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December/January

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# Rat's Den

*a scenario for Shadowrun*

*by Stephan Wieck*

## Introduction

Orion sleazed through the blazing energy field unscathed. He was just another office memorandum to the Okowa computer system. The software and deck the Yak had provided him with were making short work of the system's defenses. The raw speed of the jazzed-up deck both thrilled and scared Orion. If the Yak were investing this kind of hardware in his run, they must expect him to encounter something heavier than what the system had thrown at him so far. Of course, the data he was collecting would probably indenture Okowa to the Japanese clan for a long time and a lot of nuyen, so the Yak could afford expensive decks and cutting edge programs.

He slipped through the Sub-processor and routed to a data bank. One last browse and then he was jacking out. Famous last words. He dove into the datastore and immediately the system kicked into overdrive. Red node, he thought. Access whirled at him barring his entrance into the node itself. He tried to silence the Access while he called up the Sleaze again, but things were happening too fast; he was out of his league here. A Trace leapt from the midst of the Access wall and rocketed out of the node, backtracking along Orion's entrance route. He ignored the Access and followed the Trace. It was too fast for him. The simulated reality of the matrix started to fizzle with static around him and sharp pains stabbed his brain. He jacked out.

The Yakuza deck was smoking as the Trace and Burn fried it. Orion tore the molding case apart and snapped free the optical chips

storing his collected data. The red hot chips sizzled the flesh on his fingers. He stared in disbelief at the smoking deck. In less than a second he had gone from being a rich man to be a dead man. The Yakuza would kill him for losing the deck and Okowa had his address. He grabbed the chip and hit the streets.

## Plot Synopsis

Rat's Den is a scenario designed for FASA's *Shadowrun*. The adventure involves a lot of detective work as the players uncover one of Okowa Holding Company's ruthless corporate power plays. The character group will need both a decker and a magician (preferably hermetic). If the group doesn't have these Archetypes, the GM should consider adding one as an NPC for this run. The adventure was designed to be run in Atlanta, but can be transplanted to any city.

The storyline of the adventure begins with Okowa Holding Company. Okowa is utilizing two of its corporate holding companies, Chiwa Biotech and Southeast Real Estate, to wrest a profitable city housing contract from Southeast Real Estate's corporate rival, Liberty National Properties. The city government is currently contracting Liberty National to maintain a large housing project for the city's poor. Okowa has plans to take that contract away.

Okowa has had Chiwa Biotech develop a new strain of the Vitas-3 plague under the supervision of Dr. Dorean Peaks. The new strain is engineered to be carried in city rats and then kill its carrier after a few days. Dr. Peaks developed the virus strain and Chiwa Biotech agents planted several of the infected rats in Liberty National's housing project. The outbreak of plague caused several deaths in the project and the resulting bad publicity has forced the city to revoke Liberty National's contract.

The contract is currently up for bid and Okowa plans to have its subsidiary, Southeast Real Estate claim the lucrative contract.

However, the best laid plans of mice and men often screw up, and so did Okowa's plot. The infected rat's died out and this should have ended the plague, but unfortunately, the Vitas-3 strain was transferred to a pack of Devil Rats residing in the projects. The Devil Rats are immune to the self-destruct side-effect of the plague and they have continued to spread the disease. Now, Okowa is afraid that a city investigation of the spreading plague could lead back to them, so they're taking steps to wipe out the Devil Rats.

Through their street contacts, the Yakuza have gotten wind of Okowa's actions. The Yak hired the decker Orion to take a jaunt into Okowa's computer system to find some blackmail material that the Yakuza could hold over Okowa. Orion was stopped by the system's ICE. He is now running from Okowa's men and stumbles into the characters.

## Never Take Candy from Strangers

The characters are contacted by Killer Fry, a Redskulls gang member. He meets them at 9 pm at Zonedancers, a dance club in a grimy section of town. The club is filled with youths zonedancing on the club floor. The dancers are each jacked into their own channel of music and dance to their own rhythm. The bar is strangely quiet as the dancers gyrate to the music pumped into their skulls.

