy makes it*, Matt thought, *I'm going to make sure his kid gets to see a hydroshot game.*

The guy didn't make it, though. Two hours after his daughter left, the man's body began shutting down and by the time the moons were visible through the window, he'd been wheeled out of the room on a tall, shiny gurney with a sheet over his face.

That was the night Matt decided to become a cop.

There's an unspoken rule that natives go into the Native Patrol and everyone else joins the GEO Patrol. Matt was a native, but he'd grown up in Kingston and didn't *feel* like a native. Eventually, though, after being declined on four applications, he submitted one for the Native Patrol. Unsurprisingly, he was accepted and scheduled for the next training class.

Matt worked hard and even found time to take extra courses in arson and bomb investigation. The instructors encouraged him to stick to more appropriate classes, such as traffic enforcement or drug education, but Matt wanted to know more about the source of his seared hand and face. Sure, he probably could have gotten some body sculpting to fix it, but that's an expensive procedure and besides, people remembered him after they met him.

Upon completion of his training, Matt was assigned to the village of Wish on Endeavor Island. At first, Matt hated the little fishing village with its primitive buildings and quiet people. After all that training, the worst crime he encountered in a year was three kids joyriding in a fishing boat. He contented himself with taking extension courses over CommCore—when the uplink was working—so that he could fill the requirements to take the captain's exam.

Then a storm blew a sailboat ashore, complete with three pirates and the possessions of the boat's previous owners. Swaggering into the village, they demanded food, then supplies, telling the stunned natives that the sooner the boat was repaired, the sooner they'd leave.

Acting Captain Matt Nolan wasn't about to let anyone—even the people of Wish, *especially* the people of Wish—get pushed around by these bullies. He confronted the pirates in his best Native Patrol manner, calmly and politely. For his trouble, he was shot at, knocked down, and laughed at.

The Wish Headquarters building is a two-room temporary shelter. The administrative office is in one room; the jail and Matt's quarters are in the other. Lying in the sand, Matt wondered how he was going to confine three men in a temporary shelter. It wasn't going to be easy, he decided, and started to get to his feet. A powerful thought—a *vibe* was all he could think of later—nearly knocked Matt down as he watched the three pirates inexplicably run past him and into the sea. They swam until they were just dots in the water, and then disappeared.

The villagers said the "water people" took care of the pirates. Matt has smelled sand roses ever since the incident and is considering asking for a transfer to a Native Patrol post with a staff of more than one, even if it means he'll just be a Patrol officer again.

Species: Human Aquaform
Origin: Native
Backgrounds: Colonial, Native
Profile:
Goal: Justice
Motivation: Compassion
Attitude: Introspective

Primary Attributes: Build 0, Fitness 1, Agility 0, Dexterity 1, Awareness 1, Intellect 0, Presence -1, Will 2

Derived Attributes: Endurance 2, Reflexes 0, Strength 0, Toughness 0

Biomods: Aquaform

Aptitudes: (Suprerior) Tech (Strong) Communication, Culture, Firearms

Primary Skills: Aquatics 7, Bureaucracy 3, Colonial Culture 5, First Aid 3, Handguns 4, Law 4, Longarms 3, Mechanics 4, Native Culture 7, Persuasion 5, Unarmed Combat 4

MARTINA MAUPIN, ME

Maupin attended the University of Madrid, near her family home. Originally, she intended to follow her father into microbiology, but her first anatomy class captivated her. She quickly switched her focus to pathology and soon became Dr. Martina Maupin.

She completed her residency at Johns Hopkins University Medical School in Maryland, studying forensics, trauma, toxicology, wound ballistics, trace evidence collection, forensic serology, DNA technology, injury patterns, medical law, and court procedure. There, at a dinner for distinguished students, she sat next to Professor Ivan Hauser, the director of the Johns Hopkins Anthropology and Forensics Research Center. This chance meeting changed Maupin's life.

The Anthropology and Forensics Research Center is located on five acres of forested land. At any particular time, at least 50 donated human bodies in various stages of decomposition can be found in vehicles, shallow graves, ponds, and rolled up in Persian rugs. Hauser's program attracts students of death investigation and forensic medicine from all over the world to study the effects of different environments on dead bodies.

Maupin spent every spare minute at the cadaver gardens, as the students affectionately called the center. Hauser invited her to observe new findings and generously and enthusiastically shared information with her. It was not long before Maupin was intimately familiar with death and its sometimes-strange activities. And she loved it.

After completing her residency, she sat for the International Board of Investigative Pathology's examination and received the highest passing grade the Board had ever seen. Maupin credits her experience with the cadaver gardens and Dr. Hauser for her success.

The GEO Chief Medical Examiner, Dr. Andrew Browning, issued a request for Maupin to consider filling a long-vacant post at Haven's Medical Examiner's office. He promised a state-of-the-art facility, an exceptional staff, and plenty of work. Thrilled to be able to go to Poseidon, she jumped at the chance, arriving at her new job in 2195.

Browning appeared to have been badly misinformed: The equipment was in poorer shape than Maupin had seen in any medical school, the staff consisted of three medical students on internships, and her office—well, she'd find one somewhere. Browning was right about there being plenty of work, though. Both the standard 40-drawer freezer and a temporary installed behind the building were full. A new freezer had been on order for more than a year, she was told.

Maupin followed her chain of command persistently, demanding immediate funding and additional personnel. A visit from a very appalled and apologetic Dr. Browning himself brought resources flooding in. Maupin hired qualified help, caught up on the backlog of bodies, and rebuilt a shiny, modern ME's office complete with an administrative staff, the newest technology—and a cozy corner office for herself.

Species: Modified Human
Origin: Urban
Backgrounds: GEO, University
Profile:
Goal Accomplishment
Motivation Professionalism
Attitude Confident

Primary Attributes: Build -1, Fitness 1, Agility 0, Dexterity 1, Awareness 1, Intellect 2, Presence 0, Will 1

Derived Attributes: Endurance 1, Reflexes 0, Strength 0, Toughness 0

Biomods: Uplink Neural Jack, Immunological Symbiote, Implanted Micro Toolkit

Aptitudes: (Superior) Medicine (Strong) Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Tech

Primary Skills: Anthropology 3, Biochemistry 3, Bureaucracy 5, Chemistry 3, Computers 2, Forensic Medicine 7, General Medicine 6, Genetics 4, GEO Culture 5, Persuasion 3, Physics 3, Remote Operation 4, Surgery 6, Writing 3

CRIMINAL CONSPIRACY

CHAPTER 04

INTRODUCTION

A crew of criminals hijack a xenosilicate shipment from a Biogene transport aircraft. Escaping the scene, they retreat to a remote smuggler's den in the Wall, while a GEO Marshal Service task force spars with Biogene Security over jurisdiction and begins an investigation of the crime. When the criminals discover that the stolen cargo is actually a sample of a manufactured xenosilicate synthetic, the stakes are raised and the tension mounts. The criminals must close a deal for the valuable cargo as the GEO task force and a Biogene special operations team closes in.

Criminal Conspiracy is a **Blue Planet** scenario designed for four to eight player characters and a game moderator. The scenario is unusual in that the players can assume the roles of either a professional criminal crew or the law enforcement task force assigned to track them down and bring them to justice. With a bit of extra work, a pair of moderators could even run the scenario for two opposed player groups simultaneously. The scenario can be played either as a standalone adventure or integrated into an ongoing criminal or law enforcement campaign.

Assuming the scenario is played as written, the player characters will be either the criminal team or the law enforcement task force. Whichever side the players choose, the moderator will control the non-player character team opposing them. The players may create their own characters for the scenario, play their usual characters in an ongoing campaign, or play one of the pre-generated characters provided with the scenario.

Criminal Conspiracy is a very non-linear scenario. In general, situations, characters, and objectives are described, but anything goes within this framework. Each episode provides an overview of the situation, as well as the possible actions and approaches the player characters may take. Suggestions and guidelines are provided for both player character criminals and law enforcement officers. In addition, the sections identified as "Casey's Gang" or "The Task Force" provide the moderator with information on the planned actions of the non-player character team opposing the player characters.

The scenario will require some preparation by both the moderator and the players if it is to run smoothly. The scenario's non-linearity can become confusing for the moderator if he is not thoroughly familiar with it. Because the investigation and possibility of an eventual arrest and conviction depend on many details that are often considered trivial, the players should be encouraged to describe their characters in a much detail as possible. Who are the character's family, and what kind of contact does he have with them? Who are his friends, contacts, and confidants? What kind of weapons and equipment does he use, and where did he buy them? All of this and more is potential evidence, and it should be described in as much detail as possible.

Criminal Conspiracy is organized into three episodes: the Heist, the Hideout, and the Deal. Each episode provides the moderator with an overview of the situation, guidelines for handling the player characters' actions, and descriptions of the non-player characters plans and objectives. All game statistics for major non-player characters are provided at the end of the scenario (see page 125).

THE HEIST

When running this episode of the scenario, the moderator should take careful notes of the criminals' activities and the possible evidence they may leave behind. Thorough study of the criminal investigation section of this book will be of tremendous help in this. Specific possibilities and suggestions are detailed in the appropriate sections of the scenario. This information is critical in determining the progress of the subsequent investigation, whether the player characters are the criminals or the law enforcement officers.

OVERVIEW

The criminals acquire information about a shipment of Long John being transported to Cliffside, the Biogene company town. The cargo is being shipped by VTOL, and the aircraft will be stopping over for refueling at a Biogene landing facility in the Colonial Air Terminal. The criminals will have to plan and execute the theft of this shipment. However, when they get inside the VTOL, they will discover that what was supposed to have been 10 kilograms of Long John is actually a few research scientists and a small locked briefcase,

contents unknown. The criminals will have to grab what they can and escape before the arrival of Biogene Security and the GEO Patrol. If all goes well, the episode ends for the criminals with them in possession of the briefcase and en route to the smuggler's den in the Wall.

The Marshal Service task force characters will just be getting started. They will be called in to the Biogene landing facility shortly after the robbery. Their first challenge will be to secure the cooperation of Lieutenant Ramirez, the head of a Biogene Security team dispatched to the scene. The investigators will work the crime scene, searching for physical evidence and attempting to recreate the crime. They will have to identify and interview witnesses and survivors to determine the criminals' numbers, resources, apparent objective, and point of entry and exit to the facility. If all goes well for the investigators, the episode will end with their having identified and established surveillance on the fixer who set up the crime. The information gathered from the surveillance operation may lead the investigators to the criminals' identities and current whereabouts.

THE TIP

The scenario begins when the criminals receive information from a contact about a scheduled xenosilicate shipment from a Biogene facility in the southern Haven Cluster to the company town, Cliffside. The tip may come from a contact or informant inside Biogene, or from a freelance fixer or information broker with whom the criminals do business. If the moderator is running Casey's gang as the non-player character criminals, the fixer is Jacques Arnaud (see page 132). Arnaud, in turn, acquired this information from a Biogene logistics manager. If the players have created their own criminal characters, Arnaud can still be the fixer if the characters do not already have one. Arnaud requires a standard 15% commission on the job.

Regardless of how they acquire it, the criminals will receive the following information:

- A shipment of approximately 10 kilograms of refined Long John will be transported from a mining facility to Cliffside via cargo VTOL. The Long John has a street value of about 10 million scrip.
- The VTOL will be stopping over at the Biogene compound at the Colonial Air Terminal in Haven for refueling.
- A complete itinerary for the shipment is provided, from the time it leaves the mining facility to its scheduled arrival and departure at the Colonial Air Terminal. The scheduled stop over at the air terminal is just more than an hour. The precise timing of the event is left to the moderator's discretion, though it should take place during the nighttime hours.
- Two Biogene Security officers will be aboard the VTOL. These officers are typically armed with small-caliber handguns, submachine guns, and light armor vests. The nighttime detail at the landing facility's security office is five similarly equipped officers.
- Overflight imagery of the Biogene compound at the Colonial Air Terminal, of sufficient quality to make a detailed, scaled map. This can be accomplished with standard image-manipulation software and a bodycomp.

The criminals' fixer, whether Arnaud or someone else, has also arranged for them to hole up in a smuggler's den located in the Wall. This will provide them a safe haven far from any real law enforcement efforts and allow them to lay low until the heat dies down (see page 113).

EVIDENCE

It will probably be very obvious to investigators that the criminals had inside information. First, the job has a very specific, lucrative target, and the criminals would have had to learn about it from someone on the inside. Second, the job will likely be very precisely timed, indicating knowledge of the shipment's time schedule.

This is important evidence, because it provides investigators with a possible lead. There are relatively few people who could have provided the information, and if the investigators discover who did it, that person might be able to identify one or more of the criminals. However, running down this lead will require cooperation from Biogene Security. Unless the investigators have well-placed contacts within the Incorporate state, this cooperation will not be forthcoming.

If Biogene does cooperate, a security liaison will provide the investigators with a list of 28 names of employees who both knew of the shipment and had access to its itinerary. If especially cooperative, Security will also provide personnel files on the suspects. The investigators will then have several avenues to pursue. They can check backgrounds

and financial records for leads to specific individuals on the list. They can interview the suspects. They can interview friends and associates of the suspects. And, if there is sufficient cause to justify the funding, they can conduct surveillance on suspects to follow their movements and monitor their communications.

For player character criminals, the moderator should be able to evaluate the likely success of this line of investigation based on the identity and behavior of the contact who fed them the information on the job. Did the characters pay their contact an advance that will show up on financial records? Is the contact reliable and discrete, or prone to bragging to friends and colleagues of his exploits? Was there a middleman, a fixer such as Jacques Arnaud? The better the moderator knows the contact and his relationship with the characters, the easier it will be to determine the success or failure of this line of investigation.

If Casey's gang is being run as non-player characters, this lead—even with assistance from Biogene—will ultimately prove fruitless. Even if the logistics manager who fed the information to Arnaud is identified, he has had no direct contact with him and does not even know his real name. All of his communications with Arnaud have been electronic, and he has kept no records of them.

THE JOB

With the above information, the criminals can formulate a plan to hijack the shipment. If the criminals are the player characters, the moderator should make several considerations very clear.

- The Colonial Air Terminal is the best place to hijack the shipment. The GEO limits the number and equipment of security personnel at the airport and lacks the Patrol resources to provide the Incorporate facilities with adequate protection. Security at both the mining facility and Cliffside will much heavier, up to and including surface to air missiles and other military weapons. An appropriate Culture roll (Colonial, GEO, Incorporate, or Street) should be sufficient to gain this information.
- Hijacking the transport VTOL in the air is next to impossible. Likewise, there is no way to take control of its systems remotely without hacking into Biogene's satellite network or the Colonial Air Terminal's traffic-control system. Any character proficient with computers, vehicles, or remotes will realize this fact.

The most obvious approach, and the one that affords the highest probability of success, is to hijack the shipment when the VTOL is on the ground at the Biogene landing facility. The operation also calls for a pretty straightforward smash-and-grab: There is no plausible way to steal the shipment by deception or finesse unless the criminals have a very high-level partner in Biogene. In the unlikely event that the player characters have the resources to pull off this kind of approach, the moderator can play through it and continue with the rest of the scenario.

The criminals' plan will need to address three primary challenges:

- Gaining access to the landing facility
- Neutralizing security personnel
- Seizing the shipment

GAINING ACCESS

This is perhaps the most difficult obstacle facing the criminals. Access to the landing facility by ground vehicle or aircraft is very tightly controlled. Unauthorized ground vehicles are not allowed inside the security perimeter, and unregistered aircraft will be challenged as soon as they approach the terminal's airspace. The facility is in a fairly isolated location, and the closest edge of the security perimeter is about 100 meters from the tarmac on which the VTOL is scheduled to land. There are therefore three broad approaches to accessing the facility with a reasonable chance of success: frontal assault, infiltration, and stealth.

Frontal Assault: This approach abandons all stealth and finesse and simply tries to overwhelm security, seize the cargo, and escape before there is time to organize any serious resistance or pursuit. The criminals would wait until the transport VTOL landed and began fueling, then penetrate the perimeter. This would require either a heavily stealthed aircraft flying just off the ground or a ground vehicle that could smash through the security fencing and quickly cover the 100 meters to the target landing pad.

The biggest risk of the frontal assault approach is that security is alerted before the criminals are in position to seize the cargo. When the ground vehicle is racing toward the landing pad or the stealthed aircraft is landing, security forces could be marshaled and reinforcement requested. An alert pilot inside the Biogene VTOL could simply disengage the refueling robot and take off. Moreover, the criminals' vehicle will almost certainly be identified, complicating their getaway. Finally, this approach makes violence a near certainty, and that is something professional criminals try to avoid for simple practical reasons: It is one thing to serve a short sentence at the Haven Detention Center for attempted robbery, and quite another to do a life tour at Böse Strand for murder.

Evidence

The frontal assault approach will inevitably leave a lot of evidence that investigators can pursue. First, as with all of the approaches, it establishes an MO. Unless the criminals are rank newcomers, they will have done armed robbery jobs before. Chances are, they will have a preferred method of executing them. There are not going to be many professional crews who hit their targets with a stealthed aircraft and military-grade weapons. A frontal assault will inevitably leave bodies at the scene. Examination of these bodies will likely reveal bullets, which can be matched to a make and model of firearm, or even a specific weapon if it is on file. This kind of evidence may allow the investigators to link the crime to previous jobs, and therefore, to additional evidence. If the criminals are player characters in an ongoing campaign, the moderator should compare their approach to previous jobs and determine whether or not the evidence is sufficient for the investigators to link them.

