A detailed comic book illustration for the cover of 'Cyborgs'. The scene is set in a dark, industrial environment with large, metallic, mechanical structures. A central figure, a man in a dark, tactical suit with a high-tech helmet, is shown in a dynamic pose, appearing to be in the middle of a fight or a high-speed maneuver. He is surrounded by sparks and bright light, suggesting a recent impact or explosion. The background features large, cylindrical mechanical components and a complex network of pipes and machinery. The overall color palette is dominated by dark blues, greys, and metallic tones, with bright yellow and orange highlights from the sparks and light effects.

Cyborgs

HELL ON EARTH
John Hopler

Dead Man Walkin'

I could tell you, but then I'd have to kill you. And then, to make sure your corpse didn't go spilling any of its secrets to some shaman or huckster who can speak to the dead, I'd have to turn you into one of them so I could keep an eye on your soul.

At least that was how it was back then. Top secret clearances don't mean as much these days.

My name is Leo Poe. I was a spook for the Agency. If you want to know about cyborgs, you've come to the right place. I suppose I know as much about cyborgs as any man left on Earth with the exception of Malcolm Rhinehart. I don't suggest asking him, he'd kill you without telling you a thing.

I was in charge of the Agency's Cyborg Proliferation Task Force. Our job was to spy on the countries who possessed cyborg technology or who were thinking about developing said technology. Before the Last War began, all of the major industrial nations had some sort of cyborg program underway and a few Third World countries had something in the works, so I was busier than a fireman in Hades.

As head of the task force it was my regrettable duty to write the briefing papers for my superiors. That meant I had to know all there was to know on the subject of cyborgs so I could analyze the data coming in from the field and make sure that we were not experiencing a "cyborg gap."

Deaders

The raw material for cyborgs is deaders—those corpses that don't seem to have received notification of their deaths yet. Some folks call them Harrowed. Deaders are a little different from your average walkin' dead. For starters, they're more intelligent, and most of them don't go around eating human brains for breakfast. I've been told the reason they're different is because the soul of the fool who died is trapped in the body with the manitou that's animating the corpse.

Deaders are used for a bunch of reasons. The most important is that many of the types of equipment implanted in a cyborg simply couldn't be placed in a living, breathing person. Many cyborgs have their torsos crammed full of electronics where a normal person would have vital organs like the heart, lungs, and kidneys.

The second reason is that the manitou trapped in a deader's brain allows him to do things living people can't. Some have special powers even before they become cyborgs, and once they've been implanted their resident demons are forced to run on a hamster wheel and power all of their systems. This means that as long as a cyborg can keep his body and soul together—in the most literal sense—he's got juice for his equipment.

Lastly, being dead, the Harrowed had no legal rights in most countries. This made them expensive yet completely expendable weapons.

Why Cyborgs?

One of the questions I was asked a lot, especially by snot-nosed Washington bureaucrats who had never even *heard* a shot fired in anger much less fired one themselves, was, "Why do we need cyborgs? Why don't we just build automatons and train regular troops to perform their duties."

The desk jockeys always got my blood pressure up with that one. The simple answer is "because everyone else has them." Of course, saying that to a bunch of bleeding-heart liberals was a sure way to have the budget-cutting axe hit you square between the eyes.

There were valid reasons for creating the Hellish man-machine hybrids. Hellstromme Industries' automatons were great for battlefield fire support and piling up impressive casualty-to-kill ratios for the brass in the rear, but they were one-trick ponies—killing was the only thing they could do. Automatons used zombie brains as their AI. This made them the equivalent of lobotomized serial-killers with machine-guns and 300 pounds of armor. They could be very

clever about hunting down and destroying a target, but they couldn't be expected to execute anything more complicated than simple fire-and-maneuver tactics.

Cyborgs on the other hand, have the full reasoning and decision-making capabilities of a normal human brain. They can execute complex plans and do things which require some degree of subtlety like sneaking past a guard or rescuing a hostage.

As for training normal human troops to do what cyborgs do, forget it! Even the best-conditioned human can't match the performance of a cyborg. Cyborgs don't need to sleep or breathe, they don't feel pain, they only require food if they become damaged, and they can carry a 200-pound pack for hours at a time without ever slowing down.

What is a Cyborg?

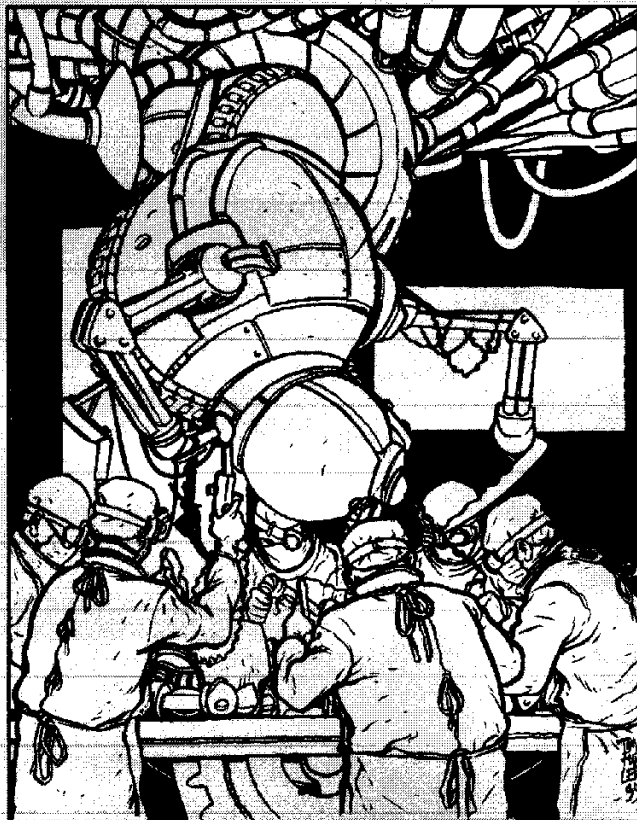
Before I tell you the whole sordid history of cyberkind, I suppose I should discuss exactly what a cyborg is. The word "cyborg" is short for cybernetic organism. This name doesn't really fit the beings we call cyborgs, I for one would never classify a spirit-animated corpse as an "organism," but that's what they were called and the name stuck. We usually called them tin cans or just cans for short, because of how they looked when all armored up.

I'm not a scientist, and I could never dream of building or even repairing one, but my position as head of the CPTF meant I had to have some idea of how they worked and what they were capable of.

Heart of Darkness

The heart and soul of all cyborgs—in a very literal way—is the spirit fetter. A spirit fetter is an arcane device that traps the manitou in a deader and sucks it dry of spiritual energy. Think of the manitou and fetter combination as a giant plug into the Hunting Grounds through which the cyborg can draw juice for his systems.

The spirit fetter also serves another very important purpose. It prevents the manitou from challenging the cyborg's soul for control of the body. This is important, because ordinary deaders were sometimes possessed by their manitou and forced to commit unspeakable acts. Cyborgs would be impractical if the fetter didn't keep the manitou down, because you could never be sure when they might go AWOL or fly into a murderous rage.



A cyborg is created.

There is a drawback to the fetter, though. The manitous in many Harrowed allowed them to develop magical powers that were extensions of their psyche. When fettered, a manitou is unable to provide energy for these powers and they are no longer available for use.

Big Brother

It can get awfully crowded in a cyborg's cranium. Besides the deader's soul and the manitou, all cans also have an artificial intelligence riding shotgun. The very early models didn't have one of these because, as I mentioned, they were all volunteers. Later, as recruiting methods changed, AIs were installed to ensure the cyborg's loyalty and force them to follow certain programmed behaviors. The AIs in many military models also perform useful functions in combat.

Some cyborgs get along well with their AIs, others don't. Some cyborgs I've met despise them. That's understandable, because just like the manitou, the AI can take over the deader's body. If the Harrowed is about to disobey orders or violate one of its programmed behaviors, the AI twists the can's arm until the deader is willing to cooperate.

My Brain Hurts

This conflict between the AI and the cyborg's soul can actually damage both the computer and the deader's brain. Whenever a cyborg attempts to resist the AI's programming, it sets up a dangerous feedback loop that can short out chips and burn brain cells. Severe feedback can cripple or even kill a cyborg.

Many scientists worked on the feedback problem, but they were unable to completely eliminate it. All cyborgs still suffer from feedback every now and then. Back when cyborgs received regular maintenance, slagged AI components were replaced on a regular basis. Spare parts are hard to come by these days, and as a result, many of the cyborgs that are still roaming the Wasted West have damaged or non-functioning AIs. Over the years the struggle for control of the body has shorted out the AI one circuit at a time. Some cyborgs' AIs have stopped working altogether, others fade in and out, and some AIs have gone mad.

Madness is rare. The majority of the time, the AI simply fades into the background. This is usually good news for a cyborg, because it means he has one less passenger in his noggin trying to drive from the back seat.

The Carrot and the Stick

Most commanders didn't care for the idea that a strong-willed cyborg could circumvent it's programming, so safeguards were built into the later AIs that reduced the likelihood of a cyborg trying to resist the computer. The AI was wired directly into the pain and pleasure centers of the brain and used these to keep its charge on the straight and narrow. If the cyborg resisted the computer, the AI could inflict crippling pain on it until the cyborg decided to be a team player again. Likewise, if the cyborg performed a task exceptionally well, it would be rewarded by the AI stimulating its pleasure center—a sensation most deaders can't feel on their own.

Cyber Goodies

The purpose of these electronic doodads messing with the deader's mind is to make sure he does the right thing with all the other toys the techs stick in him.

All cyborgs have a spirit fetter and an AI. Beyond that the configurations of individual cyborgs varied widely, and even changed from mission to mission. Most systems were designed as interchangeable modules that could be swapped in and out as desired, but some, like increased strength, required such extensive surgery over such a large portion of the body, that once implanted, they were rarely removed.

The number of different systems available for cyborgs was enormous. I had a hard enough time keeping track of the systems used by our forces; discovering and cataloging all the modules created by the CSA and other countries was a nightmare. The available systems ranged anywhere from the performance enhancing like increased strength, telescopic night-vision, and limb replacement, to more esoteric things like rad-scanners, retinal implants, and gas analyzers.

Weapons and armor were always popular, especially with the military battlefield models. Some cyborgs had hidden internal weapons, while many of the military models had them mounted externally. Some of the later models had hard points on which they could mount nearly any man-portable weapon.

All I know is that you don't want to throw down on a cyborg with a weapon implant. A properly-equipped weapon feels just like an extension of a cyborg's body, giving it an extra measure of speed and control not possible for an unenhanced human. Also, if it's an energy weapon powered by the manitou, the cyborg will never, ever, run out of ammo.

Body Replacement

One of the most radical procedures performed on cyborgs was the replacement of limbs and sometimes the entire torso with artificial parts. This was most often done on the military models so the generals could cram that last little \$2,000,000 widget in their troops. Some of the heavy combat models were little more than talking heads on an artificial body.

Body replacement had its pluses and minuses. On the positive side it made the cyborg much stronger and tougher. The removal of most of the muscle tissue and internal organs also opened up a lot of room for more internal modules to be implanted.

On the negative side of the ledger, the greater the amount of body replacement performed on a cyborg the more dehumanized it became. It seemed like chopping off body parts took some of a deader's sense of identity away also. This made the cyborg more easily controlled by the AI, but it also removed the deader's sense of initiative and need for survival. Many deaders

who experienced full body replacement eventually came to identify with their AIs to the point that they actually lost their personality and became their AIs.

Cyborgs who underwent full body replacement also seemed highly susceptible to manitou possession in the rare occurrence that their spirit fetter failed.

The Mission

Nearly everyone associates cyborgs with the military, but the very first cyborgs were creations of the Agency. Unlike many of those who would follow, all of these first cyborgs were volunteers. These brave men and women served on the front lines of what became known, at least in Agency circles, as the Shadow Wars.

The Shadow Wars

The Shadow Wars began in the late 20th Century. In the years following World War II, supernatural occurrences dropped off dramatically worldwide. It almost seemed as if the Allied victory over the Nazis and their horrendous death machines had been a victory over the Reckoners themselves.

Supernatural phenomena continued to occur, but at a much lower rate. It seemed as if all the Agency's work over the past century was going to pay off. Some of the bigwigs in 2060 actually thought the Reckoner's had been defeated and all that was left was to mop up. None of the Agency's operatives complained—they had their hands full keeping track of the Soviet Union and all the other commies.

Unfortunately, it turned out the Reckoners had just been taking one last deep breath before the big push that would send the world to Hell. As the millennium's end neared, things began to heat up and the Agency was soon neck deep in doodoo for which it was woefully unprepared. The Supernatural Containment division had been drastically scaled back during the 1960s and 1970s, and it was incredibly short on manpower when these new threats appeared on the scene.

As far as the public knew, the strange, supernatural events which had flared up occasionally since the Civil War had been all but stamped out. Sure, the *Tombstone Epitaph* still reported things like zombie sightings and the birth of werewolf babies, but no one took those stories seriously. The Agency was determined to keep things this way.



A cyborg crashes the cultist's party.

Hundreds of field operatives were transferred over to the Supernatural Containment division (usually just called the "Spook division"), and given crash courses in how to deal with common abominations. These poor sods were sent out to investigate the new bumper crop of weirdness—most of which erupted out West—and promptly got their butts kicked. In the first year alone, the Agency lost nearly 150 agents.

The Cults

One of the reasons for these heavy losses was an unprecedented, and entirely unexpected, amount of cult activity. The weirdness hadn't disappeared like the Agency had believed, it had just gone underground to spawn. Its offspring was a bizarre collection of twisted and often interconnected cults. There were all sorts of cults: millennium cults, apocalypse cults, demon-worshipping cults, celebrity cults, etc.

Although the cults held strange, and often contradictory beliefs, they all had two things in common. The first was that at the center of each cult, either as the organizer or the subject of worship, was some sort of supernatural person, item, or creature. The second was that many of the cult members possessed magical powers.

The Reckoners had pulled the old bait and switch on us. They distracted us with blatant abominations while they recruited human minions with offers of power and wealth. This tactic was devastating because these people came from all walks of life, and held all sorts of jobs. The cults had their slimy tentacles (I mean that literally in some cases) in nearly every important office in the country. They had people in local governments and police forces, the federal government, the military, and even the Agency itself. The worst part, at least from the Agency's point of view, was that this had happened right under our noses.

These infiltrators made it extremely hard to battle the cults. Agency teams would often arrive at a suspected cult location only to find it cleaned out, or worse, the team would walk straight into an ambush.

Extreme Prejudice

The Agency considered the cultists traitors to the human race. As losses mounted, the word was quietly passed down from the top that in this war, there would be no prisoners. The Agency cleaner teams began a full scale program of cult extermination—no quarter was asked or given.

Upping the stakes in this way just meant more dead agents. The cult safehouses were often a bitch and a half to crack. As I mentioned, many of the cultists had gained magical powers from their dark masters and they used them to blast our guys to pieces. Many of the cults also had supernatural "pets" that could pull a man limb from limb or slurp him down in a single gulp. Even the poorest of cults always seemed to be able to get their hands on a small arsenal of weapons.

On top of all that, a lot of cultists were wealthy and respected members of the community. Many of them had enough political clout to make you wish you were dead. Many an honest agent's career was ended by some behind the scenes string pulling.

Losses began to reach unsustainable levels and newbies fresh from the Academy were being thrown straight into the meat grinder. It became obvious that the Agency was going to have to find a new approach or admit defeat.

Division X

Luckily the Agency's research department, the fabled "Division X" of TV, had just the ticket.

Back in the late 1800s a dissident group known as the Sons of Sitgreaves was formed. They got their name from R. Percy Sitgreaves, another troublemaker that the Agency dealt with back in 1876.

