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FEATURE REVIEW



PEOPLE
OF THE
LAND



SHADOWS ACROSS THE BIG EASY



C.R. Shaver & Jason Rush

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SHADOWS ACROSS THE BIG EASY

For over three centuries New Orleans has stood apart from other North American cities. In the 21st century, the age of urban sprawls and megacorps, it stands out even more, an island of antebellum charm in a chaotic sea of high technology and reawakened magic.

But like all sprawls, New Orleans has an underbelly. The shadows on its streets are long and dark, and in its slums are those willing to do anything to escape their life of poverty and frustration. And recently, in its hot urban nights, an ancient evil has been awakened and hungers. For all its gentility, New Orleans is a

dark and dangerous place, and anyone stalking its shadows must always beware what may be stalking them.

>[Remember that old shadowrunner's adage: never do more than you can get away with, never take more than you can sprint with, and if first you don't succeed, try something easier.]<

- Pressbutton (20:21:34/1-23-52)

HISTORY

EARLY 21st CENTURY

The end of the 20th century was not kind to New Orleans. A failing economy, skyrocketing crime and unemployment, and a corrupt city and state government were stripping New Orleans of its glory. The city's population was dwindling, its citizens seeking greener pastures to

the North and West. For New Orleans, the 21st century looked bleak.

The "Resource Rush" of 2002-2008 changed that. Able to use resources that had been protected, corporations began to flock the Gulf region, several of them settling in New Orleans. This sudden influx of money and industry stopped New Orleans's downward spiral, sending the economy on a sharp upswing. The anti-corp violence that flared in other cities was almost unknown in New Orleans; most people were happy too see the corps pumping money into the city.

As years passed, however, things changed. City limits expanded to allow for more industry, but the population was growing beyond what the city could hold. Slums started to appear, and the problems that plagued New Orleans in the late 20th century were seen again. The city government, still riddled with corruption, raised taxes to aid in dealing with the rising crime rate. If any of the money ever reached the street cops, it did no good. Several corps responded to the new taxes and rising crime rate by moving elsewhere. Anti-corp sentiment and violence began to grow, crime continued to increase, and a future that looked bright for New Orleans began to be overlaid with shades of gray.

THE CAS

The secession of the CAS in 2034 did not have a great effect on New Orleans. The change did not hit home until 2035, when the CAS Senate chose Atlanta over New



The 1st in a series of five articles & adventures
detailing the New Orleans Area
by C. R. Shaver & Jason Rush

NEW ORLEANS AT A GLANCE

POPULATION: 4,000,000 +

Human: 59%

Elf: 14%

Dwarf: 5%

Ork: 19%

Troll: 2%

Other: 1%

DENSITY IN POPULATED AREAS: 400 + per square mile

PER CAPITA INCOME: 25,000

POPULATION BELOW POVERTY LEVEL: 30%

PERSONS ON FORTUNE'S ACTIVE TRADER LIST: 1.5%

PERSONS OF CORPORATE AFFILIATION: 35%

PERSONS OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT: 3%

MEANS OF COMMUTING TO WORK:

Air Commuter: 1%

Electric Vehicle: 21%

Internal Combustion Vehicle: 20%

Public Transportation: 47%

On-Site Workers: 10%

Other: 1%

EDUCATION:

Drop-out: 17%

High School Equivalency: 51%

College Equivalency: 22%

Advanced Studies Certificates: 10%

HOSPITALS: 54%

FELONIOUS CRIME RATE (N.O. Metropolitan Security Statistics): 25 per 1000 annum

LTG ACCESS NUMBER: 1826

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Orleans as the capital. This decision led to an animosity between the two cities that still lingers.

>[Yeah, so be real careful wearing those Falcons or Braves t-shirts on the streets.]<

- Cowboy (16:00:31/1-05-52)

It was during the first years after the formation of the CAS that New Orleans stopped expanding and the areas that exist today sprang up. The area known as the Corp Sector became a virtual fortress, with both metro and corp security aggressively patrolling its streets. Most of the city's have-nots were relocated to ramshackle projects in the Barrens, where they were promptly forgotten.

The independence fever that swept North America eventually hit New Orleans. In 2039 a majority of the city's black population demanded that a portion of the city be set aside for them to set up their own community. Despite protests from both corp and civic leaders, the city gave in to the group's demands, and the area known as the Zulu Nation was created. The Nation is a city within a city, with its own laws and culture. Recent relations between city government and the Nation have been strained due to the Nation's constant demands for more land, but there have been no open conflicts between the two.

>[A word about the Zulus. They're real nice if you go down there to blow some nuyen, but if they catch you on a shadowrun down there . . . well, it could get ugly.]<

- Cowboy (17:35:31/1-08-52) >[You shouldn't be running against the Nation. We mind our business, you mind yours.]<

- Iklwa (21:34:08/1-08-52)

In 2040 New Orleans orks and trolls also demanded their own community. This time the city was slow to respond, but eventually they gave in. Almost the entire troll population and over half the city's ork population now live in the area known as Orktown.

>[Anybody for a trog hunt?]<

- The Duke (12:36:16/1-02-52)

>[Bring it on, breeder.]<

- Troll Patrol (9:39:34/1-04-52)

NOSFERATU

Since the Awakening New Orleans has seen its share of paranormal activity. The appearance of the dragon Falthur in 2025 and the banishment of four fire elementals rampaging through the Barrens in 2039 are two of the most famous occurrences.

But the most frightening and deadly occurrence has been the city's problem with Human-Metahuman Vampire Virus. New Orleans has always been plagued by HMMHV, with roughly twice as many cases occurring in New Orleans as in such sprawls as Atlanta and Seattle. Doctors could find no reason for this, but several mages offered the opinion that New Orleans has always been a haven for vampires, even before the awakening.

The city's problem with HMMHV was kept fairly quiet until February 23, 2044, when three humans and an elf nearly destroyed a Downtown Metro Security precinct. Two humans and the elf were killed, but the remaining human

was captured and discovered to be a vampire. Before her execution the vampire revealed that a small group of her kind, led by an ancient vampire/mage named Bartholomew, was plotting to conquer New Orleans. "This is our age, not the age of man," she said. "We will rain hell on this city until the blood runs in the streets and we turn it into our hunting ground."

This statement threw the city into a panic. Within days, more attacks occurred, all directed against corp and city property. These attacks were all the deadlier because of the creatures that carried them out: ghouls, hellhounds, and elementals, all led by one or more of the vampires.