Frontal assaults can leave a lot of additional evidence behind as well. Bullets can be recovered and matched to a criminal's firearm if it is subsequently discovered. If a criminal is wounded, blood can be recovered and the DNA analyzed. Likewise, the criminal may leave the scene with a victim's blood on his body or clothing—damning physical evidence if the criminal is subsequently captured or his clothes are recovered. If hand-to-hand fighting occurs, there may be traces of the criminal's blood on a victim or survivor, or particles of the criminal's skin under the victim's fingernails if a defensive struggle occurred.

Lots of blood on exposed surfaces also creates a perfect environment for visible prints: Most criminals will be smart enough to wear gloves, but even gloves can leave imprints in blood that give investigators enough information to identify a manufacturer and potentially even a retailer. The seller can then potentially be tracked down and questioned about recent purchases and customers. The moderator should also note that latent prints can be taken from the inside of a glove and take note if the criminals discard them.

Blood-spatter evidence may indicate physical characteristics of the attackers, such as approximate height, or in the case of hand-to-hand attacks, build and strength. It will also reveal the type of weapon used in the assault.

Recovered ammunition may indicate the number of different weapons used in the assault. This may reveal the number of criminals involved in the assault, even in the unlikely event that the criminals are extremely thorough and leave no survivors, security recordings, or tracks. The moderator should always make sure he knows what weapons criminal characters are using. Players in this kind of scenario are encouraged to select specific weapon brands rather than generic templates

for this reason, among many others. Of course, the moderator does not have to inform the players why he is insisting on this! The moderator should simply make the request and even allow them to create their own firearm models as an incentive. Players of criminal characters will rarely pass on the opportunity or belabor the point.

Infiltration: A crew with extensive contacts and the appropriate skills may be able to infiltrate the Biogene staff at the landing facility. Security is fairly tight, but there are a lot of personnel, they work several different shifts, and employees rotate in and out all the time.

The best course for this approach is for the criminals to pose as ground crew. These are low-level employees who security tends to ignore, and they nevertheless have access to most areas of the facility. At minimum, the criminals will need to acquire ground crew uniforms and either steal or forge the smart cards the facility personnel use for identification.

The uniforms are sold at an employee supply outlet store in Ballard Arcology, and any Biogene employee can purchase them. While it may be difficult for the criminals to do so directly, they may have a contact who can, or they may be able to bribe a low-ranking employee to do it for them. The identification cards will be more challenging. Stealing them is certainly possible, but several stolen ID cards will almost certainly alert security. Forging them is also possible, but it will require the criminals to acquire one real card on which to base the forgeries. Even if it is reported, a single missing card is unlikely to draw undue attention from security. Smart cards can be purchased from most any electronics store. Forging one or more IDs requires a Complicated Forgery and Challenging Electronics task roll. The rolls can be split between two different characters working together. If a character suffers a simple failure, he can try again assuming time is no constraint. However, a critical failure indicates that a forged card will be discovered when queried by a guard or the facility's security network. Obviously, the moderator should make these rolls secretly to hide their results from the players.

Once they have uniforms and ID cards, the criminals can enter the landing facility through the service entrance with the rest of the ground crew during a shift change. Assuming they play it cool and do not do anything stupid, there is little chance they will be challenged.

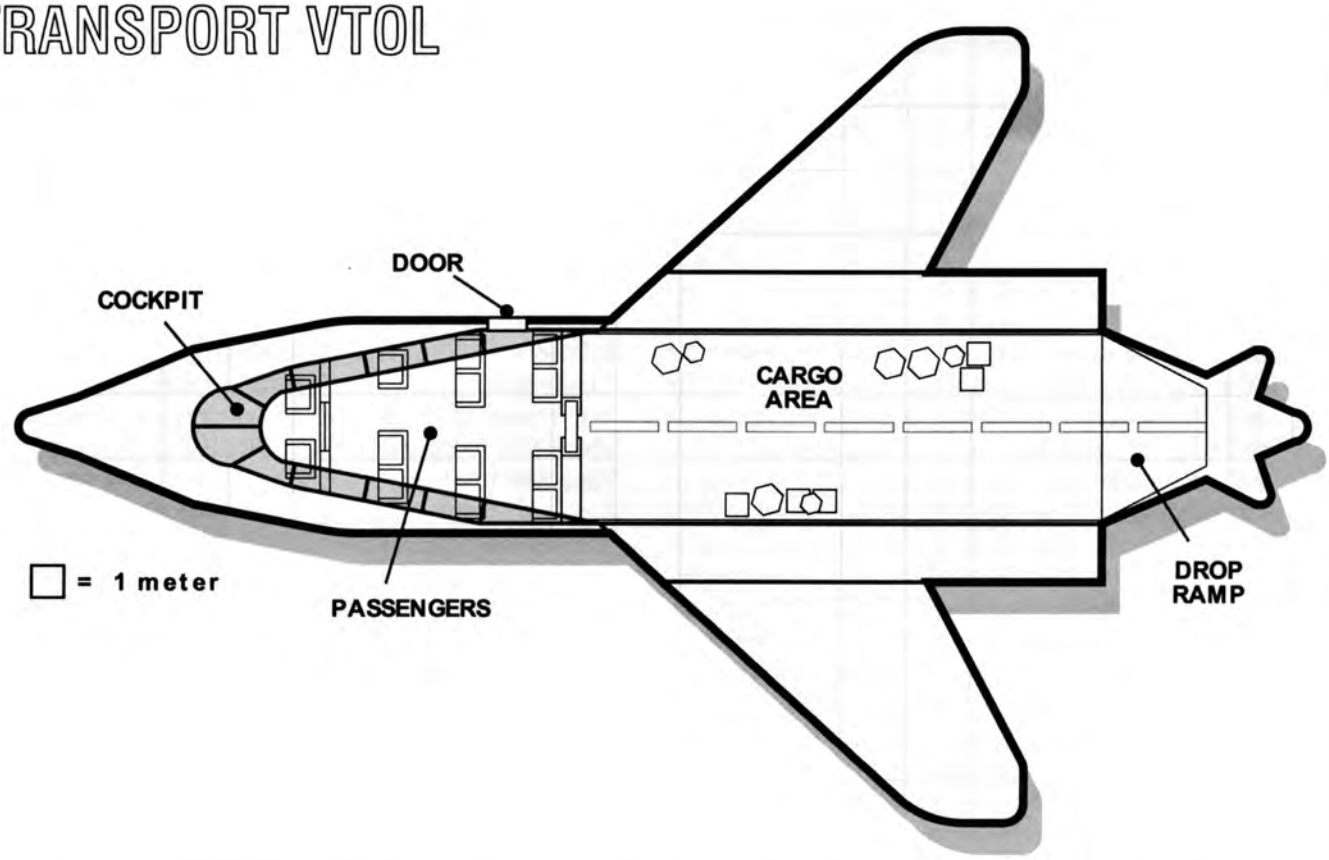
There are several obvious drawbacks with this approach. First, the criminals may be discovered while they are attempting to acquire uniforms and IDs. At the very least, this will alert security and make any subsequent infiltration more difficult. Second, the criminals' ruse may be discovered when they are at the landing facility waiting for the VTOL to arrive. The Biogene Security officers patrol the facility regularly, and while they try to stay out of the ground crew's way, a minor mistake could blow the whole operation. Third, the criminals will have to smuggle weapons and equipment into the facility and hide them until the VTOL arrives. Fortunately, there are no security sensors at the service entrance, so it should be relatively easy to stash weapons and gear in duffle bags and carryalls. These can then be stored in personal lockers or hidden in automated baggage trucks. Finally, if their covers are blown, the criminals will have no ready and quick means of escape.

Evidence

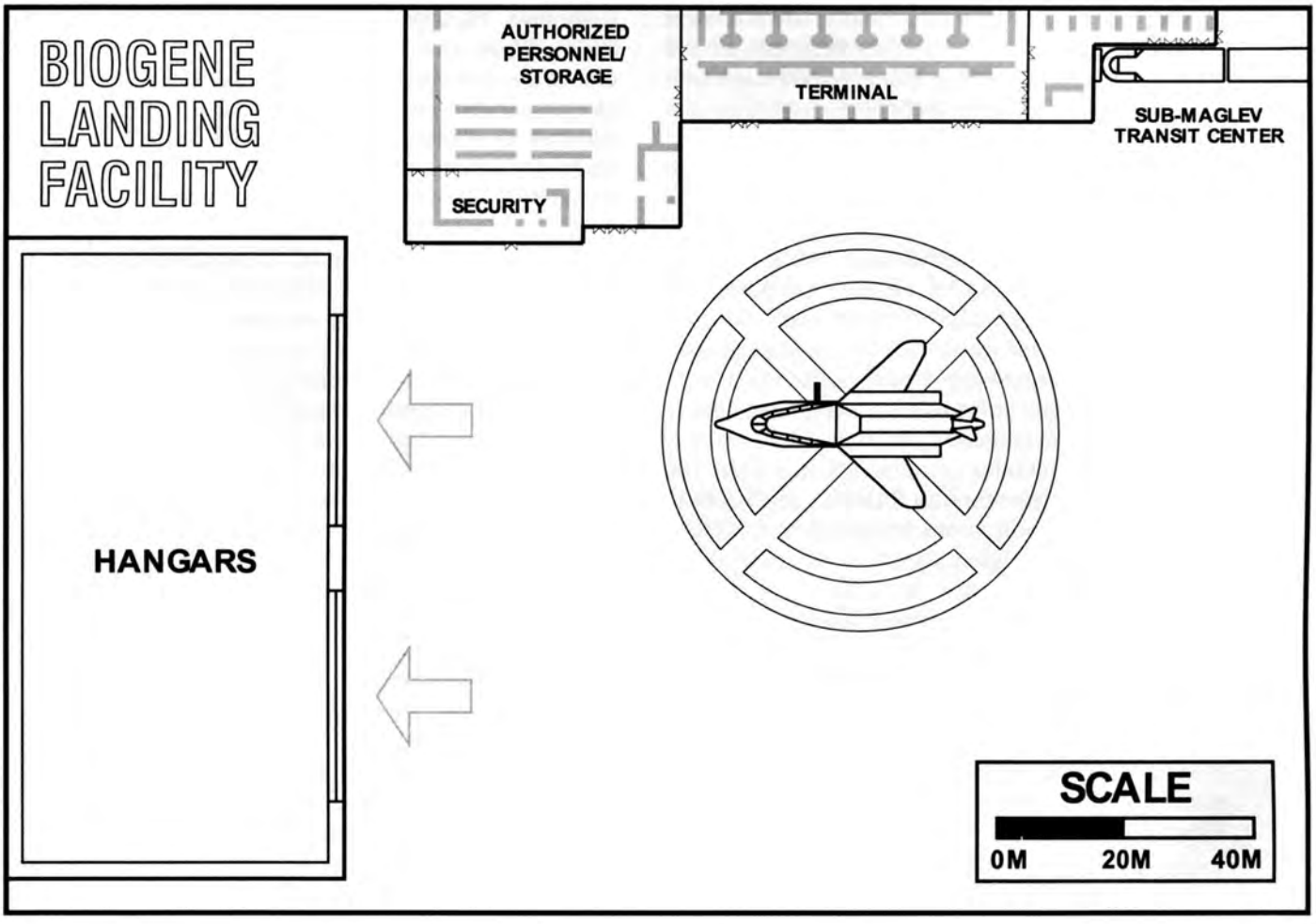
Obviously, this approach has the potential to produce a great deal of evidence. Witnesses are much more likely to be useful to investigators if the criminals use infiltration to gain access to the facility. Unless the criminals took great pains to disguise themselves (and were successful in doing so), witnesses will be able to provide physical descriptions. Recordings from security cameras may corroborate these descriptions. Even if the criminals disguised themselves, witnesses and security footage may reveal many physical characteristics, including height, weight, build, handedness, and any unique body language or mannerisms. Some witnesses may even have spoken to one or more of the criminals and be able to provide descriptions of everything from attitudes to speech impediments and vocal mannerisms.

Uniforms and forged ID cards will also provide evidence. The simple fact that the criminals had them will provide the investigators with valuable information. Again, this information may lead the officers to a contact inside Biogene or to a smart card retailer. The criminals will also either have to keep the uniforms and IDs, which will be incriminating if they are recovered, or ditch them, in which case they may subsequently be discovered and analyzed for blood stains, perspiration, fibers, prints, and other trace evidence.

TRANSPORT VTOL



BIOGENE LANDING FACILITY



As with the other approaches, infiltration may also establish an MO. Particularly careless criminals may even have used the same or similar (presumably) false names on the ID cards that they used for past jobs. These kinds of habitual repetitions are not at all rare, and they will provide an immediate connection between crimes.

Stealth: All things considered, this is probably the best approach for professional criminals with the appropriate skill set. If Casey's gang is being run as non-player characters, this is the approach they will take. The stealth approach offers a number of advantages. First, the landing facility is not a high-security compound. There are only five officers on the nighttime shift at the security office, and another three inside the transport VTOL. Second, the facility—and indeed the Colonial Air Terminal itself—is in a fairly remote location, far from residential and commercial areas, and a safe distance from the spaceport proper. The facility borders the coastline, and an approach from the water will make it relatively easy to get close without being detected. While the landing pad is well lit, the darkness will also provide cover as the characters approach from the perimeter. Finally, while there is a security fence with electronic safeguards around the perimeter, it is nothing that a skilled team cannot quickly and easily defeat.

The first challenge will be to reach the perimeter security fence without being discovered. As noted, the safest option is to approach from the harbor. From the closest point on the shore, it is roughly 30 meters to the southeastern edge of the perimeter. The criminals might take a small powerboat in to shore or pilot an inflatable raft from a larger vessel offshore. For maximum stealth, characters with diving gear might swim to shore from an offshore vessel or even an isolated spot on the Haven waterfront. Ground vehicles can also get to within 100 meters of the perimeter with little risk of detection. Smart criminals will avoid jumpcraft and VTOLs due to their loud engines.

The security fence is equipped with motion sensors. These sensors have a range of 10 meters and will identify any significant movement by an object larger than a medium-size dog. The sensors are networked to each other and to the computer terminals in the security office. If alerted, two security officers will leave the office and proceed directly to the site of the alarm to investigate.

The motion sensors will not register movement from an object as small as a standard hover remote. Such a device equipped with appropriate electronics intrusion systems can be used to disable or bypass one or more sensors from a safe distance. These systems must be purchased illegally and roughly triple the base cost of the remote. Using a remote to disable the sensors requires a Routine Intellect + Remote Operations roll and a Challenging Intellect + Electronics roll. Characters may repeat their attempts, but each try will require about five minutes. A critical failure indicates that the alarm has been triggered.

The fencing is constructed of standard-grade bioplastic and a hotwire (FM 25) will cut through it in minutes. It is approximately three meters high and characters can simply climb over it with a Routine Agility roll.

Once the characters have penetrated the fence, they will have to cover the ground between it and the landing pad. It should be fairly easy to do so undetected. While the immediate area of the landing facility is well lit, the surrounding area is not. Criminals equipped with phototropic intrusion suits will be virtually invisible. The only guards out on the landing pad—assuming the VTOL has already landed—will be located near its side door and can be easily circumvented. The other guards will remain in the security office unless an alarm is raised.

The moderator should make unopposed Routine Agility + Sneaking rolls for the characters, applying any bonuses for stealth equipment. A failed roll simply means that one of the guards on the tarmac has seen or heard something and decided to investigate. The moderator should then allow characters to respond, perhaps making Awareness + Hiding rolls to conceal themselves. Such a roll should be opposed by the guard with an Awareness roll. Only if the guard wins this opposed roll will a character be spotted.

CASEY'S GANG

Casey's gang will use the stealth approach to gain access to the landing facility. They approach the landing facility from the water in a powerboat, anchoring it about a kilometer offshore. They use gills suits to cover the distance between the boat and the shoreline.

When they reach the shore, the gang sheds the gill-suits and dons phototropic intrusion suits and night-vision glasses (for those who do not have biomodified night vision). Khang will send up his remote constellation, consisting of two recon remotes and an intrusion remote (see page 126). When he determines that the area is clear, the intrusion remote will disable three motion sensors along one section of the fence and then cut through the fencing with its integral hotwire.

The team will then move through the fence and advance to the landing facility, taking advantage of the darkness and scarce available cover. Heinrich Karl will position himself as a sniper at the fence, covering the team's advance with his rifle. Once the team reaches the VTOL, they will hide and cover Karl as he advances to their position.

Evidence

As with the other approaches, a stealthy intrusion of the landing facility may establish an MO. Unless they take special and time-consuming precautions, the criminals will leave tracks. Investigators can use these tracks to determine the number of people involved in the intrusion. Tracks may also allow the investigators to identify footwear, which might be traced to a manufacturer or retailer.

If the team disables the remotes or cuts through the fence, their tools may leave trace evidence—anything from bioplastic fibers to distinct toolmarks. This can be used to identify the equipment used, and to place the tools at the crime scene if they are subsequently recovered.

When the team penetrates the fence, there is also a fair chance that they will come into contact with it, whether they cut through it or climb over it. If the criminals are player characters, the moderator should make an Agility roll for each as they go through or over the fence. A failure indicates that the character has brushed against the fencing, and notices it. Fibers will be left behind unless the character makes an effort to clean or recover the trace evidence. A critical failure indicates that the character left trace evidence behind but doesn't realize it, unless the player specifically announced that he was being careful.

If Casey's gang is being run as non-player characters, Utu will snag his suit on the fence as he goes through. This will leave a small fragment of his intrusion suit on the fence, which investigators may discover and identify in the lab.

