



**Don't Mess
With My Head!**

What if your mind was no longer yours?

What if you could no longer
distinguish fantasy from reality?

What if your brain had an off switch, and
someone else held the remote?



Brainscan is a campaign of five linked adventures that drop the characters squarely into the middle of a titanic struggle for identity, control and freedom.

Brainscan is for gamemasters and players of all experience levels.
For use with *Shadowrun*, Third Edition.

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BRAINSCAN™



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DANCE WITH THE DEVIL, PART TWO



Dr. Sherman Huang stared morosely out of his office's floor-to-ceiling window at the glittering skyline. His chair still smelled of fresh leather, and he was still unused to its ergonomic curves. It reminded him how little time he had spent in this new office ... and how long it had been since he had seen his old one.

Like a weak emperor, I have been dethroned.

He glanced toward the desk's built-in telecom, where a muted video feed was playing. The transmission was live from the Renraku Arcology, where General Colloton's people were making yet another doomed foray into enemy territory. The live coverage was insanely expensive. The least Huang could do was watch.

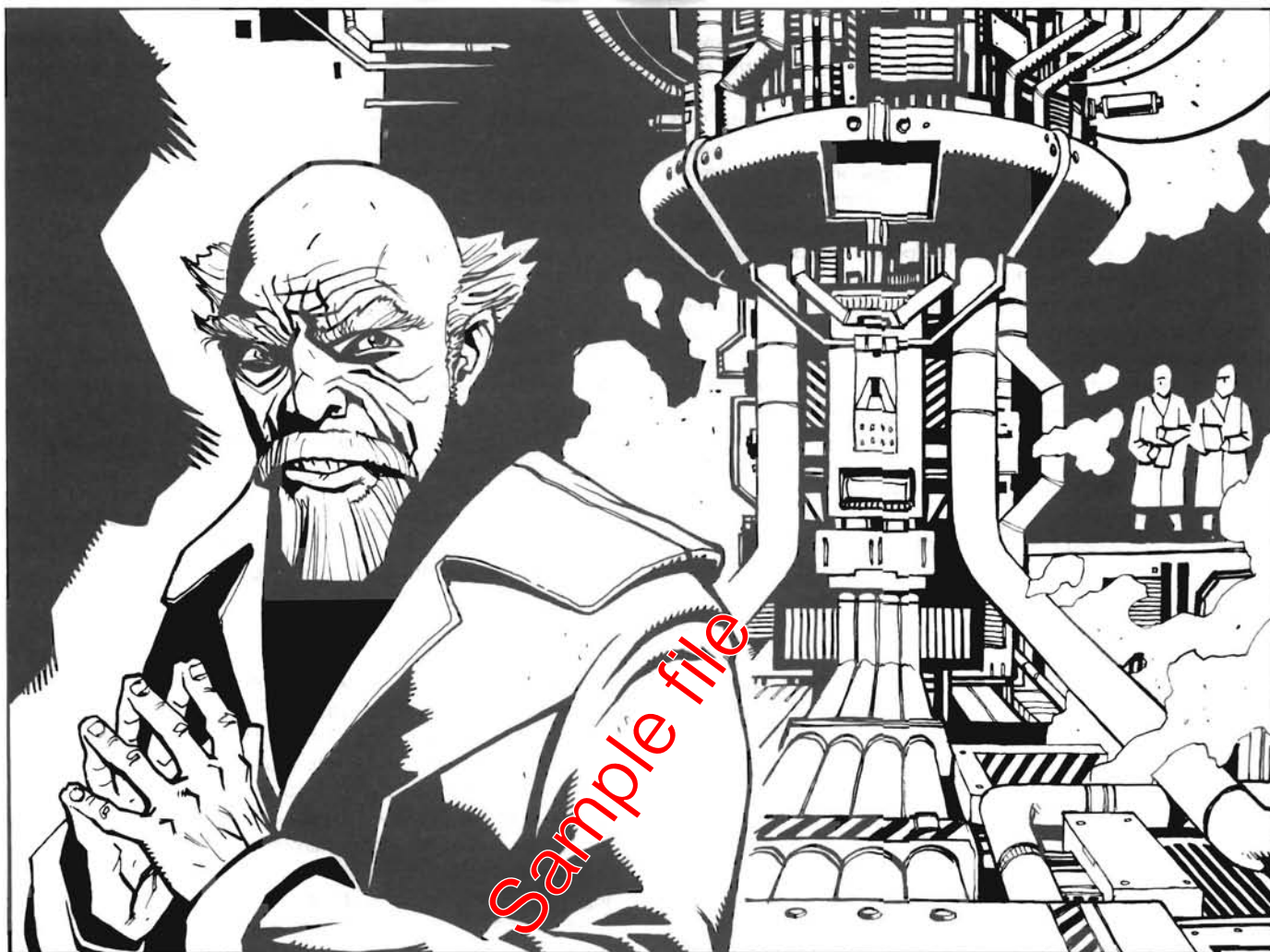
On the screen, two squads of UCAS Special Forces were beginning an operation to free prisoners from a thirteenth floor hospital.

Lieutenant Krause watched as the Special Forces engineers forced the 9th floor elevator open. A dozen troopers dropped into place, covering the squad that was about to begin the climb.

Krause glanced over at his second-in-command, Lieutenant Harrison, and saw him staring at the "9" above the open elevator doors. Krause knew what Harrison was thinking; he had thought it too many times himself. *Not even a dozen floors retaken out of three hundred, and each one harder than the one before.* Krause leaned over and muttered to Harrison, "One bite at a time, Bill." Harrison chuckled slightly, then nodded. *How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time. All we can do is keep chewing.*

Four floors above, the rescue team deployed a rescue droptube-slide and started tossing evacuees down the shaft. Krause's platoon stood ready to fire; more than once, they had "rescued" people who were armed, booby-trapped or both. Krause didn't believe in taking chances.

The first evacuee slid unceremoniously out of the tube: a gaunt young woman, her long blonde hair shaved to the skull around the fresh surgical scars on both sides of her head. She was naked, but the effect as she struggled to stand was more pathetic than erotic. Her frail body



shook with deep, silent sobs as they wrapped her in a blanket and led her away. Another prisoner was already arriving.

The telecom said, softly, "Dr. Huang-san, your guest has arrived."

Huang willed his voice to remain neutral, professional. "Let him in."

Two immaculate guards escorted the arrival in, closed the doors, and faded discreetly into the background. Huang knew their cybernetic data filters were activated; there was no need to worry about what they might overhear.

Huang's guest smiled. The expression was familiar, but everything else had changed. His stance was more arrogant than Huang remembered. His hands, once prone to nervous fiddling with pens and paper clips, hung perfectly still at his sides. Once, Huang had been able to read this man by his body and his eyes. Now his body was unnaturally controlled, almost machinelike. And his emotions were masked behind iridescent green cybereyes.

The guest made a slight bow, almost insulting compared to the deferential respect he had once shown Huang. Huang chose not to bow at all. "Hiroshi Ushida. Welcome back to Renraku."

The small man spoke firmly. "I have not returned, Huang-san, for I am no longer a Renraku citizen. I owe my allegiance to Deus now, and I am here to negotiate with you in the interests of diplomacy."

Huang smiled viciously. "Well. Why linger on the past, when there is the present to consider?" His eyes flicked to the telecom screen, where a stream of victims flowed by.

The rescue settled into an efficient rhythm. Krause had time to examine his prisoners: the scars, the amputations, the strange grafts, the incomprehensible implants. He had time—too much time—to wonder what manner of thing could do this to human beings, and what manner of man could have created such a thing. *I want to be there when we pull your plug, fragger.*