Metro Security and the local national guard were no match for these new opponents. While small in number, they were much more powerful than the squatters and street people Metro Security knew. The attacks grew worse, particularly in the Downtown and Riverfront areas, and rumors began to spread that the vampires were using some kind of new and powerful magic. As the death toll rose the people clamored for something to be done.

In response, the city government organized a group of Metro Security officers who were specially trained and equipped to battle vampires and ghouls. Combined with mages able to fight the elementals and other Awakened creatures, this elite force was named the "Night Stalkers". They were sent out in two to four-man patrols to hunt their prey.

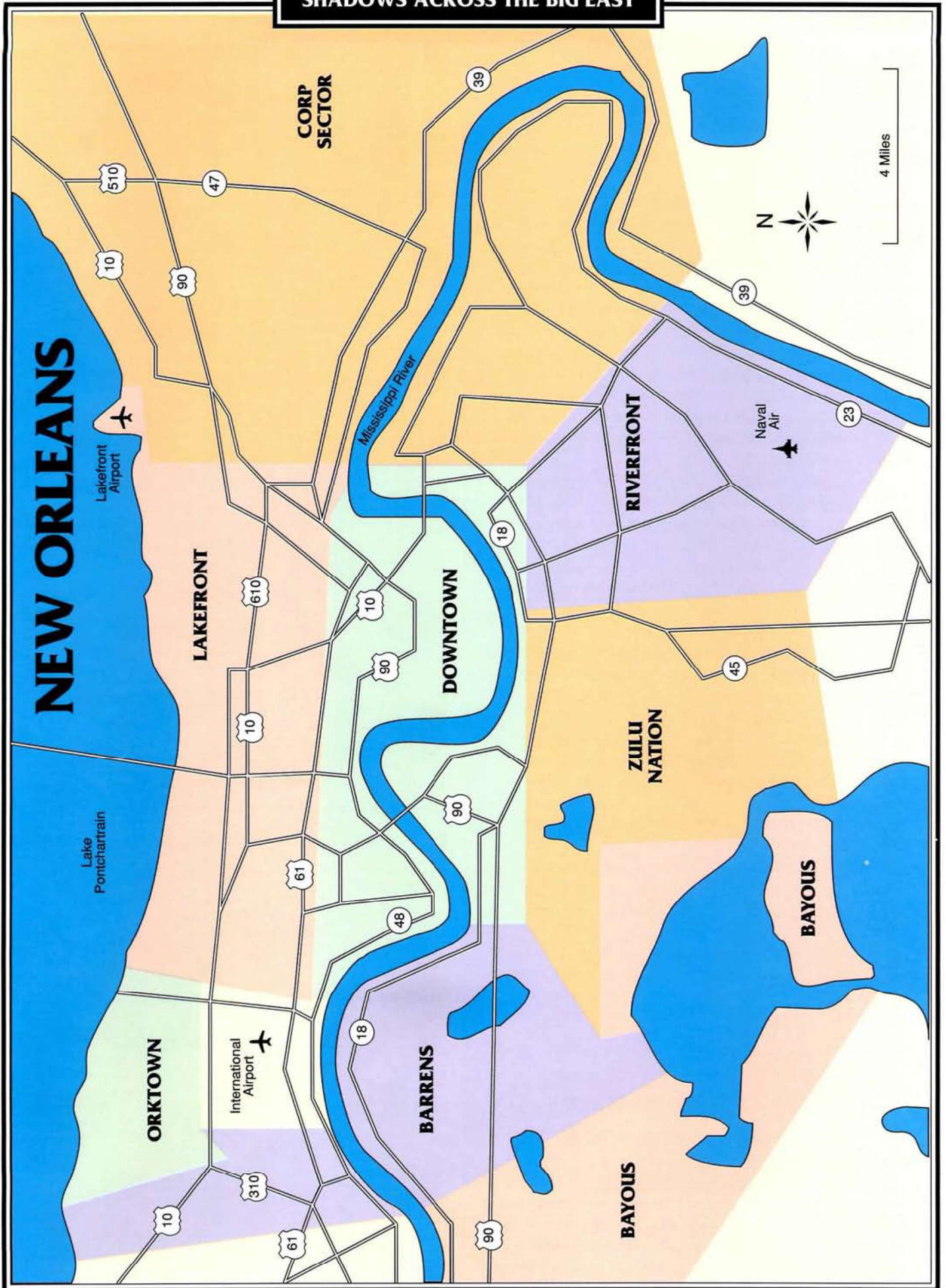
The brutal hit-and-run commando tactics of the Night Stalkers were hugely successful. Within six months their nocturnal hunts had scored twenty vampire kills; every suspected member of the conclave except Bartholomew was dead. The closest they ever came to capturing the group's leader was finding a massive library of grimoires and magical tomes that belonged to him. Magical experts who examined the books called them the blackest magic, dealing with beings alien to this dimension and how to summon them. The books are currently held, under lock, key, and spell, at Tulane University.

On November 6, 2044, the mayor declared New Orleans's war on the vampires finished, even though Bartholomew was never found. Rumors persist that powerful vampires are still alive and plotting revenge, but no new attacks against the city have occurred. The Night Stalkers have been kept active to deal with the unusually large numbers of HMMHV carriers that exist in New Orleans.

Research at the Tulane Thaumaturgical Center shows that certain locations in the world influence any magic used near them, and that the more powerful locations can breed their own magical energy. Some locations said to be able to exert such power are Stonehenge, Easter Island, the Great Pyramid, and Native American burial grounds. It is believed that HMMHV thrives in the magical energy of New Orleans, resulting in the proliferation of vampires in the New Orleans sprawl. Ghouls, on the other hand, flock to the city for more tangible reasons; the large number of graveyards scattered throughout New Orleans offer them a cornucopia of decaying flesh.

>[Whatever you do, don't go playing at the old Riverwalk

SHADOWS ACROSS THE BIG EASY



after dark. There's more than bums and deckheads there. Why'dja think they calls it Nitemare Alley?]<

- Night Stalker (1:31:21/1-17-52)

>[Ah, the children of the night. What music they make . . .]<

- no name logged (2:50:31/1-24-52)

RETURN TO THE OLD SOUTH

By 2050, New Orleans had reached some degree of stability. The brutal war with the vampires was forgotten, the economy was steady, and everything seemed to be going well for the city. A fad among the wealthy that has lasted until today is a return to the fashion and lifestyle of the antebellum South. Steel and glass condos have been replaced by stately plantation homes; seeing these in the Riverfront district, wedged between dance clubs and casinos, can be a jarring experience. Privately owned and magnificently crafted paddle boats ride up and down the river and into Lake Pontchartrain carrying the elegant parties of their wealthy owners.