NEUTRALIZING SECURITY

At some point, unless the criminals are fortunate and skilled enough to slip in, seize the cargo, and escape without being noticed by Biogene personnel, they will be forced to neutralize the security officers. This may involve killing or seriously wounding the officers, but it does not have to. Professionals will try to avoid it if possible, but they will not hesitate if a guard stands between them and their goal. Some crews may use stun guns or suppression rounds, which can be even more incapacitating than conventional firearms at very short ranges. The criminals may also attempt to neutralize the guards by distracting them. For example, they may decide to blow up the refueling robot with a Binex charge to focus security's attention elsewhere. However the criminals decide to deal with the guards, the moderator should have plenty of information—the guards' locations, stats, equipment, etc.—to resolve the action with little difficulty.

Evidence

As discussed under the frontal assault approach to gaining access to the facility, violence almost always leaves evidence. If the player characters are the criminals, the moderator should carefully note the details of any combat that takes place between the characters and the security officers. The moderator should record the targets of any attacks, the location where the attacks take place, any weapons used, severity of the injuries, the amount of ammunition the characters expend, and any injuries they sustain. The investigators will use accounts of survivors, ballistics, blood-spatter analysis and other techniques that rely on this evidence to recreate the crime scene.

Most of this evidence will only help the investigators recreate the scene and determine exactly what happened. The evidence will reveal some of the criminals' capabilities and resources. However, unless the heist is a major fiasco for the criminals, there should be relatively little evidence that will directly point to the criminals' identities. Some possibilities include:

- If a criminal is wounded and leaves blood behind, DNA analysis will identify him unless he is unregistered in the database

- If a mask or similar headwear is lost during a scuffle, witnesses or security cameras may enable an identification of the criminal
- One of the criminals may be killed, captured, or left behind—even if the criminal is killed, investigators may be able to connect him with the others on past jobs

THE CARGO

Once the criminals get inside the VTOL, they will of course be in for a little surprise. When they are planning the heist, however, they will have to decide how to steal the cargo, and this plan will determine the way the scenario develops. The criminals basically have two options: They can take the Long John from the transport VTOL or they can take the VTOL.

1. Steal the Long John from the VTOL. This is perhaps the most obvious approach: The ore only weighs 10 kilos (according to the criminals' information), so it should be relatively easy to board the transport VTOL when it lands, seize the cargo, and escape the facility before additional security can be marshaled. This option works well with the frontal assault and stealth approaches to the job, but criminals who choose to infiltrate the facility may not have an easy way to escape with the cargo. This is the option Casey's gang will choose if they are being run as non-player characters.

2. Steal the VTOL. There are basically two variants of this approach: **a)** wait until the VTOL has refueled and then fly it to any place of safety within hundreds of kilometers, or **b)** steal the VTOL before it has been refueled and then rendezvous with the actual getaway vehicle at a point within a few kilometers of the airport.

Of these two options, 2a is perhaps the most obvious, but it has one serious flaw: It will take about an hour for the VTOL to be refueled. The gang will be exposed and vulnerable during that time unless they time the assault to coincide with the completion of the refueling. In this case, though, split-second timing is crucial—if they are a little late, the VTOL may take off before they reach it.

2b is difficult, risky, and calls for a lot more nerve than most criminals can claim. The crew would have to be technically proficient, with the ability to crack the VTOL's systems and gain control. And, of course, this will have to be done quickly - within a few seconds, minutes at most. Cracking the system is a Formidable Intellect + Computers task. Unless the hacker suffers a critical failure, he may make repeated attempts. However, each attempt will require about one minute to complete. The hacker will also need sophisticated intrusion software, which will cost about 10,000 scrip on the black market.

Alternatively, the gang could take the flight crew hostage and coerce the pilot into flying the aircraft for them. While the flight crew is trained to cooperate with hijackers, this makes the criminals dependent on civilians and most professionals will avoid it. The transport VTOL is also slow and cumbersome, hardly the ideal getaway vehicle. The crew would have to strike quickly and escape the scene before airborne pursuit could be called in. This is an option for gangs that have accessed the facility through stealth or infiltration.

The synthetic xenosilicate sample and five dataspikes are secured in a super-strong carbon-fiber briefcase. The case has an electronic locking mechanism that requires both a fingerprint ID scan and a numeric combination that can only be input via a neural interface port. Defeating the security system requires a Challenging Intellect + Computers roll and a Challenging Intellect + Electronics roll. The person attempting to bypass the security system must also have access to code-breaking software and a neural interface.

The briefcase includes a molded bioplastic insert that keeps the contents secure and prevents them from rattling around inside. Below this insert, which can be easily removed, is a layer of industrial bioplastic. Imbedded in the side of the case below this layer of bioplastic is a small locator beacon. It is effectively a miniature GPS unit that transmits a telemetry signal to a Biogene satellite network at random intervals. The transmitter can be detected by a countersurveillance scanner or similar device, but only when a transmission is in progress. Unless the device is discovered and disabled, or the entire briefcase is discarded, it will allow Biogene Security to follow the criminals' progress and track their location.

CASEY'S GANG

Once they have rendezvoused at the VTOL, the criminals will incapacitate or kill the security officers guarding the VTOL. One officer will be killed and four seriously wounded in the shootout. Once the way is clear, Casey and Pierce will enter the

VTOL immediately while the others cover the security office, engaging any guards that emerge. Casey and Pierce will neutralize the flight crew and research scientists with disposable restraints, keeping them alive in case they are needed as hostages. They will then move to the back and attempt to secure the cargo. They will not, of course, find the 10 kilos of Long John they were hoping for.

Casey and Pierce will return to the passenger cabin and question the scientists. Fearing for their lives, one of the scientists will give Casey his briefcase and tell him that there is a small amount of Long John inside. The briefcase is electronically locked and none of the scientists know the access code. Casey will store the briefcase in his pack, and they will exit the VTOL and form up with the others outside.

Casey is a professional: While he suspects a blown operation at this point, he is not going to delude himself and put his team at risk by wasting time looking for the lost score. The team will immediately withdraw back to the perimeter. As they go, Khang will remotely pilot the boat into shore for a quick extraction. The criminals will not discover the microtransmitter in the briefcase.

From the time they hit the beach, the entire operation will take Casey's gang less than ten minutes.

PURSUIT

From the time onsite security becomes aware of the robbery, it will take 15 minutes for a Biogene Security team (see page 132) to be dispatched to the landing facility. The security team will also be required by law to notify the GEO authorities before entering the facility. It will take another 15 minutes after that for the first responders from the GEO Patrol to arrive at the scene. If onsite security (either guards or cameras) can identify the suspect's getaway vehicle, Biogene Security will organize a search effort comprised of five jumpcraft within 30 minutes.

Biogene Security's tactics will depend on whether or not the criminals have discovered and neutralized the microtransmitter in the briefcase (see page 104). If they have, security will try to locate, contain, and apprehend them immediately. If they have not, security will monitor their "getaway" and dis-

patch the special ops team to shadow them. The hope is that the criminals will lead the team to an employer, perhaps a rival Incorporate state.

If the criminals are still at or near the landing facility within this time frame, they are in serious trouble. If the Biogene Security team spots the criminals, they will attempt to apprehend them without calling for support. They are perfectly willing (and within their legal authority) to use lethal force in doing so. If the Patrol officers spot the criminals, they will attempt to follow or contain them and call for backup.

Most likely, the criminals will be long gone by the time security reinforcement or the Patrol arrives on the scene. The moderator should emphasize to experienced criminal characters that it is imperative that they escape the scene as quickly as possible in case they or their vehicle can be identified. The characters should be encouraged to depart for the Wall immediately.

THE INVESTIGATION

Once the Patrol officers have assessed the scene, they will call in to headquarters to report. At this point, the case will be routed to either the player-character law enforcement team or Deputy Marshal Stoddard's task force. In the unlikely event that the criminals have been pinned down or a hostage situation is in progress, the task force will be charged with directing the efforts of SWAT personnel and negotiators. It is much more likely, however, that the criminals will be gone and the investigators will have to work the crime scene.

If the investigators are the player characters, their first task will be to gain the assistance and cooperation of Biogene Security. Lieutenant Ramirez (see page 131) will have taken charge of security at the facility and he is not well disposed to the GEO. From his perspective, he is in charge of the case and the GEO is intruding on his jurisdiction. However, any character who makes a Routine Intellect + Law roll will know that, because the robbery took place at the Colonial Air Terminal, the GEO claims jurisdiction. If all of the characters somehow fail this roll, their superiors will point it out to them when they report in to headquarters.

Ultimately, Ramirez will fight the investigator characters every step of the way unless they are persuasive and officially request Biogene Security's cooperation. If he is convinced that the GEO is recognizing and considering Biogene's interests, he will concede his claim to jurisdiction and allow the investigation to proceed.

THE CRIME SCENE

The evidence at the crime scene will depend on the approach the criminals used on the job. If the investigators are the player characters, the moderator should pay special attention to the evidence notes relevant to Casey's gang. The moderator should encourage the investigators to work through the crime scene following the guidelines in the investigation section of this book.

- The scene should be secured, with all bystanders kept away from the area
- Emergency medical services should be called in to assist anyone injured
- Witnesses should be identified for later questioning
- The investigators should do a walkthrough of the crime scene
- ChromaTrace and crime scene remotes should be deployed to work the scene
- All physical evidence should be gathered, recorded, and routed appropriately

If any security officers or ground crew were killed during the heist, it becomes a robbery-homicide and the stakes are raised significantly. As already noted, if Casey and his crew are the non-player-character criminals, this will be the case as one of the security officers dies in the shootout.

The investigators should make sure that any bodies are protected, perhaps even erecting temporary shelters around them to protect any evidence from contamination. An investigator with the Forensic Medicine skill, such as Jason Powell, should check the bodies for apparent cause and probable time of death, and note any potential physical evidence, such as bloodstains, defensive wounds, or discarded weapons.

As the investigators work the scene, the moderator should reveal the evidence they discover. The evidence left by Casey's gang will include:

- Spent ammunition. This can be found on the tarmac, in the fuselage of the VTOL, and in the walls of the security office and hangar adjacent to the landing pad. Maison and Khang did not fire their weapons, but ammunition will be found for each of the others' primary firearms. Lab

analysis will reveal the make and model of these firearms.

- Tracks: The crew will leave a trail of tracks running from the beach, to the security fence, to the landing pad. The gang's footwear is part of their intrusion suits, which they obtained on the black market. However, lab analysis and a check with the CIC will reveal the manufacturer: MacLeod Enforcement. A Challenging Awareness + Tracking roll will also allow an investigator to determine that there were six criminals in the team. A critical success (AV +5 or better) will reveal that one was a female.
- Suit Fragment: If the investigators carefully check the fence where the team penetrated it, an Average Awareness roll will reveal the small fragment torn from Utu's intrusion suit. Identifying it as such will require an average Intellect + Electronics roll. Again, lab analysis will confirm it as a MacLeod product.
- Hotwire: If samples are taken from the melted bioplastic of the fencing, they contain minute particle traces of the hotwire used to cut through the fence. Lab analysis will identify the tool with 90% probability. This analysis will not be sufficient to match the trace evidence to a specific device if the criminals' hotwire is subsequently discovered.
- Modus Operandi: While the physical evidence is relatively limited, the gang's technique closely matches other jobs the task force has investigated. The team's apparent numbers, the intrusion suits, the technical proficiency demonstrated, and the ruthlessness and cold professionalism with which the guards were neutralized will lead experienced investigators to believe that the perps are the guys they've been tracking.

The investigators will also want to question any surviving witnesses, including security officers, ground crew, the VTOL's flight crew, and the research scientists. Lieutenant Ramirez will absolutely not allow any witnesses to be interviewed before he has personally debriefed them. All will be forthcoming and cooperative. How much help they can be largely depends on the approach the criminals took to the job. The investigators are fortunate that they have security camera footage and the witnesses need only fill in details and corroborate this evidence. The information they can potentially divulge is as follows:

- Numbers. If the criminals took the frontal assault approach to the heist, the witnesses will be able to estimate their numbers. Given the circumstances, not all of the witness accounts will be reliable or consistent, even for such a trivial detail. Answers will range from -2 to +5, based on the actual size of the criminal team. If multiple witnesses are available to interview, the investigators should be able to narrow the range to +/- 1. Security officers will be much more accurate in their estimates than ground crew. If the gang took the stealth or infiltration approach to the job, the issue may be much more confused. It is quite likely in this event that no single witness will have actually seen all of the criminals. The investigators might only be able to get an estimate within a range of +/- 3. In both cases, these numbers can be checked against the security camera footage.
- Reconstruction of the crime. Importantly, witnesses may be able to tell investigators what happened. Where did the criminals come from? How did they neutralize the guards? What did they do when they got to (and inside) the VTOL? What was their apparent target? Where did they go? The ground crew might be of the most help answering questions about the early stages of the heist—they may have been the ones to see the criminals approach, for example. Conversely, the security officers will be of most help describing the events that transpired once any shooting started—the ground crew would have been running for cover at that point. Finally, the flight crew and/or research scientists will be in the best position to describe what happened when the gang got inside the VTOL.
- Physical Descriptions. The witnesses can describe the criminals. They may not have seen their faces—unless the criminals used the infiltration approach or chose not to conceal their identities—but they can describe the criminals' clothing, equipment, builds, mannerisms, etc. While this information may not disclose the criminals' identity immediately, it may be helpful to the investigators later on.
- The Cargo. Only the research scientists, flight crew, and security guards have any information about the cargo the VTOL was transporting. And of them, only the research scientists know what it really was—the others believe it was just what it was purported to be, a shipment of Long John. Lt. Ramirez will have explicitly briefed the scientists not to reveal the cargo's true nature. If explicitly questioned on the subject, however, p-scanners or spyware will reveal that the scientists are withholding information about the cargo—

not lying outright, just obfuscating. They will not reveal the cargo's true nature by any means short of illegal methods of interrogation—torture or chemicals.

Once the investigators have completed these onsite interviews, they will want to make appointments for full interviews with those witnesses who seem to have useful information. Lieutenant Ramirez will offer some objections to further interviews, but he will eventually concede if the investigators remain calm, reasonably respectful, and persistent.

The final battle with Ramirez, and the investigators' last major task at the crime scene, will be to secure the video footage from the surveillance cameras. Lieutenant Ramirez will insist that the footage is Biogene's property and of "vital interest to Biogene security as a sovereign state." He will be completely unwilling to simply hand over the footage to the GEO. However, if the characters suggest it, he will agree to copy the footage "relevant to the crime." If the characters accept this compromise, they will receive heavily edited footage that omits the criminals' method of access to the facility and any engagement with Biogene Security officers. If this is unacceptable to the investigators, they will have to petition their Magistrate to issue a writ of seizure giving them explicit and official authority to confiscate evidence from a member state.

ASSESSING THE EVIDENCE

The physical evidence at the crime scene and interviews with witnesses will tell the investigators a great deal but leave many questions unanswered. It will likely reveal the criminals' numbers, resources, and allow an evaluation of their capabilities and skill level. However, unless the criminals were extremely sloppy, the initial investigation will not answer the too most important questions: "Who are they?" and "Where are they now?"

The opportunities open to the investigators to answer these crucial questions depend on whether they are the player characters or not.

The criminals are the player characters. If the characters have made any glaring mistakes during the execution of the heist, the moderator is encouraged to exploit them. If they were professional and careful, however, there is only one immediate threat to their operation—the undercover officer waiting for them at their hideout (see page 116). If they can identify and overcome this hidden obstacle, the investigators will not be able to track them down until the final episode.

The investigators are the player characters. The undercover officer provides a *deus ex machina* to steer the characters back on track if they lose the trail, but they should first have an opportunity to find the criminals through their own efforts. To do so, they will have to widen their investigation once they have finished at the crime scene.

GOING TO THE SOURCE

They may question potential witnesses outside the landing facility in hopes of finding someone who can identify the criminals' transportation to or from the scene. It will require excruciating trial-and-error legwork, but the investigators will eventually be able to track down a dockworker named Nolan Guthrie who saw the powerboat Casey and the gang used to get to and from the landing facility. Guthrie will either be found on the waterfront, scraping fast fungus off boat hulls; at a blue-collar dockside bar called Longshoreman's; or at his home in East Shore. Guthrie can provide a solid description of the boat, as well as the first three

numbers of the registration stenciled on its hull—Guthrie has an eye for the details of boat hulls. If the characters run these numbers and a description of the boat through the CIC network, they will get a hit: The boat was registered by Alicia Morrow the previous week.

If the investigators run "Alicia Morrow" through CIC, they learn that she doesn't exist: She has an identification number and vehicle operator's license, but no credit, health, insurance, or civil records—no birth certificate, marriage license, immigration records, etc. The registration, however, lists the company that sold Ms. Morrow the boat, Haven Marine. Following this up will bring the investigators to Leo Cacanis, the owner-operator of the company and the man who sold the boat to Ms. Morrow.

Cacanis does not favor the authorities and he will initially be unwilling to cooperate. If his shifty, nervous demeanor should prompt the investigators to run his name through CIC, however, they will learn that he has been convicted twice—once for transporting contraband and once for receiving stolen goods. He is on probation after two short sentences at the Haven Detention Center, and the third strike would either send him back to the Solar System or to an extended stay at Böse Strand. If the investigators imply some plausible threat, such as charging him as an accomplice to armed robbery, aiding and abetting, or obstruction of justice, Cacanis will give them Anne-Marie Maison's name.

Cacanis does not know a whole lot. He knows he has never heard of "Alicia Morrow," but he knows Maison uses lots of aliases. He will also tell the investigators that she buys things from him from time to time—the boat was not their first transaction. If pushed and explicitly threatened, he will reveal that he purchased things from her sometimes, too. The most recent such transaction was for some fuel cells, which match the description of goods missing from one of the other robberies the characters are investigating. Cacanis, of course, insists he knows nothing about them being stolen. If the characters look, they are not listed on his books. If asked whom he sold them to, his only response will be "Some Russians." He will say nothing further, even if the investigators send him to the Beach.

