

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

The tall figure was alone at the stern of the old decrepit cargo in the bay, striking white flesh in the darkness of the Night; alone against a backdrop of blinding neon lights and monstrous shadows, buffeted by the winds of fate...

He lifted his head against the now raging wind, blue eyes locked on the city nearby... Lights everywhere... but they were hurting. Buildings, immense, omnipotent, choking the life of the city... And at the center, the darkness, ominous, permeating everything and everyone...

Was this everything there was to life?... Constantly living on the edge, courting both light and darkness, sanity and madness, peace and violence until all is but blurred into a massive swirling grey cloud, and you lose your life to the punk's knife or the drug overdose, cut open by the Edge...

Will he too fall prey to a fiery death? Will he see many innocent victims before him? Will everything he has earned and felt just disappear... Faded memories, washed away like tears in the rain? Will he dream?

Join the cast, and outcast, of SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST, into an intricate adventure for up to six players in the shadow of the Night's Edge. Become children of the night struggling against an implacable enemy bent upon your utter destruction. Wage a desperate battle against ARASAKA, Sun Knights and kin alike. Whatever happens, you will never be the same...

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A CYBERPUNK ® 2.0.2.0.
Alternate Reality Adventure

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SURVIVAL

OF THE FITTEST



by Gilles Bussière

An Alternate Reality Adventure for

CYBERPUNK

LICENSED FROM R. TALSORIAN GAMES, INC.



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DEDICATION

The writer would like to dedicate this first published work to the memory of Gilles Bussière Senior (1925-1992):

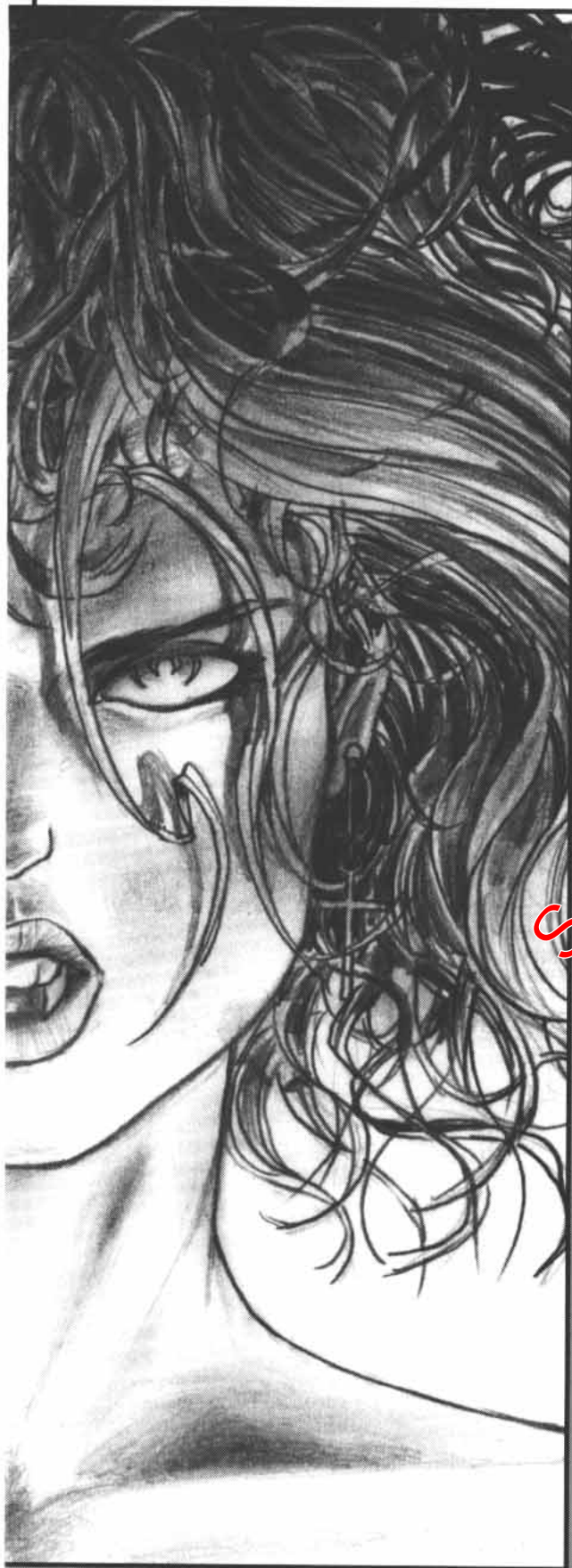
*FOR ALL THOSE TIMES YOU COULDN'T UNDERSTAND
WHAT IT WAS ONE COULD POSSIBLY GAIN
FROM PLAYING THOSE SILLY ROLE-PLAYING GAMES OF MINE...*

