

Blade Runner – Electric Dreams

Session 01 06-11-25

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The White Dragon Noodle Bar - Novak and Fenna

Toxic rain is pouring down over the city, where gigantic buildings dwarf ancient skyscrapers. Lights from huge billboards flash along the streets and wipe across the crowds of pedestrians in Sector 5, Little Tokyo district. The White Dragon Noodle Bar is crowded with customers, sitting on stools slurping their breakfast out of bowls. Veteran Blade Runner Willem Novak is among them, enjoying a few days of hard-earned rest and reading today's Independent Sentinel newspaper while sipping his coffee.

Across the square a Detective Special Spinner slowly descends to street level and sets down. The Spinner's door lifts and Fenna emerges, she looks around and quickly spotting Novak at the noodle bar, she weaves effortlessly through the crowd to position herself at his shoulder. Aware of all of this, from the moment the spinner entered the airspace above the square, Novak studiously ignores its arrival and the fellow LAPD-RDU officer now standing nearby. Smiling pleasantly, Fenna announces herself, "Hello sir, I'm afraid you have been called in for duty, apologies for the interruption." Without lifting his head, Novak mutters, "Fenna... off and fuck... rearrange those words into a suitable order." Fenna chuckles to herself as within a minute she calmly and quietly talks the reluctant detective into accompanying her. Sighing ruefully, Novak follows Fenna to the spinner, still sipping his coffee and wondering what the hell it is that warrants calling him in from leave.

LAPD Headquarters - Holden's Office - Bakker and Percival

As Fenna and Novak enter they see two other officers, the burly ex-soldier Bakker and departmental smart guy, Percival, already seated. Novak attempts to complain about the disturbance of his leave but is quickly reminded by the Deputy Chief of his place in the chain of command and the importance of this matter.

"Sit down," the Deputy Chief says with a rasping voice.

"We have an urgent situation. Last night, there was a shooting in Sector 1, in a sordid place called the Snake Pit on Nightclub Row. Two Nexus-9 Blade Runners were there, serial numbers LH3-7.93 and SN9-1.48, code names Leah and Sandor. Maybe you've seen them around? Anyway, Sandor was shot dead, and Leah is now missing. We have no idea where she is."

Holden taps on his desk terminal and the data files of Leah and Sandor appear on the big screen behind him and also on the Blade Runners' own personal KIA units.

"They went to the Snake Pit to investigate suspected Nexus-8 activity, but we don't know if that's what triggered the shooting. According to local cops at the scene, witnesses said there were human supremacist jerks at the Snake Pit last night. Maybe that had something to do with it. We just don't know. I guess we'll read about it in that sleazy tabloid KILL tomorrow."

"You need to figure this out, and fast. I have the brass breathing down my neck on this. As you know, the Nexus-9 Replicants were approved for use on Earth just last year, and mistrust against the Reps is running high. If someone out there is killing and kidnapping Nexus-9s, *our* Nexus-9's, we need to find them and stop them. Fast."

"Add to that, the Wallace Corporation is pushing us hard on this. Their business depends on this new line of Replicants, and anything that jeopardizes that would be a major blow to their bottom line. They're letting us run this investigation but have offered their assistance. Their PR manager Quell is expecting you at Wallace Corp HQ, to tell you more about Leah. Play nice with them... I mean it!" He glares at Novak and Bakker in particular.

"You can play this any way you like, split up to cover more ground if you need to. I don't care as long as I get results. And fast. You have the full resources of the Rep-Detect Unit at your disposal. Sandor's body is being processed down in the Crime Lab right now. Of course, you can check the LAPD Mainframe for personnel files on Sandor and Leah, and any Esper footage of the Snake Pit Last night. Maybe you'll get lucky. I have uploaded to your KIA all relevant information that we have so far."

"Novak, you're not in charge of the team, each of you has particular abilities to bring to bear and equal standing, so work this out together... Now, get out of here."

