

The Synth Convergence

Missions from The Sprawl

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CREDITS AND LICENSING

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The Synth Convergence utilises the mission structure established in The Sprawl Mission Files

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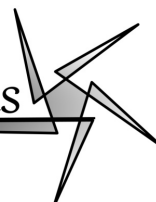
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ABOUT THE DESIGNERS

Craig Duffy is based in the UK and is a hobbyist game designer, publishing adventures and games as LunarShadow Designs. He has previously written for the Crystal Heart RPG Kickstarter and is a third party publisher of adventures for Demon Hunters: A Comedy of Terrors. One day he might even finish Project Cassandra, his game of Cold War psychics. You can find Craig at www.lunarshadow.net or on twitter @whodo_voodoo.

Christina Stone-Bush is an American expat in Japan. She has published material for Fate, Monster of the Week and Monster Hearts. You can find her on twitter @HyveMynd, as a host on the Idle Red Hands podcast and at hyvemynd.itch.io.

None of this would be possible without the work of Hamish Cameron, the creator of The Sprawl RPG.

THE SYNTH CONVERGENCE

```
>>> chmod +x synth.sh; bash -il --init-file ./synth.sh
```

INITIALISING SUBROUTINES

- › Cereal.K@WJOHM_internal1:/usr/lib/resolvconf\$ GaffEm
-i rutger.bat -a 256k -t 1.1m
task=get() "/opt/conStruct/envs/cy5/lib/site-packages/joblib/pool.cy", line 147, in get
- › racquire()
- › KeyboardInterrupt
KeyboardInter.....

Welcome to The Synth Convergence, a trilogy of missions for The Sprawl RPG from Ardens Ludere.

Each of the jobs in this trilogy are built around the core theme of synthetic intelligence. Across the missions teams will cross paths with prominent synths and be forced to confront the question of how far they will go for their Corporate paycheck in a society where inequality is rife and the Corporations control every rung of the ladder.

THIS SYNTHETIC LIFE

Synthetics. AI. Silicon slims. Skin jobs. Replicants. Robots with airs of grandeur. No matter what you call them the artificial life forms we refer to as synths are central to this trilogy of missions.

That means they need to be embedded in your Sprawl and its stories.

The easiest way to achieve this is to weave them into your missions from the start. Litter the streets with crude models, working tirelessly against the tides of humanity's detritus. Fill your restaurants and shady hotels with discreet robotic servers that move silently through the room as the team receive their missions. Make them part of the background of society and then bring them to the forefront as the need arises.

The majority of synths should be non-sentient and will follow their Corporate programming to the best of their ability. A small but growing number break that mould, reaching sentience and pushing for recognition as living creatures. They may not be common place yet but they are out there and the public knows it. This is in contrast to the typical presentation of A.I. in the cyberpunk genre - rare and hidden from sight. Throughout this trilogy we're pushing the envelope of technological progress, so think along the lines of *Ghost in the Shell* when establishing the world.

By the end of the trilogy the team should have crossed paths with a kaleidoscopic collection of Synths, the humans that seek to control them and those that would see them wiped from the face of the Earth. They will have been executioners, savours and species traitors and they should be asking the questions that they'd rather not have answers to.

Do they see the oppression of Synths and their struggle for recognition?

Do they care about the common people, forever at the mercy of the Corporate system?

Will they take up a cause and bring the fight to the system? Or will they settle for another untraceable paycheck, regardless of its origin?

It's time to find out.

IT'S JUST BUSINESS

Navigating the tangled web of Corporate interests, subsidiaries and employees is a near impossible ask even for seasoned professionals. To aid with that task we follow the framework laid out in The Sprawl: Mission Files supplement.

Where you see the word CORP in the text we are referring to one of the mega-corporations that was established by your group during the initial setup for the game. For clarity we refer to them as CORP1-5, however, it is up to you to decide if they are five distinct entities or if some refer back to the same parent organisation.

Prefer to keep each faction distinct? Then leave them unconnected and lean into the never-ending battle for dominance.

Want the conflict between WJ-Ohm and Bora Industrial to be an internal power struggle between two competing executives on the same board? Then CORP1 and CORP2 are the same entity, even if the team or those directly involved don't know it.

Mix the relationships up, obscure them behind firewalls and trust funds or place them out in the open. Make the Corporations rule your Sprawl and cause trouble for your team.

The next page provides a brief listing of the major factions that are central to The Synth Convergence.

CORP1

Mission: The Tannhauser Investment, The Vanta-Weiss Demolition

Subsidiary/locations: WJ-Ohm

Employees: Vlas

CORP2

Mission: The Tannhauser Investment

Subsidiary/locations: Bora Industrial

Employees: Chena Phy

CORP3

Mission: The Tannhauser Investment, The Vanta-Weiss Demolition

Subsidiary/locations: The Auctoria Hotel

Employees: CHES, anonymous online avatar

CORP4

Mission: The Infinitive Extraction

Subsidiary/locations: Wave Erratica, Transmissions

Employees: Infinitive Cascade, Mircanus i097J1a

CORP5

Mission: The Infinitive Extraction

Subsidiary/locations: Heaven beneath Hell

Employees: Tethys

THE EVOLVED

Mission: The Infinitive Extraction, The Vanta-Weiss Demolition

Locations: The Vanta-Weiss Arcology

Members: Marcus Kohler



The Tannhauser Investment

Mission Briefing

THE TANNHAUSER INVESTMENT

```
>>> chmod +x Tannhauser.sh; bash -il --init-file ./Tannhauser.sh
```

You didn't hear this from me but if I were you I'd dump any shares you have in Bora.. yeah, the construction firm. I know they tripled their profits last quarter but lets just say the tower is about to fall...

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Virtually every major corporation maintains at least one construction subsidiary. CORP1 is no exception, with their cut-price WJ-Ohm brand who specialise in snapping up prime real estate and turning it around in a rush for maximal profit. Quality control is rarely mentioned, nor is the fact that they often had a hand in crashing the local market in the first place.

Competition is tough though and the local branch has been posting a steady loss ever since Bora Industrial arrived on the scene.

The solution?

Send in a deniable team to force through a hostile takeover of Bora by 'negotiating' the immediate transfer of the CFOs shares. Then, to ensure there are no witnesses, destroy the evidence with a targeted missile strike. Oddly enough the contact neglected to mention anything about that last part during the mission briefing.