This fad has infuriated the Zulu Nation, who look upon it as a reminder of their subjugation and slavery. Vandalism and arson have risen in the districts that have enjoyed a return to the Old South, and most of these actions have been blamed on citizens of the Zulu Nation. These occurrences have led to new tension between the city and the Nation.

A stronger Metro Security presence has been felt, and both the Zulu Nation and metahuman activists complain of police discrimination and brutality. Corp security has grown even stronger and corporate citizens feel safer in the Corporate Sector than the rest of the city.

But, as always, the city and the corps cast shadows. And there will always be those who look to the shadows for money, thrills, or safety. In New Orleans, as in all sprawls, this is a fact of life.

>[Ooh, the shadows!!!! It just gives me the goosebumps!]<

- Johnny R. (4:51:14/1-12-52)

>[Watch yer butt in Corp Sec. Those goons shoot first and don't ask no questions at all. One second you're king of the streets, the next you're another "missing SIN"]<

- The Saint (12:22:41/1-09-52)

>[Beware, my friends, of any matrix ventures you take into the corporate systems. Many have been sculpted into tranquil plantation scenes; however, around every corner may be black ice in the form of an eight foot tall Confederate soldier manning a vicious cannon.]<

- Chimera (21:00:52/1-19-52)

FACTS AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

GOVERNMENT

The city government of New Orleans is led by a democratically-elected mayor and city council who serve four-year terms. Michelle Hebert is the current mayor, elected to her second term in 2050. There is no limit to the number of terms a mayor or council member may serve. Unlike most



large sprawls, New Orleans handles almost all of its civic responsibilities rather than contracting them out. The city has its own law enforcement, fire control, power, and transportation departments. The only service not provided by the city is sanitation control, which is contracted out to EWE3 Industries.

In 2014 Louisiana moved the state capital from Baton Rouge to New Orleans. Almost all state offices are now located in the mass of buildings known as the Cityplex that lie in the shadow of the Superdome, the huge enclosed entertainment arena. State government consists of a two-chamber legislature whose members are elected to four-year terms. The executive branch is headed by the governor, who also serves four-year terms. Edwin W. Edwards III is the present governor, having stepped up from the office of assistant governor after the mysterious disappearance of Ivory McCabe in 2051.

Both the state and city governments are rumored to be among the most corrupt in the CAS, but no evidence of this has been presented.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Most of the daily law enforcement in New Orleans is handled by Metropolitan Security and megacorp security. While Metro Security does patrol corp-owned property, most of the megacorps employ large security forces so they can deal with their own problems. Usually, any criminal apprehended on corporate property is arrested by corp security and turned over to Metro Security for prosecution. Enforcement in the Corporate Sector is usually much tougher than in areas patrolled by the city.

The majority of the city is patrolled by New Orleans Metropolitan Security. Metro Security maintains several forts throughout the city and patrols with cars, motorcycles, and helicopters.

Metro Security is a large organization with all branches normally associated with a police force. In addition to these, two elite divisions also exist: the Night Stalkers, which handle all cases dealing with HMMHV, ghouls, and similar creatures; and the Paranormal Investigation Bureau, or "Metacops," who deal with cases involving magic and the Awakened. Despite the government's reputation for corruption, New Orleans Metropolitan Security is considered to be one of the cleanest law enforcement agencies in the CAS.

>[Honest NOMS? Ha, ha, ha, ha . . .]<

- Johnny R. (17:28:31/1-15-52)

In case of emergency both CAS troops and the Louisiana State Guard can be called upon. However, the State Guard is really nothing more than good ol' boys with shotguns, so dealing with real trouble falls on the shoulders of the CAS soldiers.

CRIME

Like all sprawls, New Orleans is plagued by crime. Even with stepped-up law enforcement, the city's crime rate continues to rise. Most crimes occur in the Barrens and

Riverfront districts, which also happen to be home to most of the city's poor.

Both the Yakuza and Seoulpa Rings are strong in New Orleans, but another form of organized crime is on the rise. Vicious "Krewes" of metahumans are attempting to gain a foothold by controlling the city's drug and black market trades. In the few years they have existed the Krewes have made the New Orleans black market second only to that of Atlanta. Everything from BTL chips to heavy military weaponry can be bought from the right Orktown connection.

The Yakuza and the Seoulpa Rings have responded to this new threat by working together. While territorial battles between Rings and wars between Yakuza organizations still occur, conflict between the two groups is rare. Their combined strength has kept the Krewes in the minor leagues in all areas except the black market.

Youth gangs are common in New Orleans. There are currently four large gangs in the city, with almost every smaller turf gang owing allegiance to one of the four. They are the Wargs, who limit membership to orks and trolls; Stormtroopers, who recruit only humans; the mostly Asian Dragons; and the 3-5-7s, who have no membership limits. The Rings recruit from the Dragons while the Krewes recruit older members of the Wargs. Rumors link the Stormtroopers to the Humanis Policlub, but no connection has been proven.

Go-gangs are on the rise in New Orleans, ignoring the authority and power of the city's organized crime. They rely on their speed and savvy to protect them from Metro Security and the ire of the larger criminal organizations. Go-gangs tend to be much older, tougher, and meaner than street gangs.

>[Turf tips: Wargs control Orktown, Dragons hold Lake Front and Downtown, Stormtroopers thrive in the Bayous and Riverfront, and the 3-5-7s are everywhere. Watch them colors.]<

- Cowboy (21:44:42/1-04-52)

LANGUAGE

In New Orleans the street language City Speak is similar to that used in other sprawls. The main difference is that the New Orleans dialect of City Speak has a definite Acadian flavor, with both French and Cajun vocabularies exerting a strong influence.

Below are some slang terms used in the New Orleans sprawl.

Aint (n.) - A poor homeless person.

BFE (n.) (vulgar) - An out-of-the-way or remote place, usually difficult to reach.

Cher (adj.) - A person the speaker is very fond of.

Krewe (n.) - A metahuman criminal organization; adapted from the old Mardi Gras Krewes, groups who conducted the city's famous parades.

Lagniappe (n.) - Something extra; a gift.

Nitemare Alley (n.) - The old Riverwalk mall, closed since 2010. A haven for the homeless, the name comes from the number of deaths and disappearances that have occurred there over the last five years.