Killer Fry is a scrubby youth whose only purpose in the adventure is to get the runners together so Orion can happen upon them. Fry wants the players to geek a rival gang boss. He'll offer the characters



200 nuyen each. The players should laugh him out of the club for coming to them, seasoned professionals, with such an offer. Depending on how they treat him, Killer Fry and his gang may show up latter to help or hinder the players.

Sometime during the stay in the club, Orion will stagger into the club. He is bleeding from a gunshot wound in his arm. He will recognize the player decker and stagger over to him. Orion will toss the bloody optical chip in front of the character, "Here chummer, it's worth a lot to the right people." Then several undercover Chiwa Biotech company men in overcoats step into the bar, and look at Orion and the players. Orion will quickly stumble toward the back door. One of the Chiwa men will follow Orion through the back door, while two more go to the player's table.

The company men will question the characters. "What did he say?" or "Did he give you anything?" The men will attempt to escort the characters outside to an alley. There, they will try to geek the players, just to be sure. Use company man contact stats for the Chiwa Biotech men. Orion will be killed in the alley behind Zonedancers by the third company man. None of the company men have any identification on them.

The scene should end with the players confused, with only an optical chip for evidence.

## The Chip

The players will want to examine Orion's chip. An Electronics - 4 skill check is required to physically examine the chip.

**1 Success** The chip is for deck memory.

**2+ Successes** The chip has been reverse biased and burned. The memory may be destroyed. Plugging the chip into a deck allows further examination of its contents. The chip has been mostly destroyed, but some of its memory contents can still be accessed if the decker's good enough. Screening through the chip's destroyed memory requires a Computer - 5 skill check.

**1 Success** A complete file

intact. The language is alien to the decker, but any hermetic magician can recognize it as a spell formula. The spell is Detect Devil Rat (2).

**2 Successes** Mostly gibberish. Piecing it together, it becomes obvious that Orion was decking the Okowa system. He discovered that Southeast Real Estate and Chiwa Biotech are both subsidiaries of Okowa.

**3+ Successes** The SAN number for Chiwa Biotech. The Detect Devil Rat spell was purchased by Okowa. They are planning to send a team of agents into the projects to kill the Devil Rats. The spell was purchased for the Okowa team's wagemage. A player hermetic magician may wish to learn the spell if they have the karma to spare.

## Investigation

Armed with the information on the chip, the players have several investigation avenues to explore.

## Orion

The players may want to check their street or decker contacts to find out more about Orion. Whichever player decker Orion recognized at Zonedancers should only have been a casual acquaintance. Street Etiquette - 4

**1-2 Success(es)** "Orion was an alright decker. But if you ask me, his reputation was a lot bigger than his abilities. He got lucky with that run on Renraku. I wouldn't trust him with a big job."

**3+ Successes** "I heard the Yak were outfitting Orion for a run. But that's rumor and you didn't hear it from me, understand chummer?"

## Chiwa Biotech

Corporate Etiquette - 4

**2 Successes** "Chiwa took off five years ago when they 'acquired' Professor Dorean Peaks from Ares Technology. Peaks was working in Ares' virulence warfare division, but now he's working for Chiwa, trying to cure diseases. At least, that's what

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Chiwa promised its stockholders, a Vitas-3 cure in three years. Of course, that was five years ago."

**3+ Successes** "Chiwa Biotech is actually owned by Okowa Holding Company. A pretty ruthless bunch there, even by corporate standards. There's rumors that after Chiwa couldn't deliver a Vitas-3 cure, they turned their research another direction. There's no telling what Okowa has planned."

#### Southeast Real Estate

**Media or Corporate Etiquette - 4**  
**1-2 Success(es)** "Southeast is salivating over that city housing contract bid that Liberty National just lost."