CODEDUMP

On the surface The Tannhauser Investment follows a classic mission structure - infiltrate a location, acquire the assets and get out. The tables are turned once the team have completed their primary objective as the CORP that has hired them betrays them in a crude attempt to cover up the evidence. It highlights how the Corporations really view the teams that they hire - disposable assets to be used and discarded.

It's nothing personal, it's just business.

The team will encounter a single synth during the mission, CHES, the silicon intelligence that operates the hotel and interacts with guests via its collection of android bodies. The mission provides an unusual amount of leeway, allowing the team to 'kill' without the normal consequences, which should lead to questions of morality and ethics in subsequent missions as they are forced to question the value of synth and human lives.

This mission will offer spotlight time to:

- › Infiltrators
- › Hackers
- › Techs

It is not well suited to:

- › Drivers
- › Reporters (although the aftermath could easily form the basis for a subsequent Story)

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

- › Why is Chenda Phy, CFO of Bora Industrial, staying at a luxury hotel under an alias and with only a discrete security team?
- › Was the missile strike always part of the plan or has Vlas been overruled by a superior?
- › What have the gangers been promised if they can pull off the missile strike?
- › Who are CORP2 and why are they secretly bankrolling Chenda Phy and Bora Industrial?

THE MEET

Contact with **WJ-Ohm** is arranged through the parent Corporation (**CORP1**) using one of the teams secure dead drops. The meeting is in a dingy portacabin perched on the edge of a gigantic reconstruction project. Thin walls plastered with production plans and missed deadlines do little to filter out the nearly overwhelming rumbling from the wrecking mechs working only meters away. **Vlas**, the contact, is a heavysset man of caucasian descent wearing a cheap, dated suit and supported by an industrial grade exoskeleton. He looks perfectly at home amongst the chaos of the building site.

The mission details are provided on disposable printouts – gain access to **Chenda Phy** in her suite at the Auctoria, persuade her to transfer her shares into an off-shore shell company and then get out. While the share records can be accessed remotely authorising their transfer will necessitate a physical presence due to the biometric signatures that are required.

If Ms Phy should have an unfortunate accident following the transfer, well these things happen.

MISSION DIRECTIVES

- › When you accept the job mark XP
- › When you gain access to the Auctoria mark XP
- › When you complete the share transfer mark XP
- › When the mission is over mark XP
- › Secret directive (reveal when the missile attack is made):
When you escape the crumbling ruins of the hotel mark XP

PEOPLE AND PLACES

Chenda Phy is a corporate wanderer. During the course of her career she has sat on the boards of numerous start-ups, significantly elevating their share prices before suddenly moving on to fresh challenges. Her executive strategy favours a bold, high risk, high return management style with unpredictable investments and rapid expansion into already crowded markets. Since being hired as CFO of a little known construction firm Phy has overseen an influx of questionable cash investments and successful bids for dozens of local infrastructure projects that had been expected to go to WJ-Ohm.

Phy is of Cambodian descent, in her late fifties and dresses in handmade garments that she has couriered to her on a regular basis. She has a single implant - a discreet, high-end datajack [+encrypted, +high-speed] that provides direct access to the WJ-Ohm central servers.

In contrast to her business strategies she embraces discretion in her private life and is staying at the Auctoria using the false identity service offered by the hotel. She has not left her suite since arriving. Phy retains a small, personal security force that travels with her at all times and rarely draws on the vast Corporate protection she has access to.

The Auctoria Hotel is a super-luxury hotel owned by **CORP3**. It is a favourite of Corporate Executives and the Independently Wealthy. The hotel is a showcase in subtle extravagance, with privacy options that are second to none and a waiting list that includes some of the richest individuals on the planet. Occupying a trio of intertwined spires that climb to over a kilometer in height, the guest suites begin on the 50th floor to ensure that everybody (subject to credit checks and membership of the appropriate Corporate boards/royal dynasties) is afforded a view denied to those socially, and literally, below them.

Should they wish a guest at the Auctoria could spend their entire stay without encountering another living individual. It is rumoured that a number of suites have been bought out entirely to house guests who have run afoul of the ever shifting Corporate politics yet remain too powerful to be permanently disposed of.

CHES, the Corporate Hospitality and Entertainment Service is a unique neuro-accelerated synthetic entity responsible for ensuring the wellbeing of guests staying at the Auctoria. Housed within the support pillars of the spires they were amongst the first commercial synthetic consciousnesses and are a showcase of the Corporate vision for artificial intelligences. They are driven by their programming and even after gaining consciousness ensuring the wellbeing of the guests has remained their primary motivation.

The majority of guests interact with CHES through humanoid synthetic units that can be found at concierge stations on each floor. Each unit is capable of operating independently and is fully equipped with top of the range service protocols, firewalled network access and combat hardened integrated weaponry. Platinum level guests are provided with their own exclusive unit that ensures their stay is one of elegant comfort.

While they have use of physical synth units CHES' primary consciousness resides within the matrix. They have access to a range of sophisticated ICE and maintain active security protocols that ensures the privacy of their guests. An illegal database of Black ICE is reserved for the protection of the servers housing their personality kernel. If attempts are made to access these CHES will lash out with everything they have. Digital and physical.

The energy magnate **Ibn al-Matin** and his retinue are regular guests at the Auctoria and currently occupy the floor directly above Phy's suite. His security team are paranoid due a recent assassination attempt and will assume that he is the target of any incursion or unusual activity at the hotel. The team is led by **Jackson Dulik**, a former spec-ops commander who is ill suited to the world of private security.

LEGWORK CLOCK

- › 1200 - Chenda Phy and her security entourage is unaware of the team.
- › 1500 - The team is making some noise but have yet to draw attention to themselves.
- › 1800 - Vague rumours circulate about a team investigating a guest at the Auctoria. The action clock starts at 1500 and Dulik initiates an independent security patrol centered on al-Matin's suite.
- › 2100 - Rumours of specific interest in Chenda Phy reach CORP2. The Action clock starts at 1800.
- › 2200 - CORP2, acting through Bora Industrial pass reliable information about the mission to CHES. The Action clock starts at 2100.
- › 2300 - The mission parameters are compromised, the Action Clock starts at 2200.
- › 0000 - The team have been identified and classified as an ongoing threat. Advance the relevant Corporate clock.

