

Loose ALLIANCES

FanPro

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LOOSE ALLIANCES

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INTRODUCTION

Shadowrun has often focused on the major power players in the shadows—the megacorps, organized crime, dragons, and so on. But there are many smaller organizations in the world of *Shadowrun* that also play a role—and even more importantly, are more likely to appeal to characters as groups they might want to affiliate with.

Loose Alliances explores these second-tier players—organizations that are more likely to have a smaller, localized effect than impacting on a global scale. These groups are perfect for using in street-level and alternate campaigns, whether they are used as antagonists, allies, or even as the uniting force that brings the player characters together.

Loose Alliances is presented as a series of electronic documents posted by Captain Chaos, sysop of the vast Shadowland archive and data haven—the number one source for shadowrunners on what’s going on in the world of *Shadowrun*. The documents come from a variety of sources, underground and mainstream, but are directed towards an audience of shadowrunners. These sources are each unique in outlook and perspective, influenced by their own particular prejudices and interests. Each article is marked up with a running commentary by shadow denizens who add to, revise and contradict the original post. These inserted comments add innuendo, allegations, opinions, rumors, misconceptions, misinformation, lies and sometimes even the truth to the information presented. It is left up to the gamemaster to decide what information is correct and which is just filling, as appropriate to his or her game.

The first section, *Political Agitators*, introduces a wide spectrum of policlubs, activist fronts and armed resistance

groups, from eco-groups to anarchists to fascists. It discusses their politics and goals and describes several types of groups in each category, as well as their allies and enemies.

The second chapter, *Hands of the Elite*, details three organizations that are puppets/servants (depending on who you ask) to the rich and powerful: the United Nations, the Aristo Cabal and Aegis Cognito.

Mystic Secrets first describes treasure-hunting arcano-archaeological groups such as the Atlantean Foundation and its competitors. It then moves on to cover magical groups in general, with several specific orders discussed in more detail, from the Illuminates of the New Dawn to the Voice of Ogoun to the Seers’ Guild.

The next chapter, *Keepers of the Faith*, introduces several religious groups, starting with the *Vigilia Evangelica*, the Vatican’s secret libraries and mystic defenders. A triad of Islamic groups competing for power in the Middle East are then featured: the Islamic Unity Movement, the New Islamic Jihad and the Islamic Renaissance Movement.

Finally, the *DIY Crime* section covers several criminal groups that fall outside the range of standard syndicates and gangs. In addition to Tamanous organleggers and Brokerage X black traders, it features several shadowrunner groups, including Assets, Inc. and the Smokers’ Club.

A *Game Information* chapter at the end provides advice for using these groups in campaigns, whether as employers, allies or enemies. Several adventure hooks are given for each faction as well, suggesting ways in which the gamemaster can introduce these groups into game play. Suggestions on combing some of these groups into “unholy alliances” are also included, to throw the players off-guard.



POLITICAL AGITATORS



Let's face it. Our world is no longer as comfy as it used to be, even in the prosperous countries. The rich are still getting richer, and the poor are still getting stepped on. Throw in some ecological devastation, megacorporate influence, radical technology and a minor little thing called the Awakening, and you've got the perfect recipe for mixing together some people with extreme political notions. These range from complete nut-job toxic avengers who view metahumanity as a parasite to be eradicated from the Earth, to more rational anarchists like me who have the radical notion that people should control their own lives. The more people get screwed over or faced with events that drastically change their lives, the more poli-clubs and underground groups we'll see popping up to throw a wrench in the gears.

We're covering a wide range of political ideologies here, and we here at Shadowland certainly don't support them all. But we understand that others who view these files might be interested or supportive, or might just want to know more about a group that they consider a threat. Please restrict your remarks here to postings that clarify, enhance or factually correct the information—if you're looking to spark a political flame war, take your opinions to the appropriate poli SIGs—you'll find plenty of mobs looking to riot there.

- Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 19 February 2064 at 16:28:35 (PST)

GREEN KEEPERS: THE ECO-ACTIVISTS

- Ecotope was my first choice to get you out of the 'plex into the countryside. Check out the war that's being fought on both political and physical fronts to save Mother Nature from further abuse by her children. As an environmentalist, he knows the eco-movement, from its historical roots to the thick trunk of green parties and poli-clubs to its sometimes radical branches and the dead wood that, rotten to the core, has already fallen.

- Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 19 February 2064 at 16:30:12 (PST)

by Ecotope

"When the last tree is cut, the last river poisoned and the last fish dead, we will discover that we can't eat money."



GRASS & ROOTS

Outside of the Green parties, there are thousands of eco-politicians around the world that make up the bulk of the Green movement. Many of these activists are distrustful of “sellout” Green politicians or simply have no Green party in their country to support.