The four Blade Runners leave Holden's office and organise their tasks:

- Fenna will visit the Wallace Corporation to speak to PR VP, Quell.
- Percival will go to the RIT Crime Lab to check the autopsy status on Sandor. If he has time he will also consult the LAPD mainframe for related information.
- Novak and Bakker will go to The Snake Pit club to investigate the crime scene.

DAY 1 - MORNING SHIFT

Wallace Corp

Fenna takes her Spinner and flies to the small mountain range of towering buildings that constitutes the, still under construction, Wallace Corp Headquarters. Landing in a huge internal garage, she descends into the cavernous and eerily empty interior, lit by a pale golden light and the shadows and distant sounds of water. After enquiring at the front desk, she is led into Quell's austere and immaculately decorated office, where Wallace Corp's VP of Public Relations is expecting her.

Adopting a relaxed conversational manner, Fenna briefly introduces herself to Quell before being interrupted by the Wallace Corp VP. Briskly and in a clipped, efficient tone Quell thanks her for coming and proceeds to explain how critical the handling of this case is to Wallace Corporation.

"The Nexus-9 launch was just over a year ago, and the public is still getting used to Replicants," and she pauses, gazing meaningfully at Fenna before continuing, "...such as yourself, among them. As we are all very well aware, the Nexus-9 line is perfectly safe and thereby exists as a means to ensure the survival of society as we know it, through the smooth integration of the Nexus-9s," Quell explains. "It is simple, plain sense, there are not enough capable humans to run things on Earth and sophisticated and advanced replicants are the only answer to ensure that the common good is best served and nothing must be allowed to hazard that mission."

Fixing Fenna with a hard stare, Quell demands, "so what do you know so far and what are you going to do about it?"

Fenna, giving nothing away herself in her expression or body language swiftly correlates her observations of Quell. The Wallace executive has given nothing away and Fenna realises she is conversing with one of the most talented and able people... or replicants she has ever dealt with, cold and hyper efficient, and following her instincts Fenna concludes with a high degree of certainty that Quell is likely an advanced Nexus-9 like herself.

With this in mind, Fenna replies quickly in a manner she calculates will suit Quell the best, tersely explaining what the responding police already know regarding the shooting and that two of the Blade Runner team are investigating the crime scene as we speak. In addition, one of the team, Percival, is following up on the autopsy of the murdered Nexus-9 officer, Sandor.

Quell replies, "good, that's the correct choice. So far, I think you are doing quite well." She concludes with a restatement that the matter is of vital importance and must be resolved quickly.

Fenna uses her Empathy/Insight ability with great success to realise she can press Quell for additional information.

Quell agrees that Fenna's request for additional information is reasonable given the circumstances and provides the following information...

LEAH'S BASELINE TESTS. Leah failed a few Baseline Tests recently and was brought to Wallace for recalibration. This is standard procedure. With tens of millions of Nexus-9s being produced, minor malfunctions are to be expected in rare cases. Quell thinks it highly unlikely that this had anything to do with Leah's disappearance – instead, she suggests that the Blade Runners should investigate the human supremacist groups that are inciting hatred and violence against Replicants.

Once again, Fenna is able to use Empathy/Insight to lead Quell to divulge the following...

LILITH MEMORY LAB. Leah was an early Nexus-9 model, with memories designed by the Lilith Memory Lab, one of Wallace's subcontractors. If they want to know more about Leah's memory design, Quell says they should talk to the Lilith Memory Lab. She thinks this would likely be a waste of time, however.

They part reasonably cordially with Fenna inwardly relieved that she was the Blade Runner assigned to this very sensitive task and highly satisfied that she has extracted two important leads from the icy Wallace VP. As she returns to her Spinner she updates the shared investigation dossier via her KIA device.

The Snake Pit Nightclub

Parking their Spinner, Bakker and Novak note the police line outside along with a small crowd of gawkers.

