

Live To Tell
A Cyberpunk 2020 Adventure for 5 to 8 Characters
By Todd Bradley

Overview:

I wrote this adventure to be played in a short amount of time by players whose attentions can only be kept by fast action and massive violence. It is intended to be played with new, fairly low level characters. I recommend that each player should have two characters because a death rate of 40% should be expected. It should take about 10 hours to play through thoroughly. So far, we have only done about the first two thirds of the adventure. The group should include no less than two Solos, perhaps as many as four, accompanied by at least one Techie and, preferably, a Medtechie. Nomads and Fixers would also fit in. This isn't really the kind of job for Corps and Netrunners, and I didn't write anything into the adventure for a Netrunner to do. Our group consisted of two Solos, a Rockerboy, a Techie, a Fixer, and a Nomad.

This adventure was written by Todd Bradley during August and September, 1991 to be played with R.Talsorian's Cyberpunk 2020 game. I encourage you to modify this adventure to suit your own gaming group.

If you are not the referee, don't read past here or you will ruin your own fun.

Preliminary Referee Notes:

Although this adventure is dangerous, it is scaled right for a group of beginning characters. Play it hard. Make the players sweat and don't be afraid to kill some of the characters off. In many cases will the group get into fights with the bad-guy thugs. I haven't included stats for these thugs (also called guards or goons). When I ran the game, I generated stats using the "Quick And Dirty" NPC generation rules. Since then, I've written a C program which quickly generates goon squads. If you have an MS-DOS computer or another computer with a C compiler, you might want to use my program to make your security guards. It's quick and it's easy.

My email address is bradleyt@spot.colorado.edu. If you can't find a copy of my NPC generator elsewhere and want one, drop me a line and I'll send it to you. Also, I'd appreciate your comments on this adventure. Good or bad, let me know what you think or just let me know you have a copy.

There are no netrunning sections to this adventure. I knew that my group wouldn't have time for that, so I left netrunning out. For those who think no Cyberpunk game is complete without it, it would be easy to add some netrunning parts.

After you read this adventure through, you'll probably be thinking one thing--"Yes, but what about the doublecross?" I agree that one of the important parts of the cyberpunk genre is the inevitable doublecross and my players have come to expect it in every adventure. So, to throw them off, for once everything is as it seems (well, almost everything). Also, this adventure is a good way to get the player characters some "real" jobs which could lead to other adventures in the future. Enough chit chat. On with the story.

Player Setup:

The group is approached in a bar by a "headhunter" named Phillippe Mauraud who is working for the World News Service (WNS). He is looking for attractive, interesting looking CyberPunks to help film and possibly appear in a television news program. He hands out his card to each of the interested characters and writes a phone number on the back of each one. [see the visual aid contained in MAURAUD.BMP] The number, he says, is that of the producer for whom he works. He emphasises that the characters must specifically mention his name when requesting an interview.

The next day, or whenever the characters call the number, they get through to a secretary computer, and, after mentioning Mauraud's name, they will get through to Sam Powers who would like to see them as soon as possible. The interview is informal. Powers is looking for some "young, able adventurous types with a variety of skills, particularly street experience and the ability to adapt to new situations." He cannot reveal the exact nature of the work yet. As the interview progresses, Powers realizes the group is just what he was looking for and asks the party to sign this non-disclosure agreement:

Non-Disclosure Agreement:

By signing my name to this document, I agree that I shall not reveal any details of personal discussions between myself and Samuel Powers pertaining to present, future, or hypothetical employment situations available from World News Service to any persons or entities other than authorized agents of World News Service. I understand that the willful breach of this contract can result in legal action, monetary penalties, and the termination of any current, future, or hypothetical employment agreements with World News Service.

After the characters have signed the agreement, which he has handy in a desk drawer, he tells them of the assignment.