Once the characters have a name, they can really go to work. Running the name turns up the following:

- Photographic and holographic images of Maison
- The address of her home in the Heights
- Tax records, which list her as "self-employed" with a substantial income
- Bank account and investment records from several institutions
- Immigration records
- DNA and fingerprint records

The investment records can lead the investigators to the other criminals. If they study the records closely and make an Average Intellect + Economics and Challenging Intellect + Law roll, they will discover that Maison has several partners in numerous investments across the archipelago, mostly real estate. There are a dozen names and each of her confederates is among them. If the investigators run checks on these names, they will be able to establish that all but her five comrades are legitimate—or at least not involved in armed robbery. While there are no outstanding warrants or other "smoking guns" on any of the criminals, they each have enough holes in their bios to stand out. They will get a hit on one other name as well—Jacques Arnaud. The check will confirm that Arnaud is not an armed robber, because he is a well-known fixer that the Patrol has been after for years.

Even if the investigators do not catch the lead from the boat to Maison, it is a logical approach to begin quietly investigating known fixers. These criminals are clearly professional, but they must have gotten their information from somewhere, or more precisely, someone. And the GEO's list of fixers with the connections to get this kind of information is a very short one. Arnaud's name will come up with very little digging, and he has been implicated—though never convicted—in several similar Long John hijackings in the past.

Arnaud is a licensed attorney with offices in the Central Business District and a tasteful residence in the Heights. The direct approach will get the investigators nowhere—Arnaud did not get where he is by being loose-lipped or easily intimidated. He knows the law inside and out and he will not even consider turning informant unless shown direct and irrefutable evidence that would lead to his conviction of a major criminal offense—and

that is evidence no one in GEO law enforcement, including the characters, has been able to discover.

A much more promising approach would be to do a full surveillance workup on Arnaud. After all, if they are actually using him, the criminals likely have been and will be in contact with him. Based on the information gathered so far, the investigators will have no difficulty securing the appropriate warrants for a surveillance operation.

Arnaud's "professional" electronic mail communications are routed to his office network, which he can also access through his bodycomp. His office terminals and bodycomp are password protected, but code-cutting software and a Challenging Intellect + Computers roll will be sufficient to gain access. All of Arnaud's electronic communications with Casey have been deleted, but not completely erased—sweeper software and another Challenging Intellect + Computers roll will recover it. While the correspondence is always vague and often coded, there is one item that will catch the investigators' attention. It is a communication in which Arnaud and Casey seem to be coordinating the criminals' course of action after the hijacking. Arnaud says, "When you stop to refuel on Kraken, ask for Logan. He'll take it from there."

The investigators can also monitor Arnaud's audio communications. Microbugs placed in the office are a possibility, though even cursory observation will reveal that he sweeps for them twice a day. If he finds any listening devices, he will become highly paranoid and cautious, limiting any potentially incriminating conversations to isolated or crowded areas where he is sure he is not being eavesdropped. However, the investigators or their surveillance team can also requisition laser monitoring systems that, when directed at the large, plate-glass window in Arnaud's office, will record the vibrations caused by conversations inside the office as electronic signals and translate them into coherent speech. When Casey calls in, the investigators will be able to hear every word of his conversation with Arnaud.

The investigators can take the electronic surveillance one step further by filing the appropriate warrants and requisitions with the High Commissioner for Communications. If requested, the HCC will monitor and record all of Arnaud's satellite and local wireless communications, and download the "take" to the investigators. As with the laser surveillance, this will allow the characters to listen in on Casey's conversation with Arnaud. At the moderator's discretion, it may also provide further evidence about Arnaud's activities, including further scenario hooks. More importantly, the HCC will be able to trace these transmissions to Casey's hideout in the Wall.

CASEY CHECKS IN

Once Casey and his gang reach the hideout in the Wall, he will call Arnaud. By this time, Khang will have figured out what they have, and Casey needs Arnaud to fence the goods: find buyers with the interest and resources for this kind of rare score. The full transcript follows:

ARNAUD: Yes?

CASEY: Jacques, this is Case.

ARNAUD: John! How nice to hear from you. Are you there?

CASEY: Yeah. Listen, I'll make this quick. What we got is not the cargo you told us would be there...

ARNAUD: Hey, wait a minute, John. My information was very reliable, but you know these things are never one hundred percent...

CASEY: Jacques, shut up and listen for a minute. The stuff is fake...

ARNAUD: But...

CASEY: Jacques, it's synthetic. [silence] You understand what I'm saying?

ARNAUD: I...I'm not sure I understand. John, there is no synthetic of this cargo.

CASEY: There is now. I've got it right here. Along with several encrypted dataspikes that we believe are technical specifications for its manufacture. The crypto is... Khang's never seen anything like it. He thinks he might be able to break it if he had a few decades on a supercomputer.

ARNAUD: But, then... how do you know it's... synthetic?

CASEY: Because Khang tested it. Wanted to check its grade or purity or whatever. He worked up some kind of bioreactive solution to analyze it.

He says it's Long John, but it's like it's too pure or something. He says nobody pulled this stuff out of the ground. They cooked it up in a lab somewhere.

ARNAUD: Mon Dieu! John, do you know what this means?

CASEY: Yeah, it means we're rich and I'm gonna retire. If you can find someone to buy it.

ARNAUD: [laughing] Oh John, they'll positively be lining up just to get a look at it! But that's not even it. We could give it away and we'll still be rich...

CASEY: What do you mean? I'm not giving anything away...

ARNAUD: John, why are we here?

CASEY: What? You know damn well what we're doing?

ARNAUD: No John, I mean us... humans. Why are we really here, on this planet? Do you think, if blue sky, and ocean, and a million damned things that could kill you were all this planet had to offer, any of us would be here?

CASEY: Well, the natives, I guess...

ARNAUD: John, I'm not talking about the damn natives! I'm talking about the rest of us, all two million of us. The GEO, the Incorporate, the bloody Mob, the lunatic terrorists, the sorry bunch of kelp farmers... All of us! We're here for one reason, John. [laughing] Your namesake: xenosilicate. Long John.

CASEY: Okay, yeah, like I said, we're gonna be rich.

ARNAUD: John, how much will Long John sell for tomorrow?

CASEY: Huh? How the hell do I know? A little more than it did today, judging by past trends.

ARNAUD: Well John, there are some people who think they do know. They stake millions—billions—on it, on the futures markets. Now what if you really did know, what if you knew that tomorrow, the stuff was going to be worthless, that no one would ever bother digging up another gram?

CASEY: Shit. You could manipulate the markets. Make a killing...

ARNAUD: Yes! Now what if you also knew that, say, Biogene—and not GenDiver, or Hanover, or the NIS, or LavOrg, or Atlas, or anyone else—was going to have the xenosilicate market cornered, wrapped up, locked down?

CASEY: You could make another killing on the scrip markets. But hell, those others might pay even more not to be shut out.

ARNAUD: Yes, John. The question is, what wouldn't they pay?

CASEY: Set it up. Find some potential buyers, but do it fast. I don't want to live in this cave any longer than I have to, and I'm not sure how much I trust these bastards I'm sharing it with. Call me when we're ready to move.

ARNAUD: It shouldn't take long. Goodbye, John.

With this transcript in hand, the investigators finally have a hot case. Their next decision will be what to do with it. They basically have two options:

- Go after the criminals immediately. The transcript implies that they are somewhere near Kraken, hiding out in a cave. It also gives the investigators the name of a contact on Kraken. The investigators can immediately go to Kraken, find Logan, and attempt to track down the criminals.
- They can sit on the information and wait. Arnaud has promised to call Casey when he has made arrangements with potential buyers. The investigators could wait to intercept that call and potentially catch some much bigger fish than the criminals.

Both options have advantages and disadvantages. If they try to locate and apprehend the criminals immediately, Casey and his gang will be less likely to relocate, run, or disappear. Why not hit the trail while it is still hot? Of course, if they strike and are unsuccessful, Casey and Arnaud will likely realize that their identities have been discovered and their communications compromised, making the case much more difficult from there on out. On the other hand, if the investigators are patient, they have a chance to bust a much broader criminal conspiracy. They could potentially charge the eventual

buyer with a whole range of offenses, from receipt of stolen goods to industrial espionage.

If the investigators choose the first option and go after the criminals, it takes them to the second episode (see page 113). If they choose the second, they wait just over two days for Arnaud to make the call. The transcript is as follows:

CASEY: Yeah?

ARNAUD: I have found our prospective buyers, John.

CASEY: Good. Who are they?

ARNAUD: One of the Incorporate interests, and a group of natives...

CASEY: Natives? What are they gonna do, trade us fish and beadwork?

ARNAUD: I admit this group is a bit of a stretch, but these particular natives are extremely... politically active... and heavily backed by Earth interests with substantial resources.

CASEY: Okay, if you say so. But what do they care?

ARNAUD: You remember why we're here, John?

CASEY: Yeah?

ARNAUD: They would like very much for that reason to just go away. For all of us to just go away.

CASEY: Okay, that fits. So you have meetings arranged?

ARNAUD: Indeed. But John, the stakes have been raised, and I think it's time to tighten our security. I am dispatching a courier with all the information you need. His name is Kamaal, a native lad, and he should reach you this evening. I am uploading an encryption key to you that will allow you to access the information he carries.

CASEY: Just make sure he isn't followed, Arnaud.

ARNAUD: Indeed. Goodbye, John. And good luck.

The take from the satellite intercept will also provide the investigators with the encryption key Arnaud transmitted.

The characters can also set up physical surveillance on Arnaud's home and office, and he can be followed to and from work or when he goes elsewhere. The investigators can requisition an unmarked surveillance van, a jumpcraft, and three ground vehicles for this operation. They will be issued the equipment they need, including cameras, listening devices, and night-vision gear. They can also call in as many as five Patrol officers on a temporary basis to assist in the surveillance. Additional resources will require appropriate roleplaying, as well as Bureaucracy and Persuasion rolls.

Following Arnaud unobtrusively will require that the investigators involved succeed at appropriate Stealth tasks. Arnaud is cautious, but he is not highly trained—he will make cursory efforts to insure he is not being followed, but he will not use any sophisticated countersurveillance methods. These tasks are left to the moderator's discretion and should be used to build tension, suspense, and excitement—a botched Shadowing roll should not blow the investigators' whole operation.

After Arnaud's first conversation with Casey, his activity level picks up tremendously. He begins meeting with fences, fixers, and contacts from all over Haven—and with some from outside Haven. He meets with known gangsters, ecoterrorists, Incorporate executives, and many others, sometimes at his offices, sometimes at places of their choosing. If the investigators can intercept these conversations, they will learn the two groups Arnaud chooses as prospective buyers and where they are supposed to meet with Casey's gang. With this information, together with the intercepted communications, the investigators could theoretically skip episode two and set up surveillance and/or a raid at one or more of the chosen meeting places (see the Deal, page 120).

However, even with this information, the characters may want to intercept Kamaal, the courier, or set up surveillance at the criminals' hideout in the Wall. This will take them to episode two.

THE HIDEOUT

OVERVIEW

In this episode, the criminals reach the smuggler's den in the Wall where they have arranged to lay low until the heat dies down back in civilization. This may also be the first chance the criminals have to inspect their score and try to figure out exactly what they stole from the VTOL. The criminals will face serious dangers as well, with an undercover GEO law enforcement officer in their midst and a possible visit from a Biogene Security special ops team.

ARRIVAL

Once they reach the Wall, the characters first stop will be Kraken (MG 41), where they will have a chance to refuel and supply themselves, and also meet their contact, Logan.

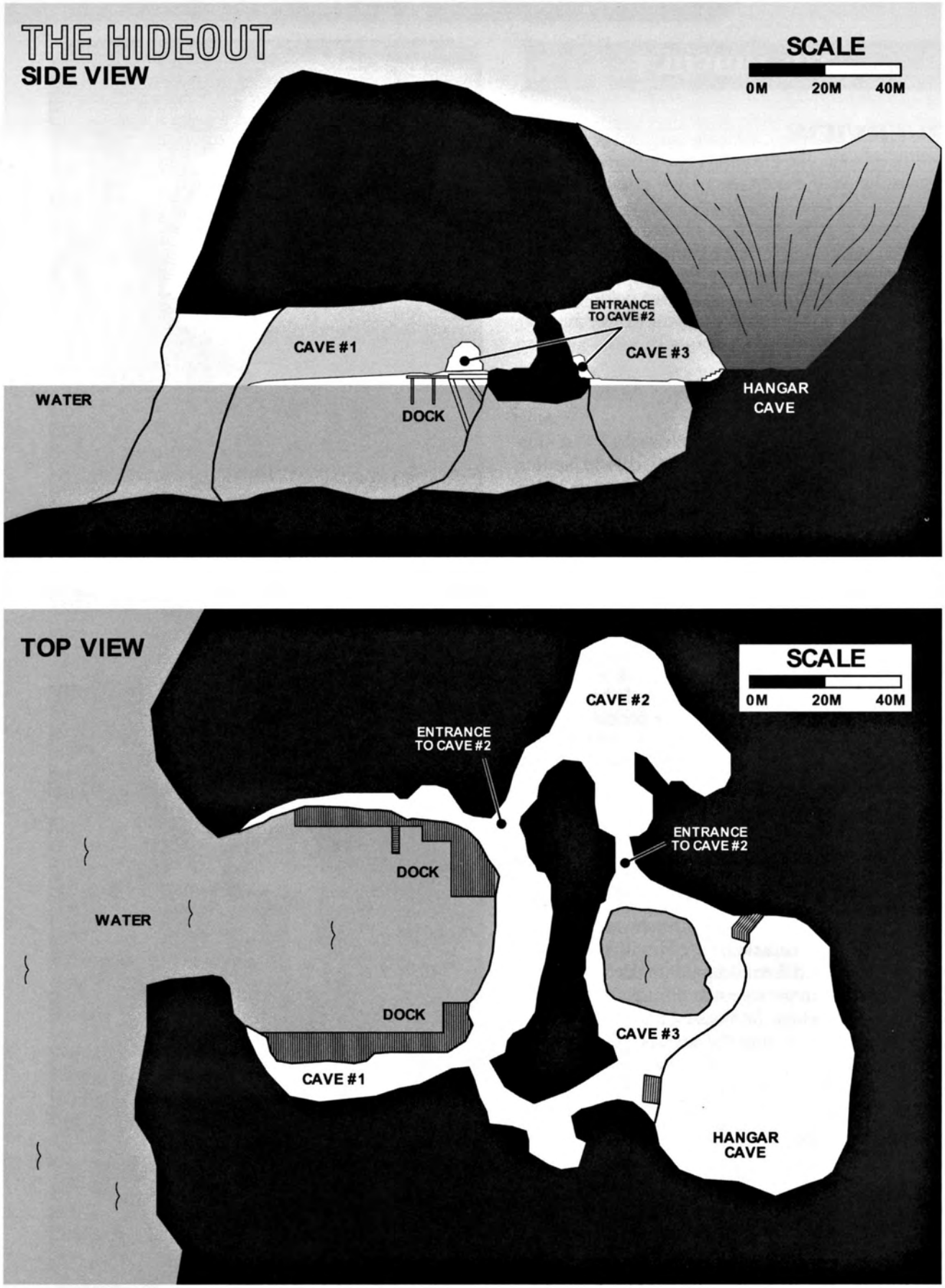
Logan is a small-time fixer and fence who works with many of the smuggler and pirate gangs from Nomad to the Wall. For a significant fee, he has agreed to hide the criminals in the Wall, far from the searching eyes of the GEO Patrol and Biogene Security. He will radio the criminals when they approach Kraken on a pre-established channel and tell them to meet him on the water deck.

When they arrive, Logan will see that some locals begin refueling their vehicle, then lead them topside where they can purchase supplies. Just about everything is available on Kraken, from field rations to weapons and ammunition. Prices are roughly double the going rate.

Once they have provisioned themselves and their vehicle has been refueled, Logan will hop on his jumpbike and lead them deeper into the Wall. After taking a long, circuitous route through the tumbledowns during which he insures they aren't being followed, Logan eventually arrives at the smuggler's den.

THE DEN

A large natural cavern opens into the cliffside of a narrow canyon. The ocean here is about 10 meters deep, and the main cavern shelters a large, calm lagoon. Wooden and bioplastic docks and piers have been constructed along the sides of the cavern, and a rocky shelf runs along the edge of the lagoon. Smaller tunnels lead from the main cavern


THE HIDEOUT
SIDE VIEW
SCALE
0M
20M
40M
ENTRANCE TO CAVE #2
CAVE #1
CAVE #3
WATER
DOCK
HANGAR CAVE
TOP VIEW
SCALE
0M
20M
40M
CAVE #2
ENTRANCE TO CAVE #2
ENTRANCE TO CAVE #2
DOCK
WATER
DOCK
CAVE #3
CAVE #1
HANGAR CAVE

to several interior caves. The first is used by the smugglers as a general living area. Crates of supplies, camping gear, and personal equipment are piled in the southeastern nook. The third cavern contains a smaller lagoon that connects to the main cavern through an opening deeper underground. This cave will be offered to the criminals. The last cave is large and open to the surface above. The smugglers call it the "hangar cave," because it is a useful place to land a jumpcraft or VTOL.

THE SMUGGLERS

When the criminals arrive, they will discover—if they haven't explicitly questioned Logan on it previously—that they are sharing the hideout with the smugglers who call it home. There are four of them, and they look mean and well armed enough to be trouble if the criminals cannot find a way to peacefully cohabitate. The smugglers have a large, currently empty hydrofoil docked in the lagoon.