In the wake of the collapse of large international organizations such as Greenpeace that approached environmental protection on a broad basis, the field was open for eco-groups to pursue a new range of strategy and tactics. This led to an explosion of eco-motivated groups in the Thirties. They ranged from networks that relentlessly targeted specific industries and corporations to groups that infiltrated corporations to expose ecocidal practices. Their tools included such things as arcane circles that seek to heal devastated areas with magic to tech workgroups that promoted eco-friendly technologies. Many of these groups were dynamic, melting away and reforming as needed—or as activists switch gears and try new ideas. A considerable number survive to this day, despite corporate attempts to smash them as soon as they surface.

- That’s an exaggeration. The corps have better things to do than start a vendetta against eco-groups; it’s simply not worth the expense or bad press to send out corporate thugs to clobber activists.
- LabRat
- Of course they don’t send their own henchmen. They hire people like us to send the message to go bother another (that is, rival) corp. Environmentalists can be a useful tool for a corp to hit a competitor with while keeping its hands clean.
- Socio Pat

The interests of this new generation of activists are as diverse as the damage wrought on the Earth, ranging from forest protection, anti-whaling, safeguarding of (para-)fauna and -flora, stopping resource exploitation and control of industrial waste and toxic transport. A major segment of the movement also focuses on issues like genetic-hypermodified (GHM)-food or crops, the second generation fallout of gene-engineering on ecosystems and the emerging nanotech threat.

- Can you imagine what would happen if self-sustaining nanites were to leak into the environment? They would be a worse plague than any bacterial and viral infection in history.
- Trychosope
- The horror vision of a nanotech pandemic has been around since the inception of nanotechnology. To be self-sufficient, they would need the ability to self-replicate, which even SOTA nanites don’t possess. And they don’t evolve, they’re just robots.
- Warentester
- Yeah, right. And AIs are just programs.
- Silvery K

Most organizations portray themselves as watchdogs whose mission is to alert the public to alleged environmental risks, using methods such as Matrix campaigns, trid piracy and good ol’ fashioned canvassing. Others engage in civil disobedience with office occupations, lock-ins and media jamming to garner attention and pressure their target. Still others focus on building alternatives or reversing the damage done.

- These activists are a little too quick to make demands, sound false alarms, point fingers and place blame. They don’t really perform a public service; they’re just a public nuisance.
- SPD
- Still smarting from that time you tried to pepper spray that group of blockading eco-activists, and their guardian spirit blew it back in your face, eh, SPD? Lackey.
- Gamera
- You have to give these eco-freaks credit for creativity. They’ve invented quite a few interesting ways to stop the corps without breaking anything or hurting anyone. They blockaded the Japanese fishing fleet off New Zealand with a sea spirit storm and delayed the transport of a Castor (nuclear waste) container by freeze-foaming it to the rails. They’ve also tricked the whales away from the whaling fleets with undersea drones and sent elements to safeguard animals from poachers and safari hunters.
- Southern Cross
- Do-gooder pests, the lot of ‘em. They’re always sneaking into Grand Tour parties to mark known eco-polluters like French wine-growers with non-washable glowpaint. Don’t get me started on what happens if they see people wearing real fur.
- Gossip

To cover the spectrum, I selected the best known groups and a few minor ones to show you how widespread the modern grassroots eco-movement is.

Astral Space Preservation Society (ASPS)

Environmental protection isn’t limited to the ecosphere. The ASPS consists of a significant number of mages, shamans and even free spirits that take care of impaired regions of the astral world. Their goals are “to monitor potential abuse of astral space and its inhabitants, protect the rights of the denizens of the astral space, establish a set of parameters that will facilitate a positive working relationship between spirits and metahumanity and create a sanctuary in astral space for beings in search of a safe retreat,” as laid out by the great dragon Dunkelzahn’s will.

Though the ASPS is a *de facto* research branch of the Dunkelzahn Institute of Magical Research and under its administration, the members view themselves more as a society of astral environmentalists than scientific researchers. Given this mindset, the ASPS works closely with the eco-movement to prevent further corruption of the manosphere by the toxic phe-



//Begin File//

Let me start out by saying this: I don't hate anybody. I'm a good citizen just like you are: I have a wife and two little girls I love more than anything in the world. I have a good job, pay my taxes, go to church on Sundays, and complain about the prices at the Stuffer Shack. I might be your neighbor, your coworker or your tennis partner. I'm also a member of the Humanis Policlub. Does that surprise you? You're not alone. Many people still have an outdated view of our organization, which leads to a lot of misconceptions. They'll say, "Look at you—you're successful, you're happy, you're 'normal.' Why would you belong to an organization like that? Aren't they just a bunch of rednecks who like to beat up orks and steal milk from troll babies?"