The Assignment:

"You are probably familiar with our hit action adventure game show, Live To Tell. It's been in the top five consistently for three seasons. Well, while searching for new game locations near Atlanta, the show's field crew disappeared. That was Wednesday. Yesterday, one of our satellites received a short unauthorized voice message which was recorded by our electronics equipment. Unfortunately, as it didn't have proper authorization, the signal was jammed, as is normal procedure. But before it was cut off, the technician heard enough to later realize that it was the cameraman of the missing crew. Apparently, the crew has been kidnapped and is being held by the NAZI party, although we have not yet received any sort of ransom requests. What we'd like you to do is to locate and rescue the crew. But we also want to film the rescue for use on the program. Assuming they are out of service a week or two, we are that much behind on our episode schedule, so we can make up for it by broadcasting their rescue. You each get the opportunity to be on the most exciting adventure show of all time and make some money while doing it! We will provide necessary equipment and transportation. There will be a \$500 payment up front to each of you. On the successful completion of the rescue, you will each get another \$1500 for each crew member safely returned to this office as well as a \$1500 completion bonus and, potentially, an offer for continued employment. Here is \$50 for each of you. I thank you for coming on such short notice. Those of you who are not interested may leave now. I thank you for your time."

Hopefully, all PC's will be interested and stay. Note that Powers didn't say how many crewmembers were kidnapped. If asked he will tell them--eight.

The overall plan for the rest of the adventure is as follows:

1. The pc's will sign agreements and contracts with the network.
2. They will get outfitted by the network, including "team" jackets and some weapons and electronics. These team jackets are actually quite nice. They are made of imitation leather, but look tough. They have the WNS logo on the back, count as SP 4 for torso and arms, and are worth about \$200 each. The pc's may make suggestions for their equipment, but nothing expensive or unusual will be provided. At this point, hand out whatever equipment you think the group needs. Don't go overboard, though. WNS won't spend too much on these guys. Only weapons with Excellent or Common availability codes are available. All other equipment needed for the mission will have to be obtained by the characters using their own funds.
3. The pc's will meet and get acquainted with the network crew who will be coming along. They include Kindra Wright (media, cohost of "Live to Tell"), Patricia Mars (techie, cameraperson), and Gunther Rommel (solo, security liaison). For reasons you'll see later (Gunther's speech to the pc's), it may not be necessary to write up character sheets for the NPC's as they won't get too involved in anything exciting.
4. The pc's will procede to the network car pool where they will sign for and take possession of one World News Service mobile unit. They will also each receive \$500 at this time. The mobile unit is a big van, like a Ryder moving van, which has a satellite dish on top and lots of electronics inside. It will carry the whole group in crowded quarters, but only two people can sleep in it overnight due to the crowded conditions.

5. Rommel will make it very clear to all when the group dines that evening at the network that, although they are all legally responsible for the borrowed equipment, he is personally responsible the well being of Wright, Mars, and himself. Therefore, he will restrict the group from any action which he feels unnecessarily places any of them in excessive danger. Rommel should be portrayed as a very good, alert Solo. He knows his job and can do it well. The group is ordered to return the next day for filming of a short segment.

6. [This part's fun] The next morning, the group is taken to the filming of this week's episode of "Live to Tell". The main host, Dirk Richards, comes on stage amidst massive applause and begins to speak. Hopefully, you can surprise the players. A microphone prop would be a good addition here. Give the players a chance to do some real role playing. There's nothing funnier than a rookie Solo grunt forced to do a personal interview in front of 30 million people.

"And here is the host of 'Live to Tell', Dirk Richards!"

"Thank you. I'm Dirk Richards and welcome to 'Live to Tell', the educational adventure program that dares to take you to where the action really is. Ladies and gentlemen, a tragedy has occurred this week during the filming of 'Live to Tell.' One of our field camera crews, while on assignment in Georgia, U.S.A., was kidnapped and is being held hostage by a terrorist organization calling themselves the American National Socialist Party. This group has its origins in the NAZI party of the early part of the twentieth century and has recently resurfaced as the perpetrator of several hate crimes in the U.S.A. in recent months.

"Among those kidnapped were field unit director Gregory Patterson, field unit reporters Lucy Viggers and Thomas Hokkanson, chief camera operator Fidel Aguila, security officers Wellhart Giesler and Bart Getty, second camera operator Darlene Talbert, and field technician Dieter Vandendriessche. The location of the team is not currently known, but we have brought in a crack team from World News Service's own Special Operations Group who will be accompanying my cohost, Kindra Wright, on a rescue mission starting immediately."

"That's right, Dirk. Due to the importance of this situation and relevance to our viewers, I will personally begin an investigation, accompanied by several members of WNS's Special Operations Group. Here they are now! Come on out, fellas!"

"Well, that's great, Kindra! Now let's get to know the rescue team!"