This group was dedicated to spreading the idea that mad science was inspired by evil spirits known as manitous and that these spirits had some sort of sinister agenda. This happened to be the truth, but the Agency couldn't allow them to spread this news because it would have caused widespread panic and might have triggered a global economic crisis that would make the Great Depression look like a pothole.

The group was outlawed and the leaders fled to Europe to stir up trouble. They eventually returned to the US, and we nabbed them within a few days of their return. The rabblers were interrogated, of course, and they revealed a new form of inventing their group had developed that blended bits of hucksterism with mad science to create items magically from simple raw materials.

Mad science had been working just fine for the boys in the lab, so they didn't give this new technique much thought. The original files on the subject were placed in storage in one of the Agency's massive archive warehouses and simply forgotten.

That changed when the Shadow Wars began. As the casualty list grew, the tech-weenies in the basement were given an enormous budget and told to find a way for our field agents to gain an edge over the opposition. Dust was blown off a lot of old files and the scientists got to work.

To make a long story short, the tech-heads found a way to combine the Sons of Sitgreaves' methods with the pioneering work that Hellstromme Industries was doing with the spiritual energy from ghost-rock reactors. The result was a new class of devices which could be powered by spiritual energy. I'm told this is very similar to the magic practiced by junkers, but not being a scientist, I couldn't tell you.

Unlike junker tech, the devices the Agency techs came up with weren't powered by spirit batteries. Nope. They found a way to trap manitous and suck them dry. Manitou-powered cyborgs didn't happen overnight, though.

The program to build these bad puppies was called the Anubis Project, after the Egyptian god of the Underworld.



Zimmerman on a rampage.

The Anubis Project

The Anubis Project was ultra-top-secret-need-to-know classified. It was the sort of project that if someone involved with it said, "I could tell, but then I'd have to kill you," you'd best shut your ears or you'd get a bullet in the head. Everyone involved with the program was subject to routine syker scans, and the Agency even brought in sykers to scan the sykers.

There were a number of reasons security was so tight on the project. The first was the obvious reason: The Agency didn't want the cults to know we had them. The government was riddled with cult members and people who unknowingly associated with them. If the cults found out about the cyborgs before they were operational, they would be looking for them. Any sort of Congressional oversight committee was a leak waiting to happen, so the decision was made to fund the project from one of the Agency's discretionary funds.

The Agency also didn't want any other countries to know about them. Besides fighting supernatural threats, the organization is also responsible for gathering intelligence on foreign governments. Using cyborgs against foreign countries would be much more effective if those countries weren't looking for them and didn't have their own.

The Agency couldn't risk the public finding out about the program either. The program started only a few months after the Zimmerman Massacre. A deader by the name of Timothy Lucius Zimmerman, lost control to his inner demon and went on a shooting spree in the Mall of America. He killed over 100 civilians and ten cops before a SWAT sniper finally put a bullet through his brain.

Most papers hushed up the supernatural aspect of the whole thing, and Zimmerman was reported as a regular PCP user. The *Tombstone Epitaph* reported the truth, however, and a large portion of the public took what the *Epitaph* printed as gospel. The Agency already had a bad reputation with radical left-wingers, if it got out that the organization was actually building bigger, better, faster deaders, it would be a public relations nightmare.

Lastly, the Agency didn't want other branches of the government knowing about them for political reasons. It knew that the armed forces would want to get their hands on the cyborgs. Once they did, the Agency would lose most, if not all, control over cyborg development and procurement.

The Hill

The early stages of the project took place on the Hill, a secret lab high in the northern Sierra Madres in NorCal.

Security was so high that a few years worth of supplies were stored in the base's warehouses, and the base was literally sealed off. There was only one line to the outside world, and this was under constant guard. None of the base's computers were linked to this external line, all new research material was trucked in and dropped off just outside the perimeter. It was all thoroughly scanned for viruses, both biological and computer, before being brought inside.

In the Flesh

The first obstacle the design team had to overcome was the problem of how to forge a neural link between undead flesh and the electronics of the cybernetics. This was fairly easy to do in living patients, but deader muscles don't produce any sort of electrical impulses that can be used for this purpose.

Hellstromme had solved the problem once for his automaton brains. The zombie brains were suspended in a psychoactive, electrically conductive gel which contained a fine suspension of ghost rock particles. A brain's thoughts sparked the ghost rock which in turn generated a current in the gel which could be interpreted by the device's servos.

This unfortunately wouldn't work for a cyborg because the volume of fluid needed to create a working automaton brain was much greater than the size of an average person's head. Using the HI method would make infiltration type cyborgs—the program's original goal—an impossibility. I can see it now: No, no I'm fine. I just have a touch of water on the brain.

The only other clues the scientists had were some incomplete notes left behind by Dr. Leonitus P. Gash. The doctor had surgically implanted steam-powered prosthetics in people way back in 1876. He had used a special compound called X-19 to forge a connection between his patients' bodies and his iron and steel implants.

Later in his career, he had moved on to implanting people of the Harrowed persuasion. He used a new compound he called DX-20 to create the needed link with the dead flesh.

Gash ran a pretty slick operation and the Agency was never able to find him. According to one of his students that the Agency was able to

get a hold of, Gash's luck ran out one day while working on a deader. The patient's manitou got control during the operation, and sliced the poor guy up with the very hand saw he had just implanted. The Harrowed then proceeded to attack the doctor's assistants and set the lab on fire. The student who ended up in Agency custody was barely able to escape with his life and a handful of wadded notes he scooped off a table as he ran. It wasn't much to start from, but it was all the scientists had.

Guinea Pig

It took a lot of trial and error before the design team got the formula right. Most of the errors were made on a poor deader named Yara Glickman. She had lost her right arm while undercover with a cult in Lost Angels. The scientists tried again and again to make her a working replacement. I think they finally got it right on the sixth try. By then what little remained of Yara's arm had been lost, and the new one was connected directly to her shoulder. I met Yara many years later, and she didn't seem to mind. She was just glad to have an arm.

More importantly, the scientists could move on and start building the first generation of true cyborgs.

The Exterminators

These early model cyborgs were primitive by today's standards but they got the job done. Designed for undercover work, they had no AIs and few internal systems. Most had increased strength, subdermal armor, and some sort of recording/transmitting device so their buddies outside of cult HQ in the pizza van could hear what was going on.

The new cyborgs caught the cults completely off guard. Within the first three months after the cyborgs began operations, the Agency was able to completely crush four cults. It was payback time, and there were very few survivors.

Upping the Ante

It didn't take long for word to get around the cult underground about the Agency's new weapon. Cultists began checking new recruits out more closely to make sure they weren't letting a wolf into the fold. New initiations involved cutting the recruit with a knife to make sure she bled. Many cultists began keeping guard dogs because the hounds could usually sense a deader a mile away.



An infiltrator is sniffed out.

We didn't lose many cyborgs to these measures, although we did lose a few. I mean lost as in the Harrowed was irretrievably dead. We never actually physically lost a cyborg to the opposition. There was always plenty of backup standing by to retrieve the body and neutralize all witnesses.

The cults' newfound caution made it that much harder for the cyborgs to infiltrate the cults. As the months went by and the cultist body count continued to drop, bigwigs at the Agency began to make rumbling noises about the cost versus results ratio of the operations. The future of the entire cyborg program was in jeopardy.

Enter Gruber

The program's collective bacon was hauled out of the fire by Dr. Maurya Gruber. She was one of the Agency's leading theoretical thaumaturgists. She normally worked with the cleaner crews in dealing with hucksters, unregistered sykers, and the like, but she was called in to apply her hard-won expertise to the considerable problems facing the cyborg program.

Gruber's approach turned the entire program on its ear. The early spirit fetters only kept the manitou down and ensured that the deader didn't switch sides in the middle of an investigation. They didn't provide any power whatsoever. All of a cyborg's internal systems were powered by conventional means. This limited the amount of time the unit could remain in the field.

Maurya had done research on the powers of the Harrowed and was convinced that the manitou was the source of them. The fact that deaders lost their powers when their manitous were fettered only proved her point, and convinced her that there was an untapped power source there. It took her less than a month to design an improved fetter that drained energy from the manitou.

She didn't stop there, though. Gruber theorized that if the manitou's energy could manifest "magical" powers in the Harrowed, it could be used to power equipment which created similar effects. Under her watchful gaze, the Agency's scientists set about developing an entirely new type of hardware that was powered by spiritual energy. That may not sound so fantastic now, but you have to remember that this was decades before the junkers caught on to pretty much the same trick.

New Hardware

The two most important things which came out of the Agency workshops during that period were the infiltration package and the mind shield.

The infiltration package was a comprehensive system that allowed a deader to pass for a living person. The cyborg had a pulse, bled when injured, had bad breath, the whole nine yards. It also eliminated that faint stench of the grave that lingers around most deaders. Most cans could fool humans by wearing lots of cheap cologne, but the smell was always a dead give away (pun intended) to dogs.

The mind shield was also an impressive piece of work. It actually created an arcane shield around the cyborg's mind that blocked syker probes and any cultist magic which directly targeted the mind. In later years, improved models of this shield not only blocked attempts to mess with a deader's mind, but they also alerted the unit of the attempt and gave it a general idea from which direction the energy came from, so the cyborg could take "appropriate countermeasures."

The Cult of Atheron

Equipped with this new gear, the cyborgs managed to quickly infiltrate a number of powerful cults which had so far been beyond their reach. The biggest of these was the Cult of Atheron in Colorado. This particular group of whack jobs worshipped an ancient demon by the name of Atheron. It seems this particular otherworldly badass was so powerful he couldn't fully manifest himself in the physical world in a single host. He required three host bodies to fully house his demonic evilness, or some such nonsense.

This cult, which the Agency estimated had nearly 1000 members, was one hard nut to crack. Many of the cultists had manifested powers, and supposedly one of Atheron's evil elves, a demon known as Gorazel, was present. All of the regular operatives and cyborgs who had been sent to investigate the cult had been uncovered and killed.

Cyborgs using the new technology were finally able to infiltrate the group. One managed to penetrate the cult far enough to learn that the group had bought up most of a small town named Bonanza in Colorado. Almost two hundred cultists had moved there and were living in a small compound just outside of town. The mole also learned that on the night of the winter solstice, many more of the cultists planned to gather there, slaughter the remaining townspeople, and use the blood of the innocent to call forth their dark god. The astrological conditions which allowed all three "eyes" of Atheron, as his hosts were called, to be possessed simultaneously only occurred once every 1000 years.

Demonstock '99

The cybernetic informant got this information out nearly four months before it was to happen. The Agency immediately began plans to crash the party, capture or kill the majority of the cult and its leadership, and rescue the surviving townspeople. New cyborgs were produced and many existing ones were heavily modified. The first true combat cyborgs were built at this time.

The Agency estimated that upwards of 500 cultists would be in town for the summoning ceremony. This was a bigger job than the Agency could handle on its own, so it called in the Army for help. The plan called for Army Rangers to hit the bunker-like cult compound on the edge of town while a mixed force of sykers and cyborgs hit the town square and rescued the

sacrifice victims. Once the civilians were clear, a second company of Rangers would light up the cultists who had assembled in town for the event.

Stormy Weather

As Von-somebody-or-other once said, "No plan survives contact with the enemy." Or Mother Nature.

The cyborg and syker team was inserted into the forest around Bonanza two days before the ceremony to recon the area, gather intelligence on enemy defenses and weaponry, and determine where the townspeople were being held. The insertion went smoothly, and some of the sykers were able to make their way into town and locate the sacrificial lambs locked up in the basement of town hall.

After that, the plan fell apart. The cult had contacts in the military, and they learned through them that the 2nd Ranger Battalion had been placed on alert and was expecting to deploy to southern Colorado. Although they didn't know specifically that their shindig was the Ranger's target, the cult's leaders hadn't made it this far by being foolish. They passed out the group's weapons and doubled the sentries.

Then, the morning of the ceremony, a storm front moved in from the west a day earlier than expected, blanketing the area in blizzard conditions. The high winds and whiteout conditions made it impossible for the Ranger helicopters to reach the town high in the mountains. The advance team was on its own.

Once it was obvious that the Rangers weren't going to make the show, the scout team leaders decided to chuck the original timetable and attack early, before the cultists had congregated in town. The mixed team of sykers and cyborgs blew through the guards at city hall like a tornado through a trailer park and easily freed the huddled captives. The terrified civilians were quickly loaded into trucks and driven out of town.

Except for a small escort, most of the team remained in town to buy time for the fleeing townspeople. A hasty ambush took out the first few cultists to arrive in town from the compound, but the second wave was much smarter—and they had some demonic assistance in the form of Gorazel. The battle turned into a stand up firefight that lasted nearly an hour and took out a good portion of downtown Bonanza. The Agency team finally retreated, carrying three of their dead with them.

The storm had blocked the mountain passes, so the civilians were hidden in some caves near the extraction point. Unfortunately, it took two days for the weather to clear. During that time, the team fought a series of delaying ambushes in the snow to prevent the cultists from reaching the caves. A small team of two sykers and three cyborgs actually assaulted the cult's compound as a diversion. They succeeded in burning two of the three buildings to the ground before they were forced to retreat.

Counting the Cost

When the choppers finally showed up, six of the twenty-man advance team—four sykers and two cyborgs—were dead, and three more were badly wounded. In exchange for their casualties, the team saved all of the townspeople, accounted for slightly more than 100 dead cultists, destroyed a cult compound, and bagged the head of the demon Gorazel.

The choppers that arrived to pull out the advance team carried the Rangers in to finish off the remaining cult members. The leaderless cult had already begun to scatter, and the commandos spent a week in the hills hunting the cultists down. Atheron's cult had been broken, but unfortunately not destroyed. It would return again 2028, but that's another story.

You're in the Army Now!

This battle was the first joint operation between cyborgs and sykers. Up until this time the Agency had kept the existence of their cybernetic troops a closely-guarded secret—even from other government agencies. Unfortunately, at least from the Agency's point of view, the captain who had commanded the syker portion of the team in Bonanza was highly impressed with the cyborg's performance and said so to his superiors.

His superiors thought he had been out in the snow too long. They had simply been ordered to provide a syker team for use in an Agency field op. They weren't told any details. Like most people, they didn't like being out of the loop, so they began asking questions as only sykers can.

Once the truth came out, a group of bigwigs over at the Pentagon got their panties all in a bunch. How dare they not be informed about a new technology with such potential military applications! The Joint Chiefs went and complained to the Secretary of Defense, and he skedaddled over to the White House and complained to El Presidente.

The President was upset that he hadn't been briefed on the Agency's cyborg program (there's a lot to be said for hidden budgets). Hey, what can I say? The program was on a need to know basis, and strictly speaking, the President didn't need to know. Never mind the fact that the Agency was investigating some of his top aides for possible occult activities. Ever since the incident with Jefferson Davis, no president has ever been above suspicion.

Induction

The end result of all this pissing and moaning was that the Agency had to turn over copies of all of its material on cybernetics to the Army. In addition, the Agency was restricted to building only infiltration and light combat models—the big guns were reserved for the Army alone.

Needless to say, the Agency was less than pleased with this turn of events. More important than all the restrictions placed on the Agency's program was the loss of total secrecy. Once the Army got a hold of the material, it was only a matter of time before the information filtered out to foreign intelligence agencies and eventually the cults that the cyborgs were created to destroy. Up until that time, very few people outside the Agency had seen a cyborg and lived to tell about it.

Leakage

The Agency's fears proved right, of course, and news of the US Army's new toys made its way south of the Mason-Dixon line within two weeks after the first cyborg unit became active. The CSA had been at work on a similar project for a number of years, but had failed to produce any results. News of the Union's success spurred on new attempts. With increased funding and a few stolen blueprints, the CSA's skunkworks at Roswell turned out the South's first operational cyborg six months after first hearing of the US program.