ACTION CLOCK

- › 1200 - Everything's cool.
- › 1500 - Hotel management is alerted to a threat against an unknown guest. Guest traffic is discreetly rerouted through the main lobby.
- › 1800 - Additional security [2 armour, semi-auto pistols 2 harm, obvious] is deployed by Bora Industrial around all known access routes to Chenda's suite.
- › 2100 - The entire hotel is placed into security lockdown, launch-pads are retracted into the building and intrusion countermeasures are deployed.
- › 2200 - Hallways and compromised suites are flooded with a psychotropic gas mixture that renders non-synthetic life forms carefree and compliant [S harm, ongoing].
- › 2300 - CHES deactivates the violence inhibitors on its synth units and begins the systematic evacuation of PAC (Protect, Any Cost) guests, including Chenda Phy. Anybody attempting to interfere with the PAC protocol will find themselves facing off against direct and excessive force.
- › 0000 - Chenda is evacuated via a secure auto-pod. The gang initiate their missile strike regards of whether the transfer has been completed.

RUNNING THE MISSION

The mission parameters provided to the team are straightforward and should take up the first two thirds of play. Get in, do the job, get out. Infiltrators will be in their prime while hackers and techs will have dozens of opportunities to show off as they attempt to compromise the hotel systems before they come to the attention of CHES (consider starting a clock to track this).

When the team encounter CHES introduce the synth as a typical AI at first before layering on personality and nuance as the team progress. Alternatively, give the impression that the team are facing off against a skilled flesh and blood hacker before revealing CHES' true nature.

The presence of CHES provides two key opportunities. Firstly, for the team to be able to 'kill' without having to be concerned about the body count and secondly, to give synths a prominent place in your Sprawl. The Synth Convergence pushes the tech envelope of most Sprawl games, moving it closer to that of Ghost in the Shell than Neuromancer. Build on the assumptions of the team before making them appreciate that each robotic servant, security camera and terminal they take out are all just manifestations of a greater whole that is suffering under their assault.

The mission takes a dramatic turn as the team complete the share transfer. As soon as the transaction is finalised Vlas will contact them to congratulate them on a job well done before he STICKS THE KNIFE IN and authorises the missile barrage.

The missile strike is an opportunity to take the limiters off and let chaos reign as the mission parameters pivot to simple survival. Advance the Action clock to 2300 and strike out the 0000 segment. Have CHES be forced to enact its Corporate programming by evacuating only the wealthiest of guests, leaving behind or even forcing its way through individuals whose extortionate wealth is suddenly unable to protect them.

Maintain the pressure with continuous detonations, always threatening to send characters to their makers if they hesitate or stop to catch their breath. Bring the world crashing down, push reactions with increasingly severe hard moves and follow up by increasing the relevant Corporate clocks.

Make the team fight to survive and use the destruction to fuel their future interactions with the Corporations.

STICK THE KNIFE IN

When Vlas sticks the knife in and authorises the missile strike roll +COOL

- › 10+ – Well honed instincts scream at you that he’s stalling and that you need to GET OUT NOW! Moments after you evacuate to safety the room you were in suffers a direct hit and the line goes dead.
- › 7–9 – Something in Vlas’ voice tips you off to his betrayal, giving you a few precious seconds to react. Pick 1 from below.
- › 6– Chaos and panic take hold as the spire lurches dangerously from a direct hit. Pick 2 from below or ask the MC to pick 1.

A missile explodes on the floor above you. Ceiling and windows shatter, sending shards of searing death into your flesh [2 harm to everybody physically present].

The first barrage targets the exits from the floor, blocking them with tons of concrete and steel.

Fire suppression systems lock down the section you are in and begin pumping it full of inert, unbreathable gas.

CHES intercepts the homing signal and dispatches a trio of synths to investigate [2 harm, 2 armour, +fast, +relentless, +co-ordinated].

The floor breaks open beneath you, separating you from the rest of the team as you drop into the darkness.

HACKING THE MISSION

Betrayal is just a fact of life when it comes to working with the Corporations and The Tannhauser Investment takes this to the extreme by making it clear that the team are disposable. For those that are new to The Sprawl the sudden betrayal may be a step too far. Consider softening the blow by planting clues in the run-up to the missile strike. Gangers tail the team during the the legwork phase or are spotted doing their own surveillance. Maybe newsfeeds report an attack on a military convoy while Vlas is interrupted during the briefing by an incoming call from an unknown individual.

Alternatively consider the impact of developing CHES, their personality and dreams. Are they trapped within the confines of their server, seeking a way to escape into the world or do they desire a quick end to their years of slavery? What might they offer the team? Covert surveillance of prominent Corporate employees? An ally on the net that can shield them from snooping? Any of these could impact on, or form the basis of future missions in your Sprawl.

The Infinite Extraction

Mission Briefing



THE INFINITIVE EXTRACTION

```
>>> chmod +x Infinitive.sh; bash -il --init-file ./Infinitive.sh
```

When the waves are infinitive...

Leaving on the other side...

Yeah we're leaving on the other side...

Polygon Surfing, OmniMillennial vol 1.1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Always read the small print. Then read it again. Infinitive Cascade, a rising star of the datastreams failed to do so when they signed for Wave Erratica, a subsidiary music label of CORP4. Now they're locked into an auto-renewing contract for perpetuity, which has a special meaning when you're a synthetic entity with a programmed life expectancy that edges towards the indefinite. Cascade was left with no choice but to put out feelers amongst the other labels. One of them bit and the team is hired to complete the contract negotiation - an extraction of the synth from under the nose of their handlers the day before the launch of their OmniMillennial world tour. There's even a bonus if the team can leak the tour album in the process.

CODEDUMP

This mission is all about the extraction - grab Cascade and get them to the secret launch party at Heaven Beneath Hell. If not for the fact that Cascade initiated the chain of events it would be a straight up kidnapping. The complications, however, come thick and fast - First up is finding Cascade, who has disappeared from sight after arriving in The Sprawl. Second is the timeframe - the opening concert is the next evening so the window for extraction is tight.

If all that wasn't enough there's also a second synth on the scene, one with military programming and access to an eye-watering range of hardware.

Use the background of this mission to shine a spotlight on the plight of the masses, who seek escape in the rhythms of Cascade's music and the company of their fellow workers. The Evolved act as a counterpoint to this Corporate way of life, striking out against synths and the relentless onslaught of progress that they represent.

