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you're trying to buy a black market item from a sharp-eyed contact—maybe your armorer or technician. You hand him the cash, and watch as he first glances it, then looks again, his eyes widening in surprise. Then his brow furrows with rage, and his face turns red and blotchy. He's obviously pretty irked by what he sees as an attempt to dupe him with counterfeit cash. Only perseverance and some extra real nuyen will calm him down.

You've apparently been given some funny money—over 10,000 nuyen, in fact. You know exactly where it came from—it's the entire cash payment for the last job! From the trusted (until now) Mr. Johnson you just did business with.

Assuming you don't geek him out of hand, Mr. J will flip when confronted. Checking his remaining financial reserves, he'll discover a substantial portion to be fake. He's been burned too, and he thinks he knows who did it. In a routine sale of hot decks to an entrepreneur by the name of Crazy Vic, he seems to have come into possession of about 100,000 nuyen in counterfeit. This might also explain why Crazy Vic hasn't been answering his phone lately.

Oh well. Vic has certainly jumped town, but it's the only lead the you have (assuming you want your money back). Mr. Johnson also wants his back and will offer 20% of the funds recovered as a finders fee. Sounds like Crazy Vic is going to pay for this one.

FAST CASH

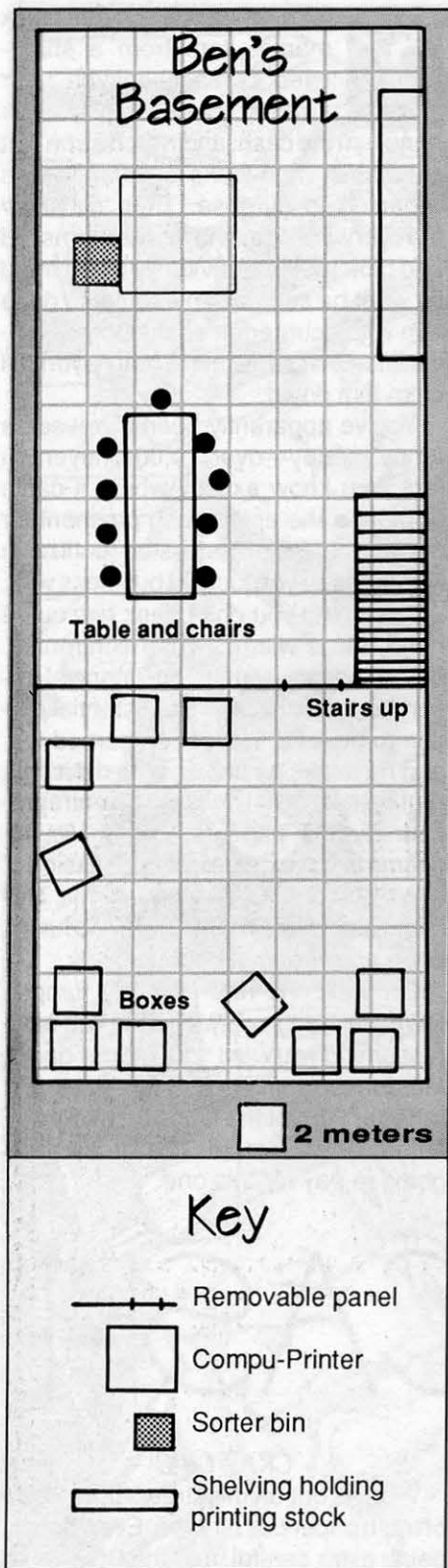
QUALITY CONTROL IS A
COMMON HAZARD
WHEN DEALING WITH
AN ILLEGAL SUBSTANCE.
WE'RE TALKING BAD CASH,
FAKE FLASH, NURD NUYEN. THAT'S
COUNTERFEIT—
PAPER MONEY THAT'S
NOT ONLY ILLEGAL,
BUT ALSO WORTHLESS.

BY
MICHAEL S. BUNCH

CRAZY VIC

Word is out on the streets that a load of trash paper has hit town. Everybody's being extra careful, and the PCs would have a hard time passing off any of their bad bread.