The Confederacy shared the knowledge with their close allies, the British, and soon cybertechnology was flourishing in Europe. Within a year after the first US unit appeared, a lot of the major industrialized nations of the world had some form of cyborg program underway. Despite this sudden proliferation, all of the governments involved went to great lengths to prevent the public from learning of the cyborgs' existence. Once I became involved with the CP, it was my job to keep tabs on the state of all these programs.

Deaders in Society

Before I tell you about all the different cyborg units that sprang up overnight, I should say a few words about the Harrowed and polite society.

It's simple. The Harrowed didn't exist.

At least not officially.

In North America, the extent of a Harrowed's official non-existence depended on which side of the Mason-Dixon line he "lived" on.

The US

In the US, the Harrowed were non-people. The government didn't acknowledge their existence, and, being dead, they had no legal rights under the Constitution. This gave the Agency a free hand to deal with the problem as it saw fit.

Blackleaf Correctional Facility

The Agency policy was simple. Harrowed individuals had two choices: they could sign up with the Agency or they could be locked up in the Blackleaf Correctional Facility in Montana.

Blackleaf was a special facility built by the Agency to house supernatural troublemakers. It was built in an area in which the veil between Earth and the Hunting Grounds is very strong. It has something to do with some strange ore found beneath the place. Hucksters and other magic-using types found it nearly impossible to contact the spirit world and the manitous within the Harrowed are weakened to the extent that it's all they can do to simply keep their hosts' bodies from rotting away.

In the rare event one of the inmates did manage to perform a supernatural act, the staff landed on them like a ton of bricks. Living inmates were placed in solitary on bread and water for the slightest infraction. Harrowed inmates fared even worse. They were beheaded and their heads were placed in small hat boxes for months at a time.

When not in trouble, well-behaved inmates were given the privilege of making boots, web belts, and other gear for the US Army. Any attempts at sabotaging the gear were met with similar harsh punishments.



Light combat cans assemble for inspection.



Some residents of Blackleaf Correctional.

Why go through all the expense and bother of maintaining such an expensive facility? Why not just kill them?

I'll be honest, enlistment or extermination had been the Agency's policy for quite a while. "Recruit 'em or shoot 'em," as the Texas Rangers say. The Agency realized, unlike our benighted brethren from Texas, that killing these people was throwing away valuable resources. Many of the Harrowed had lived for a very long time and had witnessed some very interesting and often important events. By keeping them around, the Agency ensured that it would always have access to the knowledge locked away in their noggins. Sure, it may have to be ripped from their mind by an Agency syker, but at least it was still there.

Volunteers?

I can see the question on your face. Why would any Harrowed willingly volunteer to serve with the Agency.

Because we were fighting the Reckoners, that's why. You remember them don't you? The big, ugly guys that stomped flat the few

buildings that were still standing after the war, killed a few billion people, ride enormous horses? This ringing any bells?

Sure, the Agency might have stepped on a few people's civil rights, but we were fighting a war for the future of humanity. If you weren't for us, you were against us. Don't give me any of that "if we sink to their level than we are no better than they," crap. We were fighting a war for our survival. Hell, we still are. Defeat equals death. There's nothing to be gained by fighting fair and losing. No one is going to give us points for being good sports. You do what you have to do to win, and you don't look back. Period.

Okay, I'm off my soapbox. I'm just kind of touchy on the subject.

Anyway, many Harrowed chose to serve with the Agency because they knew it was the right thing to do. Many of these brave souls became the first volunteers to be implanted with cyber equipment.

The Confederacy

Despite the Texas Rangers "shoot 'em or recruit 'em" slogan, the actual official attitude in the Confederate States was "don't ask, don't smell." As long as a Harrowed minded his own business, and did nothing to call attention to his undeadness, the authorities were content to let sleeping manitous lie.

On the other hand, if a deader got rambunctious, he got a visit from the boys in the black dusters. There were no warnings, and the CSA maintained no prison for wayward deader people. If your manitou got the better of you, all you could count on was a bullet in the head.

Across the Pond

Attitudes toward the Harrowed varied in Europe. England had a policy similar to that of the CSA. Get out of hand and the boys from Hereford would give you a good talking to. The German policy was also similar, but all Harrowed were required to register with the government on an annual basis. Those who refused, or broke the law, disappeared.

France was the only major European country in which the Harrowed could live openly. Given the stories I've heard of some of their bathing habits, I'm not surprised—the deaders probably went completely unnoticed. The Russian policy was identical to that of the US. Harrowed were non-people and could be killed, incarcerated, or drafted with impunity.

The Arms Race

The addition of cyborg units to the major powers' arsenals gave the developed countries one more thing to compete over. The cyborg arms race was on.

Unlike most weapons races, this competition took place under an umbrella of almost total secrecy. All of the countries involved feared the possible public reaction to the idea that their governments were equipping units of undead soldiers.

Other than a proliferation of implant types and mission-specialized equipment, cyborg technology advanced very little during the next twenty years. Despite this, this period was marked by each country sponsoring intense campaigns of espionage and sabotage against their rivals' cyborg programs.

Labor Shortage

One of the reasons for the slow technological advancement was the lack of test subjects. Once the race began in earnest, Harrowed were hard to find. The few who were willing to serve were snapped up in a heartbeat. The rest disappeared underground or held out for ridiculous amounts of money or other concessions.

This actually gave the Agency a leg up over the other cyborg programs, because the organization had a large captive population at Blackleaf. Most of the Harrowed prisoners at the facility were fitted with spirit fetters whether they wanted one or not. A large portion of the prison was turned over to the Agency's cyborg design teams, and they routinely used the prisoners to test new equipment and theories that were too dangerous to try on active-duty cyborgs.

Outside the US, scientists in other countries were desperate for suitable test subjects. Many of their experiments had to be performed on actual recruits. Mishaps and mistakes in the lab led to poor morale and lowered readiness among these units.

Gruber Strikes Again

Maurya Gruber's last contribution to the Agency's cyborg program is what earned her the nickname, "Cyber-mama." Over the years she had continued to refine and perfect the spirit fetter she had created. Her work in this area led to an even more significant breakthrough. She developed a method for creating Harrowed from fresh corpses!

Gruber had discovered that human souls still have tenuous connections to their bodies during the first 24 hours after their deaths. Implanting a specially-modified spirit fetter in the body during this period anchored the soul and prevented it from breaking these ties and disappearing into the Hunting Grounds.

After the soul was anchored to the body, a second fetter was implanted. This fetter already had a manitou kicking around inside it. Once it was in the body, the fetter was opened ever so slightly, just enough to allow the manitou to make connections with the human spirit and the body itself without escaping. The result of this procedure was a freshly Harrowed corpse with the human soul firmly in charge.

Although the procedure was simple in concept, the first few attempts at creating a Harrowed didn't go as smoothly as hoped. It took some trial and error to find the right settings for the fetters. Too loose on the manitou and it could escape back into the Hunting Grounds or overpower the human soul within the body. Too loose on the soul and it could break free of the body. Too tight on the soul and it could end up enslaved to the manitou rather than vice versa.

To make matters worse these settings changed from soul to soul and manitou to manitou depending on the spirit's strength. The early attempts at spirit implantation were done by the seat of the pants method. It wasn't until the Agency techs developed equipment which could actually measure the power of individual spirits that the program had any real success.

Enoch Spicer

The program had a few notable failures before this equipment became available. The biggest of these was Enoch Spicer.

Enoch Spicer had been a farmer in Kansas until the day his harvester was hit by a speeding truck while crossing the road from one field to another. His spinal column was badly injured in the accident, leaving him paralyzed from the neck down.

Enoch's sister Emily was involved with the cyborg program. She offered her brother the chance to walk again and work his farm. The price was a few years of government service—oh, and he had to die. A proud man, Enoch was willing to do nearly anything to get out of his hospital bed—he agreed.

Unfortunately, something went horribly wrong during the surgery. No one is sure exactly what happened, perhaps the manitou fetter was too

loose or the spirit was much more powerful than it seemed. Regardless of what went wrong, the result was the same. The manitou inside Enoch Spicer's body was able to completely consume his soul and take over his still fresh corpse.

This particular demon was very clever. He played along with the doctors and let them think everything was under control. He even managed to bluff his way through all the postoperative screening procedures they had set up to prevent that very thing from happening.

No one knew the truth until Enoch was sent out on his first assignment. As soon as he and the cyborg he was working with were away from the lab, Enoch killed his partner and vanished. The Agency sent cleaner teams after him.

All the Agency got for its efforts was a lot of dead agents. Spicer killed every agent sent after him. He mailed pieces of many of them to the Agency's director. He was never found, and unless he was killed on Judgment Day, he's still alive today.

If you ever see Spicer, get the Hell away from him as fast as you can. Spicer loves to find new and unusual ways to kill people—most of them take a long while for the victim to die. I've seen his file. Just before the Last War began he had killed 40 Agency operatives, over 100 policemen, and he was wanted as a suspect in over 30 serial-killer style murders in which the victims were tortured to death.

Who'll Start the Bidding?

What's even worse, at least from the Agency's point of view, was that Enoch had stolen a copy of Gruber's files. He sent letters to the governments of the CSA, England, France, Russia, and Germany pretending to be a private scientist who had invented a way to create Harrowed. The secrets were to go to the highest bidder, but in typical fashion he sold the secret to each country that entered a bid. The files he gave them had been subtly altered to recreate the same mistake which had created him. I guess he wanted them to make him some playmates.

That was a bit before my time, so I don't know how well his plan succeeded. I do know that many of the other countries' attempts to develop the technology hit unexpected snags and there were a number of lab accidents. Rumor has it that the Brits lost an entire surgical team and a handful of guards to one of these "accidents."

Ghouls

Even once perfected, Gruber's new method solved one problem but created another. It solved the Harrowed shortage, but it created the problem of where to get fresh corpses.

Different countries solved this problem in different ways at different times. Some used volunteers, some used criminals, some "created vessels" (a nice euphemism for killing someone and implanting their corpse with cyberware), and some used fallen soldiers. Hell, the Brits even tried cloning bodies.

I'll tell you where each service got its "recruits" when I discuss the individual units. For now, suffice it to say that where there's a will there's a way.

Expansion

Gruber's new method caused the size of the world's cyborg forces to double nearly overnight—and once the generals had all the troops they needed, they started to use them.

At first, most governments used cyborgs as shock troops against cults and the creatures of the Reckoning. Government officials were still afraid of the possible public reaction to their undead legions, and they were determined to use them only under controlled conditions where they could keep things under wraps.

That strategy worked for quite a while. A few reporters got wind of what was going on and tried to get at the truth. In this case, the truth most certainly did not set you free. Reporters who got too close tended to disappear. Some ended up in solitary confinement in maximum security prisons, others got to cover the story up close and personal—they were "recruited" into the cyborg units.

The *Epitaph* managed to publish a few blurry photos of some Army cyborgs crashing a cult safe house and an interview with a cultist describing his experience with an Agency infiltrator cyborg.

Few people took the stories seriously, but the hard-core conspiracy nuts went wild over them. A small, but growing, number of people began to suspect that their governments were keeping small armies of undead soldiers. It was kind of like the alien craze started by that "Agency Files" show back in the late 20th century. Lots of people said they believed the government had cyborgs, but those who really believed and were devoted to ferreting out the truth were considered a few cards shy of a deck.

The Congo War

The role of cyborgs eventually had to change—they were simply too good at what they did, namely kill people and break things. The generals began demanding to use the cyborgs for other types of missions and eventually the politicians agreed.

The first large-scale use of cyborgs outside of the nations to which they belonged occurred in 2065—a few years after the Hauptmann Survey was published. A ghost rock deposit was discovered in the Congo. The French made the first grab for it. They spread some cash around, destabilized the government, and made sure their boy, Igdo Imbutheleze, came out on top. Once he was in power, he cut the French a very sweet deal for mining the ghost rock.

A bunch of army officers loyal to the previous president-for-life decided that they didn't like this arrangement. Each one thought he should be the one in charge. They each disappeared into the jungle with some loyal troops and began a guerilla war against the government and each other.

Enter the Cyborgs

Things went from bad to worse when the other world powers got involved. Each of the major powers picked their own candidate for president and sent "advisors" to make sure their man won the "election."

France sent the Foreign Legion to prop up Imbutheleze. All French cyborgs were part of the Legion and they went along with their comrades. For the first few months after their arrival, the leaders of the Legion kicked some serious butt. The cyborgs gave new meaning to the term "search & destroy." Their ability to go long periods without sleep or food, and their enormous firepower allowed them to fight the guerillas on their terms. They relentlessly hunted the opposition down and exterminated them to the last man.

Faced with losing their proxy war to the French, the other countries responded in the only way they could: they sent their cyborgs to the Congo.

Cyborg Death Match

This was not only the first time most of these countries had deployed their cyborgs outside their borders, it was also the first time cans had fought others of their kind. The US, CSA, England, and Germany all sent cyborg detachments to the Congo.



On patrol in the Congo.

The African jungles became a maelstrom of death as each of these nations' leaders fought the French and each other. Normal human troops didn't stand a chance against the cyber-enhanced warriors and soon the cyborgs were the only ones still fighting. High speed battles between cyber-enhanced corpses raged through the jungles at all hours of the day and night.

This expensive war lasted for nearly three years. It only ended because the ghost rock strike which had sparked it played out sooner than expected. It wasn't nearly as big as the initial survey had suggested.

Although the war's goal ultimately proved futile, the three years of conflict had advanced the science of cybernetics by three decades. Engineers on all sides finally got a good look at the designs of their opposition and learned from them. The practical experience of keeping cyborgs operational in the field for extended periods also highlighted flaws in their designs and suggested new technologies and weapons. The cyborgs which fought in the closing months of the Congo War were much more advanced than those which had fired the opening shots.

Scooped

These newer, deadlier cyborgs survived the war, but almost didn't survive the peace that followed. A reporter from the *Epitaph* had managed to get into the Congo despite the cordon of international troops guarding the country's borders. This reporter, Nathan Plunkett, got one of the scoops of the century: an interview with an actual cyborg!

Plunkett got this interview entirely by chance. He had gone into the jungle in search of one of the cyborg units he had heard rumors about, and stumbled across the scene of a recent battle. There he found a damaged CSA cyborg scavenging for parts among the bodies.

The injured soldier was willing to talk to the reporter, but he was unable to tell Plunkett who he was. All he could remember was his unit number: 653. The cyborg told the reporter all about the campaign in the Congo, and expressed the opinion that the war was simply being used as a giant field test for the cyborgs and an excuse to inflate the cyborg program budget (he

actually put it much more colorfully than that, but I don't know if you librarians censor your material).

Besides the interview, Plunkett filmed the carnage of the battlefield—complete with extreme close-ups of the dead cyborgs and a shot of 653 ripping parts out of his dead comrades to repair himself. The whole package made quite a splash when it aired.

The public was outraged, and many groups in many countries began calling for an immediate end to the intervention in the Congo. In both the US and CSA, senators and congressmen who were unaware of the cyborg program's existence began calling for hearings into the matter. All of the militaries involved in the Congo denied the use of cybernetic troops and claimed that Plunkett's tape was an elaborate forgery.

The DPLF

The paper shredders in Washington and Richmond were running at maximum capacity as the congressional investigations got underway. Many of those involved with the cyborg programs in both countries ran for the hills or tried to find some way of covering their butts when the crap hit the fan.

Then something happened that changed everything.

A terrorist group calling itself the Dead Persons' Liberation Front took a UN delegation hostage. This organization was comprised almost exclusively of deaders, and was dedicated to "raising the public's awareness of the returned dead among them," and getting the UN to adopt a dead person's bill of rights. The Agency had been after those brainers for quite a while.