Christopher Edgecomb

Born in Guyana, Edgecomb is a tall African-ethnic man in his mid 30s. His lilting English and intense stare announces him as the leader of the gang. While he is himself neither native nor Rastafarian, he and his gang run contraband—weapons, pirated goods, drugs—for the NRM.

Anders Andersen

Originally from Copenhagen, Andersen is the gang's wheelman, an expert in vehicles ranging from VTOLs to hypersails to cargo subs. He is prone to manic-depressive mood swings, and a little digging will reveal that he is a juice addict (PG 135).

Seamus Fanon

An Irishman from Belfast, Fanon is a ruddy, red-haired man with thick features and a mean streak. He is the gang's muscle, and he is fond enough of his collection of knives to make others nervous. Fanon is belligerent and generally dim-witted, and he is the one the criminals are most likely to have problems with.

Dario Mutombo

The gang's newest recruit, Mutombo is a cat hybrid born in the Brighton Projects. He is a jack-of-all-trades who hooked up with the gang because of his connections in the Haven underworld. Mutombo is the most outgoing of the group and will make every effort to befriend the criminals. He does not pry or ask too many questions, but he is friendly, accommodating, and forthcoming about his own background and activities. Mutombo is actually an undercover Patrol officer (see page 116).

THE LONG JOHN

There will be very little for the criminals to do at the hideout, beyond waiting for word from Arnaud and interacting with the smugglers. This may also be their first real opportunity to examine the contents of the briefcase taken from the Biogene VTOL.

Testing the xenosilicate sample is rather simple for those who know what they are doing. It requires a bioreactive solution and a Routine Intellect + Biochemistry or Chemistry roll. A successful test will reveal that there are no apparent impurities in the ore, which even a scientific novice will recognize is impossible for any naturally harvested Long John. Logan has enough experience with the prospectors on Kraken to confirm this. The only conclusion is that it must be synthetic. A critical success will reveal that the Long John does not seem to function properly—the compounds in the bioreactive solution are catalyzed when a sample is introduced, but the reactions are not stable or viable for more than a few seconds. A character with this level of success will conclude that the sample represents a failed attempt to create a synthetic.

The briefcase also includes five standard dataspikes, their contents heavily encrypted. Without obtaining the encryption key from Biogene—no easy feat—there is effectively no plausible way the characters will be able to decrypt the data. If the criminals somehow have high-level contacts in GEO Internal Security, they might have a shot, but it will be a time consuming process. However, the fact that the spikes are so heavily encrypted and that they were in the briefcase with the sample should provide a pretty good clue that they contain research data on the synthesis project.

How the scenario proceeds will likely hinge on what the criminals discover—or fail to discover—about their score. The sample is only about 100 grams, but is still worth as much as 100,000 scrip on the street, so the criminals may just split it up and spend it, waiting until the heat dies down and they can leave the Wall. While the Long John will not actually work, it is a very good counterfeit, and the criminals should have little difficulty passing it off to the unsuspecting. However, even if the crim-

inals do decide to simply keep the sample and use it as currency, they may still want to arrange with Arnaud (or their own fence or fixer) to sell the encrypted data. With no idea what it is, finding a buyer will be more difficult, and the criminals are not likely to get a very high price.

If the criminals do discover that the sample is a synthetic, they will realize that it is worth far more than its street value, and the scenario will proceed as written.

If the criminals discover that the sample is a non-viable synthetic, they have a much more difficult decision to make. Do they dump it and cut their losses? Do they pass it off as counterfeit currency for the street value? Or do they try to sell it as a viable synthetic, hoping their buyer will not discover the truth? The moderator should have sufficient information to account for all of these possibilities.

THE SPECIAL OPS TEAM

The other feature of their cargo that the criminals might not discover is the microtransmitter implanted in the briefcase. If they have not, and Biogene can therefore trace them to their hideout, they will get an unexpected visit from the special ops team that has been shadowing them since they left Haven. The special ops team's orders are as follows:

- Neutralize any resistance, using lethal force if necessary
- Secure the sample and dataspikes
- Seize any evidence or suspects who can implicate any Incorporate rivals in industrial espionage
- Apprehend and transport perpetrators to Cliffside, dead or alive
- Rescue any Biogene personnel who might have been taken hostage

The special ops team will attempt to enter the hideout covertly, using combat gillsuits and MHD sleds to approach below the surface of the lagoon. Once out of the water they will form up into two-man combat teams and sweep the network of caves, neutralizing anyone they see. They will give unarmed civilians an opportunity to surrender and will immobilize prisoners with bioplastic hand restraints.

The only way the characters can avoid combat with the team is to not be present when they arrive. If the criminals have a lookout stationed outside the hideout 30 hours a day, an Average Awareness roll will be sufficient to spot the Biogene patrol jumpcraft's initial pass over the area. From that point, the characters will have about half an hour to vacate the premises without being spotted by the team. Alternatively, if the criminals spot the team or find the locator beacon, they may decide to prepare an ambush. Regardless, friendly relations with the smugglers will provide some much-needed assistance in the event of hostilities.

If captured, the team will reveal only that they were ordered to take the criminals into custody and recover the stolen cargo. They will not, without extreme interrogation methods, reveal the microtransmitter in the briefcase. If asked how they found the criminals, the team members will all claim that Biogene Security received an anonymous tip.

THE UNDERCOVER COP

Mutombo has nothing to do with the robbers and their crime—he was assigned to infiltrate and gather intelligence on smuggling operations in the area. He will, however, include whatever information he can gather about them in his regular reports to his headquarters in Haven. This will include sensory recorder footage of the criminals, which will likely be sufficient to reveal their identities. The moderator should also carefully note anything player character criminals say to him about their activities.

Mutombo has a satellite uplink stashed in a shallow cave about five kilometers from the hideout. Every few days, assuming he has anything to report, he takes his jumpbike out for a "look around." After insuring that he hasn't been followed (opposed Shadowing task roll), he stops at the cave, sets up the satellite, and sends an encrypted burst transmission.

If the criminals follow him and catch him red-handed, he will claim that he reports on his gangs' activities to a Gorchoff Family bull. He will offer them 5,000 scrip if they will stay quiet about it. However, if the criminals force him to decrypt the transmission he sent, it will be obvious that he is an undercover law enforcement agent and that he has reported their identities and whereabouts. At that point, he will admit that he is with the GEO Patrol and warn them that the strictest penalties are

imposed on criminals who harm undercover officers. If attacked, he will do his best to escape on his jumpbike, and failing that, to defend himself.

If the characters take Mutombo back to the hideout and inform Edgecomb about his true identity and employer, Edgecomb will instruct Fanon to execute Mutombo and dispose of the body deep in the canyonlands.

CASEY'S GANG

If the moderator is running Casey and his gang as non-player characters, they will not discover Mutombo's true identity. He will report them to his controller, who will relay the information to the player character investigators once he realizes its significance. This is the final safety net that the moderator can use to get the player characters back on track if they have had no success with their investigation.

THE TASK FORCE

If the moderator is running Stoddard's task force as the non-player characters, the investigators will only receive the report from Mutombo if the player characters do not discover his identity and prevent him from transmitting it.

If the criminals do stop Mutombo, they will be safe from the GEO as long as they remain at the hideout. The only remaining danger—at least, as far as the GEO is concerned—is the possibility of their being spotted and identified when they go to close a deal for the stolen goods.

THE INVESTIGATION

If the investigators are the player characters and they monitored Arnaud's communications with Casey, their first move in this episode will likely be to intercept the courier, Kamaal. Based on Arnaud's statements to Casey, Kamaal will be carrying information about the prospective buyers of the synthetic Long John.

Kamaal—a native in his early 20s—will leave Arnaud's offices a couple hours after his boss speaks with Casey. He will take the maglev to a private jumpcraft lot in the Warehouse District and get into a beat-up utility hopper. Taking off, he heads immediately for the Wall. Kamaal is strictly an amateur, and he will make no efforts at counter-surveillance. Even if he did, the jumpcraft's radar system is shabby enough that he would be easy to follow.

Kamaal flies to Kraken, where he meets with Logan. He leaves the hopper at the platform and takes a small powerboat into the Wall. Again, he should be easy to follow, from the air or on the surface. He will head directly to the criminals' hideout.

If intercepted, Kamaal will make an effort to elude his would-be captors. He is not very skilled behind the wheel of the powerboat, however. If the investigators capture him, he will say nothing about Arnaud or his assignment—his job is basically to run errands and keep his mouth shut, and he's pretty good at it. He realizes the lawmen could only charge him with minor offenses, so he will be difficult to intimidate.

He has a land lizard-skin satchel of native manufacture draped around his neck at all times. Inside are some inconsequential personal effects and a dataspike. The spike is encrypted, but the investigators should have the key from their intercept of Arnaud's last communication with Casey. The spike includes the following information:

- The date and time of a scheduled meeting between Casey and Lelang, a native who Arnaud claims is connected to both Free Poseidon! and Zero Nation. The meeting is to be held at an old native hunting lodge in a Poseidon mangrove.
- The date and time of a scheduled meeting between Casey and Domingo Lopez, a representative of GenDiver. The meeting is to take place at the Athena Club in Haven in the next few days.

The precise dates and times are left to the discretion of the moderator, to allow him to accommodate the many unpredictable events that might occur in episode two. Assuming no significant delays are necessary, the meetings should take place over the next several days, with all interested parties probably favoring nighttime hours.

Of course, once they have intercepted Kamaal and copied the contents of the dataspike, the investigators then have to make sure the criminals still receive it, without learning of the intercept. If Kamaal is still alive, unwounded, and promised immunity from prosecution, he will agree to deliver the dataspike as scheduled. Suspicious investigators might plant a microbug on him to keep him honest.

Alternatively, Casey apparently has never met Kamaal, judging by the transcript of his communication with Arnaud. An officer trained in undercover operations might pose as Kamaal and deliver the dataspike, at the same time gathering valuable intelligence about the gang and their hideout. Assuming the officer does not slip up, get caught planting microbugs or cameras, or the like, he should be able to succeed without arousing any suspicions. Casey will even give the officer a 100cs tip for his efforts.

THE BUST?

Assuming the investigators eventually locate the criminals—either through Arnaud or Mutombo—they will then have to decide what to do. They basically have two choices: Move immediately or wait.

The first option will basically involve some variation of a raid—the investigators will enter the hideout and attempt to apprehend the criminals. As always, resources in GEO law enforcement are tight, and the moderator should only give the investigators reinforcements if they are seriously outnumbered.

If the law enforcement characters do decide on a raid, the moderator should have sufficient information between the non-player character stats, equipment lists, and map and description of the hideout to resolve it with little trouble.

GEO Patrol doctrine calls for the law enforcement personnel to surround the suspects' position, contain them, and give them an opportunity to surrender. If they simply charge in guns blazing, the investigators risk being brought up on charges of excessive force or failure to follow procedure. The moderator should make sure law enforcement characters are familiar with these rules.

Of course, procedure sometimes gets thrown out the window in the field. It is very likely that the investigators will decide they do not have sufficient personnel to effectively contain the criminals. In that case, they may choose to seize the initiative, breach the hideout, and try to take the criminals down. It probably will not be the first or last time they will feel compelled to ignore proper procedure and make a judgment call. In any event, they will be able to requisition assault gear from their superiors: automatic weapons, body armor, flashbang and suppression grenades, etc.

Casey's Gang

If the moderator is running Casey's gang as non-player characters, they will attempt to escape at the first sign of the law. If the investigator characters surround their hideout, they will don their gillsuits and attempt to escape underwater, hoping that the lawmen do not have the resources to seal off that escape route. If the officers attempt to breach the hideout, Casey's gang will try to pin them down with weapons fire while the gang withdraws to the jumpcraft. Utu, Casey, and Karl will position themselves behind cover and lay down suppression fire as the others retreat. Once everyone else is aboard and Khang is lighting up the turbines, they will follow.

The team will defend themselves if cornered, but they are not fanatics. If they are trapped, they will stop fighting and surrender. If they are seriously wounded, they will likely stop fighting and seek any remaining means of escape. If critically wounded but not incapacitated, Casey and Utu are

both willing to sacrifice themselves to buy the others a little time.

SURVEILLANCE

The investigators' alternative to a raid is to set up surveillance on the hideout and wait. Perhaps they will watch the exits and try to take down the criminals when they come outside, alone or in pairs. The officers will have to move quickly and quietly to prevent any alarm from being raised, otherwise they will effectively be back in a raid situation, though perhaps with somewhat better odds.

If they choose this approach, the investigators will have access to extensive surveillance gear, though again, the Patrol will be unwilling to allocate additional personnel. In addition to watching the exits, the investigators may try to get microbugs and fiber-optic cameras inside so they can keep track of the suspects. This will require a very stealthy intrusion, however, as there are no ventilation ducts or maintenance crawlspaces as there would be in a modern building.

Casey's Gang

Casey is an experienced professional, and he has lost people before who went wandering off by themselves from a supposedly secure location. As a result, he will keep a tight rein on his people and the gang is unlikely to be apprehended by lawmen laying in wait outside. The gang only expects to be at the hideout for a couple days while Arnaud sets up a deal, and they will remain disciplined during that time.

If the investigator characters simply maintain surveillance outside the facility, they are in for a rather boring wait. After a couple days, Arnaud will have arranged meetings with the prospective buyers, and the gang will load into the jumpcraft and head for the native hunting lodge (see page 120, episode three).

THE TASK FORCE

If the moderator is running Deputy Marshal Stoddard's team as the non-player characters, they will choose to maintain surveillance, but will not attempt an arrest at the hideout. Stoddard's group has not identified the prospective buyers, so they will have to follow the player character criminals when they go to close the deal. The Deputy Marshal, Seau, and Powell will maintain visual surveillance on the main entrance to the cavern, while Connelly, Heimler, and Thomas cover the hangar cave. Both teams will work in shifts, maintaining a constant watch on the hideout. They have phototropic BDUs and abundant cover, so they should be virtually undetectable. The patrol jumpcraft is nearby, hidden under a rock shelf and covered with phototropic camouflage. The team will follow the criminals if they detect them leaving the hideout.

THREE'S A CROWD

If the moderator does not mind a bit of dramatic coincidence and is comfortable enough with the rules to handle a large number of non-player characters, he may choose to have the law enforcement officers and the Biogene special ops team show up at the same time. This situation may lead to a standoff requiring careful negotiation and crisis management or devolve into a compellingly chaotic three-way firefight, depending on the characters' actions and the wishes of the moderator.

KEEPING IT TOGETHER

Once this episode has been resolved, the scenario may have taken any number of expected or unexpected turns. The best outcome—to extend the scenario and build drama—would be a confrontation between the lawmen and criminals, with the criminals narrowly escaping. This would give the criminals an opportunity to complete a deal for the cargo, while the lawmen continue to close in, hot on their tails.

Of course, it is also possible that the criminals will be dead, seriously wounded, or in custody by the end of this episode. Perhaps they will have a chance to escape while being transported back to Haven, leading to completely unanticipated adventures. Or perhaps one or more of the lawmen will be dead, the task force in shambles. In this case, the survivors may have to wait for reinforcements before picking up the trail again. It is even possible, if the moderator steers things appropriately and the characters make the right decisions, that the criminals and lawmen could wind up in a temporary alliance against the ruthless Biogene special ops team.

The moderator should remember that this scenario is not designed as a linear progression of events. The "plot" is largely what the characters make up, together with the moderator's decisions on the part of the non-player characters. Just as in real life, the scenario does not have to follow a dramatic formula. The moderator's best course is probably to just

roll with the punches, letting the scenario evolve in whatever way seems appropriate from the events that have transpired. If the player character criminals are shot up and on the run, there's no reason the final episode cannot wait until they have recuperated in some backwater hack's clinic in Nomad. If the player character lawmen have suffered a botched raid, there is no reason they cannot pick up the case again once the internal investigation and review hearing are over.

It is even possible for episode three to be played more or less as written if the player characters secured a "victory" in the second episode. If the player character lawmen brought Casey's gang to justice, they may want to set up a sting operation on the prospective buyers. If the player character criminals successfully dealt with the task force, they still have to make a deal for the cargo. And, of course, if they killed any law enforcement officers, their problems are just getting started...

THE DEAL

OVERVIEW

In the final episode, the criminals will try to sell the sample and data, while the investigators move in, hoping to collar not only the robbers, but their buyer as well. Working through their fixer, the criminals set up meetings with a GenDiver agent and an infamous ecoterrorist, both very interested in the cargo. As with the last, this episode can play out in a number of different ways. However, the moderator should have enough information to handle any eventuality with a little ingenuity.

The episode essentially involves two set pieces: the meetings with the prospective buyers at different locations around the Haven Cluster. The meetings can be played in any order, and depending on the characters decisions, one of them might not be played at all.

PREPARATIONS

When the player character criminals receive the information about the meetings—from Arnaud or a similar fixer—they will need to prepare and decide on their approach. The players may be paranoid that they did not get to pick the meeting places. However, characters with even rudimentary experience in the business will know that the fixer always arranges such meetings. He is the neutral middleman who only gets paid if a deal gets done, and so it is in his interests to facilitate the deal by arranging a secure and appropriate meeting place. This also eliminates needless arguments between the principals, who would otherwise always want to do the deal on their own turf.

The criminals will probably not want to walk into the meetings with all of the goods on their persons. If they are smart and prudent, they will bring only enough to show the buyers that they have the goods they claim to have. A small sample—a few milligrams—of the Long John and one of the dataspikes should be sufficient.

The other major issue is who should attend the meeting. This will likely vary from one meeting to the next. For example, the whole gang should probably not show up at the Athena Club—even if they are admitted, this could easily arouse suspicion and draw unwanted attention. On the other hand, there should be no problem with the entire gang attending the meeting in the mangrove forest.