Novak is interested in whether Leah and Sandor arrived in one or two Spinners so after asking Bakker, who also doesn't know, he goes over to a cop standing at the cordon and asks him. Since he doesn't show his badge, the cop politely asks him to move along until Novak presents his shield. Bakker weighs in on the policeman, "hey wise guy, we're not just spectators here, we're investigating!" The cop, somewhat taken aback says, "sure, ok but there's no need to be nasty about it." Novak asks his question and is informed that both Blade Runners arrived in a single Spinner which has been taken back to LAPD HQ. Novak then hopefully asks the cop if there's anything suspicious from his point of view to which the cop replies, "an officer was shot dead and another is missing... Detective."

As they turn to enter the club, one of the gawkers lingering at the line registers with Novak's Observation check. A tall, pale, bald man. He looks alternately at the club entrance and the two Blade Runners. While Novak is wondering what to do, Bakker strides over to the man and staring him right in the eye begins to interrogate him in her usual forthright manner, "hey you, who are you, what are you doing here and why are you interested in this club?" The man seems a little bowled over by the stream of demands right in his face so Bakker helpfully repeats the questions rather louder and more deliberately, perhaps the man is hard of hearing, shouting should help, it always has before.

Gathering his composure the man says, "well, I saw what happened, if you're looking for witnesses then I was there at the time." Bakker continues to grill the man asking him to describe everything that happened and then confusing the situation by immediately asking him what he was doing here? "I just came to a nightclub, to have a good time," the man replies.

Bakker suggests she will take him to LAPD HQ for questioning and asks him for id. The man asks if they can go inside and he can show them where the incident happened and what he saw. Bakker agrees and after collecting Novak the three of them enter the club.

Inside, the Pit is empty except for a uniformed officer and the club owner Taffey Lewis, perched on a bar stool grumbling about the loss of trade. Novak teases Lewis about getting the club open again. Lewis tells Novak to let him know when he's finished while gazing sadly at the mess. Novak implies that Lewis must have been a witness but Lewis says he was in the back office at the time of the incident, "this guy here, Styles, he's a witness. He told me earlier; he's been waiting to talk to you."

Styles explains, he was having some drinks at the bar and there was a beautiful replicant dancer performing but there were some of those assholes from the human superiority league in the club and they were causing trouble, jeering and threatening her from the crowd. Hearing the disturbance, I turned to see what was happening and I saw two figures push their way through the crowd over to that group and then suddenly there was a deafening gunshot and the mirror shattered, then immediately a woman ran out of the room through the main exit pushing people out of the way, it was all over so fast. I was half standing up, I'm quite tall so I could get a better view.

Novak asks Styles if he recognised any of the people jeering and at first he says, "no, I don't hang out with people like that... but oh, maybe..." and he goes on to describe, "the editor of that scandal rag... Skyler or Schyler or something, the editor of KILL magazine, he was there, yelling insults at that poor dancer."

Novak's Observation check allows him to find a bloodied bullet round dug into the wall behind the shattered mirror, a caseless .44, typical of a Blade Runner weapon. He carefully bags it for evidence.

Meanwhile, over at the Crime Lab.

LAPD HQ RIT Crime Lab

Percival enters the Crime Lab and quickly finds Coco, the Chief Medical Examiner. Percival is aware that Coco can be a bit eccentric and distant but the Examiner does appreciate intelligence so Percival is confident that he is the best choice to follow up and understand the data here.

As Percival is entertained by the synthetic cat wandering around the lab, Coco enters and greets him. "Ahhh, Percival, investigating Sandor, yes, let's pull him out." They examine Sandor's body, clearly shot by a large calibre weapon through the chest, probably a .44, maybe caseless Coco thinks, showing Percival some of the marks that indicate this type of round. "Absolutely this is the cause of death, no drugs or unusual substances, just massive trauma caused by the chest wound. You can scan his eyes for a KIA scan to confirm his id if you like." Percival does this and sure enough this was Blade Runner Sandar.

Percival makes a connection check so Coco suggests it might be worth checking out Bullet Bob's Runner Surplus, maybe the round might have been supplied from there. It seems that Coco didn't know Leah or Sandor although, as Coco chuckles darkly, he knows him now.

Percival chats pleasantly with Coco for a few minutes before leaving to check if he has time this morning to run some searches on the LAPD Mainframe.