FRENCH QUARTER MAP

LANDMARKS

1. Jackson Square
2. St. Louis Cathedral
3. Superdome and Annexes
4. Cityplex
5. Jax Brewery
6. Aquarium of the Americas
7. St. Louis Cemetery
8. Tulane Medical Center
9. Mora Memorial Hospital
10. CAS Post Office
11. - 13. Metropolitan Security Stations
14. Nitemore Alley

HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS

15. New Orleans Hilton Riverside and Towers
16. Hyatt Regency New Orleans
17. Bourbon Orleans Hotel
18. Omni Royal Orleans
19. International Center YMCA
20. Creole Palace

21. Miagi's (Japanese)
22. Seafood Specialties
23. Eat-It-Quick (Chinese)
24. Taco Pup

CLUBS

25. Apollyon Club
26. Lace & Steel
27. Club Vampyre
28. The Matrix
29. Arkham Asylum
30. Rue Royale
31. The Safehouse
32. Enchantment
33. Slodance
34. Magic Forest

BARs

35. Captain Willie's
36. Chatterbox Cafe
37. Hog's Breath Cafe
38. Nightwind (elf)
39. The Double Edge (dwarf)
40. Solly's Place (ork/troll)

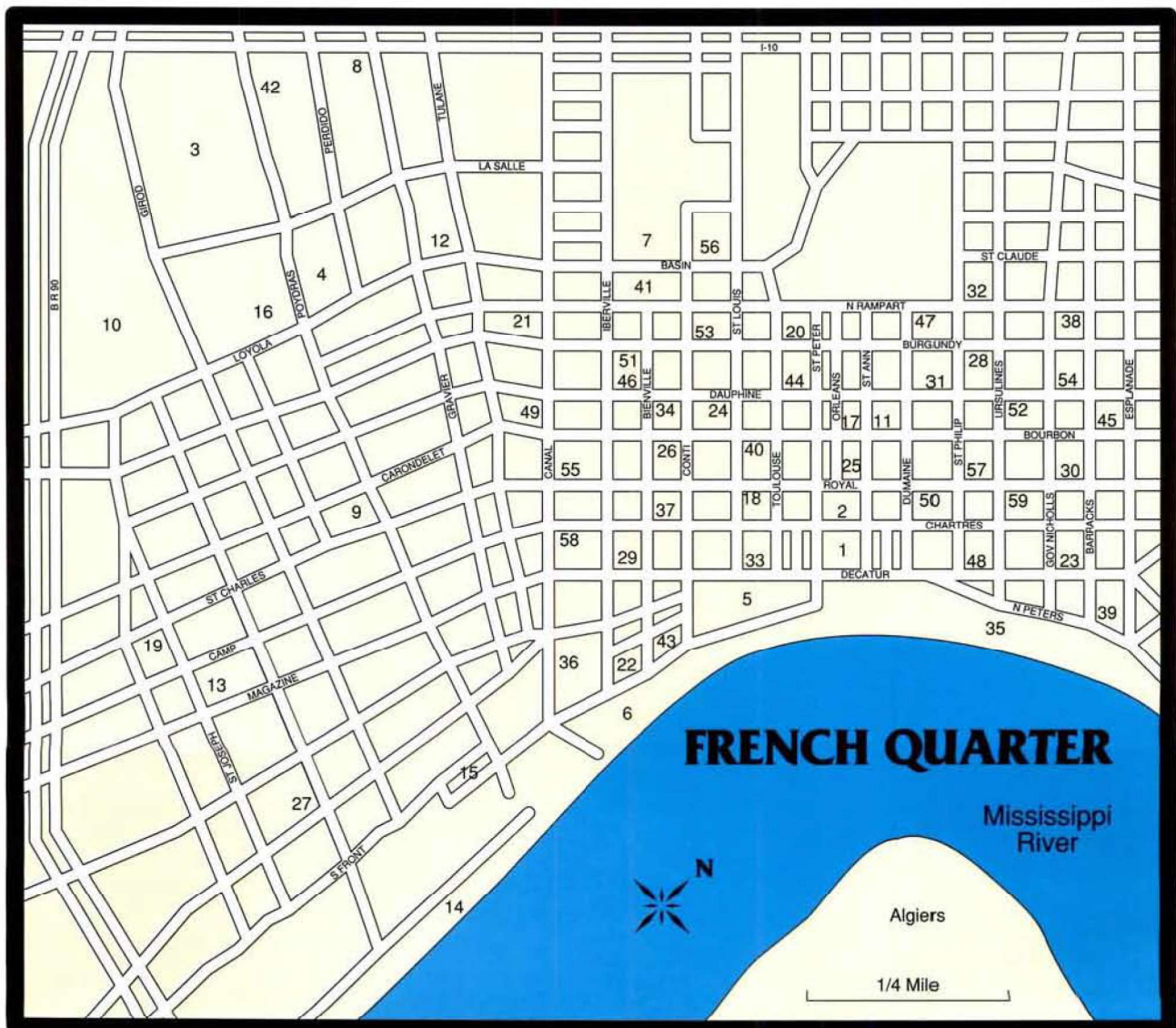
41. Firedrake (ork/troll)
42. Champions Sports Bar
43. Storm Warning
44. Killian's
45. Kyoto West (Japanese)
46. Blackhawk's
47. Fox and Hound
48. Lafitte's Rest
49. Sorento's

BORDELLOS

50. Midnight Express
51. New Mustang
52. Different Dreams

OTHER STUFF

53. Bodies to Order
54. Arnie's Armory (gun shop)
55. Firepower (gun shop)
56. Le Veau's Magic Shop
57. Spell Supplies, Inc.
58. Cane Curios
59. Order of the Invisible Fire Chapterhouse (magical group)



NOMS (n.) - Acronym for New Orleans Metropolitan Security. Once used by Metro Security itself, it is now a derogatory term.

The Quarter (n.) - The French Quarter.

Slammers (n.) - Youth gangs not interested in money or goods, wishing only to hurt and kill people and destroy property.

Yat (n.) - Any native of New Orleans. Considered an insult if used by a non-native.

CORPORATIONS AND INDUSTRY

As in the 20th century, New Orleans is home to several petrochemical corporations. Such corps as Gulfstar, Petrocorp, and Exell are based in the city. But these are not the only players in New Orleans's corporate scene. Biogenesis, North America's largest biotechnology and genetics research firm, has its main labs in New Orleans. Representing the entertainment industry, Sony Music maintains a large office and recording facility in the Corporate Sector, and Tara Trids & Simsense is based in the city. And, as in the past, New Orleans is still one of the hottest night spots in the world, offering enough clubs, bars, and restaurants to satisfy the most jaded tastes.