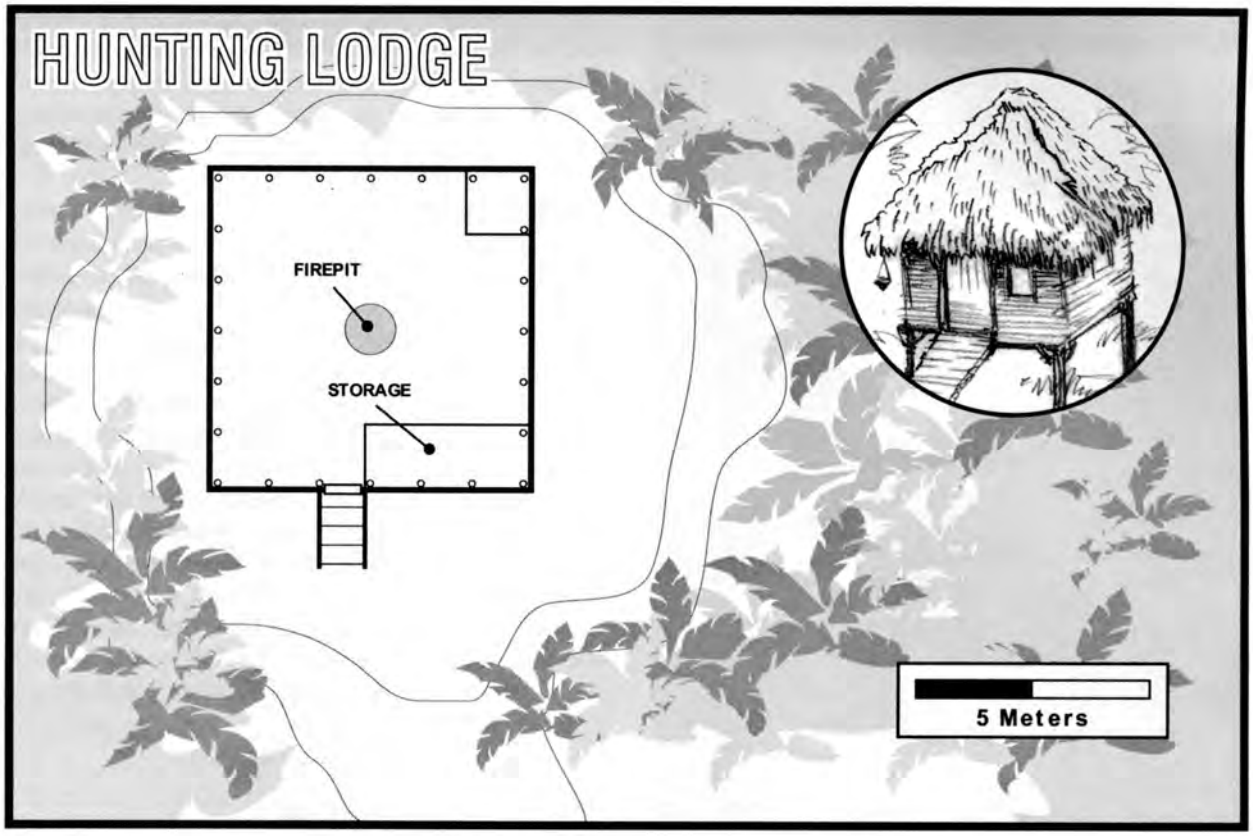
The criminals will also have to attend to their own security, especially for the meeting in Haven. Cautious criminals will disguise themselves and arrange for a new vehicle that cannot be traced to them. Logan, the contact on Kraken, will be happy to trade, sell, or rent his beat-up jumpcraft for a nominal fee.

CASEY'S GANG

Casey will decide to leave Utu at the hideout with the cargo—he will take only a few milligrams of the ore and one of the dataspikes to the meetings. Pierce will disguise the rest of the crew well enough to deceive remote surveillance. Everyone except Utu will attend the meeting with the ecoterrorists. Only Casey and Maison will go to the Athena Club, but the others will be close by and in constant communication if they need backup.

THE ECOTERRORISTS

The native insurgent group is interested in the cargo for one reason: If the specifications for a synthetic version of Long John are made public, Poseidon will no longer have anything of economic value to offer. The driving force behind the colonization effort will simply disappear. The group's leader, known only as Lelang, is a leading member of Free Poseidon! and is secretly backed by Zero Nation.



There will be five ecoterrorists at the hunting lodge, including Lelang. They are armed, but they will not do anything overtly threatening. When they arrive, Lelang will greet the characters and invite them into the lodge, where he will offer them a seat on the bare wooden floor.

Lelang's "pitch" is a personal tale. He was born just more than 20 years ago in a small native village in New Hawaii. His village was built along the banks of a river, and the freshwater fish in the river supported his people. The fish were an exotic delicacy, and as far as Lelang's people knew, their river was the only place the fish could be found on the entire planet. Throughout his childhood, Biogene was a growing and disturbing presence in the area. When he was 10 years old, Biogene constructed a manufacturing facility upriver from his village. The facility produced a chemical fertilizer Biogene was using at an aquacultural research facility along the coast. Waste products from the factory were dumped into the river, and they killed all the fish.

Lelang's people filed a complaint with the GEO, which after all had been established to guard against this kind of abuse. Inspectors arrived to tour the facility and test the water in the river. These bureaucrats told Lelang's people that the waste products were properly filtered and treated and that the river water tested within acceptable, statutory limits. Perhaps the fish had been killed off by something else, or were especially vulnerable to the toxins in the water. In any case, there was nothing they could do, since Biogene was not breaking any laws.

Within a few months, Lelang's village was abandoned, the river no longer able to support his people. Most moved to nearby villages where they had friends or family. Lelang's parents moved to Haven, where his father got a job working in the kelp fields. They had practically no money, so they were forced to live in squalor aboard a small, decrepit raft in the Floats. One night, while the family was sleeping, a drug-crazed newcomer boarded the raft, stabbed Lelang's mother and father to death, and stole their life savings: 132 scrip hidden under his parents' bed. "The next day," Lelang says, "I buried my mother and father in the harbor and became a 'terrorist.'"

Lelang will tell the characters that he shares this story with them so they will understand that he will do anything, right or wrong, good or evil, to rid

Poseidon of the newcomers who seek to destroy it. "These newcomers," he says, "are our Blight." Having related this story, Lelang will ask the criminals to give them the sample and research data. He offers them 10,000 scrip in return, and makes it clear that he considers it a token payment.

By the time Lelang makes his offer, the hairs should be standing up on the back of the characters necks. Lelang does not intend to take 'no' for an answer. If the characters refuse his offer, he will signal his comrades to attack. They will attempt to neutralize the criminals, taking one or more hostage. Lelang will then negotiate with Arnaud or any of the characters who did not come to the meeting to exchange his hostages for the sample and data. The way Lelang looks at it, even if his gambit fails, at least none of the greedy Incorporate will get the prize, either.

If the criminals accept Lelang's "offer"—or claim to—he will insist on keeping a guest with him if the characters do not have the complete contents of the briefcase with them. This hostage will remain with him and his comrades as insurance until the criminals return with the cargo.

If, as is more likely, the criminals attempt to fight and/or escape, they will have to do so quickly. There are another 10 terrorists hidden deeper in the mangrove, and they will arrive at the lodge within five minutes of the first gunshot.

CASEY'S GANG

When Lelang makes his offer, Casey will request a few minutes alone with his crew to confer. Lelang will agree, and he and his men will move outside, staying between the lodge and the criminals' jumpcraft with their weapons at the ready. Unfortunately, the native terrorists neglect to consider the capabilities of modern technology. When the natives have left the lodge, Casey, Utu, and Karl will open fire on them from inside the hut. At the same time, Khang will remotely pilot the jumpcraft *into* the hut, demolishing the rear wall. The crew will withdraw into the hopper while continuing to lay down suppression fire; once every one is in, the jumpcraft will lift off, break through the forest canopy, and fly off. Karl will be hit in the process, sustaining a serious wound, but the crew will otherwise escape unscathed.

THE INVESTIGATION

If the player character investigators have been able to track the criminals to the mangrove, parabolic microphones or laser monitoring systems will be sufficient to eavesdrop on the meeting. When it devolves into violence, they should be encouraged to intervene. A straightforward raid on the hunting lodge is the only real option. Again, they must identify themselves and give the suspects an opportunity to surrender before using lethal force. Of course, no one will surrender.

Once the firefight begins, the investigators will have two main challenges. First, they will have to prevent Casey's gang from escaping in the jumpcraft. Second, they will have to neutralize and apprehend the terrorists. Unless they are able to disable the jumpcraft or neutralize the gang before they can escape, they will be forced to pursue the robbers and call in backup to deal with the ecoterrorists. Of course, the terrorists will be long gone before they can arrive. On the positive side, the 10 terrorists held in reserve deeper in the forest will disappear as soon as the law arrives on the scene.

Casey's gang will head straight for Nomad, which is about 300 kilometers from the mangrove. If they reach it, they will attempt to ditch the hopper and disappear into the warrens, seeking refuge with one

of their many local contacts. If they get this far, the gang will likely evade capture for the time being. The investigators will have to wait and try to pick up the trail again when they meet with the GenDiver agent in Haven.

The Task Force

If Stoddard's team has managed to follow the player characters to the mangrove, they will move in as soon as violence erupts. Powell will land the patrol jumpcraft near the lodge and the team will deploy around it, using the hopper as cover. They will attempt to neutralize and apprehend the suspects—both terrorists and robbers—but their priority will be the player characters. If the criminals manage to escape the scene, Stoddard's team will pursue in the patrol hopper. If two or more of his officers are critically wounded in the fighting, the Deputy Marshal will attempt to withdraw and call in backup.

THE INCORPORATE

GenDiver may seem the riskier of the two potential buyers. This deal requires that the crew return to Haven, and the Incorporate state does not exactly have a sterling reputation on the colony world. In fact, though, it may be the better opportunity of the two. GenDiver has practically unlimited resources; indeed, the amount of money involved is trivial to the Incorporate state, especially when compared to the potential payoff. This provides GenDiver all the motivation it needs to play it straight and attempt to make a "legitimate" deal with the criminals.

When the characters arrive at the Athena Club, Lucas White (FC 18), the manager, will meet them at the door at personally escort them to a private backroom. Lopez, a tall, dark, striking man apparently in his mid 30s, will be waiting for them at the table. He will introduce himself, thank them for agreeing to the meeting, and arrange for any drinks or food they request. When the refreshments have arrived and the waitstaff have retreated, Lopez will get down to business. He will outline GenDiver's offer before asking to see the sample and data.

If the sample is verified as a viable xenosilicate synthetic, the Incorporate state will offer the characters 100 million in a variety of non-GenDiver corporate scrips. Any character who makes an Average Intellect + Economics roll will immediately recognize the significance of the "non-GenDiver" part: that particular scrip will increase in value dramatically if GenDiver brings a Long John synthetic to market.

GenDiver is also prepared to offer the characters security. They can offer new identities, complete with body sculpting if necessary, and will relocate the characters to a place of their choosing, on or off planet. If the characters wish, they will be provided with private residences in Santa Elena or in the GenDiver city-state on Earth.

After outlining the offer, Lopez will ask to see the goods. He will place a large briefcase on the table, press his thumb to a fingerprint scanner, and open it. Inside is a small molecular scanner and a bodycomp. He will place the sample in the scanner and slot the dataspike into the bodycomp. He will, of course, not be able to access the dataspike, but he will check the apparent volume of data and insure that it appears to be functioning properly. After a few minutes, the scanner will finish its work, and Lopez will view the analysis on the bodycomp, which has a wireless connection to the scanner.

After viewing the output, Lopez will sigh and inform the criminals that the synthetic is nonviable, similar in many respects to failed attempts by GenDiver to synthesize Long John. He encourages the characters to have this independently verified. He will tell the characters that GenDiver would still like to purchase the sample and dataspikes, as Biogene's failure might provide them with helpful clues in their own continuing efforts. The amount he will offer is left to the moderator's discretion, as it could have a profound impact on the direction of the campaign. Any amount between 100,000 and 10 million scrip is plausible, depending on the moderator's wishes and the expenses the criminals have incurred.

If the criminals decide to make the deal with Lopez, they will have to arrange to deliver the rest of the goods. He will invite them to either bring it to the GenDiver consulate, or offer to pick it up at a place of their choosing. Rather than deal with large quantities of cash, Lopez will request that the characters receive payment in the form of electronic transfers to private numbered accounts that he can help them arrange. They will, of course, be able to verify payment before the goods are delivered.

Lopez has absolutely no interest in deceiving the characters or attempting to cheat them. His job is

simply to close the deal quickly and within the financial parameters determined by his superiors. He will therefore be very accommodating and cooperative, doing anything he can to allay any suspicion or distrust. If they accept Lopez's offer, the deal should go through without a hitch.

CASEY'S GANG

Assuming his crew makes it this far, Casey will accept Lopez's offer, selling the goods for 10 million scrip. That is the approximate street value of the 10 kilos of Long John he thought he was stealing, after all. Casey will want to verify first that the synthetic is nonviable: Arnaud will set up a meeting with a biochemistry grad student at HIST named Emile Jolie for the purpose. Casey will arrange a tentative meeting with Lopez at the GenDiver consulate the following day to close the deal. After Jolie confirms Lopez's analysis, Casey and Karl will deliver the goods to the consulate and close the deal.

THE INVESTIGATION

Player character investigators should have identified the meeting place with the GenDiver agent, either by intercepting the courier, Kamaal, or maintaining surveillance on the criminals. However, any surveillance of the meeting at the Athena Club will require the investigators to go in undercover. If the investigators have not already identified the criminals' disguises (for example, by spotting them when they left the hideout), it will require a Routine Awareness roll to do so in the club.

It will be extraordinarily difficult to gain access to the private meeting room. The characters' best option might be to bribe a waiter to plant a microbug when he delivers refreshments. It will have to be a very healthy bribe—at least 1,000cs—because the waiter knows he will lose his job, and maybe worse, if he is caught.

In addition, as noted previously, the officers cannot charge the buyer with receiving stolen goods unless merchandise and money change hands, which it will not at the club. However, if the investigators figure out a way to listen in on the conversation, they will learn of the arranged meeting to close the deal the following day.

This, of course, introduces the real problem for the investigators. Lopez insists on closing the deal at the GenDiver consulate because the GEO cannot enter it without explicit permission from the

Incorporate state. The best they will be able to do is arrest Casey and Karl just before they enter the consulate grounds. While this will not allow the GEO to press formal charges against GenDiver, it will be sufficient to score a major political and public relations hit on the Incorporate state.

The Task Force

If Stoddard's team is able to follow the player character criminals to the meeting at the Athena Club, they will maintain visual surveillance on the outside of the club while Heimler goes in undercover. One of his aliases has a membership to the club, and Heimler will have no trouble getting in. When he sees the criminals enter the private room, he will pay the waiter 1,000 scrip in cash to plant a microbug in the room. When the waiter returns with refreshments, the moderator should make a Formidable Awareness roll for each of the player characters. Anyone who succeeds will notice the tiny surveillance device affixed to the bottom of one of the dinner plates.

If the characters do not detect the bug, Stoddard's team will listen in on their conversation. In the process, they will learn for the first time what the cargo actually was. They will also record any arranged meetings to close the deal with GenDiver. If the characters do detect the bug, the team will simply try to maintain visual surveillance and continue following the criminals.

CONCLUSION

This scenario has countless possible outcomes, determined by the decisions, successes, and failures of both the player characters and non-player characters. Its resolution will also depend on whether it is a standalone adventure or part of an ongoing campaign.

THE CRIMINALS

The criminals have accomplished their goals if they avoided capture and sold the cargo for a healthy sum. Obviously, they have failed if they are in custody. The extent of this failure, however, remains open. How much evidence does the GEO have on them? Were they caught red-handed, with the cargo in their possession, attempting to sell it to a third party? Is there any physical evidence that connects them to the original crime scene at the Biogene landing facility? Is there evidence to charge them with a violent crime, such as assault or homicide? If convicted, do they serve a short term at the Haven Detention Center, an extended sentence at Böse Strand, or are they transferred to a prison back on Earth? If the scenario is just one adventure in an ongoing campaign, perhaps the characters will have to attempt a prison break.

THE LAWMEN

The law enforcement officers have accomplished their goals if they apprehended the criminals and gathered sufficient evidence to convict them of the robbery and other crimes they committed in the process. The officers will want to interrogate any suspects they arrested, ideally getting full confessions from the perpetrators. If the case goes before a Magistrate, the prosecution will need enough hard evidence to establish a "reasonable standard of guilt." Physical evidence tying the suspects to the crime scene and witnesses who can connect them to the crime will be invaluable. The best evidence of all is to actually have captured the suspects in possession of and attempting to sell the stolen goods.

THE CAST

THE CRIMINALS

JOHN CASEY

John Casey, or "Case" to his friends, was born in Hell's Kitchen, New York, in 2154. He grew up on the streets and survived on petty larceny from the time he was seven years old. He hooked up with Anne-Marie Maison and Marcus Pierce in 2188, forming a professional crew that committed armed robberies up and down the East Coast of the United States. Ten years later, with federal investigators hot on their trail, Casey moved his operation to Poseidon.

Casey is a professional criminal whose intelligence, experience, and judgment are uncommon in his line of work. He can readily distinguish the promising opportunities from the setups, scams, and stings, and his ability to plan and execute a criminal operation is unmatched.

Casey is also a borderline sociopath. He does not enjoy killing, but he will kill without hesitation if it protects his crew or brings him closer to a score. He is very loyal and capable of forming deep personal relationships, but he feels no empathy for anyone outside his own closed circle of friends, colleagues, and family.