Dirk shuffles the group into an interview area and begins asking questions. Potential questions include:

What is your name? Where are you from?

What experience do you have performing rescue missions of this nature?

Do you expect this mission to be difficult?

Are you afraid of the potential danger of this mission?

What do you plan to do with the kidnappers once you find them?

What kind of weapons do you prefer to use while on missions like this?

What do you think of the American National Socialist Party?

Do you have anything you'd like to tell the kidnappers who may be watching our show this evening?

"Thank you gentlemen and good luck. We'll all be wishing for a safe, successful mission. We'll now take a short break for a word from our sponsors and be right back with 'Psycho Squad--Friend or Foe?'"

6. The group leaves the network complex and is free to carry out their assignment as they wish.

7. The PC's will hopefully go to Atlanta. With some digging, maybe even a bar fight, they will find by looking in the Yellow Pages, that the NAZI party has a headquarters building downtown. The address is given. Hopefully, the group will take some time to scope out the headquarters. There is a library across the street and the group can watch the NAZI headquarters building from the second floor windows. The headquarters is always guarded. There can always be seen two guards at the only entrance to the building and other guards can be seen from time to time looking out the windows. The headquarters is two stories high with a very sloped roof. [see the files FLOOR1.BMP and FLOOR2.BMP for floorplans of the headquarters] The players may jump to the conclusion that the hostages are being held there, especially given the visible security. Actually, though, there are only six security guards in the daytime and four at night and the hostages aren't there. The NAZI party really isn't that big and doesn't have any reason for high security, but the players probably won't know that. The headquarters building is made of brick with thin (a foot wide) windows that run up both stories. [My players assumed that this must be bulletproof glass and went to the trouble to buy a water-cooled concrete saw to cut through. It's just normal glass and can be broken by any hard object.] The windows are wide enough that a person can squeeze through if the glass is eliminated.

8. At some point, the PC's must break into the headquarters and try to find some information on the NAZI party. Kindra and her crew will, of course, be unable to go on this part of the mission, but might film it from remote or attach remote cameras on the PC's. The attack will presumably be done at night and will involve the first big gunfight of the adventure. Unless the PC's do something really stupid, the guards will not be expecting an attack. In addition to the two guards at the door, there is one roving guard on each of the two floors. Once an attack begins, one of the guards will set off an alarm (unless everything is done completely stealthily) which will alert the local police. The players are looking for a large, metal strongbox (although they might not know it). It is about the size of a dorm refrigerator (1 meter by 1 meter by 1.5 meters). It will be locked by a combination lock but can be lifted by any two people of Body 8 or better (allow Strength Feat to add directly to Body in this instance). If they can't lift it, the group will have to open it (that's why the Techie came along). There won't be much time to search the files before the cops arrive. Hopefully, the group will find last year's tax forms which include a list of NAZI party property.

9. At some later time, after the group has escaped the police and had a chance to look through the documents, they'll find that the organization owns the following:

- the main office in Atlanta, also used as a meeting hall
- four Mitsubishi Nightsky's
- a 737
- a yacht, moored at Jacksonville, Florida
- a warehouse in the warehouse district of Atlanta (a red herring for the players)

All this information points to the fact that the Party probably has one or two wealthy backers, but no names can be found. If the group doesn't make this deduction themselves, Kindra will. Hopefully, the group will go to the warehouse, since that's where prisoners are traditionally kept in movies. As an additional motivation, some questioning of street people will reveal that a WNS van was seen going into the warehouse a few days ago.

10. If the group goes to the warehouse and peeks in through the windows, they'll find two Nightsky's and a WNS van (like their own) parked inside, but they'll get found out by the guards and will have to have a gunfight in the warehouse. There are three Solo guards here and one NAZI netrunner in an office upstairs. [see WAREHOUS.BMP for the map of the warehouse with guard positions marked] After the group has killed the guards, they will find that no records are kept at the warehouse and the news crew isn't there. Hopefully, they'll get the Netrunner as a prisoner. He can be captured and successfully interrogated (with or without Interrogation skill), and it will be learned that the news crew was taken via the plane to the yacht where it is kept at Jacksonville, Florida. If no prisoner is taken, the group will have to learn through some more investigation that the plane recently flew to Jacksonville and that the yacht is usually kept there.

