

JACKPOINT

CONNECTING TO JACKPOINT VPN...

...IDENTITY SPOOFED
...ENCRYPTION KEYS GENERATED
...CONNECTED TO ONION ROUTERS

>>>LOGIN: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

>>>ENTER PASSCODE: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

...BIOMETRIC SCAN CONFIRMED
YOU'RE IN. USE IT WELL.

“EVERY TRAIL HAS ITS END, AND EVERY CALAMITY BRINGS ITS LESSON!” -JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

JACKPOINT STATS

Interaction rate: +19%
Posts per hour: +12%
Today's content quality
(signal:noise): 5:3

LATEST NEWS

• <101277> Working on an awesome tool that will let you visualize mana flows in an area like you can visualize Matrix traffic. It'll be so cool. If it works. -Slamm-0!

PERSONAL ALERTS

• You have 2 new private messages.
• Your internal Q score is 47 (up 4 points)
• You have 5 new responses to your JackPoint posts.
• You have 3 new friend requests; 2 friends have dropped you.
• **PDA:** Ms. Mulligan has requested another late evening appointment, do you wish to respond?
There are 4 members online and in your area.
Your current rep score: 128 (53% Positive)

THE INNER CIRCLE

You are visible to your closest 4 levels of contacts.
Your Eyes Only posts have been viewed 12 times

Current Time: 12 Oct 2077,
0512 hrs

WELCOME BACK TO JACKPOINT, CHUMMER:

Your last connection was severed: 14 hours, 13 minutes, 12 seconds ago

TODAY'S HEADS UP

• The strongest allies are sometimes the other guy. – Glitch

INCOMING

• Enjoy the city by the Bay. [\[Tag: San Francisco\]](#)
• The best wear chrome. The very best make sure it is always polished. [\[Tag: Chrome Flex\]](#)
• The neo-anarchists aren't the only ones who gather in tribes. [\[Tag: VirtualTribes\]](#)
• Survival just means another story must begin. [\[Tag: The Seattle Gambit\]](#)

TOP NEWS ITEMS

• Nuclear arms reduction talks between Russia and France stalled yesterday after Russian negotiators demanded Saeder-Krupp devices be counted as part of the French arsenal. [\[Link\]](#)
• As gruesome murders continue to plague White Center, Knight Errant has refused requests for a town meeting on the subject. [\[Link\]](#)
• The Phillipines have provided evidence of Renraku storing nanite-based Weapons of Mass Destruction at a facility in Manilla as justification for the government's raid, possession of the devices violates agreements between the corporation and island nation. [\[Link\]](#)

Mika's commlink chirped and his eyes snapped open. Instantly he was ready to kill. Five days in a cramped RV nursing a compound leg fracture with barely enough meds would sour anyone's disposition; especially when he'd finally drifted off into actual sleep.

"If this isn't a street doc, someone's going to die," he said to himself as he snatched up the 'link. His weariness quickly evaporated when he saw the commcode. He hit 'accept,' then simply asked "What happened?" without any preamble.

A light, feminine voice replied. "Charlie's in trouble. He was brought before a military tribunal two days ago on trumped-up charges of murder, espionage, and treason. They found him guilty an hour ago. Sentence is death by firing squad."

Mika closed his eyes and balled his fist. "When?" Mika asked.

"Ten days from now. The military brass wants this swept under the rug ASAP. No one wants this to get out; it would be a major scandal to say the least, plus there'd be blowback from the Tribal Council."

Mika banged his fist on the RV's wall in frustration. "And here I am with a busted leg."

"I know"

"Is there anything you can do to help?"

"Working my sources as we speak, but manpower is in short supply after the Nature's Bounty fiasco. We're going to need outside help. I need you on that."

Mika grimly nodded. "I understand. Do you have anything for me to work with? I'm not exactly rolling in the nuyen right now."

"Check the usual spot. There'll be a data-packet with what little I know regarding Charlie's situation and an access code to a Carib League account, and I've taken the liberty of contacting the Old Man. He'll be expecting your people."

Mika grimaced. "Are you sure about that? We don't have time for his ..."

"Exactly, we don't have time. Despite his eccentricities, he's the only one who can get a team in position. And he's got as much stake in this as we do, more so actually. Look, something big is happening. I don't know what, but a lot of people are dead, and they're framing Charlie for it."

"He never did know when to quit."