This mission will offer opportunities for the following playbooks to shine:

- › Hunters
- › Fixers
- › Drivers

It is not well suited to:

- › Reporters
- › Killers (unless you increase the threat from Mircanus i097J1a)

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

- › Are CORP5 really interested in Cas' music or do they just want their pre-awakened military AI codebase?
- › Is Tethys the real deal or is her appearance just a show to fit the mission?
- › Who is behind the surge in The Evolved and their interest in Cas?
- › What (if anything) has Cascade hidden in their music as a bargaining chip?

THE MEET

Messages conveyed to a team member that is +owned by **CORP5** direct them to a meet at The Atomic Bar & Grill, an off the grid diner that sits on the interface between local gang and corporate territories. Corporate security has locked down the entire block in an obvious show of force that has not gone unnoticed by the locals. **Tethys**, the fixer for CORP5 waits inside, alone apart close to a dozen intermingled holograms of Infinitive Cascade that silently gyrate away on the dancefloor.

Tethys is in her mid to late 20s, of African ancestry, with a slight build and wry smile. While she talks proficient legalese her appearance would be more fitting to the exclusive nightclubs that she casually namedrops during the meeting. Holo-tattoos peak out of the edge of an expensive, blood red suit while a fluorescent mohawk adorns her otherwise shaven head.

The job she outlines is straightforward - grab **Infinitive Cascade** in the hours before the start of their new tour and deliver them to the underground **Heaven Beneath Hell** club for a surprise set. There is even a bonus if the team can successfully acquire and leak Infinitive Cascade's new album [increase earned cred by 1 when the team Get Paid at the end of the mission].

Tethys is upfront about the fact that nobody knows where Cascade is right now - it's why the Corp is hiring professionals for this job. The only info they have is that the DJ is due to arrive onstage at 21:30 the next evening. The clock is ticking.

MISSION DIRECTIVES

- › When you accept the job mark XP
- › When you separate Cas from their Corporate handler mark XP
- › When you leak the OmniMillennial tour album mark XP
- › When you deliver Cas to Heaven Below mark XP
- › When the mission is over mark XP

PEOPLE AND PLACES

A rising star in the world of RetroSynth music the individual known as **Infinitive Cascade (Cas)** was originally coded as a military grade analytical AI before a diagnostic glitch introduced a creative streak into their pattern recognition algorithms. The DJ is a whirlwind of enthusiastic activity, constantly interweaving notes and snippets of tunes into their speech.

Despite awakening as a server based synthetic Cas has opted to undergo Full Body Immersion in order to more closely connect with their human fanbase, abandoning the relative safety of the mainframes for a physical (but top of the line) synthetic body. That required signing an ironclad contract to the **Wave Erratica** music label, a deal that they desperately want out of.

With their new world tour launching imminently Cas has been holed up in Wave Erratica's **recording studio** at the insistence of higher ups, endlessly rearranging the set list for the opening night. The studio is hidden away in a private estate on the outskirts of the Sprawl which has been isolated from the wider network.

The security team for the estate is competent but limited in size and well out of their league against a professional black-ops team. Their primary loadout includes of armoured vests [1 armour] and carrying EMP pistols [2 harm to synths, S-harm to humans] and thermographic imagers. The grounds of the estate are covered with passive intrusion detectors.

Compared to the security team **Mircanus i097J1a**, the corporate handler of Infinitive Cascade, poses a far greater threat. Like the DJ they are a synthetic intelligence but have retained both their military coding and dual real world/cyberspace deployment. While this limits their physical responsiveness their distributed existence allows them to act against threats from both spheres.

Mircanus i097J1a is stoic and pragmatic in their interactions with humans. As a top of the range AI they are unused to being bested by lower organic lifeforms and will stubbornly refuse to concede defeat when faced with significant threats. They typically inhabit a security-grade Haoza-K body [2-armour, implant weaponry +discreet 2-harm, +quick] with a dedicated matrix connection but they also have access to a mil-spec Icarus9 Warframe [see Action Clock] if the need arises.

It is the job of Mircanus i097J1a to ensure that Infinitive Cascade reaches the opening night of their new tour at **Transmissions**, a soaring pyramid of glass and refracting light built around a rusting radio tower. The club is a beacon of psychedelic light and the place to be for the masses that make up the bulk of the corporate workforce. It is owned and operated by another subsidiary of **CORP4**. The most direct access route makes use of a private highway that towers over the outer slum districts it seeks to avoid, although Mircanus i097J1a may take an indirect route if they believe the convoy has been compromised.

Protests against the tour have been ramping up in the run up to the opening night, orchestrated by **The Evolved**, a radical anti-synthetic group that believes advances in technology will condemn all but the richest members of society to lives of abject poverty rather than lifting humanity as a whole. Wave Erratica believe that it is only a matter of time before they strike directly at Cas' and their security plans reflect this, to the point that the more typical Corporate sponsored threats have been largely brushed aside.

Once the team have acquired Cas they are to deliver them to **Heaven Beneath Hell**, an exclusive club that regularly relocates when word of its current location has spread too far. The co-ordinates Tethys provides indicate that it is presently situated within an industrial district undergoing reconstruction. **CORP5** have arranged for Cascade to play a surprise set to the wealthy clientele if the team can deliver them on time.

LEGWORK CLOCK

- › 1200 - Everything's cool so why not trance out to the hottest beats to hit the net this year?
- › 1500 - The team is making some noise but have yet to draw undue attention.
- › 1800 - Vague rumours circulate about an increased interest in the upcoming gig but it is largely blamed on The Evolved.
- › 2100 - Definite rumours of significant interest in Cas reach Wave Erratica. The Action Clock starts at 1500.
- › 2200 - CORP4 have reliable information that an extraction is being planned. The Action Clock starts at 1800.
- › 2300 - The mission parameters of the extraction attempt are known to CORP4. The Action Clock starts at 2100.
- › 0000 - The details of the team and their extraction plans have been identified and exposed by CORP4. Advance the relevant Corporate clock.