New Orleans is also one of the major ports of the CAS. If something needs to be sent by boat, it usually begins or ends its journey in New Orleans. There are over seven major shipping lines, both luxury and commercial, based in the city.

ENTERTAINMENT AND TOURISM

LEGAL AND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

New Orleans Legal Aid (NOLA) maintains an office and 24-hour hotline in the city. They may be reached at 555-NOLA. NOLA has a listing of lawyers able to meet most needs; metahumans will be referred to attorneys skilled in handling their unique problems.

The city has many clinics and hospitals capable of dealing with any medical emergency. The CAS Regional Research Hospital specializes in cyberwear design and installation; the New Orleans Children's Hospital provides care to the city's youngsters; and the Pendleton Memorial Metahuman Hospital treats the bulk of the city's metahuman population.

New Orleans paramedics are given special training in treating combat-related injuries and injuries to metahumans. And finally, for those who can afford it, there are the omnipresent DocWagonTM van and helicopters that speed to aid their customers.

ALCOHOL, CHIPS, AND PROSTITUTION

While much of the CAS maintains strict control over the sale of legal drugs and alcohol, New Orleans is lax in enforcing any "blue laws". Beer, wine and hard liquor are sold in almost all grocery and convenience stores. Prices are very reasonable, with a bottle of 100 proof whiskey costing 12 and a six-pack of beer selling for 4.

BTL chip abuse is common in New Orleans. While the

city pays lip service to the CAS policy of cracking down on illegal simsense chips, Metro Security makes very few arrests for possession or distribution of BTL chips. This attitude is becoming very unpopular with most of New Orleans's citizens, since it has brought many of the BTL chip addicts from other CAS cities to New Orleans.

Prostitution has been legal within New Orleans city limits since 2030. All prostitutes are required to be licensed and to undergo regular health checks. Most ignore these requirements, however, so dealing with someone "off the streets" can be risky.

There are seven bordellos currently operating in New Orleans; the three largest are the New Mustang, the Midnight Express, and the Different Dreams, which specializes in both metahuman customers and employees. All bordello workers are licensed and guaranteed to be healthy. In addition to these legal establishments, there are several illegal escort services in operation. While these are cheaper than the bordellos, the workers are usually not licensed and there is no guarantee of the customer's health or safety.

GAMBLING

Riverboat gambling became legal in Louisiana in 1991; casino gambling became legal in New Orleans in 2010. Since then twelve major casinos have been built, with four more currently under construction. All are located in the Lakefront district, easily accessible to corporate gamblers and tourists alike, and are decorated in the garish style of Las Vegas — bright neon and half-naked showgirls.

The largest casino, the Golden Dragon, is built on an artificial island in Lake Pontchartrain. Ferries carry gamblers to and from the Dragon, which includes a thousand-room hotel and stage shows that rival those of Las Vegas's heyday. The casino's island serves as home to the western dragon Falthur, the owner of both casino and island.

Control of the casinos is split between the megacorps, the Yakuza, and the Seoupa Rings, with the Krewes trying to muscle in. Enough casino money is laundered into the city government to keep Metro Security away from the casinos. Any trouble in the gambling palaces is handled by casino security, and they play a lot rougher than any street cop.

The five megacorp-owned casinos are reputed to be more honest than those operated by the Yakuza and the Seoupa Rings, but all odds still favor the house.

ENTERTAINMENT

New Orleans is home to several of the CAS's best nightclubs. Tipatina's, the Chatterbox Cafe, the Blue Nova, and the Lace and Steel are some of the largest. All nightclub goers are guaranteed the best music, food, and drink in the CAS. The best clubs are in the Downtown district, many in the Superdome Annexes, allowing street people and corporates to rub shoulders at the bar or on the dance floor.

The Lakefront district boasts several private clubs, usually catering to the corporates who can afford their prices. These clubs offer gambling, food, liquor, companionship, and unique entertainment to their customers. This entertainment

runs from BTL chips to the world's foremost illusionist shows to troll sex shows. Most cabbies know the best clubs and can usually find one to suit any taste. The most famous private clubs include the Chateaux, located in the Lakefront and Blackhawks, located in Orktown and serving an almost exclusive ork and troll clientele.

New Orleans is home to several professional sports teams. The Saints football team plays its home games in the Superdome. Due to recent violence between Saints fans and Atlanta Falcons fans, all spectators are now scanned for weapons before entering the stadium.

The Superdome is also home field to the Corsairs baseball team and Hurricane combat bike team. A new Urban Brawl franchise, the New Orleans Warlocks, begins play next year, playing in the Dutch Moriel Memorial Arena.

New Orleans also boasts the Simdome, a huge structure built specifically for simsense performances. Both the Superdome and the UNO Lakefront Arena have hosted some of the biggest musical acts on tour, including such notables as Navigation X, Black Ice, and the Wild Hunt.

In addition to these many attractions, New Orleans contains cinemas, art galleries, museums, and other cultural attractions located throughout the city. For anyone seeking entertainment, New Orleans offers an unlimited number of diversions.

>[And for that special entertainment, stand on any Barrens street corner on Saturday night and watch the bullets and spells fly!!!!]<

- Night Stalker (13:21:49/2-06-52)

NEIGHBORHOODS

THE BARRENS

The Barrens are home to most of New Orleans's homeless and poor. The area is dominated by deteriorating housing projects and rubble-strewn vacant lots. No industries are based in the Barrens, so inevitably most of its citizens turn to less-than-legal methods to support themselves. Several small turf gangs call the Barrens home, and both the Krewes and the Seoulpa Rings have illegal labs and warehouses scattered throughout the district.

Due to the fact that Metro Security only enters the Barrens when it has to, the area has become a favorite area to arrange deals, pick up hot property, and conduct all manner of illegal business. Showing a little nuyen (or a large gun) to any of the area's numerous squatters can buy silence or a lookout.

The lack of police presence also makes the Barrens one of the most violent areas in New Orleans. Gang wars and firefights are common; at night the entire district becomes one huge combat zone, and anyone not ready to shoot to kill is advised to stay out of the Barrens.

THE BAYOUS

The Bayous is the collective name given to a number of small communities scattered throughout the swamps southwest of urban New Orleans. Most of these are just ten

to fifteen houses gathered around small stores and businesses, but there are also a few large communities and single houses. A large number of dwarves live in the Bayous, and they have gained the reputation of being the best boatmen and swamp guides in New Orleans. Their sleek Samuvani-Criscraft Otters and Aztec Nightrunners are familiar sights at the bars scattered throughout this region.