- Got it in one.
- Cascade Trog

I'm the first to admit that Humanis had an image problem, and that's what I want to talk about here. That's all behind us now—the new Humanis is focused on positive political change. We aren't about hatred or violence, not these days—neither of those are much good for solving the long-term problems of society. The popular conception of Humanis members as ill-educated louts with sheets over their heads couldn't be further from the truth. What we *are* about is being proud of who we are as humans, and standing up for our rights as they're slowly eroded away, both subtly and not so subtly.

- He's right about the image problem, but for the wrong reasons. Thing is, while they were all busy trying to line up the eye-holes in their sheets so they could see, the rest of the world passed them by. Nowadays, kids grow up with metas all around them. They walk by them on the street, go to school with them, see them at their parents' workplaces—so Humanis's base of support is aging with few young, new racist recruits. This friendly spiel covers up the whiff of desperation, boys and girls.

- Observer

- Humanis has a lot more support among younger human's than you'd expect. They aren't signing up with violent anti-meta groups, but they do buy into Humanis's message, and they exercise their personal economic and political power. They shop at human-owned businesses, vote for pro-human candidates and support pro-human policies. There are lots of pols who don't have Humanis membership cards, but their ideologies are in line with Humanis goals. And in some parts of the UCAS and CAS, pols are not only open about their affiliations, but Humanis membership is actually considered a positive thing.

- Monitor

- Humanis might not officially condone violence, but we all know that every organization attracts the hard-core types who have their own version of the party line. Metas are just as beat-

en-up or dead whether or not the Humanis member doing the dirty work isn't "officially" supported by the club.

- Antifa

Let me ask you a few questions. Have you or a friend ever lost a job because a metahuman was willing to do the same work for less money? Has your child ever come home from school crying because he got beaten up by an ork boy—a "boy" who, at ten years old, is built like a linebacker for the Seahawks? Have you had your taxes raised to fund welfare programs for unwed ork women having four and five babies at a time without any way to support them? Or, here's one that's a little more insidious: have elves or dwarfs been rising into management positions at your company? Why should I be worried about that, you ask? Think about how long elves and dwarfs live. Nobody knows, really, except that they'll outlive us humans. Do you want your corporations to be dominated by them in twenty years? How do you think that will affect the business climate for the humans who work there?

- About like it affects orks now. Boo-fraggin'-hoo.
- Bung

It's a simple fact that any five-year-old can see: metahumans and humans are different. Science claims we're all just variations on the same race, but consider this: humans and chimpanzees share 99.4% of their DNA too. That doesn't mean you want one marrying your daughter, do you? Forgive me, I know that's a tired old cliché, but be honest: isn't it true? We of Humanis don't hate metahumans—we simply believe that humans have our society, metahumans have theirs, and it's best for all of us if everybody stays in their own sandboxes, as it were.

No one thinks it's odd if an ork is a member of the Ork Rights Committee or a troll belongs to Mothers of Metahumans, so why is it so strange that we humans have an organization to support and promote our interests and culture? That's all I'm saying—and all Humanis is saying. Membership simply demonstrates that you've taken the very logical position that you're going to put your energy and resources into advancing the cause of your own people: humanity. Think about that next time someone accuses you of being a "hate-monger" for holding a belief that's not in vogue as "politically-correct." If you agree with anything I've said here, consider giving us a listen. You might be surprised at what today's Humanis Policlub has to offer you.

//End File//

- Oh, where to start ...
- Solaris

- Never mind, Solaris. I don't think anybody around here is buying his brand of spew.

- Griffer

- That's not what worries me. There are plenty of disaffected humans who will buy it. It's human nature (if you'll pardon the

HANDS OF THE ELITE



Too many runners seem to believe you can only play the game if you're jacked into the wiring of an icy red host, crouched in a ventilation shaft or strapped into a parachute 2,000 feet above a battleground. Ain't necessarily so, and those who see it that way are missing a lot of what's going on in the shadows. You can hardly find more varied organizations than the ones presented here, and they all offer opportunities for biz. Hugely different in scope and objectives, mostly they wield no ideology, nor are they scary threats from astral outer space. They do have one thing in common, though: they deal in information, reputation and power, three areas that are tightly interconnected.