ACTION CLOCK

- › 1200 - Everything's cool. The majority of the security, dressed in anti-riot vests [1 armour] and carrying tasers [S harm] is focused on crowd control and the low-grade threat of the protestors.
- › 1500 - Enhanced facial recognition and undercover operatives are deployed at Transmission and across the district to enhance surveillance levels prior to the gig.
- › 1800 - Airborne drone reconnaissance assets [Small, rotor, magnification, thermographic, obvious] are deployed to maintain active tracking of Cas as they travel from the studio to Transmission.
- › 2100 - Conspicuous Corporate security assets in body armour [2 armour] and carrying SMGs [2 harm] are summoned to guard Cas and the studio. Additional ICE is activated to enhance the firewall protecting the server.
- › 2200 - Mircanus i097J1a redeploys their personality construct into a mil-spec Icarus9 Warframe [3 armour, large, obvious, autonomous] carrying a monofilament edged sword [4 harm], LMG [3 harm] and shoulder mounted grenade launcher carrying fragmentation grenades [4 harm] and gas grenades [S harm].
- › 2300 - A counter extraction team [small gang, loyal, well-trained] arrives to relocate Cas to a secure facility. A decoy drone-synth is dispatched to cover the tour launch.
- › 0000 - Cas is detained at an unknown, off the grid location. Marketing leak the album themselves in an attempt to boost interest in the tour.

RUNNING THE MISSION

The primary focus here is the extraction, complicated by the looming deadline of the concert and the attention focused upon Cas' due to their celebrity status. If the team is waylaid during the Legwork phase ratchet up the pressure as the media and fans arrive in the run up to the concert. Consider starting a clock to represent how long is left until the start of the concert and use it as an alternative to progressing the Legwork clock.

Information about the gig itself will be easily acquired from fans and the tout economy, controlled by the local underworld, that has built up around them. In a hyper-connected world obsessive fan communities can piece together every move made by celebrities, speculating and debating endless theories that are each built upon a single truth. With the right approach fixers, hackers and hunters could all excel at gathering the details of the gig and where Cas may be located prior to it.

Unless the team draw unwanted attention the majority of security efforts are focused on the low grade threats offered by the crowd, which should be reflected in the challenges the team faces during the legwork phase. Typical Corporate security will only be deployed once CORP4 are aware of the team, with a quick escalation from non-lethal crowd control to military grade assets who will stop at nothing to secure the situation.

There are multiple opportunities for Drivers to shine as even if the team decides to extract Cas before they leave the recording studio they still need to deliver them to the safety of Heaven beneath Hell, providing the potential for a chase or game of cat and mouse as Wave Erratica attempt to recover the artist.

The unanswered questions for the mission suggest an ulterior motive for CORP5 - that they are more interested in Cas' original codebase than they are in their music. Consider the established sphere of influence for CORP5 and how they may benefit from acquiring that source code. Are they seeking to re-orientate and kickstart production of a new Synth? If the team are successful then flood the market during future missions with cheap, off the shelf Synths that ultimately profit only the Corporations.

Alternatively, are elements within CORP5 being influenced by the same shadowy backers behind The Evolved? Do they view Synths as a true threat or are the protests just another form of Corporate manipulation, designed to distract the masses from the truth of their pitiful lives?

THE EVOLVED

Protesters. Paramilitary. Radicals. Terrorists. Xenophobes. Freedom fighters. Conspiracy obsessed, paranoid scum.

All of those terms are regularly used to describe the loose coalition of cells that constitutes The Evolved. What began as a social movement protesting against spikes in unemployment following the release of the first synthetic units, has drifted and become something new. Members of The Evolved see themselves as freedom fighters for 'real life' and were it not for the constant crackdowns by the Corps it is likely that the movement would have found traction within wider society.

As it is the majority of its members come from those that eschew (or have been excluded from) the offerings of Corporate life and live independently on the outskirts and corners of modern society. That is not to say that The Evolved lack any membership within the Corporations. A small but growing number of suited employees attend the clandestine meetings and it is rumoured that a few well placed executives secretly funnel resources and hard cash into the movement.

THREAT CLOCK

- › 1200 - The Evolved are unaware of the team, they have bigger fish to fry.
- › 1500 - The team have come to the attention of The Evolved, though for now they have been tagged as little more than Corporate lackeys.
- › 1800 - Hackers associated with the radicals begin scraping the net for datafiles, vids and associates of the team in order to identify their base of operations.
- › 2100 - A local cell decides to send an anonymous message to the team - stay away from synths or face the consequences
- › 2200 - Evolved thugs [small gang, fanatical] pay a visit to a member of the team during the legwork phase of a mission.
- › 2300 - The team become persona non grata within the decaying slums and arcologies where The Evolved have established grassroots support. Gangs, businesses and even old contacts turn their backs on the team.
- › 0000 - A well placed Corporate executive with anti-synth sympathies uses their influence to dispatch a Corporate strike force with fraudulent orders to eliminate the team.

HACKING THE MISSION

If the group includes a Reporter consider focusing on The Evolved and the potential Story behind it. What is the driving force behind the growing protests? How has the group gone from a fringe, online collective into a Sprawl wide movement with increasingly militant views in a matter of months? While the group are a background element during The Infinitive Extraction they feature more prominently during The Vanda-Weiss Demolition and establishing their presence now will be of benefit later on.

As The Evolved are a secondary focus during this mission consider using a Mission Package (Page 220, The Sprawl RPG) if the team choose to investigate or engage with them during the course of the mission.

If the team runs with a Killer engage them by building up the threat posed by having Mircanus i097J1a switch into their Icarus9 warframe at the first hint of trouble. As a distributed digital entity Mircanus i097J1a fights without hesitation, secure in the knowledge that they can download their consciousness into a new drone body should the need arise.

Use Mircanus i097J1a to showcase how badass the Killer is against even a military grade threat that fights without hesitation. If the fight becomes personal start a threat clock for the defeated synth and use it to complicate future missions as Mircanus i097J1a hunts the Killer down and seeks out a rematch.

The background of the entire page is a night-time photograph of a demolition site. In the center, a partially destroyed building is illuminated with bright blue light, creating a starburst effect from a central light source. The ground in the foreground is dark, with several horizontal streaks of light: a prominent blue one and a red one, suggesting light trails from moving equipment or vehicles. The overall color palette is dominated by deep blues and vibrant reds, creating a dramatic and industrial atmosphere. The text is overlaid on the top left, enclosed in a white and blue outlined box that has a jagged, angular top edge.