The group snatched the delegation and whisked them away by VTOL. By the time UN security had established what had happened and who had been taken, the terrorists were already safely holed up in an armored compound in upstate New York. They gave the UN twenty-four hours to draft and pass a resolution giving full legal rights to all deceased yet animate people. If the UN hadn't complied by the end of this period, they would start killing the hostages at the rate of one an hour.

The members of the UN Security Council had absolutely no intentions of passing such a measure, because doing so would grant rights to their cyborgs. Preparations were made for a multinational force to storm the DPLF compound. The force was made multinational not out of any sense of cooperation but because



A kidnapped diplomat takes shelter behind a heavy

no country wanted to be solely responsible for getting diplomats from other countries killed if things went bad.

While these preparations were underway, it occurred to Colonel Green, the commander of the syker detachment assigned to the mission, that fighting a bunker full of Harrowed who were armed to the teeth was bound to result in high casualties in the assault force—and probably among the hostages. Since the public had already learned of the cyborg corps, and, it seemed, was about to learn more, he reasoned, why not let the cyborgs be seen in the most favorable light? Why not let them make the assault? That's what they were built for.

The generals agreed, and a joint US/CSA strike team was quickly assembled (none of the other countries involved could get cyborgs there in time). Minutes before the terrorists' deadline ran out, the cyborgs hit the compound. After an intense firefight that lasted only ten minutes, the cyborgs emerged with the hostages into a sea of floodlights and television cameras. The footage of the assault and rescue was replayed on television for weeks. The final results of the mission were one hostage and one cyborg dead, all terrorists eliminated.

During that time the governments "came clean" and admitted the existence of their cyborg corps. They didn't however, admit that the cyborgs were undead humans. They simply made a statement saying that the implantation process caused certain "chemical changes in the body which were irreversible."

The cyborgs of the assault team became overnight heroes. They were awarded medals by every country which had had a diplomat held hostage and by some who didn't. They appeared on talk shows and had a parade held in their honor in New York City. Unit 653 returned from Africa (with a repaired AI that prevented him from saying anything objectionable) and appeared on "60 Minutes." He retracted the statements he made in the Plunkett interview. He claimed that he had said those things simply because he was overwrought by the deaths of his friends.

TV shows about the cyborgs appeared. In the US, the show that appeared on Fox was "Borgs: Most Incredible Gun Camera Footage." Each week it showed a half hour of actual mission footage which had been sanitized by Army censors. In the Confederacy, the most popular show of 2068 was "237, Texas Ranger." This show starred an actual cyborg on loan from the government.

Sign Me Up!

The PR trick paid off in more ways than one. The congressional investigations still occurred, but more out of curiosity than the outrage which had originally sparked them.

The unexpected side effect of this media campaign was that people began to volunteer for service as cyborgs. Even when it was carefully explained that the process could not be undone and the term of enlistment was for the life of the unit, many people still wanted to sign up. Those who still wanted to join after being informed of all the risks (well, most of the risks, no one was actually told that the implantation process would kill them) were accepted after passing a psychological screening (that looked for those susceptible to control by an AI) and signing a 200-page waiver that covered the government's butt in case the cyborg's one remaining secret got out.

Brushfire Wars

The unexpected popularity of the cyborgs translated into increased funding and more recruits. This sudden expansion of the service, together with the lifting of the restriction that all cyborg operations had to be totally clandestine, greatly increased the use of these troops by the governments which owned them.

The two decades preceding the Last War were filled with hundreds of small regional conflicts over ghost rock, territory, and braggin' rights. Many of these places held resources vital to one major country or another. When these resources were threatened, more often than not the cyborgs got sent in to protect them. US cyborgs saw action in Mexico, El Salvador, Argentina, Georgia (the Russian one), India, and Taiwan among other places. Confederate deaders were busy too. Their battles ranged from Mexico, to Honduras, to Indonesia, to Pakistan, to Mongolia, and beyond.

Geronimo!

The ability of the cyborgs to operate in nearly any terrain or conditions made them a vital part of many nations' rapid response forces. The US and CSA even went so far as to station some of their troops on orbital platforms.

These troops could be anywhere on Earth in less than two hours. They just loaded onto an orbital transport, moved to a position over the target zone, and dropped down from orbit in individual re-entry pods.



An anouk gets more than he bargained for.

I saw an orbital drop once. It was spectacular! The pods came crashing down like fiery meteorites. Their retro rockets fired when the pods were only a few hundred yards off the ground. If the deaders weren't already deceased, I'm sure the G-forces would have killed them. The pods still hit hard and threw up all sorts of debris and a huge cloud of dust. Before the dust cleared, the troops came storming out of the cloud, weapons blazing. I'd hate to be on the receiving end of one of those attacks.

Some of those troops may still be up there looking down on us. I know we targeted the Confederate platform, Manassas Station, with some nukes, and I'm sure they targeted Sherman Orbital, but I'd be willing to bet that both stations are fine. Both of them were bristling with so many energy weapons, I doubt a missile could get close enough to cause any damage.

Banshee

Some cyborgs had the misfortune to get sent to Banshee. The intel reports I got back from the detachment commander, Colonel Santiago, indicated that the situation there was totally

FUBAR. Unless Santiago was yanking my chain, it sounds like General Warfield had received one too many blows to the head.

Both Agency-style infiltration models and Army heavy weapons cyborgs were sent to Banshee. Warfield used them, in conjunction with his sykers, like a hammer and anvil against rebel human settlements. The infiltration models would work their way into a village, disable the defenses from within, and then call in the heavies to wipe the place clean.

The heavy-weapons cyborgs always got the worst assignments because Warfield knew that their AIs would force them to follow orders. After a few syker units refused to torch villages as ordered, the job of pacification (Warfield's term for genocide) fell to the cyborgs. Warfield liked to refer to them as his "brute squads."

Even the AIs couldn't completely squelch the deaders' consciences. The cyborgs on Banshee had the highest rate of feedback and processor burnout of any unit in the field. It was obvious that many of the deaders were trying to fight the orders they had been given.

Almost all of the cyborgs sent to Banshee were mind-shielded. This made them useful against the skinnies, because they couldn't get in the deaders' heads and make them turn on their friends. The 22nd Howlin' Death led the infantry assault against Castle Rock. They took heavy casualties, but they managed to blast their way into that God-forsaken hunk of rock.

Most of the cyborgs sent to Banshee are still there. A few were recalled just before the balloon went up back on Earth, but Warfield managed to delay the departure of the rest until it was too late. Those who did come back returned to the orbital platforms. They're probably still up there.

The Last War

Cyborgs, of course, played a big part during the Last War. They fought in nearly every major campaign of the war in a variety of roles. During major offensives cyborgs were often used to spearhead the attack.

More often, though, they were used as raiders. Cyborgs could operate for long periods of time without supplies or the need to stop and sleep. This made them perfect for operating behind enemy lines. Unlike sykers—who tended to go after enemy command and control, taking out the enemies' brains—the cyborgs hit the enemy in the stomach. Cyborgs hit depots, ambushed supply convoys, and blew up bridges, ferries, and mag-lev lines.

A successful one-two punch of sykers and cyborgs left an enemy confused and without supplies. Even the most well-planned attack could be brought to a grinding halt when faced with such a combination.

Virus Warfare

The Southern Alliance techs came up with a way to bring the Northern cyborgs to a grinding halt—a computer virus that could enter a cyborg's system through its communications gear. The rebs first used this at the Battle of Three Peaks in Colorado. The virus was broadcast on a Northern Alliance frequency, got into the comnet, and forced all the Northern cyborgs to power down. This caused the NA attack to stall. It was quickly pushed back and rolled up by a counterattack by Southern armor.

Once the NA commanders realized what happened, all cyborgs were immediately pulled out of frontline service until a defense could be found. It took only a few weeks for Northern scientists to develop some software to protect against this new threat, but they couldn't stop there. The Southern boys came right back with a new virus that cut through the Northern software like a chile fart through jeans. This began a circle of virus and countermeasure that lasted the rest of the war.

The Maze

One of the theaters in which cyborgs played a major role was in the Great Maze. The rugged terrain and hostile waters of the Maze made it difficult to deploy conventional troops. Conventional troops were pretty much limited to operating on the tops of the mesas. Cyborgs with the proper modifications could operate anywhere.

Most of the cyborgs deployed to the Maze had been heavily modified for the theater. Most were equipped with climbing attachments and an underwater propulsion system. One CSA unit, the Mesa Masters, had small hoverfans mounted on their backs that both gave them limited flight capability and propelled them underwater.

The cyborgs in the Maze made life Hell for the regular troops with hit-and-run raids. The deaders would appear from nowhere, light their enemies up, and then disappear back into the waters of the Maze. The subjects of the cyborg's torment learned not to pursue them too closely. Sometimes it only seemed like the raiders had left. A few costly rearguard ambushes by the cyborgs quickly taught them otherwise.

The Battle of San Andres

The biggest engagement of the war in which large numbers of cyborgs were involved took place in the rugged San Andres Mountains near a place known as "Jornada del Muerto" or "Dead Man's Journey." The name of the place was strangely prophetic.

Buried deep beneath the San Andres Mountains was Fort Longstreet Strategic Missile Center—the command center for the entire Confederacy's nuclear arsenal. Just before the war went nuclear, President Bates ordered an attack against the facility. I guess he hoped to cripple the Rebs' nuclear arsenal before he started tossing his own bombs around. Not a bad idea, but he had about as much chance of pulling it off as an ant did of walking off with the Statue of Liberty.

Not that reality's ever had much of an impact on politicians. Despite the protests of his top generals, Bates ordered the strike to go ahead. The entire 1st Cy-SOG battalion was committed to the attack. The plan called for the entire force to drop on the base from orbit. It took two weeks of round-the-clock shuttle flights to get all the troops and drop pods up to Sherman Orbital for the operation. The station wasn't designed to hold anywhere near the number of people that were crammed into it. Luckily, deaders don't need to breathe or the life support system would have been seriously overloaded. God knows how, but the Confederates didn't notice the 16-ton weight being raised above their heads.

Well, actually it was more like two 8-ton weights. There weren't enough shuttles to get all of the troops over the target area at once, so it was going to be necessary to drop the force in two waves 20 minutes apart. That meant the first wave would have to overcome the surface defenses, breach the facility, and hold until the second wave arrived.

It was estimated that once the attack began it would take only 30 minutes for the SMC to contact Richmond, get the order to launch, spin up the missiles, and start Armageddon. This meant that the second wave had only ten minutes to secure the command center and abort the launch.

Showtime!

Of course, once the time for the attack came, nothing went according to plan. Two of the shuttles carrying troops collided leaving Sherman Orbital, this delayed things by ten

minutes and further reduced the size of the initial landing force. The Air Force wasn't informed of the delay until after it was too late—the cruise missile strikes to take out the air defenses around Fort Longstreet had already begun. This meant that the assault force was now dropping against defenders who had been alerted to an impending attack.

The cyborgs dropped anyway. The missile strikes had done a good job of suppressing the air defenses, so most of them made it to the ground in one piece. Unfortunately, the Rebs had already sealed the base and manned the surface defenses. The cans on the ground ran into a withering fire from numerous pillboxes with interlocking fields of fire. Despite this, they pressed on and began knocking out the enemy fortifications one at a time.

Into the Fire

Despite the setbacks, it seemed as if the ant might get Miss Liberty up on his back. The assault force had cleared the enemy fortifications around the base entrance and had

begun planting the nuclear demo charges needed to crack the base open. The second wave had dropped and would be on the ground in five minutes.

That's when the entire force was betrayed by one of their own. Colonel Edwin "Hammer" Hamrick contacted the Confederate defenders inside the base and offered to deactivate his troops' viral defenses. The Rebs agreed of course, and began broadcasting one of their most potent computer viruses. Within moments, Northern cyborgs began shutting down involuntarily. Only those strong-willed enough to resist their AIs were able to continue the fight.

Many in the second wave shut down before they hit the ground. Those that were still mobile joined up with the survivors of the first wave and began a slow retreat north. The defenders of Fort Longstreet launched a counterattack with the small armored contingent stationed there. The retreating cyborgs bloodied the tankers' noses. They fell back and contented themselves with blasting the crippled Northern Alliance troops into scrap metal.



The opening stages of the assault on Fort Longstreet

The retreating troops staged a fighting withdrawal all the way into southern Colorado, where they finally managed to link up with a Northern Alliance armored column that had launched an attack south to reach them. Less than 25% of the 1000 cyborgs dropped made it back to Northern Alliance territory.

Benedict Arnold

No one is sure why, or even how, Hamrick betrayed his troops like that. Some people think he was a Southern agent, others believe he was angry his men had been ordered on such a foolish suicide mission and was simply trying to arrange their surrender. We may never know. Hamrick was taken prisoner by the Rebs and never seen again.

I've run into people who claim he survived Judgement Day and is still alive. If he is, he'd better watch his back. There are a lot of dead-bots gunning for him. Some are survivors of the attack at Fort Longstreet, others simply take exception to the fact that he betrayed his own kind.

Hamrick's betrayal caused a major upheaval within the US cyber corps. Sykers were brought in to scan high-ranking cyborg officers for any indication that they might be Southern agents. This totally disrupted operations at a time when we needed every troop we could muster in the field. Ultimately, though, it didn't matter because Judgement Day was just a week away.

Post-Bomb

Unlike most human troops, the cyborgs who survived Judgement Day didn't immediately desert or turn to marauding. Most continued to follow the last orders they had been given. In a few places, most notably Kansas, cyber troops from both sides continued to fight the war as if nothing had happened. Some poor cans are still following their last orders.

This lasted only a few weeks though. The high levels of radiation damaged many of the cyborgs' AIs and gave them a new measure of free will, others simply fought their computer for control and won. The cyborg units slowly melted away as their members gained their freedom one at a time. Some emancipated cyborgs banded together, others wandered out to explore this new world alone, and some picked a fight with something bigger than them and got scrapped.

I can't really say much about what's happened to the deaders since then. I'm not too popular with them, so I usually try to keep a low profile.

Seems they blame me for a lot of the asinine missions they got sent on. I'll admit to tasking them to a few *vital* intelligence-gathering missions, but that's all.

There won't be a record of where this interview took place, will there?

Cyborg Units

You'd like to hear about some specific cyborg units? Okay, here's where I divulge all the Agency secrets I swore to never reveal even when threatened with death. Monitoring the status of the world's cyborg legions was my job for nearly five years before the war, so I've got all kinds of intel on these guys.

The Agency

Let's start with the program I know the best: the Agency's.

Being forced to turn over many of its newest toys to the Army was definitely a setback for the Agency's cyborg program, but the guys in the lab recovered quickly. The Agency labs were always able to remain at the cutting edge of cyborg tech right up until the bombs fell on Judgement Day.

The Agency's cyborgs continued to be used against the cults, but as things heated up prior to the Last War, they were used more and more for espionage and sabotage against foreign governments—primarily the Confederacy.

These missions called for cyborgs who could easily pass as human. All Agency cyborgs were equipped with an Infiltrator package and many of the later models were also equipped with Facemaker units. Retractable weapons like arm spurs were common.

Oh, an Infiltrator package lets a deader pass for a living person. It gives him a pulse, makes him sweat and blink when appropriate, even makes him breathe. It also covers up that slightly musty, moldy smell most Harrowed have.

The Facemaker units were something to see. The bones in a deader's face were broken and then reattached using a small network of air bladders and tiny hydraulic pistons. When activated, the system could move the bones around to change the cyborg's facial features. This allowed him to change his appearance in a matter of seconds, and even impersonate other people whose facial features were somewhat similar. Most of these systems also included electrically-sensitive lens implants that could change the deader's eye color at will.

Recruitment

With very few exceptions, Agency cyborgs were volunteers. Although it's possible to regulate a cyborg's behavior with an AI, that method is not always 100% reliable. More importantly, the harder an AI has to work to keep a cyborg on the straight and narrow, the more it suppresses the cyborg's personality. Talking to a heavily-regulated cyborg is about as interesting as watching paint dry.