If you still believe shadows can't exist in plain light, take a look at our article on the United Nations. As powerless as ever to save the world from chaos and war, the UN is much more pragmatic nowadays; don't be shocked if you get hired by the High Commissioner for Human Rights for some high-end network in Africa. Sure, the UN pales in comparison to the Corporate Court, but it's got some resources of its own, believe me. You'll also need to get informed about that spooky cabal of aristocrats, originally limited to a bunch of stiff-upper-lipped blue-bloods in Königsberg, but who've been expanding throughout Europe and beyond, attracting all kinds of influential people opposed for various reasons to the reunification of Europe through the New Economic European Community. Then there's Aegis Cognito, a private intelligence agency based in Southern Europe. This corp used to restrict its operations mainly to Europe, but now it's jumped over the Pond and acquired a solid rep in the shadows.

As you can see, whether they're a loose alliance of reactionary aristos or the latest version of a downcast worldwide organization, we're leaving you in the hands of the elite. Better learn how to rub shoulders with them, chummers.

• Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 19 February 2064 at 16:54:50 (PST)

THE UNITED NATIONS

• Some of you may think it's strange not to hear more than the occasional word on a global intergovernmental org such as the UN, which must be an important player in interna-



tional affairs. The simple answer says the UN these days is little more than another pawn of the Corporate Court. That's true as far as it goes, but it doesn't go as far as most people think—so you might want to check out this write-up before making up your mind about this bunch of seat-warmers.

- Captain Chaos

by Ambassador

The United Nations never managed to match its lofty ambitions to its limited power. Stuck in place during the Cold War, it briefly promised to become worth the reckoning in the 1990s, but it lacked funding and power and lost much of its political weight at the turn of the century. Several setbacks finally finished it, starting with the Israel-Libya "Ten-Minute War" in 2004. That missile exchange was the worst atrocity on an international scale since World War II, and in its wake several Muslim states and Israel cancelled their UN membership. The destruction of the UN headquarters in the New York quakes of 2005 was the final blow, with several officials and diplomats killed during a Security Council meeting. Forty years would pass before a new HQ was inaugurated in Geneva to replace the provisional facilities hastily erected there.

Suffering from infrastructure and internal problems and running on half its former funding, the UN used what resources it had left trying to cope with the innumerable catastrophes that plagued the world in the following years. The floods and nuclear accidents in Europe, along with the VITAS pandemic, bled all the UN humanitarian organizations dry. Less efficient at providing relief work than some corporate-funded initiatives, the UN lost what credibility it had left, and large numbers of countries started leaving its ranks.

- Ever wondered why nothing could stop the spread of VITAS that claimed up to one-third of India's and Africa's population, leading to a worldwide epidemic? In a matter of months, the UN refugee, food and medical programs were moved to the rich countries, leaving tens of millions homeless, starving and dying.

- Brick

- To make things worse, the UN cancelled most peacekeeping missions worldwide because of credit limitations or new priorities, such as the Belarus or Korean wars. Countries providing troops for the UN reduced their numbers drastically, triggering bloodbaths everywhere the Blue Helmets had departed.

- Echech

The Crash of '29 marked the end of any funding for the organization, and several elements of the UN system were suspended, merged or disbanded. When the Euro-Wars broke out, the UN could do nothing but oust Russia from its roster and issue formal statements condemning the invasion. Having lost two-thirds of its members by then, either through formal withdrawal or geopolitical chaos, the UN faced dissolution in 2035—the Corporate Court resurrected

it through the recently acquired World Trade Organization. The revamped UN played a key role in the negotiations that followed the Euro-Wars, and its newfound respectability gave the Corp Court a legitimate front with which to consolidate corporate extraterritoriality and ensure its domination of the world's decisional bodies.

- Believe it or not, corporate action then was popular. People thought they were seeing the dawn of a new era of cooperation between political and economic forces. How wrong.

- Virtuelle

Streamlined and reorganized, the UN's various institutions were given smaller objectives that they could achieve more efficiently. The Second Charter of the United Nations was finally signed at the Prague Conference in 2045, marking the conception date of the United Nations of the Sixth World.

- Maybe it's not known in America, but in Europe the corps made sure the United Nations would regain its past prestige. I was at the Euro-War conference. Imagine representatives from a hundred countries and from the Big Eight of that time, silent in unity above the ruins of Brno where battles had been fought in both wars. The Old World was getting back on track by then, and the UN was a dream we still wanted to believe in.

- Veteran

The UN has remained under the Corporate Court's aegis ever since, and is little more than a corp puppet. The mega-corporations wanted it for PR and marketing purposes, and they have succeeded in making the UN a renowned and respected advisor. Some countries occasionally step up at the Security Council to oppose a united front on an issue and have forced the corporations to step back in several of their Economic Council decisions, but most UN operations exist only to serve corporate interests. To this end, the member nations implemented one of the corporate-controlled UN's major tools, the famous Resolution 3031 on Local Rights, in 2060.