**3+ Successes** "Southeast is set. Half of the city council housing committee is on their payroll. Barring an act of God, that housing contract is in their pocket. And, let me tell you chummer, that's a hefty acquisition."

#### What's in the News

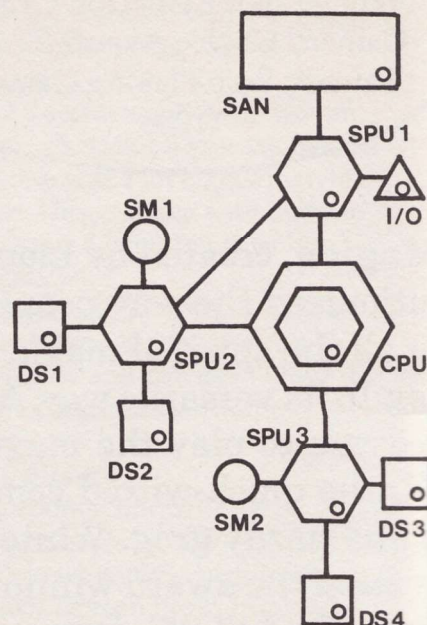
If the players consult the local media, they'll discover several articles on the Vitas-3 outbreak in the housing projects. The outbreak began November 14, and so far it has claimed eleven lives and led to the revocation of Liberty National's contract. The article quotes Dr. Dorean Peaks of Chiwa Biotech: "The squalor that Liberty National was forcing its residents to live in is inexcusable. They are directly responsible for allowing the disease carrying rats to infest the buildings."

A more recent FAX article reveals that city health investigators now believe that a pack of Devil Rats is responsible for spreading the Vitas-3 plague. The GM should mix in other articles that are red herrings to mislead the players.

#### Hacking Chiwa Biotech

Eventually, the players will want to deck into Chiwa Biotech. They should have collected enough hints to start piecing together the picture of what's been happening at Okowa and in the housing project. If the player decker could not recover

### OKOWA COMPUTER SYSTEM



Chiwa's SAN number from Orion's optical chip, then he will have to find the unlisted number (SK rulebook p.100).

SAN Orange-4, Access (5),  
SAN#8942500

SPU-1 Orange-4, Barrier(4),  
Killer(4)

SPU-2 Orange-3, Barrier(4), Data-  
Routing for Building Operations

SPU-3 Orange-5, Barrier(4), Trace  
and Dump(4), Data Routing for  
Research and Development Department

I/O Orange-3, Access(4), Operator  
Terminal

CPU Red-5, Barrier(4), Blaster(5)  
SM-1 Green-3, Operates inventory  
machinery.

SM-2 Orange-4, Monitors and  
controls laboratory instruments.

DS-1 Green-4, Inventory List, no  
value.

DS-2 Orange-4, Barrier(4), List of  
orders and suppliers. Records show  
that Dr. Dorean Peaks made a special  
order on July 3rd for grey rats  
instead of standard white mice. 2  
files worth 12,000 nuyen total.

DS-3 Red-6, Access(4), Trace and  
Burn(5), Research Data. 5 files worth



150,000 nuyen. The genetic engineering files on the development of the 3-day carrier strain of Vitas-3 are here. The files are extremely technical.

DS-4 Red-5, Barrier(4), Killer(6), One file worth 45,000 nuyen. Dr. Peaks' lab journal. Pertinent entries: June 28-Might get a chance to test the new strain. Will have to alter it for rodent carrier with 3 day life span for carrier. Infestation will peak and die out in 72 hours as carriers die off. August 29-Success. DT-100 test was successful on rodent sample of 20. Max. life span 81 hours. November 12-Infestation of thirty specimens by agents. November 18-Unforeseen complications. Paranormal species with pathogen resistance may have become carrier.