Most inhabitants of the Bayous are fisherman, bringing in much of the fresh seafood used in the restaurants of New Orleans. Those that do not fish usually work in the city, but some make their nuyen in somewhat shady activities; the Bayous are a haven for small-time smugglers, drug dealers, and dealers in the black market. Hurricane Joe's, a large bar built on pillars in the middle of Lake Cataouatche, is the unofficial headquarters of the Bayou underground, and offers a Metro Security-free atmosphere for those wishing to deal.

The Bayous is a dangerous district, and not just because of the criminals that live there. Most of the area is swamp, and can be deadly to someone not familiar with the land, its animals, and its Awakened creatures. Hiring a guide to lead you through the Bayous is not just a good idea, it is a necessity.

>[The best guides are dwarves; don't ask me why, they just are. If you've got to go into the Bayous, go to Captain Willie's (on N. Peters, by the river) and take your pick of bayou dwarves there. Anyone you hire can do the job.]<

- Cowboy (14:08:59/1-12-52)

>[Cowboy, you're crazy. Ain't no little dwarf gonna lead you through the bayous like a good, New Orleans coon ass. We leave the beardfaces on the dock, cher.]<

- Ragin' Cajun (1:16:58/1-17-52)

CORP SECTOR

Corp Sector is just that: the district where nearly all megacorporate offices and facilities are located. It dominates the western half of New Orleans with its gleaming skyscrapers and cold, antiseptic offices. Lying beside the squalor of Riverfront and the rugged nobility of Downtown, Corp Sector is a world of its own.

Towering above everything else in Corp Sector is the Star Needle, a 350-story spike of steel and glass. It is home to such diverse business as Tara Trids & Simsense, Duke Publishing, the Louisiana Lottery, and Biogenesis Laboratories. The top ten floors of the Star Needle belong to Lafayette's, the city's most famous and exclusive restaurant. Their waiting list is up to six months long, but special guests can get a reservation much sooner.

>[Call up Lafayette's and ask them the price of a corn dog! Haw!]<

- Johnny R. (22:06:52/2-04-52)

The businesses located in Corp Sector are literally too many to list. Such megacorps as Gulfstar, Petrocorp, Hakita Shipping, and CustomSteel Cybernetics have offices in the area. Plants line both sides of the Mississippi River as it cuts through Corp Sector, including the huge, city-like Petrocorp Fuel Processing Base. The Base has been taken to court by the CAS times for violating pollution standards, but so far

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Petrocorp has dodged all accusations.

The Southern Broadcasting Corporation is based in Corp Sector, maintaining a sprawl of office buildings beside their broadcast antenna, the second-tallest structure in the city. SBC is the main competition of Hisato-Turner Broadcasting in the CAS, and with the planned launch of the SBC space platform in 2054 hopes to pass HTB once and for all. Violent clashes between the security forces of the two corps have occurred in the past.

>[Sometimes a pirate broadcast pops up on the airwaves, and they can be interesting. Keep eyes and ears peeled for any, especially one called WSIN. It's wiz!]<

- Night Stalker (21:27:17/1-21-52)

>[I know a guy who ran a pirate station until SBC caught him. At least I think that's what happened. I haven't seen him since he got busted.]<

- Chimera (4:21:03/1-28-52)

Tulane University moved its campus to Corp Sector in 2025. Its sprawling grounds now lie beside Chalmette Military Academy, the largest academy of its kind in the CAS. The academy has graduated some of the world's best-known military and business leaders. Corp Sector is also home to the New Orleans Lakefront Airport, which accepts most of the city's corporate air traffic.

Corp Sector also contains most of the corporate workers' homes. Several of the more powerful executives maintain large mansions near the Lakefront district. Many of these expensive residences were built to resemble antebellum plantation homes, part of the Old South fad sweeping the city. Although the houses are attractive, it can be rather disconcerting to see a troll gate guard squeezed into a Rhett Butler costume.

Needless to say, there is a strong law enforcement presence in Corp Sector. Both Metro Security and corp security patrol its streets. Violent crime is rare, and criminals of any sort are usually swiftly apprehended.

>[In other words, watch your butt in Corp Sector.]<

- Cowboy (1:16:58/1-13-52)

DOWNTOWN

The Downtown district is the heart and soul of New Orleans. Its streets are constantly alive, tourists mixing with both shaikujin and shadowrunners. The best clubs, the best bars, and the most unique entertainment can all be found Downtown, along with some of the places that have made New Orleans famous.

Near the center of downtown is the French Quarter. There is something almost mystical about the Quarter; it seems to exist in its own time, untouched by the world around it. Even the Awakening had little effect on the French Quarter. The area has always had a magical aura. In an age where the unusual has become commonplace, there are still shadowy parts of the French Quarter where the bizarre still thrives.

It could be said that the French Quarter is one huge open-air club, with constant music and dance flowing through its streets. But for the serious clubgoers the place to be is the old Jax Brewery, which contains the city's hottest

night spots. A current favorite among the stylish is the Club Darklight. On any given night it plays host to a number of world-famous celebrities.

St. Louis Cathedral, perhaps the most famous historical structure in New Orleans, also stands in the French Quarter. Virtually unchanged since it was rebuilt in 1794, it remains the center of the city's Catholic community. In an area dominated by hedonism and mindless pleasure, St. Louis stands out as a symbol of restraint and morality.

Scattered throughout the French Quarter are a multitude of magic shops and street corner talismongers. There is also at least one bar, the Keep, that caters to an almost exclusively mage clientele. These factors have contributed to the French Quarter's reputation as the 'magic headquarters' of New Orleans.

The docks near the French Quarter serve the many riverboats that travel the Mississippi River. Riverboats offer gambling, entertainment, and a slow scenic trip up the river to those who can afford the cost; a three-day trip averages 2500.

Finally, the French Quarter is home to the Aquarium of the Americas, a massive display of the underwater world and its inhabitants. In addition to the sharks, stingrays, and other varieties of normal fish the Aquarium houses, there are also such unusual creatures as albino alligators and nagas on display. The Committee for Recognition of Awakened Creatures has tried to have the nagas removed and freed, but so far their attempts have failed.

A companion to the Aquarium is the Audubon Park and Zoo, one of the largest zoos in the CAS. The zoo includes a huge variety of animals, both mundane and Awakened. It is also home to the Capwell Primate Research Center, where experiments in simian intelligence are conducted. Downtown also contains the New Orleans International Airport, which serves as the city's primary commercial airport.