11. Eventually, the group will learn of the whereabouts of the yacht, called the S.S. Richtofen. It is somewhere near the Bahamas and probably has the kidnapped crew onboard. The field unit has indeed been kidnapped by the NAZI's and is being forced to produce a propaganda film to be shown on various television channels. The PC's won't know this, of course, until later. Eventually, the group will find that the yacht is cruising about 200 miles southeast of Nassau and they'll have to make some sort of water or air based rescue attempt. Hopefully, this will be stealthy or crafty, because the yacht has good defenses. Also, if the NAZI's believe themselves to be in danger, they will try to kill the prisoners to remove any evidence of wrongdoing (which will, of course, cause the pc's to not get paid). Here are the important details of the yacht:

The Richtofen

This yacht, owned by the American National Socialist Party and built especially for Wilhelm Vandendriessche, has a typical crew of three, all of whom sleep in the crew cabin. There is a master cabin, where Vandendriessche stays during his many voyages. The yacht includes a nice dining room, suitable for dinners for up to 14 people. This room is currently being used for the development of the propaganda film. Currently, in addition to the three crewmembers and Vandendriessche, there are four NAZI guards and eight WNS employees (the prisoners) onboard.

The four guards are well armed solos. The three crewmembers can fight if they must, but aren't trained for it, except through the use of the built in defense systems. The yacht is quite fast, being of hydrofoil design. In the event of a visible attack, the skipper will turn the engines on full and try to outrun the enemy, while using the onboard guns for defense. Connected to the computer of the yacht and built into the hull are:

radar system--will detect incoming aircraft at a range of 10 miles
if the weapons officer makes an average task roll
2 Barrett-Arasaka Light 20mm guns--these can be computer controlled
(the computer has a combined REF and weapon skill of 10) or
controlled by the weapons officer
chaff and flares--for defense against radar or heat seeking missiles

The three yacht crewmen are all as follows:

Name: Crewman	Role: Crewman			
INT: 7	REF: 5	TECH: 5	COOL: 6	
ATTR: 5	LUCK: 7	MA: 4	BODY: 5	EMP: 6

No armor, weapons, or cybernetics

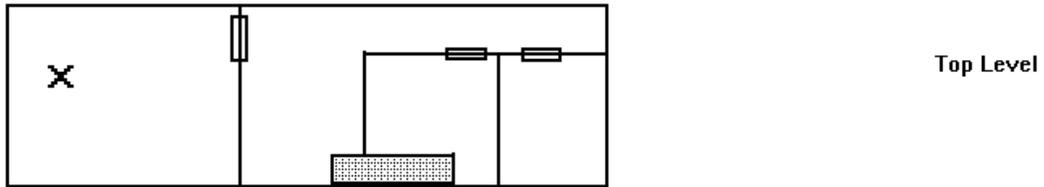
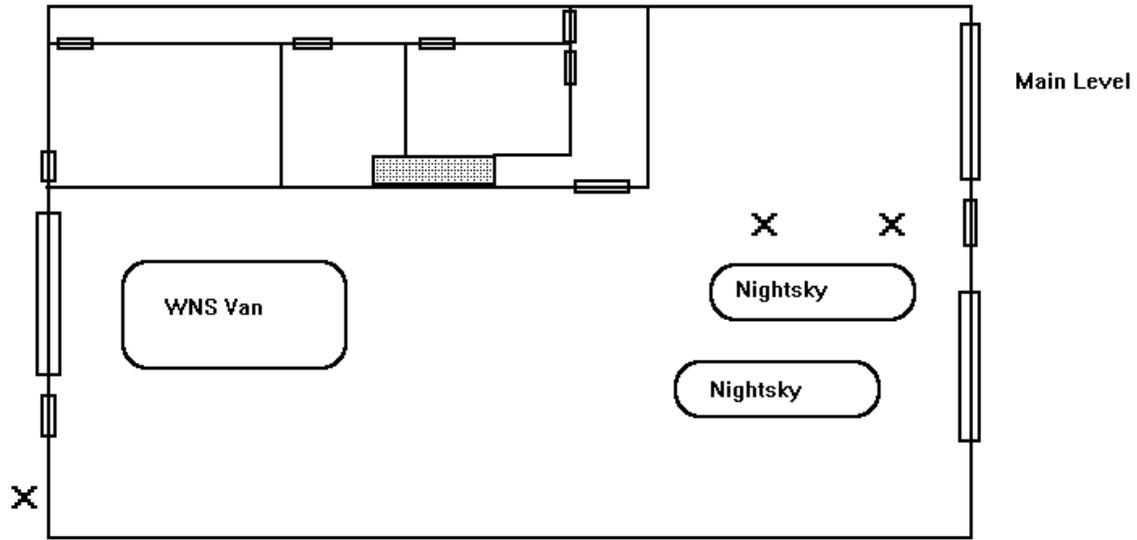
The benefactor and secret leader of the NAZI's is onboard the yacht. He is Wilhelm Vandendriessche, father of Dieter, the technician. None of the film crew knows of this father/son secret and Dieter will fight to defend his father, possibly creating a confusing scene.

