

Unjust Exposure

Branson Hagerty (Blackjack's Shadowrun Page <http://shadowrun.html.com/users/blackjack/>) Posted December 09, 1996

Alan Barry was just a normal everyday underpaid security guard when a bomb exploded inside the stadium housing the World Combat Biking Championships while he was on duty. His warnings of a mysterious package seen sitting on the steps in the stands prior to the explosion went unheeded and, after it blew, city and national investigators singled him out as the prime suspect.

The investigation turned his life into a living hell and the media contorted evidence and information given in a way that turned Alan into a monster. When, a year later, all investigative agencies cleared Alan of all wrong doing the media didn't even have the decency to apologize for their conduct.

Alan's anger and resentment toward the media didn't end with the investigation. He became bitter and began to construct a plan for getting back at them. His hatred was particularly strong towards a relatively small network called NetNews and against them he began planning his revenge.

This is where the runners come in. Prior to the meet with their Johnson the runners would already have been well aware of Alan's situation as it had been splashed across the news and the matrix for the past year. The Johnson explains Alan's requests:

#1. At Alan's apartment set up a trid camera and a transmitter which feeds via satellite into a small, portable receiver.

#2. Break into NetNews's building and tie the receiver into their broadcasting computer system which is independent of the world wide matrix.

#3. Get back to Alan's apartment and help him escape to Europe.

When the runners get to Alan's apartment he'll explain his plan fully:

He wants his broadcast to override the NetNews 10:00 pm news broadcast. He will give a short speech and then, from his apartment, he will play a chip containing a trideo montage of all the ways the station exploited his situation. After it runs the runners are to escort him to a boat that will be waiting to take him to an undisclosed location in Europe.

He will show the footage to the runners before hand. It is an impressive montage of material which makes the network look like monsters.

Allow the runners to obtain a detailed map of the NetNews office, a forty story tower located in an urban environment. The building's main weakness is its ventilation system. It is unsecured and runs throughout the entire building. The ID system is also rather flimsy and a fake ID wouldn't be difficult to obtain. Security is rather light but the runners may run into a lot of "Media Zombies", i.e. editors and producers that never seem to go home. There is a large, single Broadcasting computer room that may have a few system maintenance people watching trideo in it but not much else. Tying the receiver into the system isn't too difficult.

Speedbumps

First off, once Alan's override begins the network will simply take the program off the air. This can be

stopped inside the computer room initially but, eventually, a decker will have to go into the MAIN computer to prevent a complete shutdown of all systems. The runners could also take somebody hostage and simply demand that the show go on. Also remember that this is a media building and it is guaranteed that at least a few hot shots will try to get some footage of the runners.

Hellraisers

A producer named Benny Brunner will be sitting in his NetNews office watching the news when Alan's broadcast goes on. He had recently obtained computer generated, but convincing, footage of Alan planting the bomb and has simply been waiting for the right time to put it on the air. He has the unauthorized ability, from his office, to override any broadcast from a chip player in his office. When the broadcast goes on, he'll notice it, and take this opportunity to run his tape. It will show, from a security cam standpoint, Alan planting the bomb. The only way to stop this broadcast is to shut off power to his office or to get down there and do it manually. If the runners go to his office they will find ANOTHER chip documenting the doctoring of the incriminating chip. By playing this chip the runners can undo any damage done by the previous one.

Well, not all damage. Upon seeing this chip the City police will dispatch a Response team to Alan's dwelling for the purpose of arresting him. To make things worse this team is commanded by Sgt. Freelong who is very, very bad at listening to orders to withdrawal once he's on his way. The runners will arrive at Alan's apartment at the same time as Freelong's unit. And, a short while after that, ANOTHER response team will arrive, but this one charged with forcing Freelong to withdrawal. He will, apparently, but will then shortly engage in a psychotic pursuit of the runners in his Wasp as they attempt to take Alan to his awaiting boat.

Now if things get fairly bad for the runners and if Alan sees that his "show" has gone off the air for more than a few minutes he will dispatch a group of his loyal security guard friends to storm the building, not trying to kill anyone, but just to create a disturbance. The up side is that NetNews security will be so preoccupied with the rampaging security guards that they won't be able to bother the runners. The down side is the fact that this will almost definitely draw the police to the scene. The guards will be dressed in street clothing with masks pulled over their faces. They also have enough sense not to harm the runners unless, of course, the runners have "dressed up" as NetNews security of staff members.

Aftermath

The runners may want to get rid of any footage taken of them while in the NetNews building because the corporation will immediately want to make a spectacle about it. If the runners were especially brutal during their "siege" the media as a whole may also make an attempt to portray the entire profession of shadowrunning as being barbarious. The result of such exposure will most definitely lower the runner's reputation with other runners.

Personalities

Alan Barry

Archetype: Human Former Security Guard

A kind man who loved his job, Alan's personality quickly unraveled as did his entire life as he was unfairly pinned as a prime suspect in the Combat Biking bombing. Both the media and the authorities tore him

apart and, after it was all over, left a man with vengeance on his mind. Now all he can think about is getting back at them, primarily the media.

Alan now smokes about three packs of cigarettes a day, snaps at everybody who tries to talk to him, and is subject to extreme torrents of anger during which he'll tear down his apartment and scream at anybody in the immediate vicinity.

Benny Brunner

Archetype: Dwarf Media Producer

Benny is the definition of media sleaze. Since his own talk show bombed a few months back he's been looking for any way to get recognition. So he hired a group of expert trick technicians to create false footage of Alan planting the bomb in the stadium and has since been waiting for an opportunity to play it.

Benny is a whiny pseudointellectual who thinks he knows everything but, in reality, knows virtually nothing about anything. He's spent his life in a studio, has never encountered danger and threat first hand, and would probably turn into a whimpering mess

Sgt. Freelong

Archetype: Ork Response Cop

So far Freelong's "disobedience" in regards to following orders hasn't had too many bad effects. Until now. The rest of the cops don't want him messing with Alan because they're in enough trouble for falsely accusing him and one more slip up could land them the biggest law suit in the history of mankind. Freelong is determined to bring Alan down.

Ned Melan

Archetype: Human Security Guard

Although only a low level guard at a toy company, Ned's pretty good at raising hell having acquired the skill by successfully sparking many a bar fight. Although he's friends with Alan, he's not about to die for him, and if things start to go bad he'd be more than happy to pull out and go get a beer instead.