The busiest area of Downtown is the area surrounding the Superdome. Almost all city and state government offices are located in the massive sprawl of buildings known as the Cityplex, just a few blocks from the Superdome. The Superdome itself, besides being home to several New Orleans sports teams and a prime performance arena, is joined to the two Superdome Annexes, 50-story towers containing clubs, stores, and offices. The bottom twenty floors of west Annex are occupied by Crescent Mall, the city's largest shopping plaza. Crescent Mall contains the city's most fashionable clothing stores, the latest electronics and home entertainment buys, numerous restaurants, and various specialty stores.

Most of the Downtown district is a mix of clubs, small businesses and apartment buildings. There are almost no corporate offices Downtown, and the few that are present isolate themselves behind razor wire-topped walls and security guards. Several of the more expensive condos and apartment buildings have followed this lead. All of the heavily-secured areas, corporate or private, are located in north Downtown, near the Lakefront district. North of Tulane Avenue, Downtown is all clean and pleasant, with small businesses, clean apartment complexes, and a few suburban

areas that smiling sararimen and their families call home.

But south of Tulane Avenue things grow darker. Instead of grocery stores there are gun shops and smoke-filled bars; pleasant condos and houses are replaced with buildings that are either on the verge of collapse or have become fortresses; and the suit and tie of the corp employee becomes the chains and leather of the street samurai. South of Tulane Avenue is the real Downtown.

Downtown is the haunt of any serious shadowrunner. In its clubs and bars, or even on its street corners, jobs are discussed and prices are set. Any information or merchandise can be found on its streets, for a price. It is also the site of numerous brawls, gang wars, and occasional firefights. Metro Security maintains a strong presence Downtown, but even they cannot stop the occasional flareup.

All of the vital areas of Downtown, and in turn New Orleans, are located in this more dangerous part of the district. Anyone not experienced in walking its streets is advised to spend little time sightseeing; Downtown's streets are home to some of the city's toughest customers, and the predators that stalk its shadows show no mercy.

>[Don't believe the hype. As long as you keep your eyes and ears open, Downtown's fairly safe.]<

- Cowboy (17:37:37/1-16-52)

>[Except for any 'undesirables' caught north of Tulane Avenue.]<

- Chimera (21:50:04/1-16-52)

>[Try Lu's in Crescent. Best Chinese in New Orleans, and none of that soy crap.]<

- Johnny R. (15:21:12/1-20-52)

>[Downtown's the HQ for contacts. Mr. Johnsons galore. I personally recommend any club in the Quarter; just look for a suit who doesn't seem out of place.]<

- Katz (21:04:37/1-21-52)

>[If you go to Captain Willie's, tell Boner, the huge troll in the monkey suit, hi from Ajax, Ash, Sorrento, Knightkiller, and Pressbutton.]<

- Cartoon Boy (9:57:08/1-23-52)

LAKEFRONT

Lakefront is both home and playground to New Orleans's wealthy. The area is composed of malls, suburban neighborhoods, and the casinos and nightclubs that have made the area famous.

To live in Lakefront requires a huge income. It is in this area that the antebellum fashion has hit the hardest; almost half of the homes have been turned into Tara-style plantation houses. It is not unusual to see residents of Laketown dressed as 19th century gentlemen and ladies. While all this is very stylish and attractive, it has alienated the wealthy from the rest of the city, particularly citizens of the Zulu Nation and Orktown. Any robbery or vandalism is immediately attributed to citizens of these districts, and Metro Security had been very efficient in finding any culprits.

>[Just another case of the Man fragging over the lower classes.]<

- Troll Patrol (8:20:49/2-06-52)

The showcases of Lakefront are the casinos that line the shore of Lake Pontchartrain. Gamblers have a chance to strike it rich in such beautiful betting palaces as the Southern Sands, Diamond Jim's, and the Delta Queen. Five miles from the shore is the Golden Dragon Casino and Hotel, standing on its artificial island in the middle of the lake.

Despite the reputed link between the casinos and organized crime, there is very little crime in the Lakefront district. This can be partially attributed to the strong Metro Security presence in the district, but it is more likely that the Yakuza and Seoulpa Rings that control much of the Lakefront keep crime under control. Both groups know they have a good thing going, and neither wants to spoil it.

>[Speaking from experience, NOMS are the least of your worries in Lakefront. Step out of line there, and you'll have corp security, Yak samurai, and Seoul Men out looking for you. No fun, mah babe, no fun.]<

- Cowboy (22:35:11/2-10-52)

All in all, Lakefront is the perfect example of the image New Orleans wants to project — stylish, high-class living with a myriad of diversions and distractions.

>[Funny, whenever I think of a neighborhood that represents NO, I think of the Barrens. A little more real life than Lakefront.]<

- Johnny R. (23:23:35/1-16-52)

ORKTOWN

Orktown is home to almost all of the city's trolls and a substantial number of orks. Unlike the Zulu Nation, Orktown is not a separate entity from New Orleans; it is just a place for New Orleans's goblinized citizens to live in relative peace and quiet.

A certain amount of prejudice is always present in Orktown. Its citizens feel the district is theirs, and any non-ork or troll entering is immediately regarded with suspicion. Although anti-human violence is not common, it does happen. The Humanis Policlub has tried to march through Orktown three times, and each time CAS troops had to be called out to deal with the violence and rioting that spilled over into the Lakefront district.

>[You know if the violence had been confined to Orktown no troops would have been called out. The city would have made us fight the Humanis and the NOMS, and then blamed it all on Orktown.]<

- Troll Patrol (3:30:23/2-06-52)

>[Oh, stop crying and act like a big trogl!]<

- The Duke (13:40:12/2-10-52)

>[All metahumans in the matrix: find the Duke and burn that mutha's deck.]<

- Silverleaf (2:15:40/2-11-52)

Orktown is geared toward its inhabitants. The stores, the bars, the clubs, are all used to dealing with an almost exclusively ork and troll clientele. It's not that humans, elves, and dwarves aren't welcome; it's just that in Orktown, there's no question of who is in control, and anyone looking for trouble will find it, perhaps a little too easily for their own good.

>[Anyone looking for trouble in Orktown first has to deal

with the Wargs, then any shadowrunners hanging around, and then any Krewes they've upset. Compared to all that, Metro Security is a cakewalk.]<

- Cowboy (22:26:48/1-18-52)

RIVERFRONT

Riverfront is almost a twin to the Barrens. The only real difference is the stronger Metro Security presence in Riverfront, due to its proximity to Corp Sector. But even with more police, the crime that runs wild through the Barrens is also present in Riverfront.

Riverfront is also notable because it was the headquarters of the vampires who attacked New Orleans in 2044. A burnt-out apartment building on Lapalco Boulevard served as home to the creatures, and it was here that the Night Stalkers found the magic library of the group's leader, Bartholomew.

