

Let Them Bleed

Branson Hagerty (Blackjack's Shadowrun Page <http://shadowrun.html.com/users/blackjack/>) Posted November 25, 1996

It's NeoHeroin with a kick and people are dying for it. Well, not dying exactly, but coming damn close. This particular concoction of Neo, called Bleed, makes it nearly impossible to actually overdose. Mixed in with its mostly chemical makeup is a harsh stimulant along with special counteractants which actually reduce the drug's effect when the user comes close to death. The result is horrendous. Users can get to the point that they're reduced to a mess as their bodily organs malfunction but don't actually shutdown. Your really hard core user will be a piss and shit covered mess, bleeding through various lesions, and malnourished to the point that they're mere skeletons. But, again, they don't die.

But there is hope. A drug company called LiveChem has developed a medicine capable of counter acting the addictive effects of Bleed with virtually no side effects. Needless to say this had made the major dealers of Bleed fairly nervous.

Hence, the hiring of runners to get rid of the antidote. When they meet with their Johnson he will NOT mention, or even know, about the reasoning behind the elimination of the antidote, called Second Chance. All he will give is the name of the antidote, the location of the lab at which it was developed, and the following goals:

1. Destroy ALL existing samples of Second Chance and eliminate all research information about it in both the lab and the computers. (The ALL part of this statement will be very important later on.)
2. Eliminate Eliza Dennison, the scientist who developed it.

The payment offered for this run should be rather generous as the runner's employers (who will never be named) are determined to stop the antidote from hitting the market.

Eliza will be on leave at the time, although the runners probably won't discover this until they get to the lab. She'll be at her country home some 100km away from the city. She doesn't believe in security so getting into her cottage won't be much of a problem. When the runners arrive she'll simply resolve herself to the fact that the world is full of pricks and that she figured she was going to eventually get wasted anyway. If the runners don't keep an eye on her, however, she will activate, via a hidden button in the kitchen, a mechanism which, after only ten seconds, will blow up the house and most everything within twenty five meters of it. The only indication that it has been activated will be when Eliza says: "Ten seconds to live, guys" and the lights dim. The runners will have to run like hell to get out in time. If the runners parked their vehicles within 25 meters of the house they'll get severely damaged or destroyed by the blast, possibly with the runners partially in them if they think they can actually get out of a house, into a vehicle, start it, and pull away in only ten seconds. If they're stupid enough to try I'd simply have their vehicles blow 150 meters back into the woods and then break in half as they hit a tree, but let the actual runners off with a few cuts and bruises.

The actual lab is located at a compound on the edge of the city and covers several acres. It's rather picturesque and has very little overt security, meaning no fences or patrol vehicles. LiveChem is a non-profit organization which receives most of its money from private and governmental funding and their crusades against drugs are well known.

This is not to say getting into the place is a breeze. Stationed at LiveChem is a sampling of "donated" troops from various corporations, including the biggies. Although there is only one or two troops from

each, only half of which are on duty at any one time, how many Red Samurai do you need? In any case, each building is guarded by two or three guards at any one time. The buildings are scattered across a several acre compound which looks more like a park at first glance. What the runners will discover if they do any research, however, is that running underneath the entire complex is a maze of tunnels and access ways which tend to be more lightly guarded than the above ground areas. These tunnels, however, have all kinds of scary automated security measures including lasers and monowire. Blocking some of the less used tunnels are actual screens of monowire and anybody running to one will strain more than a muscle (get it?). A main flaw with the whole place is its rural location which makes it difficult for security to quickly ship in assistance should things go wrong.

In any case getting to the lab is going to go down like a typical infiltration, meaning it's easy if the runners are good, bloody if they screw up. Once in the lab the runner will discover two things:

First, there is a duplicate of all information regarding the project located in ANOTHER lab on the third floor and the runners will have to wipe this information as well.

And, second, they will come across a shipping order which states that 5 COMPLETED samples of Second Chance has already been shipped to a location (which will be given) in the barrens. Now, remember that little part of the contract that said ALL samples? Well.....

The location given is that of an under-funded humanitarian organization operating out of a decrepid storefront called EZ Free. It is guarded by only a few hired gang members. Once the runners enter it they will discover the brutality of the drug known as Bleed. The place will be packed wall to wall with a mess of addicts, to the point that the floor is slick with blood and other bodily fluids. In the back room the director of the organization, Evan Clay, will be administering injections of the samples of Second Chance. But, as the runners will discover, he only has FOUR of the samples. The other one is located at another clinic called Free Help, a few blocks away. The runners can obtain their information simply by looking at a piece of paper sitting on a table which states that this is where the drugs have gone.

When the runners arrive at Free Help they will meet much more opposition than before because the clinic would have been warned of the runners possible approach. Again, the resistance will only be hired gang members. Inside the clinic looks similar to EZ Free. The director's name is Cheryl Avar and she is willing to fight to the death to keep the runners from destroying the last sample.

The following only applies if reasonable: Just as the last sample of Second Chance is destroyed at the Free Help location the director, as a last resort and unknowing that the sample has already been destroyed, will tell the numerous addict lying around the place that the runners are giving out free Bleed. At this point they will be rushed by the group as they claw and beg for the drug. During the foray one of the runners will feel a small prick on their neck. When they turn around they will discover that the director (or somebody else) has actually injected Bleed into the runner. The drug is nearly impossible to resist and the runner will suddenly not give a damn about anything, will fall to the floor, and will have to be carried out by his or her fellow runners. The run is over.

Speedbumps

When running the lab security, at first, won't be heavily armed (LiveChem likes to keep a low security profile) although the guards will be good with the pistols they have. Once a problem is detected, however, heavier security will be dispatched. One thing LiveChem did shell out for are MP-Lasers due to the fact that collateral damage from their use is minimal. They also have two high tech and heavily

armored Landrovers equipped with VEHICLE LASERS hidden in garages. So what I'm trying to say is that the runners had best not underestimate the lab's security.

Aftermath

If one of the runners was injected with Bleed they are immediately addicted. To get over the addiction roll body dice with a target of 20. Yes, 20. This is a nasty drug. The runners get one chance a day and, if they succeed just once, they break the addiction. If they fail then they experience withdrawal, get a +4 to all target numbers, and will crave the drug. The runner can reduce the modifier to a +1 simply by injecting some of the drug, which must be injected once an hour and which runs about 10ny a dose. BUT if the runners shoot up the target number goes UP by one the next time they try to break the addiction. So, the day after the runner is addicted the target number is a 20 to break the addiction. If they fail they receive the +4 and feel ill. If they try again the next day they have to get a 19. If they decide to break down and simply shoot up then the target number goes up to a 21 the next day but the modifier to do stuff drops to a +1. If the target number reaches 25 then the plus modifier for doing stuff while doing the drug goes up to a +2 and the modifier to do anything while NOT doing the drug goes up to a +5. At 30 the modifiers jump up AGAIN by one, and again for every 5. As the target number to resist the drug goes up, so does the nastiness of its effects. If, somehow, the number to resist the drug gets to a 40 the modifiers would be a +4 and a +8 and the runner is definitely up shit creek, bleeding through their ears occasionally and suffering from intense, constant pain.

Personalities

Eliza Dennison

Archetype: Human Corporate Scientist

Information: Although Eliza really cares about most of the people of the world, she doesn't give a shit about herself. She's a manic depressant who often takes vacations to her mountain cottage to chill out for a while, occasionally play russian roulette with a Warhawk, and take numerous drugs in an attempt to feel better. It never really works though and when the runners come after her she'll take it as more of a blessing than anything else.