Primary Attributes: Build 0, Fitness 0, Agility -1, Dexterity 0, Awareness 2, Intellect 1, Presence 1, Will 2

Derived Attributes: Endurance 1, Reflexes 0, Strength 0, Toughness 0

Biomods: Improved Blood Oxygenation, Multiglands, Uplink Neural Jack

Training Packages
Origin: Earth (Urban)
Backgrounds: Independent, Street
Professional: Expert Crime (Gangster), Specialist Law Enforcement

Aptitudes: Communication, Subterfuge (Strong) Close Combat, Culture, Firearms, Stealth

Skills: Armed Combat 5, Bribery 5, Bureaucracy 6, Colonial Culture 2, Computers 2, Driving 6, Earth Culture 5, Economics 3, Fast-Talk 5, First Aid 2, Forensic Medicine 2, Handguns 6, Hiding 4, Law 7, Leadership 4, Lockpicking 2, Longarms 5, Negotiation 7, Persuasion 8, Piloting 2, Remote Operation 2, Shadowing 5, Sleight of Hand 1, Sneaking 4, Street Culture 8, Tactics 3, Unarmed Combat 6

Gear: MacLeod CarbonEdge diamond knife, MacLeod Guardian Model 200 concealable pistol, Hanover Arms P550 small-caliber handgun, Hanover Arms HA-G11 assault rifle, standard and armor-piercing ammunition, (3) flash-bang grenades, targeting interlink, digital binoculars, gillsuit, smart fins, phototropic intrusion suit, Light Polyflex body armor, NIS MultiComm bodycomp, broad-spectrum visor, biomonitor, medical kit

TOMMY KHANG

Tommy Khang was born on Mars Colony, where he became involved in smuggling contraband under the noses - and trade regulations - of the First Families. He met Casey, Maison, and Pierce on Mars when they were on their way to Poseidon, and was recruited into the gang. Khang is the crew's primary wheelman, and also handles many of their technical requirements. Tommy rarely becomes directly involved in the crew's inevitable violent conflicts, preferring to operate from afar through his drones and remotes.

Primary Attributes: Build 0, Fitness -1, Agility 1, Dexterity 3, Awareness 1, Intellect 2, Presence -1, Will 0

Derived Attributes: Endurance 0, Reflexes 2. Strength 0, Toughness 0

Biomods: Accelerated Neurons, Uplink Neural Jack, Implanted Microcomputer, Implanted Micro Toolkit (Electronics, Mechanics)

Training Packages
Origin: Mars Colony
Backgrounds: Independent, Space
Professional: Expert Commerce (Trader), Specialist Technical

Aptitudes: Tech, Vehicles (Strong) Administration, Firearms, Physical Sciences, Subterfuge

Skills: Artisan 3 (Metalworking), Astronomy 1, Bribery 3, Bureaucracy 3, Chemistry 1, Computers 8, Colonial Culture 5, Damage Control 5, Demolitions 3, Driving 7, Economics 6, Electronics 5, Fast-Talk 3, Forgery 1, Freefall 2, Handguns 3, Incorporate Culture 3, Law 3, Lockpicking 3, Longarms 1, Management 3, Mechanics 6, Native Culture 1, Navigation 1, Negotiation 6, Orienteering 1, Persuasion 5, Piloting 5, Physics 2, Remote Operation 5, Spacer Culture 5, Unarmed Combat 1, Writing 2

Gear: Hanover Arms P550 small-caliber handgun, standard ammunition, targeting interlink, remote constellation with three recon remotes, one intrusion remote (allows remote use of Electronics and Mechanics skills), and combat remote (Armor 3, handheld stun gun, three 0.1kg Binex charges), electronics, mechanics, and computers toolkits, hotwire, juicer, gillsuit, smart fins, phototropic intrusion suit, Light Polyflex body armor, broad-spectrum visor, biomonitor, medical kit. Khang is also the primary pilot of the crew's utility jumpcraft and hydrofoil.

MARCUS PIERCE

Like Casey, Pierce was born in the United States and he also became a criminal at a young age. Pierce grew up in a Free Zone enclave, but moved to Chicago as soon as he had saved enough money. Surviving as a street kid, Pierce was arrested when he was 13 years old for dealing illegal drugs. When he got out of the detention facility for youthful

offenders, he vowed to find a line of work in which he could operate independently, relying only on himself. After rigorous self-training, he became an accomplished second-story man. But his success ultimately brought him to the attention of more powerful players in the criminal underworld, and he finally joined Casey to avoid being recruited—or worse—into one of the ruthless syndicates that dominated that world.

Primary Attributes: Build 0, Fitness 2, Agility 2, Dexterity 1, Awareness 0, Intellect 0, Presence 0, Will 0

Derived Attributes: Endurance 2, Reflexes 1, Strength 1, Toughness 1

Biomods: Agility Chip, Improved Blood Oxygenation, Uplink Neural Jack, Implanted Micro Toolkit (Electronics), Spyware

Training Packages
Origin: Free Zone - Enclave
Backgrounds: Independent, Street
Professional: Expert Crime (Burglar), Specialist Espionage

Aptitudes: Stealth, Subterfuge (Strong) Close Combat, Culture, Firearms, Tech

Skills: Armed Combat 3, Bribery 4, Colonial Culture 5, Computers 4, Disguise 3, Driving 4, Earth Culture 3, Economics 2, Electronics 6, Farming 1, Fast-Talk 9, Foraging 1, Handguns 5, Hiding 6, Language (Russian) 3, Law 4, Lockpicking 7, Mechanics 3, Mountaineering 5, Negotiation 5, Persuasion 4, Politics 2, Remote Operation 3, Shadowing 5, Sleight of Hand 3, Sneaking 7, Street Culture 6, Unarmed Combat 6

Gear: MacLeod CarbonEdge diamond knife, MacLeod Black Viper small-caliber handgun, Hanover Arms HA-MP9 submachine gun, confounder, counter-surveillance scanner, facial disguise kit, (3) holographic diverters, hotwire, juicer, micro cord reel, recon remote, gillsuit, smart fins, phototropic intrusion suit, Light Polyflex body armor, broad-spectrum visor, biomonitor, medical kit

HEINRICH KARL

Karl was born to German parents, but grew up in the war-torn Balkan Free Zones. His parents were killed when he was 10 years old, and he eventually made his way to the Hanover city-state. Starting in menial jobs, Karl was eventually hired by the Hanover Security Service and in time was granted full citizenship. Karl was transferred to Lebensraum eight years ago, but after a series of problems with superior officers, left the service and Hanover. Having met Casey during a previous investigation, he tracked the man down and joined up with the crew. Karl is dangerous and resents authority. He and Casey are constantly butting heads over control of the crew.

Primary Attributes: Build 2, Fitness 2, Agility -1, Dexterity 0, Awareness 1, Intellect 0, Presence -1, Will 2

Derived Attributes: Endurance 3, Reflexes 0, Strength 2, Toughness 1

Biomods: Uplink Neural Jack, Myo-skeletal Enhancement, Night Vision, Pain Inhibitor

Training Packages
Origin: Free Zone - Wasteland
Backgrounds: Incorporate, Street
Professional: Expert Law Enforcement (Special Operations), Specialist Military

Aptitudes: Close Combat, Firearms (Strong) Athletics, Command, Military Weapons, Stealth

Skills: Armed Combat 6, Bureaucracy 4, Computers 1, Demolitions 2, Driving 4, Earth Culture 3, Economics 1, Fast-Talk 2, First Aid 6, Foraging 1, Forensic Medicine 2, Handguns 6, Heavy Weapons 6, Hiding 5, Incorporate Culture 3, Language (English) 5, Law 4, Leadership 5, Longarms 7, Management 1, Military Culture 3, Negotiation 1, Orienteering 1, Persuasion 4, Remote Operation 5, Shadowing 3, Sneaking 5, Strategy 2, Street Culture 5, Tactics 5, Throwing 4, Tracking 1, Unarmed Combat 6

Gear: MacLeod CarbonEdge diamond knife, MacLeod Commando Elite large-caliber handgun, Hanover Arms HA-F118 Battle Rifle w/integral grenade launcher, Hanover Arms MA-505 Infantry Support Cannon, standard and armor-piercing ammunition, targeting interlinks, (3) fragmentation grenades, (3) incendiary grenades, (3) smoke grenades, Assault Polyflex body armor, combat helmet, gillsuit, smart fins, phototropic intrusion suit, NIS MultiComm bodycomp, broad-spectrum visor, biomonitor, medical kit

MOHAMMED UTU

Utu was born on the hybrid reservation on Earth, but immigrated to Poseidon to join the Bright Savanna colony in 2191. He worked as a farmer until he was exiled for killing a drunk cat hybrid in a barroom altercation. Drifting through the streets of Brighton and along the canals of the Floats, he met and befriended John Casey and Anne-Marie Maison. He is fiercely loyal to both and will gladly die for them, as he believes—probably correctly—that they are the only ones on either world who truly care for him.

Primary Attributes: Build 3, Fitness 3, Agility 0, Dexterity 0, Awareness 2, Intellect -2, Presence -1, Will 2

Derived Attributes: Endurance 3, Reflexes 0, Strength 2, Toughness 3

Biomods: Improved Blood Oxygenation, Night Vision, Pain Inhibitor

Training Packages
Origin: Hybrid - GEO
Backgrounds: Colonial, Rural
Professional: Expert Crime (Thug), Specialist Military

Aptitudes: Close Combat, Firearms (Strong) Athletics, Military Weapons, Stealth, Subterfuge

Skills: Animal Husbandry 2, Aquatics 3, Armed Combat 6, Botany 1, Bribery 5, Cetacean Culture 1, Colonial Culture 3, Demolitions 3, Driving 3, Earth Culture 1, Farming 2, Fast-Talk 3, First Aid 3, GEO Culture 4, Handguns 5, Heavy Weapons 5, Hiding 5, Law 2, Leadership 2, Lockpicking 3, Longarms 8, Mechanics 1, Military Culture 5, Native Culture 1, Negotiation 4, Orienteering 1, Persuasion 3, Piloting 1, Remote Operation 2, Shadowing 4, Sleight of Hand 1, Sneaking 5, Strategy 2, Street Culture 4, Tactics 2, Throwing 5, Unarmed Combat 6, Zoology 1

Gear: MacLeod CarbonEdge diamond knife, MacLeod Silva Special 14mm Magnum large-caliber handgun, Hanover Arms HA-S8 Close Support Shotgun, sniper rifle, standard and armor-piercing ammunition, targeting interlinks, Assault Polyflex body armor, combat helmet, gillsuit, smart fins, phototropic intrusion suit, NIS MultiComm bodycomp, broad-spectrum visor, biomonitor, medical kit

ANNE-MARIE MAISON

Anne-Marie was born in Marseilles, France, and drifted throughout Europe and North America during her teens and early 20s. She met John Casey in New York 15 years ago, and they have been inseparable friends—and more—ever since. Anne-Marie is very petite and appears physically to be in her mid to late teens. Her perfect features and figure are obviously body sculpted, but the surgeons just as obviously had a lot to work with at the start. Her astonishing beauty is a powerful tool, and she wields it like a deadly weapon. She can be a vulnerable schoolgirl one minute and an intimidating Ice Queen the next, as the situation demands. She has a tangled web of contacts at her disposal, most of whom do not know her real identity or profession and will do almost anything to please her.

Primary Attributes: Build -2, Fitness 1, Agility 1, Dexterity 0, Awareness 1, Intellect 1, Presence 4, Will 1

Derived Attributes: Endurance 2, Reflexes 1, Strength 0, Toughness 0

Biomods: Body Sculpting, Improved Blood Oxygenation, Multiglands, Longevity Therapy

Training Packages

Origin: Urban
Backgrounds: Independent, Street
Professional: Expert Crime (Con Artist), Specialist Diplomacy

Aptitudes: Communication, Culture (Strong) Administration, Command, Stealth, Subterfuge

Skills: Acting 3, Armed Combat 2, Bribery 5, Bureaucracy 5, Colonial Culture 5, Computers 2, Driving 4, Earth Culture 5, Economics 4, Fast-Talk 9, Forgery 3, Handguns 2, Hiding 4, History 2, Language (French) 6, Language (English) 5, Language (German) 3, Language (Russian) 3, Law 4, Lockpicking 2, Negotiation 9, Oration 3, Persuasion 9, Politics 2,Psychology 4, Shadowing 3, Sleight of Hand 3, Sneaking 4, Strategy 2, Street Culture 7, Unarmed Combat 3, Writing 2

Gear: Hanover Arms P400A Revolver concealable handgun, standard ammunition, targeting interlink, gillsuit, smart fins, phototropic intrusion suit, Light Polyflex body armor, NIS MultiComm

bodycomp, broad-spectrum visor, biomonitor, medical kit

THE LAWMEN

DEPUTY MARSHAL JAMES STODDARD

Stoddard was born in Haven and served with the GEO Peacekeepers for 10 years before joining the Marshal Service in 2194. He is a resourceful, disciplined, and ambitious law enforcement officer, and hopes to become a full Marshal after a couple more years of service in Marshal Church's district. Having lived on Poseidon all his life, he knows the people and customs as well as any lawman on the planet, especially the city of Haven. He is an aggressive officer, but loyal and fiercely protective of the officers in his charge.

Primary Attributes: Build 1, Fitness 1, Agility 1, Dexterity 0, Awareness 1, Intellect 0, Presence 1, Will 1

Derived Attributes: Endurance 2, Reflexes 1, Strength 1, Toughness 1

Biomods: Uplink Neural Jack, Agility Chip, Improved Blood Oxygenation, Multiglands

Training Packages
Origin: GEO
Backgrounds: Colonial, GEO
Professional: Expert Law Enforcement (Detective), Specialist Military

Aptitudes: Close Combat, Firearms (Strong) Administration, Command, Communication, Culture

Skills: Armed Combat 5, Aquatics 2, Bureaucracy 6, Cetacean Culture 1, Colonial Culture 3, Computers 2, Demolitions 1, Driving 4, Earth Culture 3, First Aid 5, Forensic Medicine 3, GEO Culture 7, Handguns 6, Heavy Weapons 2, History 1, Incorporate Culture 1, Language (English) 5, Language (Russian) 2, Law 5, Leadership 4, Lockpicking 2, Longarms 6, Military Culture 3, Native Culture 1, Persuasion 5, Photography 3, Piloting 1, Politics 2, Psychology 3, Remote Operation 5, Shadowing 3, Strategy 2, Street Culture 5, Tactics 2 , Throwing 4 , Unarmed Combat 6, Writing 2

Gear: GEO Marshal Peacemaker, assault shotgun, standard, armor-piercing, and explosive ammunition for Peacemaker, standard flechettes for shotgun, targeting interlink, Light Polyflex body armor, bodycomp, broad-spectrum visor, biomonitor

SGT. PATRICK CONNELLY

Connelly was born in Belfast, Irish Free State, and enlisted in the GEO Peacekeepers after finishing secondary school. With the increasing incidence of violence and crime on Poseidon, he was transferred to Haven in 2196. After serving a one-year term at Fort Pacifica, he was honorably discharged and joined the GEO Patrol. He spent a year with the Special Weapons and Tactics division before being transferred to Stoddard's task force.

Primary Attributes: Build 0, Fitness 1, Agility 0, Dexterity 2, Awareness 2, Intellect 0, Presence -1, Will 0

Derived Attributes: Endurance 1, Reflexes 1, Strength 0, Toughness 0

Biomods: Uplink Neural Jack, Improved Blood Oxygenation, Night Vision, Pain Inhibitor

Training Packages
Origin: Urban
Backgrounds: GEO, Street
Professional: Expert Law Enforcement (Special Operations), Specialist Military

Aptitudes: Close Combat, Firearms (Strong) Athletics, Command, Military Weapons, Stealth

Skills: Armed Combat 6, Bureaucracy 4, Computers 1, Demolitions 3, Driving 3, Fast-Talk 2, First Aid 6, Forensic Medicine 2, Handguns 6, Heavy Weapons 6, GEO Culture 3, Hiding 5, History 1, Incorporate Culture 1, Language 1, Law 4, Leadership 5, Longarms 6, Military Culture 3, Persuasion 4, Politics 1, Remote Operation 6, Shadowing 2, Sneaking 5, Strategy 2, Street Culture 5, Tactics 6, Unarmed Combat 6

Gear: MacLeod Commando Elite large-caliber handgun, sniper rifle, Hanover Arms HA-MP9 submachine gun, standard ammunition, Light Polyflex bodyarmor, biomonitor, bodycomp

KIRA SEAU

Kira was born in Solstice, a native village on the northeast coast of Argos Island. Feeling it was her duty to serve and protect her people as their world changed around them, she joined the Native Patrol

10 years ago. After a decade of distinguished service, she was invited to serve as a special liaison officer with Marshal Stoddard's task force. She hopes the assignment may eventually lead to her being accepted into the GEO Patrol, but her ultimate goal is to be the first native Marshal.