It is rumored that a group of toxic shamans have a base in the Riverfront and strike out from it. The recent explosion at the Gulfstar Processing Base was the result of their work, and not the faulty machinery on which Gulfstar placed the blame. There have also been stories of a group of Neo-Satanists at work in Riverfront, kidnapping homeless victims to sacrifice in their dark ceremonies.

Most of Riverfront's crime is confined within its borders by Metro Security in Corp Sector and the Zulu Warriors of the Zulu Nation. There is an occasional spillover into the Downtown area, but most of Riverfront's darkness stays on its own streets. Still, the same warning that applies to the Barrens applies to Riverfront: unless you have business and muscle, stay out.

ZULU NATION

The Zulu Nation is a world of its own. Passing from the streets of the rest of New Orleans to its streets can be a jarring experience. One moment you are in a typical urban sprawl, the next you are in what appears to be an African city. The traditional French and Spanish architecture and atmosphere of New Orleans is replaced by a culture that stresses national pride above all else.

The Nation grew from the Krewe of Zulu, a Mardi Gras organization that began to get involved in city politics in the late 20th century. Eventually renaming themselves the Zulu Nation, they became the main political voice of the black community. The Nation exerts tremendous power in New Orleans and any politician wishing to have a future eventually has to deal with them.

Animosity between the Nation and the rest of the city grew as the Nation's power grew, and violent clashes between members of the Nation and non-members became common. Metro Security was forced to break up these battles every day.

Finally, in 2039, the Zulu Nation brought the city a proposal: give them their own area of the city to live in, separate from those who disagree with the Nation's policies and power. Anxious to end the violence, the city agreed, and the present Zulu Nation was born.

The Zulu Nation is governed by the Ruling Council, a

group whose members are democratically elected to five-year terms. The council itself is overseen by a *Chaka* who is chosen from the Council by its members.

The laws of the Council have no real weight; they are respected inside the Zulu Nation, but are not adhered to outside its borders. According to the law that established the Nation, Metro Security cannot enter its borders except by invitation. This means that daily law enforcement is handled by the Zulu Warriors, a group of physical adepts that patrol the streets and defend the Zulu Nation with an almost religious fervor. Usually any criminals apprehended inside the Nation are handed over to Metro Security for prosecution but there have been rumors of trials conducted by the Ruling Council. These rumors inevitably involve someone who has committed a grievous crime against the Nation.

>[Zulu Warriors won't pursue you outside the Nation, so if they're after you, beat feet for the border. If you can reach them, you're safe.]<

- Night Stalker (3:40:04/2-04-52)

>[Once again, don't do anything wrong in the Nation and we have no reason to chase you. If you're looking for trouble, go to the Barrens or Riverfront.]<

- Iklwa (8:17:51/2-08-52)

The Zulu Nation operates several manufacturing firms and soy plants in its borders. Most of its commerce, though, is tourism, with many people traveling to New Orleans to see this city within a city. The Nation's relations with the city government are usually good, but in the past few years things have gotten rocky. The growing population of the Nation have made it request more land, preferably a large tract of the Downtown district. This has led to a growing anti-Zulu sentiment and violence among the rest of New Orleans, some of it stirred by local white separatist leaders. But, even with its future uncertain, the Zulu Nation is still a powerful political force, and it has a strong hand in deciding the future of New Orleans.

>[It's always good to have a contact or two in the Nation. The Zulu Warriors hire runners to go against corps they think have given the Nation a raw deal. It's not easy work, but the pay's good and that's what matters in the end.]<

- Cowboy (14:45:15/2-17-52)

LAGNIAPPE

MARDI GRAS

Mardi Gras is the last Tuesday before Lent, and in New Orleans it is the holiday of the year. For a month the city turns into an enormous party, with people coming from all over the world to enjoy the parades, music, food, and atmosphere that is the carnival season.

The massive parades that travel throughout the city are the center of Mardi Gras. The parades are put on by various 'krewes', civic organizations (not to be confused with the metahuman criminal Krewes). Among the more famous Krewes are Bacchus, Rex, Isis, Endymion, and of course, the

Zulu Nation. The parades are incredible spectacles; hundreds of thousands of people lining the streets as the colorful floats pass, each spectator urging the parade participants to "throw me something, Mister!" The beads and doubloons thrown from the floats are sought after mementos of the parade; particularly valuable are the golden coconuts thrown by the Zulu Nation.

With the Awakening and the return of magic to the world Mardi Gras took on a new aspect. Now many parades employ mages to entertain the crowds with elaborate illusions and spells. The Krewe of Merlin is composed entirely of magicians, and its parade is a wonder of traditional floats and subtle legerdemain. Another popular new parade is that of the Krewe of Baldr, an elven parade that is a beautiful spectacle of color, music, and magic.

Like almost all things in the 21st century, however, Mardi Gras does have its dark side. During the carnival season crime increases and Metro Security is choked by the sheer number of people on the streets. But a more mystical danger exists: several street shamans have perverted the krewes, turning them into totems. No evidence exists that belief in these krewes actually grants them any power, but these 'Mardi Gras shamans' look upon themselves as defenders of New Orleans and its traditions. They often instigate violence toward tourists, corporations, or anyone they think is a threat to the city. Often these threats are more imagined than real.

An interesting fact, and possible proof that the Mardi Gras shamans are on the right track, is that city spirits summoned in New Orleans often take on the shape of Mardi Gras floats and revelers, complete with masks and costumes. Just another magical aspect of the experience that is Mardi Gras.

VOODOO

With the Awakening many misconceptions about voodoo were washed away. Voodoo (or, more properly, 'vodoun') is not about sticking pins in dolls and drinking chicken blood. It is a religion, a mix of Catholicism and traditional African and Caribbean beliefs.

When magic became a fact of life, vodoun became a major force in New Orleans. The city became the vodoun capitol of North America, a place of great power for the faith. Houngans, vodoun priests, are respected members of the community. Like shamans, they act as social and religious leaders of their people. And, like shamans and mages, they wield great magic power, able to cast spells and summon vodoun spirits.

There are also less pleasant aspects of vodoun. Powerful houngans have the ability to make zombies, mindless corpses that do their will. And many houngans embrace darkness, turning their powers and skills to evil. There is a constant war between evil shamans and those that reject the darkness; unfortunately, no one can tell who is winning.

In the end, vodoun must be treated like any other magic. It is a powerful tool, but control of it is never a certainty, and anyone who uses it must know what they are doing. 🐾