

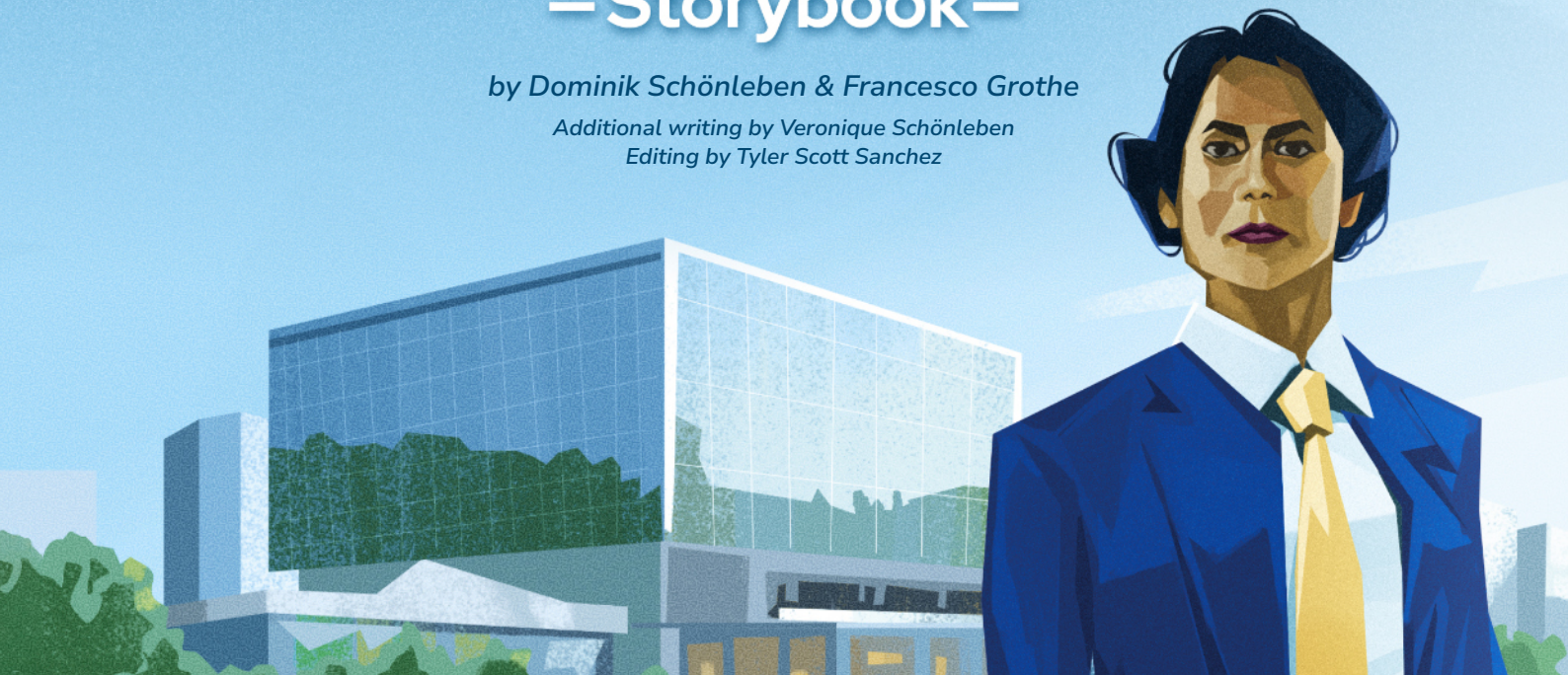
NEON HOPE

A BETTER HUMANITY

— Storybook —

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Campaign Introduction

Tech CEOs promised their technologies would shape a better world. They created AI assistants, a meta reality, digital money, and household robots. But none of this made the world a better place. The rich are still getting richer, some politicians are still corrupt, and the earth's resources are still dwindling.

Many think that the big corporations have won. That they had used their technologies to divide the world between them... Not yet! Democracy in Europe might be dysfunctional, but some citizens are still fighting for it – and many more are hoping for a better tomorrow.