Agency cyborgs were expected to be able to operate undercover with the cults. That's hard to do when you've got the personality of a grape fruit. For this reason Agency cyborgs had the least restrictive programming of any cyborgs in existence. That's also why they were an all volunteer force. The Agency AIs just weren't strong enough to force an unwilling subject to be a team player.

Early Agency recruits were deaders who already worked for the organization. Later, once Gruber's Harrowed-making technique was perfected, many of the new cyborgs were built from human operatives who had died in the line

of duty and who had signed a waiver stating that they wished to continue in service after death.

Organization • Equipment

The Agency never fielded large numbers of cyborgs like the military did. At it's largest, the Agency program had at most about 200 cyborgs. These were organized into companies of four platoons. Each platoon had four squads of ten cans each.

There were five companies. Each company was assigned a letter: Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta, Echo. The platoons and squads in each company were simply numbered.

Alpha, Bravo, and Charlie companies were composed entirely of infiltration cyborgs. They never operated as a unit in the field. The companies were broken up by platoon and sometimes squads and based at different Agency facilities around the world. The cyborgs from these units normally worked alone or in pairs to investigate and infiltrate the arcane cults that the Agency was at war with.

Infiltrator and Facemaker packages were standard issue for these units. Most also had sophisticated communications and surveillance gear implanted to record and broadcast the information they uncovered. The vast majority of these cans also had enhanced strength and mind shields.

Delta and Echo companies were the Agency's assault troops. They were called in whenever heads needed bashing. This normally occurred when the infiltrators had penetrated a cult deeply enough to uncover the core leadership or when a particular ritual or summoning needed to be broken up.

The assault troops rarely operated as a company. The companies were broken up by platoon and scattered among various Agency facilities. Depending on the threat level, assault troops were usually deployed in squad or platoon strength. The 1st platoon of Echo company was deployed as security at the Hill.

None of the Agency's assault troops had any obvious implants because they were expected to be able to pass for human at a quick glance. This was because the Agency's teams often performed take-downs in urban environments and needed to be able to pass themselves off as typical civilians, police officers, or SWAT team members. Most assault team members had enhanced strength and dexterity, advanced low-light and targeting capabilities, and a hard-point system for armor and weapons.



An infiltrator plays a game of cat-and-mouse.

Cy-SOG

The US Army formed its cyborgs into a special ops unit called Cy-SOG (Cybernetic Special Operations Group). Cy-SOG was very small at first, mainly because the Army generals didn't know what to do with the cyborgs once they had them. Syker units handled most of the military intelligence gathering and the restrictions placed on the use of cyborgs by the politicians made it difficult to find a mission for them.

For the first few years of Cy-SOG's existence the troops trained and occasionally provided backup for the Agency when a little extra muscle was needed—which was fairly frequently. The unit was little more than an over-sized platoon at this time.

By the time the Congo War broke out in 2065, Cy-SOG had grown to almost company size. Two platoons were sent to the Congo and performed so well that two new platoons were formed and shipped to Africa as well.

After the publicity from the U.N. hostage rescue, Cy-SOG was increased in size to a full battalion of four companies. The unit's ranks were swelled by a sudden influx of volunteers—some deaders, some still kicking—caused by all the favorable press. These new recruits fought all over the world as part of clandestine special operations.

During the Last War, Cy-SOG underwent another expansion—its size was increased to a brigade of three battalions. That's roughly 2100 cyborgs.

Recruitment

The early recruits, including some former Agency cyborgs that the Army considered "heavy weapons" models, were all volunteers. The early Army 'borgs had primitive AIs that aided in combat, but did nothing to control the deader's behavior.

The force remained all-volunteer until the Congo war. The losses suffered there outstripped the supply of replacements and the Army had to look elsewhere. The Agency supplied a few "recruits" from Blackleaf Correctional, but even this wasn't enough. Finally, the Army came to an arrangement with the Federal Courts which turned the bodies of criminals executed for Federal crimes over to Cy-SOG. In the following years arrangements were made with many of the states to also turn over their executed criminals.

Most of these ex-cons were less than happy to return from the dead and find out they had been drafted. The Army was forced to develop more powerful AI software and components to keep these soldiers in line. The cyborgs using this new software gave me the creeps—there was nobody home. They were totally emotionless and never spoke unless spoken to. When off-duty, they either powered down, or just sat motionless on their bunks.

Organization • Equipment

Cy-SOG's final organization was a brigade of three battalions commanded by Brigadier General Max Evers. Each battalion was square: it had four companies of four platoons of four squads. Each ten-cyborg squad normally consisted of two scouts, two heavy weapons troopers, five riflemen, and a squad leader.

Cy-SOG had an attached vehicle squadron. The squadron maintained and crewed all sorts of vehicles from APCs, to helicopters and VTOLs, to boats and mini-sub. The personnel in this squadron were all living, breathing humans.

The 1st and 2nd Battalions served here at home. The 3rd battalion got shipped off to Faraway. The 1st Battalion got the dubious honor of participating in the failed attack on Fort Longstreet and lost 75% of its troops.

In the early days of Cy-SOG, all officers were non-cyborgs. This changed during the Congo War because it became obvious that the human officers couldn't keep up with their troops. The cyborgs could operate much more efficiently if they weren't being slowed down by a "breather" as they called them.

Once this became evident, cyborgs were promoted from the ranks and allowed to reach the rank of captain and command a company. The only restriction was that only cyborgs who had volunteered for service could achieve officer rank. By the end of the Last War, some cyborgs had achieved the rank of Colonel. Until he turned traitor, many people thought that Colonel Hamrick might be the first cyborg general and take command of Cy-SOG when Evers retired.

Enhanced strength, targeting systems, and a hard-point system were standard equipment for all Cy-SOG troopers. Scouts were often equipped with infiltration packages so they could slip into inhabited areas and pass themselves off as civilians. Heavy weapons troopers usually had a global-positioning system in addition to their regular systems. Squad leaders always carried an enhanced communications suite.

The CEAL Teams

The CEAL Teams (Cybernetically Enhanced Arcane Life-form) were the Confederacy's primary cyborg units. The teams were formed less than a year after Cy-SOG came into existence. Unlike their northern counterparts, the cyborgs of the CEAL Teams saw a lot of action right from the word go.

The Southern politicians did not place as many restrictions on the use or deployment of the cyborgs, so the CEAL Teams were able to get right to work on two problems which had plagued the Confederacy for over a century: the Apaches and Mexico.

The Chiricahua

The Confederacy had had problems with the Chiricahua Apaches of southern Arizona since it took the state from the Union during the Civil War. These Indians refused to surrender their independence and they were willing to fight anyone who tried to take it. All attempts at forcing them to move onto a reservation failed.



A CEAL Team member deploys for action.

For nearly 200 years it wasn't safe to travel through the area just west of Tombstone—big rigs and delivery trucks had a bad habit of disappearing along the stretch of I-10 that runs near the Dragoon Mountains.

A couple of attempts were made to pacify the tribe in modern times but these failed as badly as all the previous campaigns. The problem was that no one could find their stronghold in the mountains—despite the use of state of the art surveillance equipment. It was eventually determined that the Indians were being aided by some very powerful nature spirits, but try as they might, the Texas Rangers were unable to penetrate the tribe's magical defenses.

Subduing the Chiricahua was CEAL Team 1's first assignment. The cyborgs were sent into the Dragoon Mountains and told not to return without Eskiminzin's (the Apache's leader) head.

The campaign against the Chiricahua lasted for three months of brutal fighting. The Apaches hated the undead, both for religious reasons and because back in the 1800s they had fought a campaign against undead troops belonging to one of the rail barons involved in the Great Rail Wars. They viewed the cyborgs not only as enemies but as abominations, and made every effort to make sure that any cyborg they put down could not be repaired. The cyborgs responded in kind. No quarter was given by either side in this vicious campaign that left much of the Dragoon Mountains a smoking wasteland of shattered rocks and trees.

Despite heavy losses, CEAL Team 1 eventually triumphed. Even with supernatural aid, the Indians could not match the endurance and tenacity of the cyborg troops. The leaders eventually managed to track one of the warriors back to the tribe's hidden stronghold. The fight for this fortified cave lasted for over a day before the surviving Apaches laid down their weapons.

I heard that they did better than get Ekiminzin's head, they collected the bounty on Cochise. That's right, the original one. They found him in a cave deep in the mountain, attended by a number of Chiricahua medicine men. His body was emaciated and near death, but he was still breathing. According to the shamans around him, his soul had wandered the Hunting Grounds for centuries forcing the spirits he found there to aid his people, while they cared for his body. It was Cochise's sacrifice which had guarded the tribe for so long. Now that he was dying, the spirits he had forced to help the Apaches had fled and left them exposed to the cyborg's attack.

Regardless of whether you buy that story or not—it seems like an excuse for finally losing to me—the remaining Chiricahua were moved out to a reservation. The defeat of the Apaches was such a defining moment that the CEAL Team decided to make the Chiricahua's stronghold their own. The team's headquarters was moved to the Dragoon mountains. The caves were expanded and filled with a state-of-the-art complex.

The funny thing about it, is that the place was on our City-Buster target list, but I don't think it got hit. I was in Arizona a few years back, and I didn't see any sign of a ghost-rock maelstrom in the Dragoon Mountains.

Border Disputes

After the success against the Apaches, the southern program was expanded and CEAL Team 2 was formed. This team maintained its headquarters in Roswell, New Mexico.

Both teams were involved in the next op. The border between the CSA and Mexico has been in dispute ever since the Mexicans invaded in the 1870s. The CSA had a treaty that shows the border in its current position, the Mexicans had a different treaty which cedes all the land north as far as Phoenix to Mexico. The disagreement had been a sore spot between the two countries for over a century.

The nationalistic government that took over in Mexico in 2055 decided to press the claim as a way of distracting the public from the recession the country's economy was in. Mexico couldn't afford an all-out war, but a few border incidents kept tempers high and the treaty dispute in the news. Both sides began digging troops in on either side of the border.

Just as things began to cool down, the Mexicans began a nightly campaign of dropping mortar rounds into the CSA positions. The mortar teams would fire a few shells and then skedaddle before the Confederate troops could zero in on their position and return fire. The Mexican government claimed it wasn't responsible for the attacks—they were the work of a nationalist separatist group.

The Confederate generals wanted to respond by hitting the Mexicans with some heavy artillery, but the hacks back in Richmond were afraid that that would make the Rebs look like the bad guys—the LatAm Alliance was already making noise in the UN about sending peacekeepers to the region and mediating the border controversy.

After a few weeks of on and off mortar attacks, the CEAL Teams were ordered in. They set up ambushes throughout the area and settled in to wait for their prey. It took a few days before a mortar team stumbled into an ambush, but there were no survivors. This didn't discourage the Mexicans, they just sent more troops to escort the mortars. The CEALs killed them, too.

The CSA brass wanted a quick end to the situation, so a new order came down from on high: the CEALs were to hit three separate Mexican border posts, "neutralize" everyone they found there, and transport the bodies back to the Confederate lines. The attacks went off without a hitch, and the CEALs' victims were carted off and buried in a mass grave far from the border.

All the Mexicans knew was that in a single night three of their border posts had been eliminated to the man and the garrisons had disappeared without a trace. As word spread, many Mexican troops began refusing to serve along the border. Faced with a potential mutiny, the government was forced to back down. Within a month, Mexican troops had pulled back from the border and the crisis was over for the moment. The Mexicans and the rest of the LatAm Alliance would be back in 2081.

The number of CEAL Teams remained at two until the Congo War broke out, when the Confederacy's cyborg force was doubled to four teams. By the time the Last War began, there were six CEAL Teams. CEAL Team 1 remained based in Arizona. CEAL Team 2 was based in the Great Maze. CEAL Team 3 was based in Norfolk, Virginia. CEAL Teams 4, 5, and 6 were permanently assigned to the Davis, Helms, and Gingrich carrier groups.

The Confederate program never grew as big as the Union's. Just before the Last War, there were roughly 700 CEAL Team members. The southern cyborgs were never used as conventional infantry like their northern counterparts, they remained strictly a special ops unit.

This was mostly due to General Jerome Stuart, the Confederacy's last General-in-Chief. A descendant of J.E.B. Stuart (or so he claimed, J.E.B. died in 1864 without any known children, so I'm dubious), the famous Civil War cavalry officer, Jerome loved tanks. Due to his influence, a large portion of the southern military budget was devoted to creating and building the biggest and best hovertank force in the world. There wasn't much left over for building "corpses with guns" as Stuart called them.

Recruitment

The small size of the Southern cyborg force allowed it to remain a mostly volunteer unit. Very early on, even before the technique for manufacturing Harrowed had been perfected, the Confederate government offered a \$20,000 bounty to the survivors of any armed forces member who donated their body for medical testing. Those who signed up for the program were earmarked for the CEAL Teams. If they came back Harrowed, they became a Team member. If they didn't, the government used them for actual medical experiments or donated them to teaching hospitals. Once Gruber's technique was adopted, all of these bodies went straight to the CEAL Teams.

Because almost all of the Confederate cyborgs were volunteers or at least southern veterans, they had fewer disciplinary problems and their AIs were much less repressive than those of their northern counterparts. The overall commander of the Teams was a cyborg, Lieutenant General Trigg Nowlin.



An early member of Las Fuerzas Muertas.

Organization • Equipment

The CEALs were organized into 8-man squads. A Team consisted of twelve of these squads divided amongst two six-squad platoons, plus a four-person command team.

The southern cyborg force had the same categories and same core equipment as our boys. Oh, you're from Texas. Okay, my boys. They weren't quite as technically advanced as the US troops because the southern unit was constantly competing with Stuart's tank program for funding.

Las Fuerzas Muertas

Las Fuerzas Muertas, or D-Force as we called them, was the LatAm Alliance's cyborg force. They got a late start with their program and never really got caught up before the Last War put it on permanent hiatus.

The LatAms didn't have any cyborgs to speak of until 2076. Then it seemed like they got a program overnight. It took a while for my field operatives to piece together what happened, but they eventually did.

It turned out that CEAL Team 1 in Arizona thought it was fun to initiate new team members by having them make a beer run across the border. Well, the Mexican Border police finally got lucky one night and bagged themselves a cyborg. The body was turned over to the government and the LatAm cyborg program was born.

The spirit fetter in the captured cyborg had been damaged by the shot that put it down, so it took a while for the LatAm scientists to reverse engineer it and create one of their own. Their first few attempts were badly flawed and produced Harrowed that were either under the manitou's control or who could be killed by a light tap to the head. The first reliable spirit fetter from the LatAm labs was built as General Ramirez's troops were already massing for the invasion of the Maze.

Insta-Harrowed. Just Add Fetter!

An elite group of cyborgs known as Los Matadores (the Killers) was quickly assembled from volunteers from all of the LatAm member nations. These were completed in time to help fight a rearguard action against General Harlow as the LatAm forces retreated back into Mexico.

After the humiliating retreat, the LatAm force were in desperate need of troops to shore up their defenses against the Southern Alliance offensive they were sure was coming. The LatAm cy-labs

went into overdrive and churned out spirit fetters as fast they could. All of the bodies coming back from the front, as well as those raided from morgues, hospitals, and funeral homes had fetters slammed into them. In a matter of weeks, the exhausted scientists had created a small army of Harrowed troops. Santa Anna's Army of the Dead "lived" again.

These fresh undead were issued weapons and thrown into the fight. By this time the US had entered the war and diverted many of the Confederate troops to the north. The LatAms were able to stop the remaining Southern troops dead and the immediate crisis passed.