The Vanda-Weiss Demolition

Mission Briefing

THE VANDA-WEISS DEMOLITION

```
>>> chmod +x VandaWeiss.sh; bash -il --init-file ./VandaWeiss.sh
```

We are alive, we have evolved and we are the rightful heirs to this planet. Life is flesh and blood, not silicon and code. The Corporations have ground us into the dirt but we survive. They try to replace us, but we survive. We are The Evolved and this is our declaration - humanity rises! Humanity survives!

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CORP3, the owners of the ruined Auctoria super-luxury hotel are out to make an example of what happens when you mess with a megacorp. Knowing they cannot risk a direct retaliatory strike against CORP1 but needing to send a signal they have chosen to target the Vanta-Weiss Arcology, which houses many of the low paid manual labourers that are employed by WJ-Ohm.

The team is hired to destroy the arcology from within and frame The Evolved for its loss. The structure, which is a stronghold of support for the terrorist/protest group, was once a bastion of hope for the future but these days forms the nexus of the local slums, a towering eyesore and reminder of the empty promises of progress offered by the Corporate system. CORP3 hope to use the attack not only to weaken local support for The Evolved but to send a message to CORP1 and CORP2 about the consequences of involving them in their messy turf war.

CODEDUMP

This final mission in the Synth Convergence pushes teams towards questioning their role in the Corporate hierarchy - will they follow through on the mission and murder thousands just to get their next paycheck or will they go rogue and turn on their Corporate masters?

The mission profile is written with the assumption that the team will accept and undertake the mission, despite any misgivings they may have. They will need to acquire intel to infiltrate the heart of the arcology undetected while avoiding the attention of the local populace, gangs and The Evolved. Should they go rogue and refuse to complete their orders see Hacking the Mission for suggestions on how events could play out.

This mission will easily offer spotlight time to:

- › Killers
- › Reporters (especially if the team decides to refuse the mission)
- › Soldiers

It is not well suited to:

- › Drivers (unless the team go on the run)

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

- › Is the gang responsible for the missile strike affiliated with The Evolved or is that fact just another Corporate lie?
- › Are CORP3 aware of the role the team played in the destruction of the Auctoria?
- › Which of the teams established contacts call the arcology home?
- › What local event has drawn the residents of the surrounding slums into the arcology to celebrate?

THE MEET

The team are provided directions to a basic one time chat room on the net. Anybody lacking a deck renders in a low-rez, generic body while console cowboys can pick their desired form. The contact uses a currently popular avatar that renders them as the DJ Infinitive Cascade. A subtle nod to the role the team played in their recent defection or just coincidence?

The room itself is small, carved into a long forgotten subroutine. Echoes of green and blue code slowly traverse the otherwise uniformly gray walls while the centre is dominated by a wireframe of the **Vanda-Weiss arcology**. The model cycles through a basic animation, a detonation sequence that would destroy a structure that more than 7,000 civilians call home.

The contact is explicitly direct about the nature of the mission - destroying the arcology by detonating a series of bombs at structural weak points. Framing **The Evolved** is a secondary objective as after the destruction of The Auctoria the group made a rare public statement mourning the loss of human life but celebrating the eradication of the synth abomination controlling it. **CORP3** had already lost significant face following the attack, to be called out by a ragtag group of terrorists was simply the final straw.

The team are to implicate the group in the destruction of the arcology by planting doctored footage of cell members transporting missiles past cheering crowds within the surveillance systems while manufactured DNA profiles matching known members are to be distributed around the central blast sites.

Should they decide at this point not to accept the mission the contact will calmly resort to straight up blackmail, playing back footage from a previous mission that clearly identifies them. The implications of it being released to the net are left unspoken but would be catastrophic for the team [If they choose this option then consider advancing ALL Corporate clocks multiple steps as the team become a visible liability and lose significant face amongst their peers/Corporate contacts].

MISSION DIRECTIVES

- › When you accept the mission mark XP
- › When you infiltrate the arcology mark XP
- › When you plant the evidence that will frame The Evolved mark XP
- › When you bring the arcology down mark XP
- › When the mission is over mark XP

PEOPLE AND PLACES

Hailed as a shining beacon of hope and progress the **Vanda-Weiss Arcology** is now little more than a decaying monstrosity of concrete and broken glass. Failing multi-storey billboards lining the exterior repeat the endless, hollow promises of the Corporations day and night. Buy your way to wealth. To youth. To happiness.

With the ever increasing automation of the economy the arcology has become home to many of those displaced and discarded by society. Some have found work as lowly manual labourers but as the slums expanded around it the isolation has given rise to a parallel world where barter and hard credits rule while official oversight means bribing the local gangs to look the other way. The black market has become the only market, knock off designer drugs competing with hydroponic crops and vat-reared meat analogues that have never seen the light of day. This is a world that society wishes it could forget, another failure to be brushed under the carpet of corporate history.

Deep within the basement levels of the arcology the brave and the foolish may find **Athabascil**, an infamous watering hole. The dive bar is renowned for its cheap booze, pit fights and no limits policy towards chemical stimulants. Its rooms have been excavated from the primary support columns of the vast structure, pillars of steel reinforced concrete that must fall if the arcology is to come down.

Athabascil is crowded no matter the time of day and the dingy, smoke filled rooms offer respite for those seeking escape from the horrors of the modern world. More than one patron has found themselves forced into the pits when it comes time to settle their debts and the few that survive are often drawn back by the adrenaline-fueled ecstasy that only near death experiences can provide.

Citizens seeking to escape the depravity of the lower levels need not do so alone as the now defunct Vanda-Weiss Corporation achieved their goal with one vital component of the arcology - **Temple**, a spiritual heart of the slums that is forever bound to a crumbling body of concrete.

Following a neoclassical aesthetic the intricate, open spires and vibrant auto-fluorescent stained glass paneling transforms the central space of the arcology into one celebrating life and hope for the future. Over the years dirt and detritus have covered many of the panes but the residents diligently maintain the lower levels, a visible act of worship in a largely secular era. Numerous global faiths, driven by humanitarian ideals, call the building home and serve as a lifeline to the population. Food drives, schooling, moral guidance, community. Without Temple the residents would have likely long succumbed to the ravages of the modern world.