You are one of those people. It was never your goal to fight. But perhaps only because you were never presented with an opportunity.

Campaign Setup

Assemble the modifier pool using the following (19) modifiers.

| Number modifiers | Symbol modifiers |
|------------------|------------------|
| 2x -3 | 3x |
| 2x -2 | 1x |
| 2x -1 | 1x |
| 2x 0 | |
| 2x +1 | |
| 2x +2 | |
| 2x +3 | |



Episode 1: The Club

Introduction

The music is so loud, that it is deafening. Blue and purple neon lights pulse with the rhythm of the neuro-tech beats filling the room. You have been to the Syphon before, but that was long ago. You never intended to return to the notorious electro club in the east of Berlin. It is one of those places where they will ask you to hand in your Augmented Reality glasses at the door: No video recording allowed inside.

You are not sure why you are here. Your friend, André, had asked you to come. He had said something about his job at Nubicon and that he needed to talk to you, as you were someone he could trust. It all sounded quite odd, but not quite as odd as his voice when he declined to tell you what this was all about.


Now, here you are at the Syphon's bar, where André wanted to meet you. However, André is not. And worse, he does not answer his phone. Perhaps you should look around to find him.

→ **Proceed to setup.**

Setup

Prepare the staging deck




Also, find the following card in the **A Better Humanity** set () and add it to the staging deck:

- »Mark 'Steelskin' Caspar«

Prepare the encounter deck



(The  icon is the **difficulty set**. A selection of its cards are added to every encounter deck based on the difficulty you are playing on.)

Determine responsibility: [Underground]

(A character with the [Underground] trait becomes the responsible character. The group chooses a character if no character has this trait.)

Episode setup

- Find the »**Syphon**« Setting in the staging deck and put it into play. (Also, find the necessary Leads mentioned in the card's setup instructions and put them into play.)
- Search the encounter deck...
 - ...for all (5) regular Enemies and add them to the staging deck. (These are: 3x »**Corp Loyalist**«, 2x »**Freelance Security Officer**«.)
 - ...for 1 copy of »**Data De-Anonymization**«. It appears in the Network.

Then, reshuffle the encounter deck.

- All characters start at the »**Syphon**« (top).

→ **You are now ready to begin.**

Conclusion

Conclusion 1

The freelance security officers have you surrounded and are cutting off all exits to the club. You stand there with your hands raised, as an officer forces you to face the wall. They question you relentlessly, asking about your friend, André. You just shake your head, telling them you do not know the guy. Who knows if they are buying it – but what else can they do with so many people watching?

An officer approaches and says: "Sir, they are coming."

The man questioning you, firmly responds:
"Okay, let's move out."

Moments later, the freelance security officers are gone, leaving you behind in the dark club. Suddenly, you hear a distant police siren, which signals to the other guests that it is time to leave. As they clear out, you spot the blond woman and the bald man you had seen earlier with André.

The man recognizes you and says in a soft voice:
"So you're who André's been talking about. I'm Nairi. André is a colleague of mine at Nubicon."

Nairi is cut off by the blonde woman: "I cannot be seen by the police, and we can't trust them." She urges Nairi to leave. As she steps closer, you recognize her as Magdalena Schneider. You have seen her face on an electoral poster in Kreuzberg some time ago.

Nairi pushes back: "André trusted them, this is good enough for me."

But without time to argue, Magdalena nods. She gestures for you to follow her backstage. There, Nairi opens a security door that lets you escape into the night.

You hastily rush down a dark alley. Here, a self-driving cab is waiting – your newfound companions must have called it. You get into the car and drive off into the twilight of an early morning.

Progression:

- **Record 1 Nubicon Watches You.**
(Check 1 box in the appropriate section of the campaign log.)

→ **Read conclusion 4.**

Conclusion 2

As you exit the club, you hear the distant sound of a police siren. Maybe you should wait for the police to arrive so you can tell them what happened? But before you can come to a decision, you hear a soft voice behind you: "Hey, you must be who André's been talking about."