"Yeah, someone needs to rescue him for a change. Look, I have to go. Good luck, Mika."

Mika let out a breath as he stared at the link's display. *Motherfucking dammit, Charlie! What the hell did you do to get yourself convicted of TREASON?* he thought to himself as he accessed a private Matrix node.



INTRODUCTION

Counting Coup is the second adventure for the *Shadows in Focus: Sioux Nation* series of e-books for *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition*. In it, the players will operate in the Sioux Nation, a country whose origins followed in the wake of the Awakening. Players will need all of their skills, knowledge, and cunning to successfully operate in a nation famous for its militancy, paranoia, and distrust of anyone who is not Native American.

Counting Coup is meant to be a mid/high-level adventure, but can be modified for all skill levels. The adventure centers on Captain Charles “Charlie” Iron-Hawk, a member of the Sioux Wildcats who’s been framed and sentenced to be executed. Unable to help save his half-brother because of an injury, Mika hires a group of shadowrunners for the job.

Players, stop reading now. The rest of *Counting Coup* is for gamemasters only. It lays out the plots, characters, and secrets the gamemaster will use during the adventure. Reading beyond this point could spoil the experience.

PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

Counting Coup uses the *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition* rulebook, additional core game supplements, e-book supplements, and the *Shadows in Focus: Sioux Nation* e-books (at the gamemaster’s discretion).

This adventure takes the shadowrunners from their current location to the Seattle Sprawl where they’ll meet with Mika to discuss the run. If the players accept his offer, he informs them of their objective: to extract Captain Iron-Hawk before his execution.

Some information about the Sioux Nation is included in this book, but for more background/historical information, refer to the other *Shadows in Focus: Sioux Nation* books, the *Sixth World Almanac*, or the *Shadowrun Second Edition* book *Shadows of North America*.

ADVENTURE STRUCTURE

In *Counting Coup*, Mr. Johnson (a.k.a. Mika) needs the runners to extract his half-brother before he’s executed. But like any run, there are complications.

The gamemaster has the freedom to run this adventure as written, or modify it to suit their group. Additional objectives may also be added to expand this adventure into a full campaign.

MAIN SECTIONS

This book is organized into sections to assist gamemasters when running the adventure:

- **Preparing to Play:** A plot synopsis, necessary background information, and other useful details and data.
- **Adventure Scenes:** The adventure itself, broken down into individual scenes.
- **Legwork:** Summaries of information and data the player characters might find during their research.
- **Cast of Shadows:** Profiles of the primary NPCs the player characters will interact with during the adventure.
- **Player Handouts:** Information designed for players.

ADVENTURE SCENES

The adventure itself plays out over a series of sequential scenes. Each scene contains some, or all, of the following subsections:

- **Scan This:** A brief summary of the events in the scene.
- **Tell It To Them Straight:** A text selection that’s read directly to the players or paraphrased when the players reach specific points in the scene.
- **Hooks:** Descriptions of ways that players might be encouraged to play a scene.
- **Behind the Scenes:** The mechanics behind each scene, including NPC motivations and any secrets or special instructions for the scene.
- **Subplots:** Secondary adventures (or red herrings) that offer avenues for gamemasters to make the adventure less linear for players.
- **Pushing the Envelope:** Suggestions for gamemasters on altering the scene to challenge more experienced players or powerful characters.
- **Debugging:** Suggestions for getting the adventure back on track if the players’ actions derail it.
- **Places of Interest:** Locations featured in the scene, including descriptions and ratings for security systems and Matrix systems.
- **Grunts and Moving Targets:** NPCs in that particular scene.

NON PLAYER CHARACTERS

Non-player characters (NPCs) are vital to any adventure. They are the allies, enemies, and contacts with whom the players will interact during the adventures. Important NPCs have stats in the *Grunts and Moving Targets* section of each scene, while major NPCs are listed in the *Cast of Shadows* section.



GAMEMASTERING THE ADVENTURE: TIPS AND TACTICS

TIP ONE: READ THE ADVENTURE

Being familiar with the entire story lets you see how each part leads to the next. Knowing what's coming down the line helps you adapt when the players inevitably come up with something not in the adventure.

TIP TWO: ASSESS THE ADVENTURE

Rarely does an adventure unfold exactly as written. Assessing the adventure lets you customize the adventure to fit the specific group and make it more enjoyable or fit your own gamemastering style.

