

# The Tannhauser Investment

Mission Briefing



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

The Sprawl RPG by Hamish Cameron, published by Ardens Ludere 2018

The Sprawl RPG layout by Aaron Brown

The Sprawl Mission Files by Hamish Cameron, published by Ardens Ludere 2018

Original Mission Files layout by Dana Cameron

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## 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. This datafile includes The Tannhauser Investment, which we're releasing as a teaser while the we compile and encrypt the remaining material.

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.

# 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

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- › 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 over-ruled 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

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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.

## LEGWORCK CLOCK

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- › 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

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- › 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.