## Yakuza Connection

At some point, the characters should start to wonder how they're going to profit from this mess. If they come up with schemes of their own, such as selling the story to the media, the GM should encourage them to pursue those routes. If their motivation slacks off, or the GM wants to utilize the Yakuza, use the information below.

Whenever the characters are alone, they will be visited by Mr. Daimari, a Kobun of the Daimari Yakuza clan. Mr. Daimari is the nephew of the Oyabun. He will be accompanied by two bodyguards. Use Fixer contact stats for Daimari and Street Samurai archetype stats for the bodyguards. Daimari has come to strike a deal with the characters concerning their role in the Okowa affair. During the negotiations, the GM should feel free to assume that Daimari knows quite a lot about the characters, especially their actions since they received the chip from Orion. This omniscient knowledge gathered by the Yakuza information network will help make Daimari seem more powerful and worthy of respect.

Daimari will open negotiations, "It is the custom of my family to take severe action upon both the giver and receiver of goods taken from my family, however, my revered uncle has decided to grant an exception in

this case. In return, we would like our property returned and any profits in information or goods that you have made by it refunded to us." Daimari will then negotiate for the chip and try to learn what the players have uncovered in their own investigation. He will demand the chip back, but will pay for information the characters have uncovered if it is worthwhile.

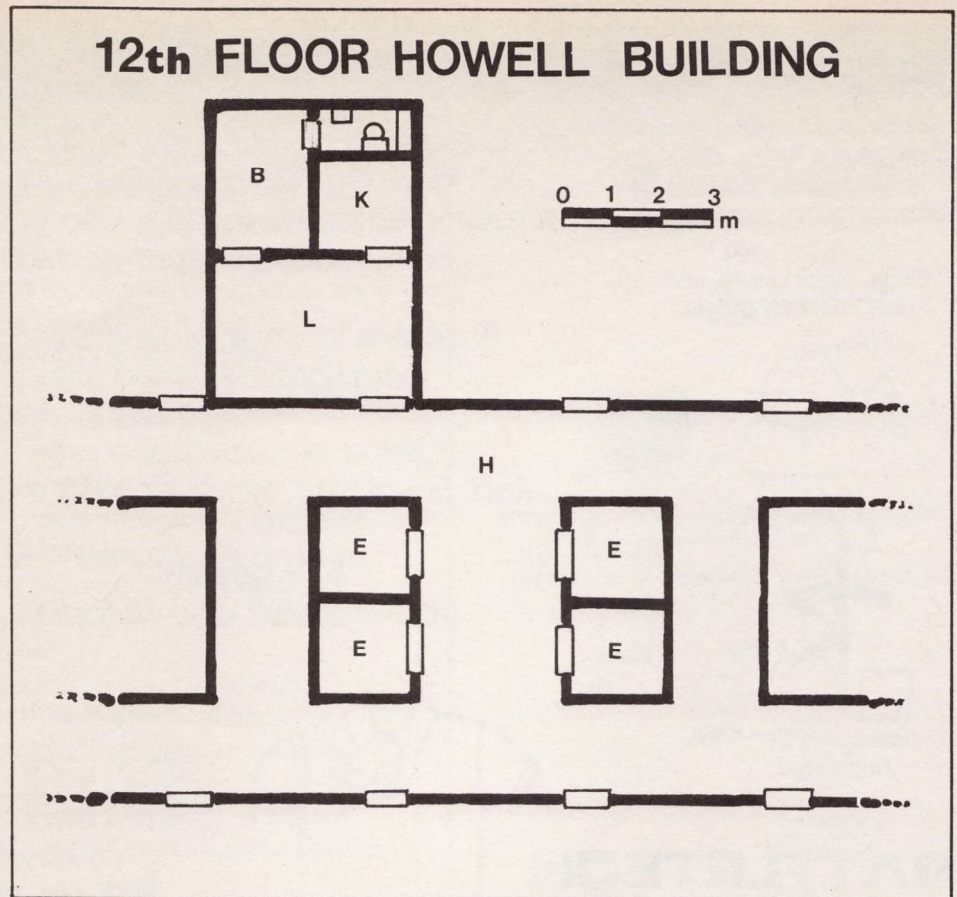
Daimari will pay 5,000 nuyen for the information gathered from the chip, 10,000 or less for the information the characters gathered from the **Information** section, depending on the quantity and quality of information collected. Also, if the characters have decked the Chiwa system, Daimari will know this and will definitely press for information uncovered from that run. He will offer to fence the datasteal on the spot at a base fence rate of 40%. If the players have not run the Chiwa system yet, Daimari will offer them a flat 50,000 nuyen to do the decking job. All of the payment figures are open to Negotiation as per the SR rules.