- Famous?

- Deadwin RCTM

- For those of you who don't speak legalese, this text is a piece of legal jewelry. Secretary General Padiyar and corporate-supported Security Council representatives designed and used it during the recent corporate war. This resolution of the General Assembly gives UN teams the right to monitor respect for basic civil rights in agreed-upon areas of national or corporate jurisdiction. The Corporate Court supported the initiative to provide the world with a checklist of corporate ethics after the Marseilles scandals of '51 and the Copenhagen Convention violations, granting access to national and corporate facilities to "independent" UN observers. In theory, this move would have put UN officials

MYSTIC SECRETS



I'm often asked to post information on groups involved in magical or paranormal activities: research, pararchaeology, parazoology, magical advocacy and so on. Sad to say, the only magic I know involves smart frames. Still, I worked a little of my personal mojo and convinced a few trusted friends to tell us about some arcane-oriented organizations that shadowrunners might be part of or employed by. I'm no magophobe, but some of the intel passed along here is downright spooky—and intriguing—and bears paying attention to.

• Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 19 February 2064 at 17:10:06 (PST)

RELIC HUNTERS

• Elijah is obsessed with mysteries, especially when it comes to the Awakened history of the Sixth World—and perhaps the previous “worlds” before this one. Various factions are clearly at work, exploring Earth’s secret history by uncovering forgotten traces of previous ages, so this seems like the right time to do a little excavation concerning their agendas.

• Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 19 February 2064 at 17:11:28 (PST)

by Elijah

Metahumanity has advanced a great deal since the Awakening by studying the arcane arts, but the path has been long and rocky. Magic was a completely new phenomenon when it first appeared. Most of the Gifted—with the exception of a chosen few—knew absolutely nothing about how to deal with this strange force. Many magicians fell back on ancient belief systems like shamanism or witchcraft to form what we know today as traditions, while others—nowadays called hermetics—chose a more scientific, academic approach. The hermetics combined classic theory with scientific methods and sought the metaphysics of magic—and that’s how magical R&D was born.

Even before thaumaturgy joined university curricula at the beginning of the 2020s, users of magic delved deep into mystic secrets to understand how it functioned on a scientific level. Others went in search of enlightenment, power or new methods to improve themselves and the world. Universities, private foundations and corporate interests quickly began pouring





- Don't be so sure—they've had their hands full lately. First they had to root out members of the Atlantean Rebirth cult, and now they're handling increased competition from the DIMR and Apep Consortium.

- Crescent Cutter

DUNKELZAHN INSTITUTE OF MAGICAL RESEARCH

Chairman of the Board: Thomasin Martyn

Headquarters: Boston, UCAS

In the few years since its formation, the Dunkelzahn Institute of Magical Research (DIMR) has become the AF's biggest archaeological rival. Backed by millions of nuyen from the great dragon's will, the Institute kicked off a number of research projects worldwide soon after setting up shop in Boston. Though the board of directors originally frowned on the idea of locating DIMR facilities outside the UCAS, they changed their opinion so that they could compete with the omnipresent AF in the future.

They've set up offices in Denver, Prague, Karlsruhe and Athens so far, and they have ambitious plans to open additional branches in Bangkok, Neo-Tokyo, Vladivostok, Lima, Sekondi and Buenos Aires within the next five years.

Among the many factions digging for ancient history and power, the DIMR has the cleanest record. Established from beyond the grave by a great dragon who was also President-Elect of the UCAS gave them an instant reputation that nearly trumped the one the Atlantean Foundation took years to establish. Run by the heads of prestigious scientific institutes, the global archeological and magical communities have generally embraced the Institute.

Despite the DIMR's meteoric rise to second place among major magical think tanks, they remain far behind the Atlantean Foundation for several reasons. Though the DIMR manages what remains of Dunkelzahn's 100 million-nuyen bequest, they need to find a way to make money out of their scientific work in the future, a talent the Atlanteans mastered years ago. The AF currently dominates the market for arcane and scientific services, and so the DIMR must rethink its approach—soon.

- They need a discovery that puts all other historical findings to shame and catches the media's eye. Like Atlantis coming out of the ocean with DIMR researchers waving from the still-wet surface.

- Prof. M

The DIMR also lacks a strong partner. Pentacle needed several favors from their mother corporation, Mitsuham, to

establish collaboration with the Atlantean Foundation, but that partnership has been fruitful ever since. The DIMR has no such arrangement with anyone. Given its origins in Dunkelzahn's last will and testament, cooperation with the other prominent corporate players in the magic biz—namely, S-K and Aztechnology—isn't really an option.