Crazy Vic resides in a low-security complex in Spring Lake, Renton. Normally, Vic's personal security measures for his mid-sized apartment are pretty tight, but, alas, the outside lock appears already bypassed. Crazy Vic is inside, quite dead of a resourceful variety of wounds to various parts of his body.



The apartment has been professionally ransacked, and nothing of real value or information is to be found.

The only real clue for the PCs to find here is the Orc in riding leathers who comes in the back way calling out Vic's name. Said Orc will break and run as soon as he sees the PCs. He will do his best to get to his bike (a Harley Scor-

pion with two forward-facing Ingram Valiants and one rearward-facing grenade launcher), possibly treating the PCs to a high-speed chase through the streets of Renton.

This Orc is, surprise, surprise, wired for a rig. If captured, this Orc is fairly easy to interrogate. He will say his name is Racer 0 (pronounced "oh") and that he was only dropping in on his old buddy, Vic, to see about some business. He's really sorry Vic is geeked (if he saw the body or is told), but that's the way things go in this business if you step on the wrong toes.

On a successful Interrogation roll, Racer 0 will reveal his exact business with Vic—running contraband into the Sioux Nation via the Cascade Orcs. Most recently, he's been moving money. On a second successful Interrogation roll, he will admit that he also knows where it's being printed (Vic let the info slip one night). On a third successful Interrogation roll, Racer 0 will reveal who's running this business: the Mafia. Oh boy.

It appears that Crazy Vic finally lived up to his name. Used as a minor gopher for a counterfeiting ring, he was given a bad run (an electronic glitch caused a flaw in an entire batch of bills) to dispose of—meaning to destroy, not pass. But Vic's greed got the better of him, and he figured he could lose the flash and be out of town before his bosses knew any better. He was apparently mistaken.

The PCs can make their interrogation of Racer 0 a bit easier by offering a bribe. Every 100 nuyen offered is a +1 modifier to the interrogation. Also, if he's reasonably well treated and fears for his own life, Rider may throw in with the PCs.

NATIVE AMERICAN NATIONS

Agents of Native American Nations have been keeping Vic's place under surveillance and will track the characters when they leave. On a successful Perception roll, the PCs may notice their tail. If confronted, the agents will explain their interest and offer to hire the PCs to hit the printing hideout and either destroy or recover the paper and ink stocks (stolen from the Sioux Nation last month). The agents would prefer that the materials be recovered and brought to them for destruction—just to be sure.

The Compu-Printer, a computerized printing press, does not "print" per se, but actually draws each bill to an exacting degree. Thus, with gook programming and the proper stocks, one machine can duplicate any bill. Indeed, the real difficulty in counterfeiting is acquiring the right stocks, the specially coded and constructed paper and inks that make the money unique. These are the real target of the run. Destroy the stocks and the ring is shut down.

The NAN has a vested interest in breaking this counterfeit ring. The money is being distributed into the Sioux Nation, not Seattle. Thus, the NAN agents are trying to track down the culprits, But they don't want to touch off an international incident and would be more than happy to hire a team of investigators to do the dirty work.

They will offer 20,000 nuyen apiece for the job, 40,000 if the PCs bring up that it's a bit dangerous to be hitting the Mafia. The NAN can supply the time and place where the printer should be programming the press for the next shipment.

The exact composition of the NAN team has been left vague, as the PCs should not get into a firefight with them. However, if needed, use a mix of Former Tribal Warriors (*Sprawl*), Tribesmen (*Shadowrun*) and Shamen (*Shadowrun*). Toughen them up a bit, as these guys should have a little edge over the PC team.

CYCLE SHOP

The hideout is hidden under Ben's Cycle Shop, Redmond (use the small store from *Sprawl*; remove the rear shelves and add garage doors to the back). Ben's is in a standard security rating "C" neighborhood, surrounded on three sides by alleys.