TIP THREE: KNOW THE PLAYER CHARACTERS

A gamemaster should have complete information on each of the player characters prior to running the adventure, so you can assess their individual and group skills, contacts, and abilities. This will help ensure that all players can contribute in some way or avoid any problems because of the lack of a necessary skill.

TIP FOUR: TAKE NOTES

Written notes keep things organized. They remind you when to distribute a handout or of details you should emphasize to make adventure run efficiently and is useful in awarding Karma and handling contacts at the conclusion of the adventure. Also, in subsequent adventures, the choices players make in one game could affect them in the next adventure.

TIP FIVE: DON'T LET THE DICE RUN THE GAME

Dice rolls are used to help resolve a situation or scene during an adventure. But sometimes, a single dice roll, either by the player or by the gamemaster, can end an adventure. A gamemaster has the power and authority to tweak the rolls to keep the story/adventure going if the players have some bad luck. While it's an accepted rule of thumb to never use a fudged roll to purposely harm a player or keep the adventure going, a gamemaster is within their rights to enforce any dice roll during a game or adventure if they feel that the roll is a proper outcome.

TIP SIX: DON'T PANIC!

At some point, a gamemaster will make a mistake; everyone does. They may forget a rule, misread something in the adventure, forget an important clue, or let the players go a bit off track. It happens. The best thing a gamemaster can do in this situation is rectify the situation as much as they can and move on.

TIP SEVEN: HAVE FUN!

A game should not feel like work, period. If you're not having fun, why do it at all? This is equally true for both players and gamemasters.

BACKGROUND

Within the NAN, few groups are as respected as the Truth Dancers. A counter-intelligence unit, they're known for their ruthless efficiency and use of magic to eliminate perceived threats. Originally tasked with counter-intelligence, they expanded their mandate and became more proactive. And because of their success, the NAN leadership turns a blind eye. Dancer units are often given carte blanche authority and are considered beyond reproach.

It was only a matter of time before some went bad.

One such team is known as Unit 419. Listed as a threat-analysis unit, in reality they're some of the Sioux's best black operators. They've broken up several enemy cells in the NAN and eliminated several shadowrunner teams as well.

Their allegiance to the NAN changed in March of 2071 when Unit 419 learned that a group of shadowrunners had infiltrated the Sioux Nation. Unit 419 intercepted the runners at a "forgotten" USAF nuclear material depot in the northern part of the nation. But Unit 419 also encountered a free toxic fire spirit who called itself *Ashe*.

The details of what happened next are unclear, but four of the original six members of 419 walked out as followers of *Ashe*. They spent the next few years conducting rogue operations to manipulate various assets within the Sioux military and intelligence communities to help *Ashe* assemble the people and materials necessary for their ultimate goal: to detonate a dirty bomb supercharged by a magical rite in order to turn most of western North America into a toxic haven.

No one suspected 419 of treachery. But Captain Charles Iron-Hawk of the Sioux Wildcats stumbled on information that hinted at 419's operations. Originally searching for information on the death of his father, Captain Iron-Hawk noticed odd orders and logistics movements. Initially dismissing this as normal military/political business, he then noticed correlations between disappearances and movement of military and intelligence community members and key civilian contractors. It pointed to a massive conspiracy.

Then, Iron-Hawk became 419's latest target.

To remove Iron-Hawk, they arranged for his team to be ambushed during a phony deep-penetration mission in CAS territory. However, things didn't go as planned and Iron-Hawk's team routed their merc ambushers. Learning of the set-up from the captured mercenary CO, Iron-Hawk decided to reveal what evidence he had. But instead, allies of Unit 419 assassinated Iron-Hawk's team by bombing their helicopter after Iron-Hawk disembarked. Planted "evidence" implicated Iron-Hawk of the assassination as well as other charges. Iron-Hawk was quickly convicted of murder, espionage, and treason, while his guilt was "verified" by mind probes conducted by members of Unit 419 and submitted as evidence.

Now Charles Iron-Hawk is sentenced to die.



PLOT SYNOPSIS

Captain Iron-Hawk is scheduled for execution in ten days, unless his half-brother Mika can save him.

Unfortunately, Mika can't help directly. After a botched run where he broke his leg, Mika is hiding out in a chummer's RV and trying to stay a few steps (or kilometers) ahead of a group of rival runners. When he hears about Charlie's predicament through a trusted contact, he takes the role of Mr. Johnson and hires the players to extract his half-brother.