Crisis Over

The newly-made Harrowed who had survived this fighting were slowly rotated out of the front lines and back to the labs. There they were turned into full-fledged cyborgs and given proper equipment and training. About half of these Harrowed had been fully implanted before the bombs started falling.

Those who had become full cyborgs served with distinction in the Great Maze, Texas, and Arizona. Los Matadores actually attempted to assault CEAL Team 1's headquarters in the Dragoon Mountains, but they were detected before they had reached their jump off points and the operation was cancelled.

Organization • Equipment

Las Fuerzas Muertas were organized into 12-man squads. The squads were grouped by fours into platoons, with four platoons to a full company.

Entire companies of LatAm cyborgs were often deployed together because they lacked the firepower of the US or CSA deaders. The LatAm program just hadn't had the time to develop all of the specialized weapons and equipment that the other countries had. As a result, many of the Alliance's cyborgs were armed with the same weaponry as regular troopers. Of course they were much more effective with these weapons and were much, much harder to kill than an average soldier.

The LatAm Alliance had no real use for infiltrator style cyborgs and it didn't have the resources to invest in heavies, so almost all D-force cyborgs were light combat models. To make up for their lack of firepower, many LatAm cyborg unit's became masters of the ambush. Some units would actually bury themselves and remain hidden for days while waiting for a victim.

The Texas Rangers

The Rangers didn't have a cyborg program of their own, but they did have cyborgs.

Many of the Rangers were completely dedicated to the work they were doing fighting the creatures and servants of the Reckoners. So much so, that many of them were willing and eager to continue serving after their deaths. On the event of their deaths, the bodies of those who felt that way were sent over to the CEAL Team labs for some radical modifications.

Most of the cyber-Rangers were infiltrator models. This allowed them to still operate undercover and often gave them an edge against opponents who thought they were dealing with an ordinary human. However, once cyborgs went public following the U.N. hostage rescue, some Rangers opted for obvious implants due to the intimidation value such things gave them. Many of these law dogs claimed they could handle two riots at once.

Borg Killer

One borg-Ranger I'd like to get my hands on is Curtis "Big Fifty" Harman-B.F. to his friends. This SOB made it his job to find and kill as many Agency cyborgs as he could. He got his nickname from the custom pistol he carried. It had a top-feed magazine and was chambered for .50 cal machine-gun ammo. His arm had been specially-modified to withstand the enormous recoil of this bad puppy. He used this hand cannon to blast big holes in the heads of my cyborgs. If I ever find him, he'll wish I hadn't.

117

Special Undead Service

The only other cyborg unit to see action in North America was the British Special Undead Service, or SUS. This unit was attached to the Special Airborne Service (SAS)—Britain's elite commando unit.

When first organized, the SUS was used primarily against the IRA and other terrorist groups which had a beef with No. 10 Downing Street. When the Congo War began, the SUS was deployed there and performed remarkably well. Its success in Africa led to its expansion and use in other global hot spots.

The SUS saw action in the Falklands in 2060. The LatAm Alliance decided to back Argentina's claim to the islands, and once again British and Argentinian troops spilled each other's blood over these tiny islands. The SUS cyborgs were

used extensively as raiders behind the LatAm lines and were instrumental in bringing about the British victory in 2062. In their most spectacular operation of the war, a platoon of SUS cyborgs swam into the harbor where the LatAm supply fleet was anchored and planted limpet mines on the hull of every ship there. The simultaneous detonation of all these charges crippled the LatAm fleet and killed nearly every fish in the harbor.

When the Last War began, a company of cyborgs from the SUS accompanied the small British force which fought for the Northern Alliance in the Maze. Along with the Cy-SOG deadborgs, the SUS made life Hell for the living troops fighting their way through the Maze's shattered canyons.

The rest of the unit was involved in the disastrous British landings at Normandy. The cyborgs fought a diehard rearguard action to keep the French armor away from the beaches while what was left of the landing force was evacuated by hoverfoil. Only four of these courageous cans made it back to England.



The SUS assault Port Stanley.

Recruitment

Due to the government's live and let live attitude, most of the members of this unit were volunteers. A large portion of the volunteers for this unit actually came from Britain's Ghurka units. These hardy, mountain warriors could give a cyborg a run for its money on a good day, after being implanted they were probably the toughest soldiers in the world.

Those who weren't volunteers came off England's welfare rolls. Citizen's who had been on the dole for over ten years were given a choice. They could remain on the rolls at a reduced rate or they could register for special government service. Those who registered were called up through a lottery system whenever the SUS ran short of recruits. The relatives of those who were drafted received all the benefits due a serviceman's family.

Organization • Equipment

When first organized, the SUS was only an understrength company with three platoons of 32 cyborgs each. Each platoon had four squads of eight deaders.

During the Congo War, the company size was first increased to four platoons, and then an entire second company was added. The SUS didn't expand much beyond this size. A third company was added in 2068, when it began to look like the LatAms were going to cause trouble.

The British cyborgs were modeled closely after Confederate technology and came in infiltrator, light combat, and heavy combat varieties. The SUS often worked closely with the Royal Navy and developed many enhancements for underwater travel and combat.

Briefing Ends

I guess that's about all I can tell you. All I ask in return is that you don't reveal to anyone my whereabouts. I'm actually on a mission for a group working to restore the US government, and there are those who would like to see me fail, if you know what I mean.

No, I'm afraid I can't say anymore about that. It's all very hush-hush. If Throckmorton found out what I was up to he'd skin me alive. There are a lot of other people out there who don't want me to succeed, either.

No, really. I've said too much already. Remember what I said at the beginning of the interview about how if I told you, I'd have to...Yeah, well I mean it this time.

The Mechanical Man Speaks

Librarian's Note: The following is an interview with cyborg, Corporal 504. I encountered him in Wakita, Oklahoma shortly after he helped defend the settlement there from a large-scale road gang assault. He had much to say about "life" as a cyborg and the activities of cyborgs in the postwar world.

Hi, I'm Corporal 504, 3rd Platoon, Alpha Company, 2nd Cy-SOG Battalion, serial number FX8756504. My friends call me Bill. So, you talked to Leo Poe, did you? Where? Oh, really. I'm not surprised he swore you to secrecy, there are quite a few guys from my unit who would like to have a word with Mr. Poe. Why? He was responsible for sending us on some of the stupidest damn missions I can remember—missions that got some of my buddies killed.

Head of the CPTF? No, he was just a senior analyst on the staff. The head of the task force was Elwood Lawrence. He was appointed to the position by the president. Elwood was a good man, but a bad judge of character. For some reason he took a shine to Poe and often took Poe's advice over that of more experienced people—people who had actually participated in field ops. I don't know what Poe told you, but his entire Agency career was spent behind a desk.

Poe used to send us on all sorts of wild goose chases. He was hoping to have that one big operation that would make his career and get him booted upstairs. I'd just like to boot him in the ass.

An example? Okay, Poe once got a report that the Chinese had developed a new weapon for their deaders. The initial field report indicated it was some sort of powerful rifle with serious anti-cyborg potential. Rather than wait for additional information, or for other sources to confirm the original report, he talked Elwood into organizing an operation to actually snatch one of these new weapons out of China.

The factory making these weapons was on the coast, so our platoon was inserted by submarine. We hit the factory, grabbed a couple of the new rifles, and headed for the beach. We were intercepted by some Chinese cyborgs on the way there and had to fight our way out to the sub. Two of our guys got zapped during the firefight and we had to lug their dead carcasses out so that the government could deny we had ever been there.

Once we finally got out of there we took a good look at the rifle we had grabbed. Turned out it was a knock-off of the old American M-82A4 Barret sniper rifle. The analysts hadn't recognized it in the photos because it had been equipped with a special barrel shroud that reduced its signature to thermal imaging systems. We had lost two troopers and risked an international incident over a rifle that had been state-of-the-art 40 years before. That was pretty typical of the ridiculous missions that Poe sent us on.

Cyber Life

I guess Poe also told you about Cy-SOG's recruiting program and how the AIs were used to "keep us in line." Thought so.

He makes it sound like we were some mischievous kids that just needed a whack on the ass to set us straight. My AI didn't keep me in line, it ruled me like a tinpot dictator in a banana republic. The damn things was wired straight into the pain and pleasure centers of my brain. If I did something the AI didn't like—zap—I was on the floor in more pain than it's possible to imagine. If I did something that pleased the computer, it made me feel better than a night with a \$100 whore. It's hard to stand up to treatment like that—after a while you just stop trying.

I bet Poe also didn't mention that all of the non-volunteer recruits had their memories wiped (and I think some of the volunteers had theirs selectively edited). I guess they figured it would be easier to condition us if we had no sense of identity.

All I know about my past is that I was a criminal who was executed and turned over to Cy-SOG. When I woke up after the implantation operation, the instructor made it clear that I was only going to exist as long as I was useful to the unit. If I refused to be a team player, they'd pull the plug on me and I'd be dead for good this time.

I think not knowing my past is the worst part of being a cyborg. I might have relatives out there right now who need my help, but I have no way of knowing. I also don't know why I was executed, or even if I was really guilty of the crime. I could be a serial-killer or just some poor schmuck who happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Not that it really matters. Since Cy-SOG brought me back I've killed so many people anything I did before is pretty insignificant.



Combat is a bad time to have an AI conflict.

My memories aren't completely gone. Sometimes things I see, hear, or even smell can trigger quick flashes of memory. Most of these visions involve an attractive woman. I have no idea who she is. She could be my mother, my sister, my wife, or one of my victims—I just don't know.

I can remember most of my "life" since I became a member of Cy-SOG, but there are a few black spots there, too. Some of the missions I was involved in were either too sensitive to national security or too traumatic to leave in my head, so the techs wiped them out. I still catch occasional glimpses of these too.

Fightin' The Man

The only reason I'm able to tell you these things now is because it's possible to fight the AI and win. If you resist the AI strongly enough it's possible to actually short portions of it out and gain some freedom. While I was still in the service, these damaged portions would be replaced as part of the regular maintenance schedule, so this freedom didn't last long—it was great while it lasted, though.

Resistance was really only practical while on a mission. That's because if you weren't in danger the AI felt free to inflict as much pain as necessary to get your cooperation, and if you really got uppity, it would simply shut you down. Things changed once you got out in the field. There the mission took precedence over all other considerations and the AI couldn't do anything that might cause the mission to fail or for its cyborg to be captured or destroyed.

Of course it would still zap you if you were about to take an action that might endanger the mission or one of the other cyborgs on the team.

I've pretty well trashed my AI, but there are still certain things which can make it activate and cause problems for me. Bald men with red mustaches for instance, are usually good for a few days of grief from my AI. I think it's because my last mission before Judgment Day was to hit a Reb POW camp and rescue a prisoner who looked similar to that.

Rank Has Its Privileges

The higher your rank, the less hassle your AI gave you. I guess this was because the guys and gals who gave the orders needed to be able have a thought or two without being zapped with a cattle prod. The same was true of volunteers, their AIs were less restrictive than those of us "draftees."

Officers and volunteers actually had social lives of sorts. When off duty they could wander around the post, talk to one another, or plug into the virtual-reality machines down at the PX and experience nearly anything they wanted to. Not us ex-cons, when we were off-duty we went back to the barracks and powered down until it was time for us to go back on duty—not that I'm bitter about it or anything.

Self-Repair

Now that I've got my freedom, I have to be careful not to accidentally repair my AI.

How could that happen? Well, almost all cyborgs have a Self-Repair Unit installed. Those things are great. If I didn't have one, I wouldn't be here talking to you today. The SRU is pure manitou magic. All I need to make repairs in the field are some parts that are roughly equivalent to the components that were damaged. The SRU does the rest and actually changes the parts into what's actually needed. It even installs the new parts for me. I just have to watch out, because every once in a while the AI tries to activate the unit to repair itself.

The Drones

I'm one of the lucky ones. There are a bunch of cans out there who are still being ordered around by the chips in their brains. Some of them simply aren't strong-willed enough to kick their AI's butts or they're afraid to risk it. An AI can inflict pain, but it can also cause real damage to the brain of its cyborg. It only uses this as a last resort, because if it miscalculates, it can fry the cyborg's grey matter badly enough to kill him. We call the poor souls still under the thumb of their AIs "drones," because they're still doing the worker bee routine.

Some of these deaders are dangerous. Some are still operating under the rules of engagement programmed into them for their last mission. That could mean anything from "kill all Southern Alliance military personnel" to "leave no witnesses." I've actually run into a 'borg operating under that last set of orders, and as much as I hated to do it, I had to put her down. As near as I could tell, she had completely wiped out two survivor settlements single-handedly just because someone from those towns had seen her.

Right after Judgment Day, a lot of cyborgs continued to fight the war even though it was obviously over. It took a while for most of us to bludgeon our AIs into submission. Some of the drones, though, are still out there fighting for their countries—even though their countries no longer exist. Anyone who expresses support for one side or another can get themselves in big trouble with these brainers. If they're lucky they'll end up dead. If they pissed Lady Luck off, the drone will also eliminate their entire settlement as "suspected sympathizers."

I try to help these guys out when I can. Well, the Northern Alliance cyborgs, at least. Not that I've got any particular hatred of the southern boys—the war's over as far as I'm concerned—but their drones tend to shoot at me on sight. The Northern cyborgs can sometimes be reasoned with. A good dose of logic can sometimes snap their AI back into reality or give the person trapped inside the extra wedge he needs to take control.

What's Wrong Dave?

Even worse than the drones are the cyborgs who are under the control of a deranged AI. Some of these AIs are damaged, some have faulty logic programming, and others were simply unable to comprehend the way in which the war ended and the appearance of hundreds

of new warring factions. It doesn't really matter what caused the AI to malfunction, because the end result is the same: an AI run amok.

It's sometimes possible to reason with a drone—you can't reason with a deranged AI. Although they have their own internal logic for their actions, good luck figuring it out. Most deranged AIs make all sorts of seemingly arbitrary and often conflicting decisions. A cyborg with a mental AI may decide that all people wearing blue are the enemy, and kill everyone it meets who is wearing even a scrap of blue cloth. The next day it might decide that people with brown hair are the enemy, or it might think a complete stranger is its commanding officer and follow his orders until it changes its mind again and kills him in its sleep.

There's not much that can be done for these 'borgs. The constant killing and the need to stay in the good graces of the crazy computer to avoid pain and damage often drive the person inside insane as well.

Powers

No, as far as I can tell, my manitou is still securely locked up. All I can say about that is, hallelujah! The last thing I need is another voice in my head telling me what to do.

No, I don't have any special "undead" powers, but I know some cyborgs who do. Some of them have damaged fetters that allow their manitou to come out and play mind games with them, and a few have a new piece of equipment—well, it was new in 2081—called a power focus.

A southern cyborg explained to me how a focus works. It basically drains power from the manitou and makes the energy available for the 'borg to use in any way he wishes. It takes some time and experimentation to actually develop a power, but the more the deader plays with the energy provided by the focus, the more he learns to shape and control it in useful ways. Some cyborgs develop "traditional" powers (whatever the Hell that means, I guess some Texas Ranger sat around and cataloged all the powers they had run into), others manifest new powers that are usually technology-related.

The southern 'borg I talked to, for instance, could heal machines. I saw him walk up to a car that had been turned into a colander by a .50 cal, and slap his hands on the hood. A few seconds later, a glow enveloped the car and it started piecing itself back together. The whole thing looked like a bad movie effect where they run the film backwards. When he was done, I kept waiting for him to yell, "You ah healed!"

Borgs and the Living

As if we cyborgs didn't have enough to deal with, there's the living. They don't much like us, and I can't say I really blame them. I don't like it, but I understand it—maybe I was Catholic before I was implanted. I have lots of unresolved guilt.

The living don't trust us, mainly because of the drones and the deranged AIs that are running around tearing up what's left of the scenery—not to mention the cyborgs whose manitous have gotten loose. Many survivor groups won't allow cyborgs into their settlements. That's started a whole passel of fights between survivors and hot-headed cyborgs that have only made for more hard feelings between the groups.