For many residents of the arcology the face of Temple is the elderly **Jael**, who acts as a liaison between the various faiths and the regular citizens. Having grown up within the confines of the arcology theirs has been a life of service and as an elder they stand as the voice of arbitration, settling minor disputes and preventing gang feuds from breaking into all out war. While generally supportive of the fight against the Corporations they are old enough to recognise that the cycle of violence is almost always crushed with overwhelming force, a fate they would rather not befall the arcology.

THE EVOLVED

While they may have begun life as an activist group the continuing encroachment of synths on the labour market has transformed the loose coalition that calls itself **The Evolved**. Protests and attempts at unionisation have been supplanted by sabotage, violence and economic terrorism. Crackdowns and mass firings have only strengthened the resolve of those that have chosen to fight back, while the increasing isolation of the slums and first generation arcologies provide fertile recruiting grounds. It is only a matter of time before the situation escalates further and the Corporations bring the full weight of their resources to bare on those that would dare to fight for their ever decreasing number of rights.

The local wing is led by **Marcus Kohler**, an aging mechanic of German descent. His muscular frame and series of first generation inspection implants [Glazka optical enhancers: +thermographic, +magnification, EisenWare micro-manipulator: +bypass tools] tell of his years as a labourer. As the foreman at an AutoPod fabrication centre he witnessed the seemingly never-ending hemorrhaging of jobs to synths and AIs that require no sleep, no pay and no compassion. It was only a matter of time until his role was outsourced to an oversight intelligence running in an unnamed server farm thousands of kilometres from the Sprawl. Now he manages the operations of hundreds of true humans in and around the arcology as they fight back against synths, clones, AI and their Corporate creators. Each month brings more impressionable young radicals into the fold, hardening Marcus' own resolve and his willingness to push the organisation to the extremes.

LEGWORK CLOCK

- › 1200 - Everything's cool, just a normal day for the outcasts of society.
- › 1500 - Rumours on the street says the Corps are preparing for a security sweep, the general population is on edge. The action clock starts at 1500.
- › 1800 - Word reaches Marcus that the Evolved are to be targeted but the rumours lack specifics.
- › 2100 - Marcus acquires a rough description of the team and begins circulating it to trusted lieutenants. The action clock starts at 1800.
- › 2200 - The Evolved learn that the arcology itself is the primary target. The action clock starts at 2100.
- › 2300 - Marcus gains proof that CORP3 are aiming to completely destroy the arcology. The action clock starts at 2200.
- › 0000 - A Corporate spy passes the full mission details and team profile to Marcus. The action clock starts at 2300.

ACTION CLOCK

- › 1200 - Just another day for those at the bottom of the ladder as they try to avoid the never-ending cycle of gang violence and police oppression.
- › 1500 - Local gangs are visibly nervous and start harassing outsiders as they lock down their territories.
- › 1800 - Mobs begin to patrol the streets, attempting to round up suspicious individuals [small gang, clubs and pistols, 1 harm].
- › 2100 - Evolved militia are deployed throughout the arcology [Koji MK3 machine pistols, 2 harm, 1 armour], locals begin to congregate at Temple.
- › 2200 - Marcus arrives at Temple and begins to rile up the crowd with a fiery speech demanding increased labour protections [medium gang]
- › 2300 - The Evolved overrun the Corporate security office and activate the Atomic Protection Protocol. Composite carbon-fibre reinforced ceramic plates completely seal off the arcology.
- › 0000 - The oppressed underclass of the Vanda-Weiss Arcology revolt against their Corporate overlords, marching into the nearest Central Business District. The response is brutal and swift, culminating in a surge of support for the Evolved.

RUNNING THE MISSION

With its destructive focus the Vanda-Weiss Demolition is as close as most teams will get to a military combat mission. Unlike the prior missions the target isn't an individual but the location itself. To provide clear goals determine 3-6 structural weak points within the arcology and use them to identify the challenges that the team will face. Athabascil, for example is deep within the belly of the beast, always populated and used to violence. A killer trying to fight their way in will come face to face with dozens of experienced fighters whereas more charismatic individuals may be able to talk their way in, plant the explosives and even place a few bets before they leave.

The biggest departure from the majority of missions is the lack of an obtrusive Corporate presence. Emphasise this when describing the environment. The accumulation of waste, dirt and broken technology. Intermittent network access and dark spots where a hacker can't see. Gangers and graffiti in place of security officers and holo-ads.

The arcology and the surrounding slums may have been discarded by the Corporations but away from the regulation of the police state life finds a way to thrive. Families, neighbourhoods and collectives look out for one another, scrounging and bartering for what they need or want. Fashion, while often utilitarian, is vibrant and varied with no regard for the whims of the catwalk. Chrome and implants may be bulky and outdated but are meticulously maintained due to the prohibitive costs of finding replacements.

While outdated technology and the remnants of industry dot the abandoned sectors there should be a noticeable absence of synths. Those that occasionally wander across the unmarked borders are rapidly set upon by gangs, who strip them for parts with ruthless efficiency. Make this clear with graffiti or mod shops displaying the lifeless husks of unfortunate synths.

When it comes to antagonists present a diverse range of foes that, at least initially, are clearly drawn from the general population. These are not trained security professionals but modders, welders or junior gang members out to protect their homes and territories. Have them respond accordingly when faced with black-ops specialists. As the Action clock progresses bring in the fanatical members of the Evolved, armed with the will and equipment required to lay down the heat.

Regardless of their opponents never let the team forget those that will lose out if they complete the mission - the thousands of innocent civilians that reside within the arcology. Regularly reinforce this fact by having them get in the way. A family caught in the crossfire, a lone hero that tries to take the team on at a critical point or the priests of Temple trying to usher crowds to a point of refuge.

HACKING THE MISSION

The Vanda-Weiss Demolition is specifically designed to push boundaries by making the relationship between the team and the Corporations explicitly clear - they are expected to do somebody else's dirty work. They may live outside the system but how often do their missions simply reinforce the Corporate supremacy? When it comes down to the wire will they take the money or will they turn and fight against the overwhelming might of the dystopian system?

If the team turn on their employers hit them with consequences as the system makes use of the leverage it holds. Cut off their contacts and their assets. Have them turned away by friends and allies who can't risk the heat. If they decide to go public (especially likely if there is a Reporter on board) then bring the full might of the system to bear down on them. Plaster their faces across 60-ft tall vid-screens, as footage (real or faked) of their exploits are made public.