As you turn around, you spot the bald man you had seen earlier with André. Further behind him is the blonde woman, pushing through a crowd of partygoers, who escaped from the club with you.

The bald man smiles and offers his hand for a handshake: "I'm Nairi. André is a colleague of mine at Nubicon."

Nairi is cut off by the blonde woman: "I cannot be seen by the police, and we can't trust them." She urges Nairi to leave. As she steps closer, you recognize her as Magdalena Schneider. You have seen her face on an electoral poster in Kreuzberg some time ago.

Nairi quickly pushes back: "André trusted them, this is good enough for me."

But without time to argue, Magdalena nods and gestures for you to follow her down a dark alley. A self-driving cab is waiting for you here – your newfound companions must have called it. You get into the car and drive off into the twilight of an early morning.

Progression:

- **Note in the campaign log:** Mark Caspar remembers you.
→ **Read conclusion 4.**

Conclusion 3

As you run down the neon-lit alley, you see two figures heading towards a dark street. You recognize them as the bald man and the blonde woman you saw earlier with André. You rush after them, but do not dare to call out for them.

A self-driving cab is waiting for them. Before they enter the car, the woman looks over her shoulder and sees you running towards them. Seeing her face up close for the first time, you recognize her as Magdalena Schneider. You have seen her face on an electoral poster in Kreuzberg some time ago.

Magdalena asks sternly: "Have you been following us?"

Before you can reply, the bald man calmly interjects: "Ah, you must be who André's been talking about. I'm glad you found us."

The woman's eyes narrow, but then she gestures to the car's backseat. As you enter, the bald man offers his hand, saying: "I'm Nairi. André is a colleague of mine at Nubicon."

The self-driving cab starts accelerating with a faint hum, and you drive off into the twilight of an early morning.

Progression:

- **Note in the campaign log:** You escaped from the club.
→ **Read conclusion 4.**

Conclusion 4

You travel through the cold Berlin night in your cozy self-driving cab. Breaking the silence, Nairi says: "I am so sorry, Lena. I should not have gotten you involved in this."

Magdalena responds quickly: "Don't be. If it is anyone's fault, it's Nubicon's fault. But why would they risk illegally raiding a nightclub?"

Nairi hesitates. "Today at lunch, André told me he had been working on a new project for Nubicon's genetic research department. What he saw had made him uncomfortable. He had reviewed a dataset that included both your and my name – and huge chunks of our medical history."

Magdalena raises her eyebrows in surprise: "That sounds highly illegal."

Nairi responds: "It probably is. André wanted to tell us more tonight."

Magdalena thinks for a moment and then replies with newfound determination: "We need to find André. Do you know his address in the Haven?"

Nairi nods and turns around to give the car new directions.

Progression:

- **Record »Nairi Azarian-Müller« as your Ally.**
Find his Story Ally card in the **A Better Humanity** set (X).
(The group chooses a character to add that card permanently to their tool kit. Also, note the Ally's name in the *Story Allies* section of the campaign log.)
- **Record »Magdalena Schneider« as your Ally.**
Find her Ally card in the **A Better Humanity** set (X).
(The group chooses a character to add that card permanently to their tool kit. Also, note the Ally's name in the *Story Allies* section of the campaign log.)
- **Note in the campaign log:** Helpful Strangers (X).
Check how many »Strangers in the Dark« you flipped during the game. Note this number for X.
- **If the Surveillance card is on the escalation side**
→ **Record 1 Nubicon Watches You.**
(Check 1 box in the appropriate section of the campaign log.)

Level up your characters:

- **Record Followers.**
(Check 1 box in the appropriate section of the campaign log for each Follower the group collected during the game.)
 - **Gain 2 Starting Resources.** (Check 2 boxes in the appropriate section of the campaign log.)
 - **Upgrade 2 Action cards.** (Each character chooses 2 Action cards and replaces them with their higher-level versions.)
- **Proceed to Episode 2: The Haven.**

Note: If your first game was especially easy, you can adjust your difficulty. See details in the *Comprehensive Rules* (p.14).