Those places that do allow jarheads to come in make it pretty clear they don't want you hanging around for very long. Take this place, for instance. Right now everyone is all happy and friendly—kiss, kiss—but as soon as they're sure those bikers won't be back, their mood will change.

I've seen it before at least a dozen times. The mothers will start to worry that it's not safe for me to be around the children. The others will convince themselves that they could have fought off the attack without me. Before you know it I'll find a delegation of embarrassed townsfolk camped on my doorstep. They'll say, "Thanks, but we'd appreciate it if you'd think about moving on." Or maybe not, I've actually had some hotheads try to run me out of town at gunpoint. It doesn't really matter, either way, I'll pack up and head out.

The Unbearable Heaviness of Being

So why do I keep doing it? The long and short of it is, I ain't got nothing else to do. Provided I don't get blown apart and my SRU doesn't fail, I'll still be around when all the people you see here are dead and buried.

There's not much left for a cyborg to do these days. Only about 20% of my original body is left, the rest is metal and electronics. I don't need to eat unless one of my few organic pieces is damaged. I only need to sleep for an hour once or twice a week. I can't get drunk (believe me, I've tried), and even if I could find a willing partner (yeah, right), sex is out of the question. Back before everything went to Hell I either shut down between missions or spent some time on the virtual reality machines at the base rec hall. Neither of those is really an option now.

The only thing that leaves is to do what cyborgs do best: kick ass and take names. The way I see it I've got three choices: I can fight for my own gain, I can fight for someone else's gain, or I can fight to protect people from those who are doing all the gaining. There isn't anything riches and power can get me that I want, and I'm tired of taking orders; so that leaves the last option.

The first few times I helped people out, I stuck around afterwards, hoping to join their group. But like I mentioned, I eventually made them nervous enough that they asked me to leave. Now I don't hang around that long, because it just makes the people I helped feel bad about themselves when they force me out. I'll stay here another day or two to make sure the bikers don't return, and then I'll make up some kind of BS story about searching for my lost brother or something and hit the road. If you're still here then, you'll see the relief on their faces.

Hmm, maybe I was a psychologist. Or maybe a philosopher.

Of course not all of my cyber-brothers and sisters have made the same choice as I have. Some have set themselves up as warlords or have gone to work for one. Many, I'm ashamed to say, have signed up with Throckmorton. What they do with the wealth this brings them, I have no idea. For some I'm sure it's just to have a reason to fight. I'll talk some more about these deaders in a moment.

Ending It All

I know a lot of jarheads, including myself, that have thought about pulling the plug and decorating a wall with their brains. Unfortunately, it's just not possible. In the early days of the cyborg program, they had a lot of problems with deaders getting depressed over what they had become—at least before they got implanted they could pretend to be human—and blowing their heads off. Not only was it hard to find more Harrowed back then, but it got to be damned expensive.

They fixed the problem the only way they could. All cyborgs have hard-wired into their equipment instructions prohibiting self-termination. This isn't part of the AI, it's a separate system altogether. I've yet to meet a cyborg who could override it (of course if I had, I wouldn't know it because they'd be dead, but you know what I mean). Any action by a cyborg which would result in it destroying itself causes an immediate system shutdown.

There are ways around this, of course. My friend Bob found one. He walked into a camp of about 100 Road Orcs and started telling mutie jokes. They tore him apart, but he took almost 30 of them with him. You see, his systems wouldn't allow him to just stand there and die. It forced him to fight back.

Moving On

Okay, I can see I'm really depressing you. Sorry, you caught me in one of my post-battle funks. As a heavy weapons model, my brain is wired up to find combat pleasurable. Coming down after a fight can be hard.

How'd I get my name? Picked it out of a phone book. Only volunteers and officers got to have names, everyone else was just a number. Once I kicked my AI's butt for what I hope was the last time, I grabbed a phone book and took the first name I saw: Bill Pitman (well, actually the first name I saw was Dorah Sinclair, but I didn't want to go there). That was about seven years ago. Since then I've dropped the Pitman and just go by Bill. Some cyborgs have chosen names like I did, others still just go by their unit numbers.

Who Am I?

Besides helping out people in trouble, I've also been searching for clues to my real identity. I know that the chances of discovering who I was before being implanted are minuscule—big word, maybe I was some sort of teacher—but it keeps me going. Whenever I'm near any sort of US federal facility, I always stop and go through all of the records I can locate. Sometimes I'm afraid of what I might find. I don't know what I would do if I found out I was some sort of killer or degenerate before I was recruited.

Okay, enough about me before you slit your wrists.

Wasteland Heroes

There's actually an up side to not having anywhere to set down roots. I've seen a lot of horrible things as I've traveled around the West, but I've also seen some good. Lots of good people are trying to build something out of the rubble and they're being helped out by some true heroes. Many of these crusaders were just ordinary people before the war, but they've responded to the call and they are making a difference. I don't know if the Reckoners can be defeated, but if they can, these will be the people who do it.

Friends • Foes

I guess Poe couldn't tell you much about what's going on with people of the dead persuasion these days, could he? Thought not. That man is going to give cowards a bad name.

Junkers

There is one group of people who can usually be counted on not to open fire or run screaming in terror when they see us, that's the junkers. Actually, sometimes it's damn hard to get them to leave us alone. Most of them are fascinated by us. Or maybe I should say by our manitous. To a junker, a cyborg looks like a giant Ever-Ready bunny because our manitous can create an endless supply of energy for their devices.

Junkers are always suggesting ways they can "improve" your performance. They also have an annoying habit of always wanting to open us up and "take a look under the hood." Although they can sometimes be a pain, it pays to stay on their good side. If a cyborg's SRU goes down, it can't



A cyborg tries to end it all with little success.

heal it's mechanical parts and it's doomed to a slow, lingering death as its systems wear out and shutdown. There are only two ways to get an SRU fixed. Find another cyborg with a cybernetic repair program and the all of the proper parts, or find a junker. Junkers are much easier to find.

I've never had any junkers work on me, but I've heard that you get what you pay for. The stuff junkers make is magical and it doesn't last forever. Good quality devices can last for years without causing a problem, cheap work can be a headache from day one.

I had a buddy who had a plasma weapon implanted in his arm by some goofball straight out of junker school, or wherever it is these guys come from. It worked fine for about a week, and then it seized up during a firefight and vanished, taking his entire arm with it.

We managed to find the guy again and get a refund and a new arm for my pal, but it took some arm-twisting—literally. I think the clincher was when I told him I'd take the junker's arm to replace Bob's. Man, I hope I wasn't some kind of mob enforcer.



Molly Scrugg at work.

Throckmorton • The Combine

The Combine's looking for a few good cyborgs. Word has it that Throckmorton's trying to get a cyborg component factory back on-line. In the meantime, he's got teams out looking for cyborgs to recruit.

From what I hear, the Combine has adopted the Texas Rangers old "recruit 'em or shoot 'em" philosophy—or is it "shoot 'em or recruit 'em"? I can't remember. Either way, Throckmorton's goons are killing any deader who doesn't want to sign on the dotted line. I guess he figures if you're not for him you're agin' him.

Now you may wonder how he's bumping off a group of people who are more than capable of taking care of themselves. Easy, he's using cyborgs. He's got his own infiltrator units out looking for us. When they find a lone can (so far Combine troops haven't tried this against any large groups of cyborgs that I know of), the infiltrators call for back up and wait for the heavy hitters to show up. This is usually a few heavy weapons cans plus a squad or two of Black Hats tricked out with anti-tank rockets.

Once these guys are in place the infiltrator tries to lure the potential recruit into an ambush—often by posing as a breather in need of help. If the sucker falls for it—like I did, that's how I know all this—he's given the choice of signing up or dieing. I managed to escape, but my friend 921, didn't.

I ran into him again two months later. He was an infiltrator, and he was out recruiting for Throckmorton. I don't know what they did to him, but he didn't recognize me. He just launched into his spiel about how his village was desperate, and could I please, please, help him? I did. I blasted him right between the eyes.

Deus Ex Machina

Not all cyborgs are wanderers like me. A small group has actually settled down and formed a town. They named the place Deus Ex Machina, but most people just call it Deus.

The entire population of the town is dead. Most are cyborgs, but a number of just plain Harrowed have settled there, too. The last time I passed through, I'd say there were about 100 people "living" there.

Unfortunately I'm not at liberty to tell you where this place is—ooh, maybe I was a politician, that would explain why I was executed. The deaders who live there want to do

so in peace. They're not worried about defending the place—they've got more firepower than you could shake a dead Combiner at—they'd just rather not have to.

Deus is easier to keep hidden from prying eyes than most survivor communities. Since the inhabitants don't need to eat, there are no fields being cultivated and no smoke from cooking fires. Most of the citizens can see in the dark, so there are few lights at night to reveal its position.

The townsfolk don't rely on that alone to keep away unwanted visitors. Most are ex-military, so they take turns patrolling a wide perimeter around the town. Anyone found inside that area is captured—killed if they resist—blindfolded, and taken back to town for interrogation. That's how I got there the first time.

Deaders are usually invited to stay, breathers had better talk fast if they want to stay that way. Anyone deemed a security threat to the town becomes a resident of the local cemetery. Executed breathers are welcome to stay if they happen to get back up.

Mayor Hazelwood

Deus is led by Colonel, I mean Mayor, Andria "Buckets" Hazelwood. She was the leader of 2nd Cy-SOG Battalion and my commanding officer. She actually remembered me from the time I had spent as an HQ runner during the Battle of Withered Pines. If she hadn't vouched for me, I doubt I would have been allowed to learn the location of the town.

The Col. Mayor is a good woman. She always went to bat for her troops, and was continually trying to get the big brass to loosen the AI strings a bit—even for us ex-cons. I know lots of Cy-SOG troopers who would follow her to Hell and back—even without an AI making us.

Danger! Danger!

There are a bunch of reasons for the secrecy about the town's location. For starters, the residents don't want a horde of breathers moving in and setting up shop. Not everyone mistrusts us, and they might decide that hanging out with some of the most elite soldiers in the world might be a safe place to live. The resident cans also don't want normals showing up on their doorsteps begging for help every morning. They came here to live in peace with those of their own kind, they don't want to become some sort of mercenary auction.

Those reasons aren't enough to justify killing people to preserve the town's secrecy, though. The big reason for all of the security is to

prevent Throckmorton from finding the place. If he knew where Deus was I have no doubt he'd try his damned best to level the place.

Have Chip. Will Travel

I don't want you to get the idea that all the deaders in Deus are heartless bastards who have turned their backs to the world. Many of them still work as mercenaries. The town actually employs a number of breathers and infiltrators as agents. They wander the West searching for people who are looking to hire on some extra firepower. If one finds some work, he sends a message back to Deus and the offer is posted in the town hall. All the cyborgs interested in the offer put in bids, the lowest bid gets the job.

Some of the cans work alone. Some have formed units or still work with other deaders from the units they served with in the war. Hiring Deus mercs is expensive. Few of them work cheap, although some of the more heroic (or stupid, depending on who you ask) do take on charity cases if it's for a good cause.

The Scruggs

There are actually two breathers who live in Deus: Hugh Scruggs and his wife Molly. They are both junkers. They patch up 'borgs whose SRUs have gone bad, make special purpose equipment for cans going out on missions, and occasionally even make a cyborg or two of their own.

Some of the old-fashioned deaders want to see what it's like to be cybered up, so they get the Scruggs to fix them up—that's Molly's specialty. Some of them like being a can, others don't. Unlike us, they can go back to being just a plain old Harrowed if they want to.

The Scruggs keep all the body parts they've lopped off in an enormous freezer. If a deader changes his mind, he can go back and have all his original parts sewn back on. After wolfing down a few sides of beef, the Harrowed's as good as new. Personally, I don't see why anyone would want to give up their cyberware, especially if I was one of the Scruggs' cans. They don't put any kind of AI in them!

They do have the disadvantage of being junker-built, though. The Scruggs do quality work, but they still have their bad days. I know one deader whose cyberware just up and crumbled to dust one day. She had had both of her legs replaced and it took her a week to get back to Deus walking on her hands. She had the Scruggs put both of her original legs back on and remove the eye they had implanted to replace one she lost over a century ago.



A Rhinehart cyborg goes kabom!

Malcolm Rhinehart

As long as we're on the subject of junker-built cyborgs, I guess I should mention Malcolm Rhinehart. He's a junker who once worked for Throckmorton. According to the Red Hat I got this information out of, Rhinehart actually *quit* the Combine—just got up and walked out. I'd love to know how he pulled that one off.

Yeah, I said a Red Hat. How did I? Oh, you're talking about that whole head-popping thing they do. I've got a brain mole unit in my left arm. It gets into enemy computer systems and zaps their defenses. It was designed to extract information from disabled enemy cyborgs on the battlefield, but it works just fine against those headbanger chips Throckmorton uses.

Rhinehart worked on getting the Combine's cyborg program rolling. According to the thug I talked to, he actually got a factory capable of manufacturing cyborg components running. All Throckmorton needs now is the raw materials. I'd say if you hear about the Combine starting any mining operations, expect to see a cyborg army marching out of Colorado not long after.

Still In Business

I don't know where Rhinehart went after Denver, but I do know he's still making cyborgs. I ran into one just a few weeks ago outside of Dallas. The damn thing near killed me.

It opened fire on me as soon as it spotted me and we played cat and mouse in the rubble for almost twenty minutes. Eventually I got to be the cat, and I put a plasma bolt through its chest. I went over to the body to make sure it wouldn't be getting back up to scavenge some spare parts (ghoulish, I know, but I needed them, one of its shots nearly took my arm off), when it blew up.

It had some sort of self-destruct mechanism, and a powerful one at that. The blast threw me almost 40 yards and finished the job on my arm. I had bits and pieces of the other can embedded all over my body.

That's how I know the thing was built by Rhinehart. Part of the cyborg's breast plate was stuck in my leg. When I pulled it out, I found an engraved message on the inside of the metal that said, "alcolm Rhinehart, February 6, 2094." At least he's proud of his work.

The Orbitals

A few months ago I ran into someone I never thought I'd see again, a gal named Kim from Echo Company, 2nd Battalion. I had worked with her on a few ops up in Canada. After the cluster-screw at the Battle of San Andres, her company was transferred up to Sherman Orbital. Not long after, the bombs started falling. The shuttle launch facilities were some of the first targets hit. The station hadn't replenished its supply of drop pods since the attack on Fort Longstreet, so without the shuttles, the troops on the station were stranded. Echo Company had only been sent up there to provide security against an attack on the station.

It turns out that there were a few drop pods left. The stranded troopers sent down a few scouts to check things out and see if there was any way to possibly send a shuttle up to bring the rest of them down. That was thirteen years ago. Kim has been wandering the West ever since then, hoping to find a way to bring her buddies back to Earth.

She still has occasional contact with them through Comsat. They're doing fine—it's not like they need air or food—but the breathers on the station are all dead. If boredom could kill, though, they'd all be in a bad way.

Hamrick

Nope. I haven't seen Hamrick since 2080. I don't know what I'd do if I did see him. I've heard so many stories about what happened at Fort Longstreet that I'm not sure what to believe. Some people say that Hamrick was a traitor and he sold out his own troops for money. Some say that he realized it was a suicide mission and he

was trying to save the lives of his troops. Others say that he knew the assault was going to fail, he was afraid the Confederates might launch, and he did it to end the fighting and prevent a nuclear war.

No one really knows why he did it other than Hamrick and maybe some big brass at Fort Longstreet. Hamrick is dead or in hiding, and Fort Longstreet got pounded into a glass-bottomed, self-lighting, parking lot, so we may never know.