Primary Attributes: Build -1, Fitness 1, Agility 1, Dexterity 0, Awareness 2, Intellect 0, Presence 0, Will 1

Derived Attributes: Endurance 1, Reflexes 1, Strength 0, Toughness 0

Biomods: Night Vision, Standard Echolocation

Training Packages
Origin: Native
Backgrounds: Colonial, Native
Professional: Expert Survival, Specialist Law Enforcement

Aptitudes: Athletics, Survival (Strong) Close Combat, Culture, Firearms, Stealth

Skills: Aquaculture 2, Aquatics 10, Armed Combat 3, Botany 3, Bureaucracy 2, Cetacean Culture 3, Colonial Culture 6, Driving 3, First Aid 5, Fishing 6, Foraging 5, Forensic Medicine 2, GEO Culture 3, Handguns 5, Hiding 3, Law 3, Longarms 5, Meteorology 3, Mountaineering 5, Native Culture 6, Navigation 4, Orienteering 6, Persuasion 3, Piloting 1, Remote Operation 2, Sailing 3, Shadowing 2, Sneaking 4, Street Culture 3, Tracking 5, Unarmed Combat 3, Zoology 3

Gear: MacLeod Police Marksman small-caliber handgun, MacLeod Roomsweeper Riot Shotgun, standard ammunition, laser sights, biomonitor, bodycomp

JASON POWELL

Powell was born on an independent habitat in Earth orbit. After graduating from university, he joined the GEO Patrol. His first assignment was as a surveillance technician, and he became a crime-scene technician three years ago. His technical abilities are in high demand at his Patrol precinct, and he has even been taking pre-med courses at night at HIST. His ultimate ambition is to attend medical school and become a medical examiner. Powell was assigned as the technical specialist to Stoddard's task force last year.

Primary Attributes: Build 0, Fitness -1, Agility -1, Dexterity 2, Awareness 0, Intellect 2,Presence 0, Will 1

Derived Attributes: Endurance 0, Reflexes 0, Strength 0, Toughness 0

Biomods: Uplink Neural Jack, Implanted Microcomputer, Implanted Micro Toolkit

Training Packages
Origin: Earth Orbit
Backgrounds: GEO, Space
Professional: Specialist Law Enforcement, Specialist Technical, Novice Medicine

Aptitudes: Medicine, Tech (Strong) Firearms, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Vehicles

Skills: Armed Combat 2, Artisan (Bonsai) 3, Astronomy 1, Biochemistry 1, Bureaucracy 4, Chemistry 2, Computers 6, Damage Control 5, Demolitions 3, Driving 3, Earth Culture 3, Electronics 5, First Aid 5, Forensic Medicine 5, Freefall 5, General Medicine 3, Genetics 3, GEO Culture 3, Handguns 3, History 1, Incorporate Culture 1, Language 1, Law 3, Lockpicking 3, Longarms 2, Mechanics 4, Persuasion 2, Pharmacology 3, Physics 2, Piloting 3, Politics 1, Psychology 1, Remote Operation 5, Shadowing 2, Street Culture 2, Surgery 1, Spacer Culture 2, Unarmed Combat 2, Veterinary Medicine 1

Gear: MacLeod Police Marksman small-caliber handgun, MacLeod Roomsweeper Riot Shotgun, standard ammunition, laser sights, biomonitor, remote constellation with two recon remotes and a surveillance remote, electronics, mechanics, and computer toolkits, crime scene forensics kit, medical kit

MARKUS HEIMLER

Markus joined the GEO Patrol immediately after gaining his degree in criminology from the University of Berlin. After his rookie year on the force, he campaigned for and was granted assignment to the Patrol's undercover operations division. He spent several years doing undercover work on organized crime activities in central and eastern Europe. His cover was blown in his last operation, and he was transferred to Poseidon to get him away from the many powerful enemies he has made in the course of his work. He was assigned to Stoddard's task force to advise and

direct any undercover operations that may be required.

Primary Attributes: Build 0, Fitness 1, Agility 0, Dexterity 0, Awareness 2, Intellect 1, Presence 1, Will 1

Derived Attributes: Endurance 2, Reflexes 1, Strength 0, Toughness 0

Biomods: Uplink Neural Jack, Body Sculpting, Improved Blood Oxygenation, Spyware

Training Packages
Origin: Urban
Backgrounds: GEO, University
Professional: Expert Law Enforcement (Undercover Officer), Specialist Espionage

Aptitudes: Communication, Subterfuge (Strong) Close Combat, Culture, Stealth, Tech

Skills: Acting 3, Armed Combat 2, Bribery 2, Bureaucracy 5, Colonial Culture 3, Computers 5, Disguise 2, Driving 5, Earth Culture 7, Electronics 2, Fast-Talk 5, First Aid 2, Forensic Medicine 3, GEO Culture 3, Handguns 6, Hiding 3, History 2, Incorporate Culture 1, Language (German) 6, Language (English) 4, Language (Russian) 3, Law 5, Lockpicking 4, Longarms 2, Persuasion 7, Photography 3, Politics 4, Psychology 3, Remote Operation 5, Shadowing 5, Sneaking 5, Street Culture 6, Unarmed Combat 4, Writing 2

Gear: Hanover Arms Black Viper, standard ammunition, targeting interlink, Light Polyflex bodyarmor, biomonitor, bodycomp

DEREK THOMAS

Thomas was born in the ghettos of Toronto and joined a street gang when he was 10 years old. As a youth, he was involved in everything from petty larceny to drug trafficking. When his brother and best friend was killed on the streets 22 years ago, Thomas turned his back on the gang and joined the Patrol. He had been fortunate to keep his record clean, and he excelled as a street cop. While he was often hard to control and his methods were highly unorthodox, he got busts and convictions where other officers failed. When his marriage ended in divorce three years ago, he applied for transfer to Poseidon. He does not yet know the streets like he did his old stomping grounds on Earth, but he is learning that it is not all that much different.

Primary Attributes: Build 0, Fitness 1, Agility 2, Dexterity 0, Awareness 2, Intellect 0, Presence -1, Will 1

Derived Attributes: Endurance 2, Reflexes 2, Strength 0, Toughness 0

Biomods: Neural Jack, Improved Blood Oxygenation, Night Vision, Multiglands

Training Packages
Origin: Colonial - Urban
Backgrounds: Independent, Street
Professional: Expert Crime (Thug), Specialist Law Enforcement

Aptitudes: Close Combat, Subterfuge (Strong) Communication, Firearms, Stealth, Vehicles

Skills: Aquatics 1, Armed Combat 6, Bribery 5, Bureaucracy 3, Colonial Culture 5, Computers 2, Driving 5, Economics 2, Fast-Talk 6, First Aid 2, Forensic Medicine 2, GEO Culture 1, Handguns 6, Hiding 6, Incorporate Culture 1, Law 6, Lockpicking 3, Longarms 6, Negotiation 6, Persuasion 7, Pharmacology 2, Piloting 5, Remote Operation 2, Shadowing 6, Sleight of Hand 1, Sneaking 6, Street Culture 8, Unarmed Combat 6

Gear: MacLeod Police Marksman, standard ammunition, targeting interlink, Light Polyflex bodyarmor, biomonitor, bodycomp

SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

LIEUTENANT RAMIREZ

Primary Attributes: Build 1, Fitness 1, Agility 0, Dexterity 0, Awareness 1, Intellect 0, Presence -1, Will 0

Derived Attributes: Endurance 1, Reflexes 0, Strength 0, Toughness 0

Biomods: Neural Jack, Improved Blood Oxygenation

Aptitudes: (Superior) Administration (Strong) Close Combat, Communication, Firearms

Primary Skills: Bureaucracy 5, Law 3, Management 4, Leadership 3, Persuasion 4, Colonial Culture 4, GEO Culture 3, Incorporate Culture 5, Street Culture 3, Handguns 4, Longarms 3, Unarmed Combat 3

Gear: Small-caliber handgun, submachine gun, nightstick, broad-spectrum visor, bodycomp, bio-monitor

JACQUES ARNAUD

Primary Attributes: Build -1, Fitness 0, Agility 0, Dexterity 0, Awareness 2, Intellect 1, Presence 2, Will 1

Derived Attributes: Endurance 0, Reflexes 0, Strength 0, Toughness 0

Biomods: Neural Jack, Multiglands, Body Sculpting

Aptitudes: (Superior) Administration, Communication (Strong) Command, Culture, Human Sciences, Subterfuge

Primary Skills: Bureaucracy 6, Economics 5, Law 7, Logistics 6, Negotiation 7, Persuasion 7, Colonial Culture 7, GEO Culture 6, Incorporate Culture 6, Street Culture 7, Handguns 2, Bribery 6, Fast-Talk 7

DARIO MUTOMBO

Primary Attributes: Build 0, Fitness 1, Agility 0, Dexterity 0, Awareness 2, Intellect 0, Presence 1, Will 2

Derived Attributes: Endurance 2, Reflexes 1, Strength 0, Toughness 0

Biomods: Neural Jack, Multiglands, Improved Blood Oxygenation

Aptitudes: (Superior) Communication, Subterfuge (Strong) Close Combat, Culture, Firearms, Stealth

Primary Skills: Law 4, Negotiation 3, Armed Combat 5, Unarmed Combat 5, Persuasion 6, GEO Culture 6, Street Culture 8, Acting 5, Handguns 5, Longarms 4, Hiding 6, Shadowing 5, Sneaking 6, Fast-Talk 7

Gear: Small-caliber handgun, satellite uplink

BIOGENE SECURITY OFFICERS

Primary Attributes: Build 0, Fitness 1, Agility 0, Dexterity 0, Awareness 0, Intellect -1, Presence 0, Will 0

Derived Attributes: Endurance 0, Reflexes 0, Strength 0, Toughness 0

Aptitudes: (Superior) Close Combat (Strong) Firearms, Stealth, Vehicles

Primary Skills: Throwing 3, Armed Combat 3, Unarmed Combat 4, Handguns 4, Longarms 3, First Aid 3, Hiding 3, Shadowing 3, Sneaking 3

BIOGENE SPECIAL OPS

Primary Attributes: Build 0, Fitness 1, Agility 1, Dexterity 0, Awareness 1, Intellect 0, Presence 0, Will 0

Derived Attributes: Endurance 2, Reflexes 1, Strength 0, Toughness 0

Biomods: Neural Jack, Improved Blood Oxygenation

Aptitudes: (Superior) Close Combat, Firearms (Strong) Athletics, Command, Military Weapons, Stealth

Primary Skills: Aquatics 5, Parachuting 3, Throwing 4, Armed Combat 5, Unarmed Combat 5, Handguns 6, Longarms 4, First Aid 3, Heavy Weapons 3, Hiding 4, Shadowing 4, Sneaking 4

Gear: Large-caliber handguns, submachine guns, (3) flash-bang grenades, Assault Polyflex body armor

ECOTERRORISTS

Primary Attributes: Build 0, Fitness 2, Agility 0, Dexterity 0, Awareness 1, Intellect 0, Presence 0, Will 1

Derived Attributes: Endurance 2, Reflexes 0, Strength 1, Toughness 1

Biomods: Aquaform

Aptitudes: (Superior) Stealth (Strong) Athletics, Firearms, Survival

Primary Skills: Aquatics 7, Throwing 4, Armed Combat 4, Unarmed Combat 4, Handguns 5, Longarms 5, Hiding 6, Shadowing 5, Sneaking 6

Gear: small-caliber handguns, assault rifles, light body armorArnaud, Jacques 109, 132
Arson and Explosives 62
Assault 71
Bell-Aarp, Elizabet 44, 54
Biogene Landing Facility 101

INDEX

A - B

Blood-Spatter Analysis 72
Bose Strand 43
Bulls 31
Bureau of Contraband Investigation 74
Burglary 68

C - D

Cacanis, Leo 109
Casey, John 125
Casting Gel 78
ChromaTrace Remote 60, 77
Colonial Rangers 56
Computer Crime 14
Con Games 69
Connelly, Patrick 129
Cope, Sterling 42
Courts 12
Crime Scene 59
Crime Scene Remote 59, 77
Criminal Ecology 10
Criminal Information Center 43, 79
Criminal Intelligence 44
Department for Counterterrorism 76
Deputy High Commissioner for Justice 42
DNA Profiling 60, 79
Drug Trafficking 16, 75

E - G

Firearms Examination 78
Fingerprint Identification Database 79
Gorchoff Family 26
Gorchoff, Bruno 29
Gorchoff, Nina 29
Gorchoff, Pia
30
Gorchoff, Vladimir 28
Gorchov, Elena 27
Gorkytown 29
Gunshot Wounds 52
Guthrie, Nolan 108

H - I

Hacking 14
Hayes, Reg 33
Heimler, Markus 130
High Commissioner for Justice 42
Homicide 71
Hideout 113
Informants 88
Interviewing and Interrogation 81
Investigation and Procedure 58

J - K

Justice Commission 42
Justice Commission Training Centers 52
Justice Commission's Forensics Labs 43, 80
Kamaal 112
Karl, Heinrich 127
Kingston 33
Khang, Tommy 126

L-M

Lelang 120
Lesear Effect 32
LeVant, Jackson 35
Locksmen 35
Logan 113
Lopez, Domingo 123
Louvier, Marly 37
Magistrates 44
Maison, Anne-Marie 128
Marshal Academy 47
Marshal Service 46
Marwanni, Manoj 22
Maupin, Martina 92
McDerritt, Quentin 32
Medical Examiner 80
Money Laundering 17
Mosely, Isaac 36
Murder, Inc. 27
Mutombo, Dario 115, 116, 132

N - P

Native Patrol	54
New Rastafarian Movement	31
Nolan, Matt	91
Organized Crime Investigation	74
Patrol	49
Pierce, Marcus	126
Poseidon DNA Database	79
Poseidon Pheromone Database	79
Posses	37
Powell, Jason	130
Prison System	18
Professional Larceny	11
Property Crimes	67

Q - S

Ramirez, Esteban	106, 131
Ras Tafari	*see Selassie, Haile*
Recovery Remotes	78
Robbery	70
Rovenidzhe Custodial Service	27
Sectors	46
Seau, Kira	129
Selassians	37
Selassie, Haile	32
Shore, Benjamin	44, 90
Skalford, Emmett	44
Slang	19
Smuggling	75
Stoddard, James	129
Sword of Zion	35

T - Z

Thomas, Derek	131
United Nations	56
Utu, Mohammed	128
Vehicle Theft	69
Violent Crimes	70
Wardens	58
Webb, Sharon	42, 89
Weiser, Ian	33
Yarberev, Pavel	27
Zaputin, Ivan "Fat Vanya"	27

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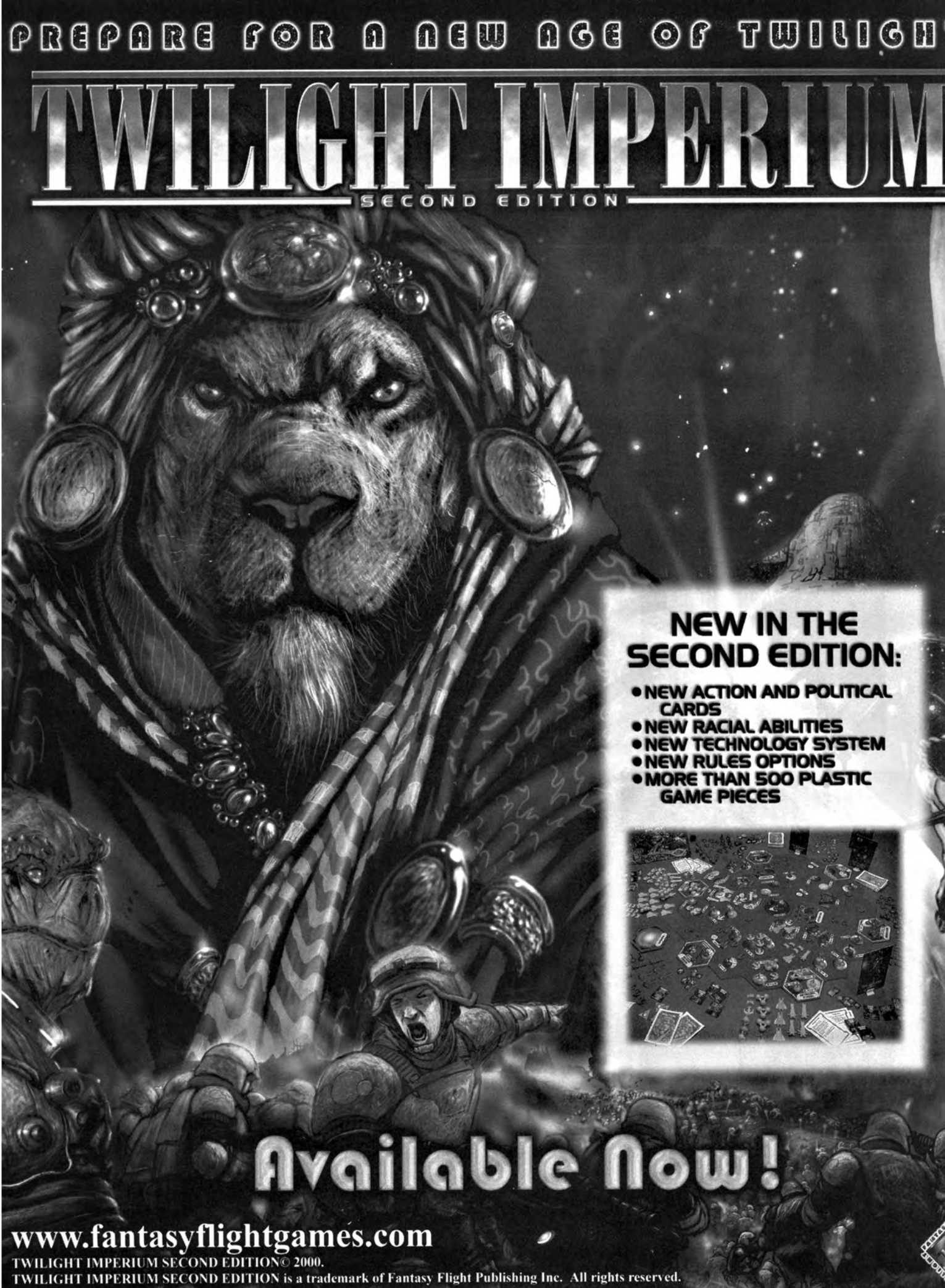

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