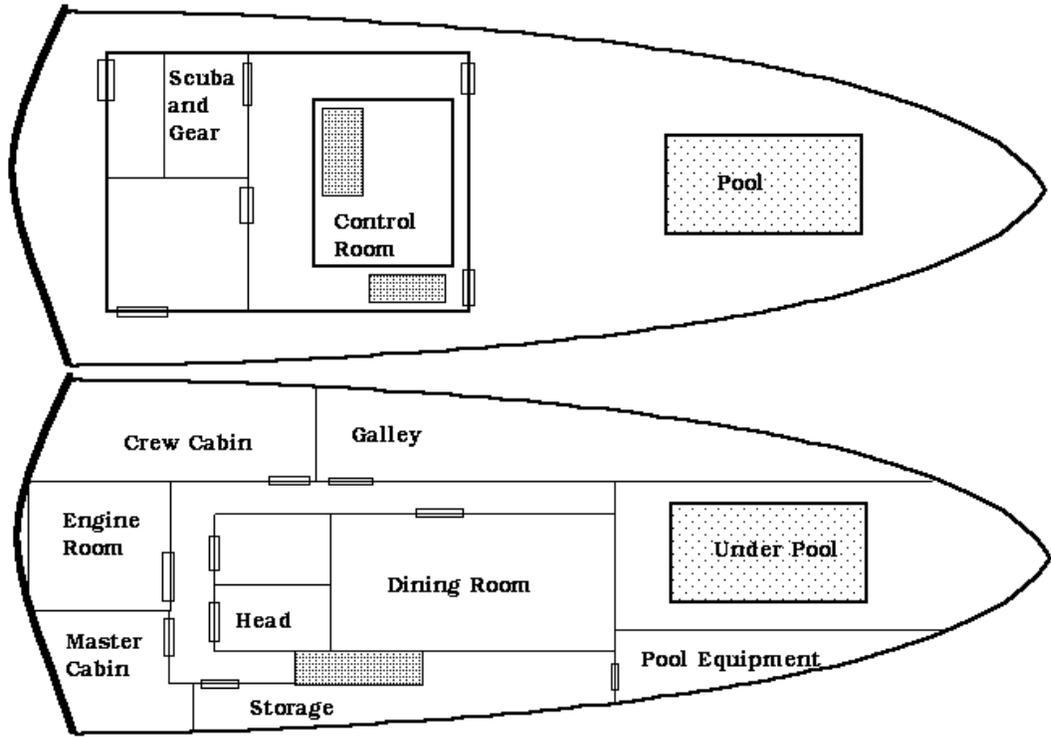
Conclusion:

Hopefully, the remaining players (after probably three fights by now) will be able to rescue at least some of the film crew and return them to the WNS studio. Ideally, most of the rescue will be filmed so it can be aired on worldwide t.v. If this is the case, the pc's should each get 15 IP for their FAME attribute in addition to a reasonable amount of normal IP. Those pc's who are outstanding should be offered retainer contracts with WNS.

An exceptional story would be the capture of the NAZI leader. If this happens, the pc's should be allowed to keep the yacht for their own uses (since it is still owned by the Party, the PC's can't sell it). If the NAZI leader isn't captured, he is sure to become a long term enemy (and a powerful one at that). Regardless of whether or not he's captured, the fact that the rescue was shown on worldwide t.v. means that the pc's will be receiving visits from angry NAZI's for months to come.

In the unfortunate event that Kindra Wright is killed and the mission fails, the pc's will be killed by a WNS hit squad and the film will never be shown. But, if she is killed and the mission succeeds, her death will be glossed over. w to Jacksonville and that the yacht is usually kept there.





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