Present are Ben, two mechanics and two customers getting their trendy scooters fixed. Downstairs, things are a whole lot tougher:

The stairs down lead into a square room crammed with spare motorcycle parts, tools and supplies. A loud, mechanical hum (the printer) is coming from one wall. Close examination of the wall will reveal a removable panel through which the PCs can enter the room. If the crew upstairs was taken care of quietly, the bad guys within will be taken by surprise. Soldiers will be

sitting around the table, Jerry Gest and Tony will be over by the printer, and Blazer (always the nervous one) will be leaning between the stairwell and the shelves.

If the battle upstairs made a lot of commotion, the press will be shut down, and the Mafia muscle will have taken best available cover, weapons ready.

WRAPPING IT UP

If the PCs leave any clues to their identity, they will have earned a powerful enemy—the Mafia, waiting for the right time to strike.

There is no way to recover Mr. J's real money. But there is about 200,000 good quality counterfeit already run off. Conceivably, it could be fenced as per the normal fencing rules, or the PCs might chance spending it. It's left to the referee to determine just how much trouble they get into.

And let's not forget Karma: This run is pretty basic, worth about three team points. Add Individual Karma awards as appropriate.

NPCs

Racer O: Use Corp Rigger from *Sprawl*; change Corp Etiquette to Drive Bike, and add/subtract relevant Orc

racial modifications.

Ben and the Mechanics: Use the Gang Leader archetype for the store owner (Ben), and give him real leather and a T-250 shotgun. The two mechanics on duty are wearing synth-leather and are carrying roomsweepers. Ben and the mechanics will not hesitate to use the customers present for cover or hostages.

Jerry Gest, Mafia Lieutenant: This operation is Jerry's brainstorm. His first mistake was believing that this project is secure from local and NAN detection. His second was in trusting Crazy Vic as his intermediary with Racer O. Jerry won't attempt to flee no matter how bad things are going.

Use Mafia Soldier from *Sprawl*. Add +1 to Firearms, Intelligence, Willpower and Charisma, +3 to Leadership. He is also Boosted 1, with smartgun link, and wears an armored jacket (tailored). He carries an Ares Predator II smartgun with a reactive trigger and two clips of explosive ammo.

Tony, Compu-Printer Expert: Use the Mechanic archetype for this guy, with Ground Vehicle B/R changed to the Special Skill Compu-Press Programming. Also drop Aircraft B/R. Add racial modifiers for a troll. Yes, Tony is a fear-



some-looking metahuman, but he is completely harmless to the player characters, except as a distraction. He's pathologically afraid of violence and will do nothing but cower behind his machine.

Blazer, Burned-Out Mage: Not much to say about this guy, hired by Jerry, who figured he'd save money by getting firepower and magic for the price of one. Play Blazer smart.

He'll not take needless chances, and will surrender or flee if the odds look bad. Increase the archetype's Firepower to 4 and give him a smartgunned assault shotgun.

Mafia Soldiers: As many as there are PCs. No special gear—they're right out of *Sprawl*.

The variant shotgun rules from **Challenge 45** are strongly suggested for these guys. Otherwise, the referee may want to give the bad guys some other effective guns. Ω

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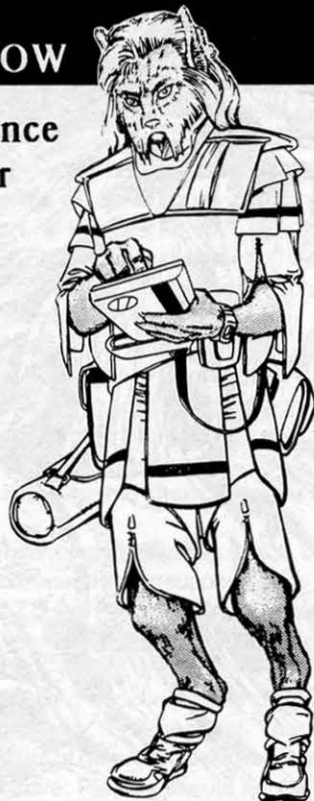
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