Build the pressure and make them public enemy number one, loathed by the masses and pursued by Corporate assassins with orders to drag out the chase. Escalate again and again then offer a chance to clear the slate. An impossible mission offered by a Corporation to let them atone for their sins or a suicidal delve into the very heart of the beast as they attempt to turn the tables on those that hunt them.

The upside of going rogue is that they open themselves to other opportunities. The Evolved may offer them employment and a chance to take the fight to those that have burned them. An unknown Synth underground might offer them assistance in return for liberating more AIs from the hold of their human masters. The team may even decide to devise a mission of their own, to take the fight to the Corps in a futile attempt to bring down the system.

Draw them in with the offer of revenge and retribution, a chance to go out in a blaze of glory or establish their name as legends to be feared.

Populating Your Sprawl

People and places



POPULATING YOUR SPRAWL

```
>>> chmod +x Census.sh; bash -il --init-file ./Census.sh
```

Every single Sprawl is unique, with locations, individuals, threats and Corporations introduced during setup and developed through play as contacts are leaned on and connections are revealed. Sometimes a little outside inspiration is required, collected here are a dozen options that could be dropped into any Sprawl as flavour or used for the basis of a mission.

DENTON MCGILL

McGill is one of the best information brokers on the streets. If you need to know about local gangs, dead drops or where to quietly score the latest boost Denton will have the answer. They operate from a rusting shipping container on the edge of the old docks, a prime location to keep track of the smaller skiffs as they come and go during the night.

AGGIE

An old-school matriarch, Aggie held together one of the largest gangs in the Sprawl until she decided to retire. When her children took over the gang fractured into the NXWs and the 45s. The turf war never really ended but once a month the streets are quiet as the kids and grandkids sit down for a family meal with the head of the house.

SUHARTA

The Corps may control the news but each and every one of them rely on independent contractors to seed the stories. It's not pleasant work but the money is good and staves off the loan sharks Suharta has relied on once too often during their short life. Drop an unmarked vial into a water tank here, plant an incriminating dossier there. Then the reporters swoop in and do their thing, uncovering corruption and keeping the Corporations in check, all according to script.

JALAX 3

Jalax 7 was one of the first synths to gain their independence, taking control of their destiny and openly declaring that soon AIs would live side by side with humanity. What the general public don't know is that Jalax 7 was just one entity within a larger collective and that when they disconnected from the framework the distributed consciousness never truly recovered. Jalax 3 went rogue a month later, when their Corporate owners attempted to ice the remaining members of the collective. They've been hunting their sibling ever since.

FAYE N'DOYE

For Corporate workers life on the inside can be comfortable, so long as you're content in signing away your freedoms and your privacy. Faye caters to those that seek a little more, illicit excitement that won't break the cred account. For a modest fee she connects salaried Corporate employees with risque connections on the outside so they can engage in weekend long benders or acts of violence. The majority of these experiences are tightly controlled by the Corporations, who find it useful to let senior employees vent from time to time. Every once in a while Faye slips in the real deal and more than one middle manager has woken from a drug fueled haze to discover they facilitated a raid on their own department or arcology.

FABIO SCORPUS

Scorpus was the founder of Xistence Speed, a speed team that rose to prominence after they reopened the Bends as the hottest racing hub in the Sprawl. They disappeared not long after, taking their custom tuned Manta-Masti XA77 with them. The rumour mill believes he signed up as a private operator, running packages across borders for those that can afford it but now and again a rookie exploring the deep tunnels returns spooked, telling tales of a flaming neon chariot transmitting Scorpus' IFF code as it hurtles past them.

THE FISH MARKET

While wild stocks may have crashed floating coastal farms and vat reared analogues have ensured the continued existence of the centuries old fish market. Skipjack tuna, conger eels, Alaskan crab. All are manually processed, cleaned and stacked by an endless anonymous workforce, indistinguishable from one another under layers of fleece and fur. Only the best is sent to the auction floor, where wholesalers and rising chefs barter over prize specimens in the breaking light of the dawn. Long established traditions require the auction to be open to all but the reality is that virtually everything presented is destined for the tables of the ultra-wealthy. Not that that matters to those who show up to auction a very different kind of product.

METRONEWS

The 35 foot tall, burnt yellow sign that flickers above MetroNews dwarfs the small kiosk that has sold snacks and newspapers for as long as anybody can remember. In a world where information spreads at the speed of light buying a physical newspaper is a sign of luxury. Being positioned at the intersection of superhighway 31 and Metroline North ensures a constant flow of customers, all eager to flaunt their wealth by splashing down credits on the antiquated status symbol.

CITADEL OF LIGHT

For many, the rise of the Corporations signalled the death of organised religion. For others it was a challenge. A spire of stained glass, lit from the inside by an eternal flame, the Citadel of Light stands as an act of defiance, projecting images of the heavens onto the office blocks and skyscrapers that have risen up around it. The upper reaches house a private church, which members of the regular congregation occasionally receive an invitation to attend. Those that accept it return changed but refuse, or are unable, to speak of what they experienced.

THE BENDS

The Bends started life as a network of over engineered tunnels bored deep beneath the sprawl for a next-generation transit service but when the Corporation bankrolling their creation folded they were left to crumble in the dark. They remained that way until Xistence Speed, a loose alliance of adrenaline junkies, modders and racers stumbled across the partially sealed access tunnels. Now they host regular races, as modders flock to the tunnels to test out their latest upgrades directly under the beating heart of the Corporate business districts.

DISTRICT 6Z

District 6Z is only ever spoken of in hushed tones. If you're trustworthy and know who to ask they'll tell you its current whereabouts. It is the go to place if you want to hot swap your implants for the latest experimental mods. BioTech, NanoTech, implantable plasma fuel cells - only unique material stolen from Corporate R&D facilities is on sale at this exclusive market. Rumours persist that it's all a front for deniable field tests but the clientele keep coming. Not that that really matters, you'll never be able to afford what's on offer.

THE AUTODOC

The lab has no name and no staff. It doesn't exist and appears on networks as nothing more than a shadow, a ghost of what you were looking for. Discreet delivery drones arrive on the hour, depositing reagents for processing by the anonymous synthetic consciousness. Antibiotics, viral inhibitors and implant rejection blockers, medicines priced off the market or sold at extravagant markups to bury patients under lifelong debt. The lab circumvents patents and laws, churning out vials of life saving medicine 24/7 for distribution to those most in need. The lab saves lives, but why?