- Good reason to occasionally send runners to drive a wedge between Pentacle and the Atlanteans.

- Kensai

Alternatives include Wuxing, which expanded its market share in arcane goods and services during the Orichalcum Rush. The Draco Foundation is another potential partner, though rumor has it that the two dragon-spawned organizations don't talk to each other much.

- Negotiations have been going on between Eهران, Fu Peng and Sharon Ching-Wu, but without any satisfactory compromise. Wuxing doesn't want to get caught between MCT, S-K and the Azzies unless there's something big worth fighting for, and the DIMR doesn't have much to offer right now.

- Argent

- I doubt that. I had an interesting experience recently, when I scanned through the Middle Ages section of the DIMR history host. While I was browsing through an English heraldry book in a 12th-century monastery scriptorium, a huge scarab the size of a dog crawled through the room. At first

I thought I'd activated IC (I'm not a paying customer, you might say), so I got ready to defend myself. Then the scarab moved on and vanished through a solid wall. I gave that wall a closer inspection and found a hidden gap, a triggered SAN whose passageway had been frozen after opening. The digital scent of paydata kept me going, so I logged on to the hidden system. Inside was a high-end sculpted environment with virtual representations of old parchments and what I would call fossil steles covered with unfamiliar carvings. While I was admiring the detailed portrayal of the objects, the system's security measures kicked into action. Before I could put up my defenses, two Paladin IC-constructs swung their swords to chop me like sushi. Luckily, another IC party squashed the bug, which closed the SAN and dumped me from the system. I don't know to which cultures these different languages belong, but at least one text was written in Minoan Linear A.

- Ma'fan

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KEEPERS OF THE FAITH



In this materialistic dog-eat-dog world of ours, it's not hard to see the fascination faith and belief hold for many people. The trials and tribulations of the past fifty years drove many toward faith in their quest for a safe haven, solace or plain old-fashioned community spirit. Though many converts have drifted away, the number of people who see religion as the answer to the modern world's evils remains impressively high. Current attitudes towards organized religion vary drastically, from those who view it as some form of social disease to those who think they've done a lot of good. No one can argue, however, that current faiths create politicized religious movements, clashing worldviews, radical creeds and zealots—nobody's exempt from blame here, Christian or Pagan, Muslim or Fordist. While planning this compilation, I decided that a few religious groups demanded coverage, either because they're hogging the rumor mills or because they aren't. It proved unexpectedly hard to nail down information on some of the ones I wanted, but I think you'll find what I turned up, like religion itself, both enlightening and ominous.

• Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 19 February 2064 at 17:24:27 (PST)

THE VIGILIA EVANGELICA

• I had a hard time finding someone who wanted to talk about the Vatican—even our contacts through the Helix seemed to have dried up. I hooked up with the author of the following section by accident while trawling several Catholic-related Helix SIGs for someone or something to go on. His alias is Padre Pedro, and I thought I'd wind up all the conspiracy theorists out there (yet again) by letting him tell you what he told me.

• Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 19 February 2064 at 17:33:19 (PST)

My name is Pedro Amato; my friends call me Padre Pedro. Those who know me know that even though I applaud John XXV's attempts at reform, I vehemently dislike certain institutions of the Roman Catholic Church. Today I've decided to tell you why, so that you too may decide if the dangers of the church's course are as great as I believe them to be.



Let me start at the beginning. Less than six years and a lifetime ago, I stepped out of the chapel at the St. Eugenio Seminary in Rome as an ordained brother of the Order of St. Sylvester, trained in the arts of healing and exorcism. I was bursting with righteous enthusiasm, ready to take up my calling within the welcoming arms of Mother Church—with no idea of what awaited me.

- Bet Pedro's a EuroWars orphan. You hear a lot of the same stories in Spain and Italy.
- Buscettino

- I can vouch for Padre Pedro. He's a straight shooter, if a little intense. He helped my crew out against a hive in Malaga. When we met again by accident in Madrid, he patched our rigger up without charge.
- Sepherim

RECRUITMENT

After serving as *Librarian custodius* in the Vatican libraries for more than three years, dousing my fire and enthusiasm, I struck up a seemingly harmless friendship with a regular patron of the archives—a Cardinal, one of the Pope's *Optimates* (inner councilors). We talked freely of faith and doctrine, the schism, church history, my meager talents as a theurge and my hopes for the future. One day he asked me to accompany him to retrieve a volume while we talked. Immersed in conversation, I suddenly realized we had walked into a vaulted library room where three ominous figures awaited—one in an Augustinian monk's white robes, the others in Dominican black and Sylvestrine gray. The Cardinal asked me to sit. Not knowing what to make of events, I obeyed. He then told me that he and his compatriots had been following my career for some time—since before I left the seminary, in fact. They needed someone with my combination of experience and gifts. The Cardinal had spoken highly of me. They asked if I wanted to learn a great secret, one I could never reveal until my dying day.