*DEATH MEANS NOTHING TO ME,
FOR WE ARE LIGHT ETERNAL...*

• YOUR SON

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*Sleep with ONE EYE OPEN,
Gripping your pillow tight.
Exit Light.
ENTER Night.
TAKE MY HAND,
WE'RE OFF TO NEVER NEVER LAND.
- METALLICA, ENTER SANDMAN*

FOREWORD

This is an adventure designed for the Cyberpunk 2020 game, but especially for the Night's Edge alternate reality sourcebook. In fact, this is a great way to introduce regular players to the vampire world, as the adventure takes place over a period of two months, allowing the players to adjust to their new state of being while still interacting with the same good ol' Cyberpunk reality: you know... sharp neon lights, glistening cyberware, biosculpted bodies, a filthy alley, the exhilaration of your boosted reflexes, the thrill of the hunt, fast cars, even faster death, the life, the edge... the Night's Edge.

Although the adventure is set in Night City, you can easily adapt it to your own campaign city with very few adjustments. For those of you who would not use Night's Edge (a shame!), the adventure can just as easily be altered to fit your needs (for more information, look under the section "HOOKS") as it is divided in five parts, each detailing locations, actions, encounters, reactions and NPCs for a smooth running operation. GMs are advised to read through the entire scenario before play and take note of the sequence of events for maximum enjoyment.

PLAY TIPS

True to form, mood music is especially nice to have during a game of Cyberpunk, and doubly so in a Night's Edge campaign. Here is a sample list of suggested songs for each part of the game: PART 1 - Will we survive? (Swans, White Light from the Mouth of Infinity), Shadowplay (Joy Division, Unknown Pleasures) or anything to build a mood of lurking doom. PART 2 - Danse Macabre (Saint-Saens), Tin Omen (Skinny Puppy) or anything suggesting a lightning attack. PART 3 - I remember nothing (Joy Division, Unknown Pleasures), A Forest (The Cure, Seventeen Seconds) or anything lonely and lost. PART 4 - Police Truck (Dead Kennedys, Fresh Fruit for Rotting Vegetables), Body Count (Ice-T, O.G. Original Gangster) or anything predatory and combat-like. PART 5 - Saturn, the bringer of old age (Holst, The Planets), Inside the termite mound (Killing Joke, Extremities, Dirt and Various Repressed Emotions) or anything gloomy and restive.

Aside from music, low lighting is recommended as it provides great atmosphere and reduces chatter among players.



SUMMARY OF THE ADVENTURE

A few years ago, ARASAKA began a top-secret project to create the ultimate warrior, one that would be tougher than any cyber-boosted solo on the streets, without fear of cyberpsychosis, one that would also be entirely under ARASAKA's control, listening and obeying without questions. Thus was born PROJECT A-47 (later dubbed PROJECT A.D.A.M.-Advanced DNA-recombinant Artificial Man), under the genius of Professor Iyesu Tanga and his team of scientists.

The project was a tremendous success, at least on the biogenetic level. It produced a new breed of warrior, faster, stronger, and possessing an amazing regeneration capability. However, there was one small side-effect: in order for his bioengineered metabolism to regenerate at peak efficiency, he needed the purest source of proteins available... human blood.

Not the least bothered by this small flaw, ARASAKA intended to take over the "education" of Adam in order to make him their obedient pawn, but Professor Iyesu got wind of the imminent takeover and took off with Adam before the company could secure them. Now ARASAKA is after them to bring Adam back for completion of his programming, and to make sure Iyesu understands who the boss is (after making sure they have all his files on the project, of course!).

Adam and Iyesu fled to Night City, hoping to escape the eyes of ARASAKA. But Adam started prowling the streets of the city, looking for nourishment, trying to keep as low a profile as possible. Eventually, he began to notice that others seemed to have the same need for blood that he had. His curiosity took the better of him and, after some investigation, he began to learn about the vampire underground society. Of course he tried to tell Iyesu about his discovery, but the professor was too deeply involved in a new attempt to create a perfect being, without the flaw Adam was plagued with; a new project called LILITH.

ARASAKA, however, has heard of the rumors about so-called "vampires" in Night City and... well, they CAN add two and two together. Their first retrieval attempt is based on a snitch's info (actually a lucky guess) but doesn't turn out quite as expected. Adam and Iyesu aren't there, and when they try to move out with someone to interrogate him later, the guy bursts in flames! Discovering the potential of their target, ARASAKA officials think that someone is launching a large scale experiment of their project, suspecting Iyesu of having sought the financial backing of a rival company. Sensing an immediate threat to their internal security, ARASAKA begins a series of raid on covens of vampires, led by a mad vampire's need for revenge against those who made him a monster (actually a very good brainwashing of the vampire they took in their first raid).