If the players agree to the job, Mika sends them to see Laughs-Too-Much, an expert coyote working the Sioux border near Butte. At the coyote's place, the players will have to "prove their medicine" by passing a series of tests, which includes smoking a special "medicine pipe" with him. This has some interesting consequences, and when the players wake up, they find themselves on the other side of the Sioux border—sans gear.

After retrieving their gear, they encounter a girl named Lightfoot who takes them to the Butte Below section of Butte. According to Lightfoot, the best opportunity to extract Iron-Hawk is to grab him while he's en route to the White Buffalo Military Proving Grounds.

To free Iron-Hawk, the players will first have to liberate some paydata regarding the detail. The players will also have to defeat a group of Sioux MPs and get to a predetermined extraction point. But once they arrive, they find that their ride has met with an untimely demise.

Iron-Hawk then offers the players a counter-proposal. If they help him complete his last mission, he'll get them out of the Sioux Nation. If the players agree, Iron-Hawk takes them to an emergency safehouse to re-arm and resupply. From there, they'll travel to an abandoned USAF black site where a member of Unit 419 is making ready to destroy the place. After a battle, the players learn that the facility was a secret nuclear material storage facility dating back to just after the Ghost Dance War.

They also learn of 419's endgame: to use ritual magic to enhance and then detonate some dirty-bomb nukes, turning the Sioux Nation and a good chunk of North America into a nuclear haven for a toxic spirit.

Iron-Hawk and the players then travel to the ritual site to battle Unit 419 and their toxic master. If successful, Iron-Hawk arranges safe passage across the border for the players, with the Sioux Nation's grudging respect and a few new toys.

SCENE ONE: GOING NOWHERE FAST

SCAN THIS

Life's been hard to Mika. First, his last run went sideways and most of his team was killed, except his rigger, "Hot" Rodney Hicks. Second, his leg was broken, and he can't get to a decent street-doc because a rival runner team has been dogging him for days. Third, this whole brother-execution thing gets dumped in his lap. Unable to help directly, Mika reaches out to hire runners.

Mika arranges to meet with them at a greasy spoon located off I-90 just outside of Spokane in Salish territory. Instead of meeting in the truck stop, Rodney's modified Ares Roadmaster RV pulls up, picks up the players, and then takes off. Mika gets right to the point and makes his offer.

After, or maybe during, negotiations, the rival shadow team catches up with the RV and start a firefight. The players can either bail or fight. If the runners take the job, Mika gives them a ride back to their vehicles and directions to someone to get them across the Sioux border.

SELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

Oh good Ghost, who knew a long, hot shower could feel so fragging *good*! You stand there motionless, letting the near scalding-hot water cascade over you; the welcome heat works loose the various knotted and strained muscles. After ten more minutes, you're finally un-sore enough to lather up. You reach for some body wash, and the water goes from lava hot to iceberg cold, then cuts out altogether. You also hear a pop and hissing sound coming from the hot water tank/pump in the closet as water leaks into the carpet. You're gonna have to replace that.

Your commlink goes off and you almost throw it into the wall, but common sense takes over. Seeing it's your fixer's number, you hit accept.

"Well hoi there! Hope I didn't catch you at a bad time, but I got something that has your name written all over it. Johnson needs primo talent for a hot extract in get this, the Sioux Nation. Now, before you ask the usual stupid questions, let me tell you this; Johnson isn't some corp-stooge or government scum. No, he's one of us; someone who works the biz. He needs some help ASAP and is being generous with the cred. So, if you're interested, be at the Red Sunset truck stop just off I-90 in Salish territory in exactly ... three hours, ten minutes, and forty seconds. Wait in north side parking lot and don't be late! I was told that timing will be critical on this, whatever that means.

IF THE PLAYER AGREES:

"Great! But before you go, you may want to put something appropriate on, or at least *something*," he says with a chuckle as he disconnects the link. At least you didn't have shampoo in your hair.



ONCE THE PLAYERS REACH THE RED SUNSET:

The Red Sunset isn't bad. The lot is well maintained, fuel prices are reasonable, and the smell coming from the diner makes it seem like they're serving something other than grease. Trucks and travelers come and go as you, per instructions, wait in the north parking lot. At *exactly* the designated time, a battered and bullet-riddled, modified Ares Roadmaster roars into the Sunset's parking lot. With more maneuverability than a vehicle its size should have, it whips around and stops in front of you.