- Thanks, Captain; you've just made my decade. You've no idea how long I've been waiting for something like this.
- €spion
- Now the problem's going to be getting you to shut up about it.
- 0111011001

If I had known then what I know now, my answer would be no different. I had heard rumors of our secretive brethren in the New Jesuit Order and Knights Templar, but nothing prepared me for what they told me. As any *custodius* worth his salt, I had suspected the existence of something like the Secret Libraries. It's almost impossible not to—too many tomes and codices misplaced, coded notes to archives, artifacts removed and never returned ... the evidence adds up. Nevertheless, the truth about the *Aquinae* Vaults and the true nature of the *Vigilia Evangelica* came as a shock. To a humble friar like myself, the *Vigilia* was simply the Holy Office responsible for the Vatican's

Matrix and intelligence resources as well as the safekeeping of our libraries and computer systems. In a world where secrecy is nigh impossible and courts attention, the *Vigilia* chooses to hide in plain sight. The Cardinal and his companions gave me a choice: join, or have all memory of this encounter erased.

- I've seen these *Vigilia* guys around the Vatican net. Can't miss 'em—neon-white monk icons packing some serious software under those robes. They're the local GOD-types. Puns intended.
- Kid Code

HIDDEN TRUTH

And so I became a *praetor* of the *Vigilia Evangelica*. I learned the *Vigilia*'s secret history while I studied archaeology, theology, physical sciences and theurgy alongside three other novices. I exercised with equal zeal—I had always dreamed of becoming a guardian of the faith. I learned about the tomes of proscribed knowledge and literature confiscated by the church under the *Index Librium Prohibitorum*, about the heretical artworks, scientific tomes and antique treasures that had come into the *Vigilia*'s custody since its founding at the Second Council of Lyons. Confronted with such mysteries, I found it easy to understand why the *Vigilia* and the church had believed from the outset in secretly preserving the knowledge within such materials, so that they might one day be used to understand and combat the very evil that had spawned them.

Three other novices and I were ordained by Pope John XXV in St. Peter's Basilica. Each of us received a commission from the *Vigilia*'s Prior-General at the end of the ceremony. A New Jesuit named Mateo—who would become a close friend despite his infuriatingly traditionalist views—and I were assigned to the *praetor* garrison at *Secundus*. The Franciscan novice was to become a *custodius* at *Tertius*. The last of us, an Augustinian friar, was called to additional training to join the *Vigilia*'s intelligence apparatus.

It was Mateo who later suggested to me that the *Vigilia* had played a role in directing John Paul IV's attention toward the writings of Claudio Aquaviva, which in turn led to the founding of the New Society of Jesus—despite their decidedly reactionary views, the church needed a militant order. Personally, I suspected the *Vigilia* had played an identical role in the creation of the Sylvestrines and the reestablishment of the Templars, but I held my counsel.

- So he's telling us these guys have been around for what—500 years?
- GnuB
- The Second Council of Lyons took place in 1274, which would make it several centuries older. Despite having researched the period thoroughly, I've never seen any reference to the *Vigilia*. Make of that what you will.
- Echec

SECRET VAULTS OF THE VATICAN

Before continuing, I must make it clear that I will not break my sacred trust. I will name no further names or endanger my

DIY CRIME



Let's face it, a lot of us turned to crime because we didn't want or didn't have access to the normal 9-to-5 lifestyle of Jane Average. Rebellious street scum like us aren't exactly well known for our ability to take orders and kiss hoop. It's only natural that some of us have written off working for Johnsons or fixers or mob bosses and decided to make a living on our terms. They don't exactly have grant foundations or corporate sponsorships for illegal entrepreneurialism, so it's all about DIY: Do-It-Yourself.

This file focuses on a few crime outfits that were started by or for shadowrunners, or that otherwise don't fit the syndicate/gang profile. I decided to steer away from smuggler groups, pirate crews and similar operations—they come a dime-a-dozen anyway—and focus instead on operations that break from the norm. This may inspire some of you to go out there and found your own gig, dedicated to the criminal project of your choice. Best of luck to you.

• Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 19 February 2064 at 17:41:19 (PST)

BROKERAGE X

• I'm sure some of you wonder how so-called prime runners can afford the cutting-edge tech toys, spanking-new spell formulae and high-grade Chiba cybertech on the kind of pay most shadowfolk get. Answer: they play it smart and call on the services of someone like our next poster and his cohorts.

• Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 19 February 2064 at 17:44:20 (PST)

by €spion

From what the good Captain tells me, this compilation is meant to cover a great many groups and organizations for which runners sometimes work. As a break from the norm, I'm pleased to introduce a group that can work for you instead. We're well established in Europe and expanding into North Am, so my thanks to the Captain for this opportunity to plug our services to a completely new clientele.

Many of you probably wonder how the big players in shadowbiz can afford their downtown penthouses, '62 Saabs, Chiba cybertech or orichalcum sword—especially when, con-



trary to popular belief, the pay scale in this kind of work isn't all that flexible. Of course, some company men and specialist crews are good enough to name their price, but ultimately the Johnson's projected profit return on a given target or operation dictates the payoff—and nobody's going to fork out a million for a person, item or datafile that they can hire, acquire, develop or reverse engineer themselves, unless it's absolutely vital. Established crews with a solid rep pull in maybe a couple hundred thousand nuyen a month at best, so how do you reconcile that size paycheck with living and running expenses *and* padding your nest?

How do they do it? Simple. They call us. And now so can you.

STOCK IN TRADE

So who and what are we? Brokerage X is a stock brokerage firm with a twist. My colleague 0111 and I started off working the fringes of the black tech market in Scandinavia and made enough money to move on to bigger things. These days we and our associates work exclusively with shadow folk, maintaining investment and stock portfolios for the best runners in town—no hassles, no red tape and no questions asked. Nice but uninspiring, right? So what's all the fuss about?

Here's where the twist kicks in. Ever been on a run where you've netted some juicy data about a corp, and then used that info to invest in stocks and make an extra buck? Or incidentally nabbed some smoking paydata that has yet to hit the markets? You probably have. Most shadowfolk do at one point or another. You might have been a bit disappointed when the corp's stock jumped 20 points and you only netted 2,000¥ on your 10,000¥ investment. Fixer and broker fees probably whittled that down to 1,500¥. Barely worth the effort, right?

The problem is twofold. First, even the most revolutionary release or biggest tech toy has minimal impact on a megacorp's global stock profile. Second, the amount of cash you usually put up for such a one-shot deal won't buy you a significant amount of stock. Combined, these two realities make the whole prospect of playing the market less than interesting, especially if it's a one-off gimmick.

- Frag if that isn't true. Plus, you have to have a SIN for most brokerage firms to even give you the time of day. Pain in the hoop.
- Bung

- Espion is making a pitch and it shows. He's correct that 10K¥ is an insignificant amount when it comes to megacorp stocks, but not when we're talking start-ups and local companies. The problem there is that small corps have a hard time getting quoted on the big exchanges these days with all the big-boy pressure.
- The Chromed Accountant.

Now imagine a way for runners to turn a regular buck off ill-gotten information, share the wealth without upsetting the markets and possibly even make a real impact on corporate stocks. That's where Brokerage X comes in.

- If you don't want all this hassle and have a friend at a brokerage firm, you can do what I do and pass on the info for a little extra beer money.
- Boston Hound

SECRETS AND SERVICES

So what happens at Brokerage X? We turn secrets into money.

Let's say you've just swiped the prototype and data for a next-gen hydro-cell from United Oil, dropped a cascading virus into the system to destroy backups and then handed it over to Zeta-ImpChem. Normally, if you had some cash to spare, it'd be a good idea to pick up some Z-IC stock through a broker and make a little extra cred when they patent the new tech as their own and their stock rockets. If you have a portfolio at BX, however, what you do instead is drop by your friendly neighborhood Matrix branch and fill in your broker on what stocks to buy, and explain why!

- As if! What's to stop them from turning around and ratting on me?
- GnuB

- Their livelihood and reps, for one. A business like this is based on trust. They screw you over, and word gets around. Soon enough they have no clients.

- Nuyen Nick

- Exactly. We're not newbies. We've been around for the better part of a decade in Europe, and the fact that we're expanding to your shores should tell you something. But don't take our word for it. Feel free to do some digging yourself. Get some opinions.

- 0111011001

We take care of all the paperwork for you, using the very best shells, double blinds and front men money can buy to handle our transactions through licensed brokerage houses—making them virtually untraceable. You get complete deniability—and that isn't even the best bit. At BX, we plan investments for all the runner portfolios we maintain. That means all the other chummers on our client lists stand to make a profit from your information, and you make a profit off of theirs. Let your money do your work for you.

- Cool. Where do I sign on?
- Kid Code

- You wish. This is the big leagues, kid. Amateurs need not apply.
- Link

- We'll see about that, old man.
- Kid Code