If the players have pieced together enough of the storyline to pin the infestation on Chiwa, and they relate that information to

Daimari, he will offer them a job. The Yakuza want blackmail evidence to milk nuyen and influence from Okowa. The Chiwa computer files are half of the battle, but Daimari needs a living carrier to match the disease with the genetic formula found in the Chiwa system. Daimari will offer the characters 20,000 nuyen each to enter the closed Howell building of the projects and capture a Devil Rat carrier. Daimari will arrange a meeting to pick up the specimen.

## Build a Better Mousetrap

The Howell building is a desolate brick tower. All of the ground floor entrances are plastered with warning signs from the city health board. Although the tenement is deserted, the projects area is active day and night. The characters should have little trouble blending into the scene, unless they pull up in a Eurocar Westwind or something glamorous. No one will go asking questions if the characters break into the Howell building, though someone might shout them a warning, "Hey, it ain't safe in there...", I say it ain't safe, aw go on then you slottin' fools."





Unless the characters have use of the Detect Devil Rat spell, they have a long search ahead of themselves. A magician can choose to go astral to search down the rats, but when he finds the Devil Rat nest on the twelfth floor, he will be attacked by a horde of the dual nature Critters.

The Howell Building

E - Elevator

H - Hallway

L - Living Room Cubicle #1209. The furnishings have been shredded by the Devil Rats.

K - Kitchen

B - Bedroom. This is the den of 12 Devil Rats. See **Paranormal Animals of North America** for stats. Each rat carries the Vitas-3 strain developed by Chiwa Biotech. A character will be infected with the disease on a roll of 1 or 2 if damaged by a bite.

The characters will have more than the Devil Rats to worry about. Chiwa has sent their extermination team into the building to kill the Devil Rats and destroy the evidence of Okowa's schemes. The team will

come up on the elevators as the characters are finishing their struggle with the Devil Rats. The Chiwa team will attempt to kill the characters and cleanse the scene. The Gamemaster should balance the Chiwa team for the size of the characters' group.

Jara Thompson - Use Former Wage Mage stats with Fighter orientation and Combat Spell Focus (2).

Grade Barrow - Use Street Samurai stats.

4 Chiwa Agents - Use Company Man Contact stats.

## Conclusion

If the characters successfully retrieve the Devil Rat specimen, Daimari will meet them as planned. He will thank them, pay them and depart. Later, the characters will hear that the housing contract was awarded to Southeast Real Estate in conjunction with an unnamed Japanese firm.

If the characters did not pursue the Yakuza employment opportunities, then it is up to the GM to

conclude the adventure appropriately. There should be a small media report of the results. Southeast Real Estate will be awarded the housing contract unless the characters expose Okowa's plot.

## Karma Awards

Survival 1

Exposing Okowa to the public 2

Ending the Infestation (killing all the Devil Rats) 1

Decking the Chiwa System (decker only) 1

Using Detect Devil Rat spell (hermetic magician only) 1

The characters may also gain Mr. Daimari as a Yakuza contact if they treated him with respect and were professional throughout the run. There may be considerable nuyen awards for the run.

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