Having learned of ARASAKA's involvement in the raid, Adam realizes that they are after him and the professor. Not wanting to alert Iyesu and seeking to show him he can take care of things, Adam rallies a gang of misfits called the "Death's Heads" into attacking the local offices of ARASAKA. Needless to say, the gang is slaughtered and Adam escapes into the night again. But this time, ARASAKA knows he is there and ups the ante, determined to wrap this operation before someone else puts their nose too deep into it... Well, somebody does. All this ruckus has attracted the attention of the local chapter of the Sun Knights, who will offer their "services" to those "fine folks" at ARASAKA's (who don't mind that these new allies think they are hunting real vampires, as long as they do the job and leave a few bodies intact for the research and development team).

Faced with no other choice now (through skillful manipulation of the medias, Adam is now held responsible for all raids as well as the attack on ARASAKA's offices, described as a disgruntled employee, complete with fake background provided by ARASAKA itself), Adam tells Iyesu of ARASAKA's attempt to flush them out. Together they devise a plan which will allow them to both escape and cripple ARASAKA's means to follow, while at the same time sending a clear message that they are to be left alone from now on.

Realizing that they would need superior forces to win over ARASAKA, and without the financial means to raise a contingent of solos, Adam decides on a risky gambit: to gain the aid of the vampire community, already deeply scarred and wishing to get even with their mysterious attacker. So the stage is set and on Christmas' Eve, Adam leads a band of vampires into ARASAKA's offices under the cover of a near total black-out provided by Iyesu. When the dust settles down, ARASAKA's offices are thoroughly ransacked, the vampire community slowly rebuilds itself and Adam and Iyesu have departed for parts unknown.

HOOKS

After reading the above summary, one can wonder how to introduce players into it, especially if they are not vampires. PART 1: Piece of cake, is designed specifically for turning regular players into new vampires which will then have a very personal stake (no pun intended) in the adventure to come. For those of you wishing to avoid the Night's Edge for now, simply ignore PART 1 and use the following ideas to involve your party, depending on their main interest.

As vampire player-characters also have some kind of profession (even if most are forced to ply their trade only at night) like their non-vampire counterparts, the motivation behind these hooks can also provide additional reasons to get involved.

The scenario is flexible enough to handle anything from a single player up to six or more (more could be a good idea if players are to confront the vampires at the showdown, as a regular threesome or foursome, unless prepared, would be hard pressed against the fury of children of the night...)

- **COPS:** Aside from obviously being assigned to investigate the events of PART 2 and follow-up, law-enforcement agents could be involved from the start, trying to solve the mysterious disappearance of a rich corporate from his Japanese homeland while on a business trip to the United States. The concerned wife of missing professor Iyesu Tanga has provided a photo of him with a friend from work: Adam...

- **CORPORATES:** If you are looking for a challenge, the characters could play the ARASAKA boys responsible to bring back Adam and Iyesu to the fold, meaning no good lead will come up until the snitch tips the characters about the coven. Of course it wouldn't be a bad idea to keep an eye on anyone hired by the loving wife, just in case.

In a totally different light, non-ARASAKA aligned corporate could have heard of a secret PROJECT A-47 and of Iyesu going AWOL; the top dog wants to know what was that all about, and you are the lucky ones chosen for this mission; a golden opportunity to climb a few steps on the corporate ladder... be careful not to miss a step...

FIXERS: Many people are going to come looking for information in this adventure and the smart fixer will put his money where his mouth is by investigating all the ruckus. Maybe he knows that a hotshot genetic engineer has set up shop somewhere in the harbor area, working on some hush-hush project and asking around for some high-tech gizmos. Of course, snooping around CAN be dangerous, especially if there's rumor that something is out there...

- **GANG MEMBERS:** Substituting your gang for the "Death's Heads" is a sure way to see major action in PART 4, but is also a sure way to get you killed! However, it is a notorious trait that gangs are very territorial and wouldn't look kindly to a new guy setting shop on their turf without being invited first, let alone a band of suspicious boys going out only at night! Of course, corporate intrusion is downright heretic, especially if they burn the 'hood in the process, unless proper "compensation" has been offered...

- **MEDIAS:** Rumor has it that a top ARASAKA-Japan corporate has fled to the United States with corporate secrets. Your informant tells you that he might want to get in touch with a former colleague living in Night City. Imagine if you could get an exclusive interview, what a scoop! Better than chasing elusives vampire-posers...