The driver, a human sporting a bright red soul-patch goatee and shaved head, opens a window and yells "If you're here for the job, get in and hold on!" As soon as you comply, it launches forward, leaving skid-marks. Sitting behind the driver's seat, across from a small folding table is a fit Amerindian male with an emergency cast on his right leg. His normal dark skin is somewhat pale, and he's sweating profusely, gritting his teeth every time the RV makes any sudden movement.

"Howdy there, name's Mika, and I'll be your Johnson for this evening. Now, before we get into any particulars, I have to ask: does anyone here have a problem with pissing off the Sioux Military?"

HOOKS

If the players are wondering what in the frag is going on, that's good! The idea is to install a sense of urgency, danger, and keep them off balance. It should feel like the players are in the middle of a chase, because they are. Play up the danger and Mika's need for help.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Two days ago, Mika and his team were hired for a B and E job. Everything was smooth until another runner tried to steal what Mika rightfully stole in the first place.

Because Mika's team wasn't prepared for a full-on firefight, three out of the five-person team were eliminated, but they took a few with them. Mika escaped with their objective—a small necklace hidden in his pocket—to Rodney's van, but not before jumping off a roof and breaking his leg. Rodney and Mika are now driving hard to make it to Seattle and trying to contact their Mr. Johnson, who's been suspiciously unreachable.

But none of that's the player's concern—at least not yet.

As soon as the players enter the RV, Rodney guns it. The gamemaster can have the players make a straight Agility or Agility + Gymnastics [Physical] (3) Test to avoid falling on their asses or face. Back on the road, Mika begins his pitch.

In nine days, a Sioux Military Police convoy will be transporting a single prisoner, Captain Charles Iron-Hawk, to his execution. The player's mission is to intercept that convoy, free Iron-Hawk, and rendezvous with Rodney for an extraction. Unfortunately, that's all Mika knows at the

moment. But he has a contact that can get them across the border and another on the Sioux-side working on up-to-date intel.

The initial offer is 20K per player, but an opposed Negotiation + Charisma [Mental] Test can add an additional one thousand per net hit, maximum five.

At some point (ideally, the most dramatic/inappropriate time), Rodney yells out "BRACE, BRACE, BRACE!!!" as a rocket almost hits the RV. Outside, an aerial drone is banking away. Rodney deploys an LMG and easily splashes the drone, then announces the gun is empty and hostiles are coming up fast. Said hostiles are a pair of off-road bikes and a truck with three individuals in the back: a mage, a street sam, and an ork packing a minigun.

During the fight, Rodney tries to avoid being run off the road. Mika will be useless because of his leg. *Everyone* in the RV is a target.

The rivals' tactics are simple: Two bikers harass the RV with SMG fire, while the truck gets in close to employ the mini-gun. The rival mage and street samurai will use their magic/weapons against targets of opportunity. The rivals will press their attack while they have the advantage. If they lose half of their group, the rivals disengage and attempt to flee.

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

The envelope can remain unpushed, unless the players are feeling particular bloodthirsty and go after the rivals. If the players catch any of them, all they'll get are variations of "Mr. Johnson hired us to take them out and get their package," "Yeah, this got personal when our teammates got hosed," and the runner-who-fragged-up-good's favorite phrase: "Please don't kill us, it was just biz."

For those who want to start the adventure off with a bang (or boom, or crunch), feel free to increase the number of outriders and or increase the combat skills of the rival runners by one or two points.

The gamemaster can enforce travel laws/tolls if they want. While the Salish government has declared I-90 neutral for business travel, local tribes often charge their own tolls. Most companies see this as cost of doing business and pay up. A standard toll payment once the players leave Seattle is fifty nuyen, but an additional "travelers fee" of a hundred to two hundred nuyen will usually keep the authorities off traveler's backs, unless they have really bad IDs or draw attention to themselves. Use the Sioux Border Patrol officer stats in Scene Two if needed.

DEBUGGING

In combat, there's always a chance players can get seriously hurt, if not dead, which can make the subsequent parts of the adventure a struggle. As such, it's recommended that the gamemaster not make the opposition too overpowered and keep the action intense but brief.