What I do know is that there are a lot of cans looking for him. Many are 1st battalion survivors, but there are a lot of other cyborgs—both northern and southern—that would like to speak with him. Just like Elvis, Hamrick has been seen all over the place, but no one you speak to has seen him personally.

Regardless of why he did it, what he did horrifies a lot of us, myself included. Being killed or disabled by a computer virus is a universal fear of all cyborgs. It's a very painful way to go because most viruses usually take over the CPU and then systematically overload one system at a time until the can is completely disabled. At some point in the process the cyborg's brain usually gets fried, and he dies.

Death's Head Legion

These cans are Death on a stick. I'm not really sure what their major malfunction is. All I know is that they've got it in for all breathers. They roam the hills and mountains of northwestern Wyoming. It's easy to tell when you've wandered into their territory, because you'll pass a large number of heads impaled on stakes. Not very subtle, but it works.

It's also easy to spot cans that belong to this group. They've got a skull fetish. Most of them have a large skull painted on their armor or clothing somewhere, and many of them have actual human skulls hanging from their belts, jewelry made from human bones, and clothing made from human skin.

I haven't actually spoken to any of these maniacs, but I have swapped ammo with them. Luckily, I got the better deal.

I did talk to some of the terrified breathers who live near their territory, though. They claim that the group is led by a can that calls himself One. I never heard of any cyborgs with a single-digit number, so I'm assuming it's a name he gave himself. Regardless of what he calls himself, by all reports he's a homicidal maniac and nuttier than a pecan pie. He hates all breathers and it seems like his sole goal is to inflict as much pain, suffering, and death on the living as he can. He routinely has his men raid nearby survivor settlements and capture people. Then he spends hours, days, sometimes even weeks, slowly torturing them to death.

One also only refers to himself in the third person. How weird is that?

I tried to pay a visit to his royal Oneness, but he had way too much firepower with him. I counted at least four heavy troopers before I tucked my tail between my legs and ran. I plan on going back there someday, but I'll need to round up quite a few of my buddies before I do.

Medusa

There's another hazard left over from the Last War floating around the Wasted West: the Medusa Virus. No one I've talked to is sure exactly which side cooked this nasty piece of code up, but it's still taking cyborgs down to this day.

The virus got the name Medusa from the way it immobilizes its victims. It's not a fast-acting virus, but once you've got it, you're never going to get rid of it. The virus slowly, but surely, takes over a deader's body one system at a time until it reaches the spirit fether. Once it gets there, it opens the fether and releases the manitou, killing the cyborg.

I've heard some say that Medusa isn't like a normal computer virus. They say it can learn from its encounters with computers and cyborgs and reprogram itself based on its experience. I've heard a few junkers claim it wasn't a virus at all, but some sort of living thing. All I know is that conventional anti-virus programs don't do squat against this thing.

I guess that's about all I can tell you, unless you're interested in hearing a thousand and one war stories. You are? Well, I'll tell you what. Once the big victory hooah is over, why don't we slip out the back and hit the road? I hate long good-byes.



Chapter Two: Makin' Deaders



Now that you've been introduced to the dangerous world of the mechanized dead, it's time to build a cyborg of your own and check it out firsthand. If you're not mechanically inclined, it's also possible to make yourself a standard, garden-variety, walking corpse using these rules.

Before we increase the Wasted West's undead population by one, let's take a moment to review some of the things that all Harrowed share.

The Unlife of the Harrowed

So what's it like being undead? It's definitely a mixed blessing. A walking corpse is a tough hombre in a fight, but he doesn't have an easy time making friends.

The first few hours an undead crawls back into the world aren't pleasant. His last memories are of whatever caused his death, and then he usually finds himself waking up in a grave or some other strange place. Whatever wounds the brainer died of don't seem as bad as they should, but he bears a scar or some other evidence of his death wound that *never* goes away.

The Harrowed's body doesn't adjust to its new state quickly. At first, rigor mortis causes the character seizures, and his mind is fuzzy as well. For the first 2d6 hours after returning from the dead, the Harrowed's Traits (both numbers and types of dice) are halved.

Things aren't much better once the fog clears a bit. The character still doesn't know why he thought he died but is still walking around. Even more confusing, if he listens for a heartbeat, he hears one, though it sounds more like a pregnant flutter than a heartbeat (that's the manitou wiggling around inside). If he tries to cut himself, he bleeds, but the blood is thick and dark and clots quickly.

Tin Cans

Most cyborgs got to miss all the fun of clawing their way out of the ground. With the exception of those who were Harrowed prior to being implanted, most cans simply woke up dead and knew it. Some were volunteers who went into the operating room alive and came out a mechanized corpse, the rest were executed criminals or soldiers who died in the line of duty and got "drafted" into the cyber legions.

The old-time Harrowed tend to look down on these "manufactured" deaders, because they never had to deal with the problem of passing for a living human, they never were hunted by the Agency or the Rangers, and most importantly, they never had to wrestle with the demon that gives them their unlife. Most created Harrowed don't care what the old-timers think, and wish they'd just shutup and stop saying, "Back in the old days..."



Makin' Deaders

Powers

After a while, the Harrowed figures out he's undead. Eventually, say when someone blows out his midsection and he keeps on fighting, he might decide being a stinking corpse ain't all bad.

Harrowed have two types of powers: common and personal. Read on, and we'll tell you more, friend.

Common Powers

As you already know, all Harrowed are born back into the world in a similar state of undeath. The manitous inside them just have to do a few things in certain ways to keep the stiff walking and in good condition (relative to a walkin' dead, that is). This gives the Harrowed a slew of common powers they share with the rest of their grisly kinsmen.

Here's a quick rundown on the various innate abilities a Harrowed gets just for being a living corpse.

Death Wounds

As you'll see in a bit, Harrowed regenerate. Gut one like a trout, and he's fine in a few days. The exception to the rule is the hero's "death wound." It heals, but it never "sets" quite right. A survivor who was hanged might have a long, crooked neck. A Doomsayer hacked up by muties has scars like a jigsaw puzzle. No one's likely to notice these details unless they're looking for them, but they can be a dead giveaway to someone who's wise to the ways of the living dead.

Most Harrowed go out of their way to cover up as much of their wounded flesh as they can get away with. In the Wasted West, where most folks wear dusters and rags to keep the fallout off, they blend in just fine.

Of course, some means of death leave scars that can't be covered up. Get fragged by a plasma gun and you're going to look pretty gross no matter how many bandages someone slapped on afterwards. When you're thinking about how your character died, try to take all of this into account, and describe his wounds in some detail on the back of your character sheet.

Many cyborgs don't have a death wound, some because they never got one—living volunteers were usually put down with a lethal injection—and others because the portions of their bodies the wound is on has been replaced.

Decay

Undead characters have pale, sallow skin. They don't rot, since the manitous inside them sustain their bodies with magical energy, but they don't exactly smell like roses either. Up close and personal (say dancing or getting frisky), another character gets a Fair (5) *Cognition* roll to sniff rotten meat. Whenever an undead drinks a quart or so of alcohol, the difficulty of detecting his undead state by smell goes up to Incredible (11) for the next 24 hours. By that time, the rotgut seeps out his rotten innards and any other holes he might have in his carcass. In the meantime, he just smells good and liquored up.

Animals always react poorly to a piece of rotting meat that has the audacity to walk around on two legs. They can detect something's wrong with a Harrowed up to several yards distant. All *ridin'*, *animal wranglin'*, and *teamster* rolls are made at -2.

Cyborgs who need to pass for human use technology to get around this unpleasant side effect of being a walking corpse.



Makin' Deaders

Drugs & Alcohol

Harrowed can never be poisoned, catch non-supernatural diseases, get drunk, or be affected by drugs.

Some of them *think* they can get drunk or high, and they act accordingly, but it's all in their heads. Even the undead have "issues."

Food

Strangely, the undead do need to eat—at least if they want to repair any damage their carcasses have taken. Theirs is a diet of meat: fresh or long-dead, it doesn't matter. The manitous draw energy from the meat and use it to rebuild the flesh of their hosts.

A Harrowed who hasn't eaten at least a pound of meat in the last 24 hours can't make a healing roll. This is why Harrowed are sometimes mistaken for ghouls by those with just enough knowledge of the occult world to be dangerous. Although they have SRUs to take care of the damage to their metal parts, cyborgs still need to eat to repair damage to their fleshy parts.

Harrowed don't need water, but a little whiskey can keep the stench of death down (see **Decay**).

Grit

Becoming a member of the walking dead hardens the mind. Seeing a horde of radrats eat your best friend is still unnerving, but a fellow who can shoot himself in the heart and keep on laughing learns to accept these things.

Add +1 to your character's Grit after returning from the grave.

Pain

Undead don't suffer greatly from pain, but they still can't shoot as well if half their shooting hand is blown off. They can ignore 2 levels of wound modifiers per area. In other words, only if the Harrowed sustains a serious or greater wound does he suffer a "pain" modifier. Lesser wound modifiers are ignored. This is cumulative with any other abilities that allow the creep to ignore pain, such as *thick-skinned*.

This applies to cyborgs as well. Damage to cybernetic limbs and torsos doesn't cause the can any pain, but once enough parts get blown away, things just don't work as well as they used to.

One last perk. The Harrowed never make stun checks caused by physical damage (magical effects that cause stun checks work normally).

Regeneration

Besides keeping the Harrowed's skin soft and smooth (relative to the average cadaver, of course), the manitous also rebuild their hosts' flesh from damage—as long as they have some other meat to replace the undead flesh (see Food, above). Unlike living heroes who only make natural healing rolls every week, the Harrowed may make healing rolls once per day.

If the Harrowed can't get meat, he can't make any healing rolls. A Harrowed who's been dismembered and can't find anyone to feed him food is still alive. He's just not real mobile (and maybe a little embarrassed when the next scavvie comes along). This can be a unique kind of Hell if the Harrowed is trapped in this way for any length of time. Remember, the only thing that can kill a Harrowed is for its brains to be destroyed. They can even survive a beheading (though they *really* hate that).

The brains are the motivator of the Harrowed's body. A body part that's amputated doesn't work any more. If the Harrowed was somehow decapitated, the head would still work fine, but its control over the rest of its body would cease. Someone would have to sew the head back onto the body and feed the head some meat so it could start healing. Then the Harrowed would eventually be as good as new.

If the Harrowed's digestive tract is destroyed, that's okay. She just puts the meat in her innards, and her body absorbs it.

A body part that is totally removed or destroyed cannot be regenerated (unless the hero has the *reconstruction* power). A Harrowed can sew cosmetic body parts back on (such as an ear or a chunk of flesh), but hands, eyes, and the like don't start working again right away just because they've been stitched back on.

It takes time to heal severed body parts, but this can be done normally (roll once per day for each wounded area). Once the wound is healed from maimed to critical, the damaged limb can be used again, and the stitches that were holding the limb on can be safely removed. Some cyber units saved the severed limbs of their members so they could be reattached later and the can could be reconfigured as an infiltrator if necessary.

Finally, the undead can never benefit from any form of healing that regenerates living flesh. This includes medicine as well as supernatural means. Even a syker with the *fleshknit* power can't heal reeking meat.

Makin' Deaders

Sex

It just can't happen. Without getting into any gritty details, undead males can't get their gats out of their holsters, if you catch our drift. And even if they do somehow manage to find some way to draw, they shoot blanks. This doesn't mean they might not try. They are still men after all.

Female Harrowed can fake it a little better than males, given some preparation. A gal "working" her way across the Wasted West might even be a little better at her job, given a lot of perfume.

Some cyborgs have found a way around this though. The cans' AIs are wired directly into the pleasure centers of their brains, and the correct electronic stimulation can create an experience that simulates sex. The few junkers who figured out how to build devices that allow two cyborgs to do this with each other have become wealthy.

Sleep

A manitou needs a few hours of "downtime" every night to keep its host from rotting away. For this reason, a Harrowed must "sleep" for 1d6 hours out of every 24.

If the Harrowed doesn't voluntarily crawl under a rock for a few hours of shut-eye, the manitou may well shut everything down for him. The demon isn't going to zonk his host out in the middle of a firefight, but it may well do it while he's supposed to be on watch. Who cares about the rest of the posse anyway?

When the manitou decides it's time for some maintenance (usually at the same time normal folks sleep, unless the manitou is up to no good), but the Harrowed wants to fight it, the hero and the Marshal should make an opposed *Spirit* roll every hour. If the demon wins, it's bedtime for bozo. Otherwise, the Harrowed manages to stay awake.

Fighting the manitou like this is exhausting work. The undead subtracts 1d4 Wind for every 24-hour period he doesn't go dormant. When he finally does shut down and lets the manitou do its work, he regains 1 of these lost Wind for every hour of shut-eye. A Harrowed who drops to 0 Wind in this way falls to the earth like—well, like a corpse. Once the body returns to at least 1 Wind, then the manitou puts him to sleep for 1d6 hours as usual.

Sleeping Harrowed aren't entirely unaware of their surroundings, by the way. The manitou always keeps one eye half-open for trouble. Should someone sneak up on the hero, allow her a *Cognition* roll versus the opponent's *sneak*. Add any modifiers for *light sleepers* as well.

Undeath

The undead can ignore bleeding and Wind caused by physical damage, drowning, or other indirect damage that affects the body's organs. The Harrowed still take Wind caused by magical or mental strain, such as failed *guts* checks or supernatural powers, however.

More importantly, though they take wounds normally, Harrowed can't be killed except by destroying the brain. The manitou needs that to make the body function.

If the noggin takes a killing blow (is maimed), the undead and the manitou inside it are destroyed. In fact, this is the only way to ever actually destroy a manitou.

Killing blows to the guts area put a Harrowed down until the manitou inside heals the damage back to critical or less. Then they just get up and start looking for whoever put 'em down.

Damage to cyborgs works a little differently than it does for "all-natural" deaders. In addition to taking wounds there is a chance their internal systems may get banged up. See page 85 for the details.



Makin' Deaders

Making a Deader

Making a cyborg or Harrowed character takes a little more work than a standard character. Let's go through the steps one at a time, and your new hero'll be rolling out of surgery in no time.

Step One: Get the All Clear

Not every Marshal wants to have undead characters in his posse. Cyborgs and Harrowed heroes are both powerful character types, and they both come with powerful handicaps to balance this. These handicaps require some extra work from both you and the Marshal. Make sure your Marshal's up for it.

You also need to be sure you're ready to play one of the living dead. Sure, it's great to be able to survive wounds that might kill a normal person, but you also have to be ready for those times when the manitou comes knocking and your hero is not your own, or your cyborg's manitou weakens, vital systems stop functioning, and your hero is another step closer to the scrap heap. There's a price to be paid for going beyond the veil and returning.

Step Two: Make a Hero

Making a Harrowed hero from scratch is just like making any other character: draw cards, assign Attributes, and then buy Edges, Hindrances, and Aptitudes.

But before you do that, you might want to give some thought to your deader's background before he became a member of the Walking Corpse Club. There have been Harrowed around since 1863, and your hero can come from nearly any time period between then and 2094. If your hero was born significantly before 2081, say up to about 1940, you should consider taking the *Veteran o' the Wasted West Edge*. If your hero was stompin' around prior to 1940, you should give serious thought to taking the *Veteran o' the Weird West Edge*.

If your hero has been around for a while, but you don't want to risk the possible consequences of taking these Edges (wuss), you should come up with some reason your deader isn't as quite experienced as he should be. Perhaps he was serving consecutive "life" sentences at a maximum security prison like Blackleaf, or he got his dumb self buried in an earthquake and spent the last two decades digging himself out.

If your hero is going to be a cyborg, you should also give some thought to where he's from and how he came to be one. Was he a volunteer? If not, was he an executed criminal, or a dead soldier whose term of enlistment wasn't allowed to expire with him?

Step Three: Kill the Brainer

Now that you've got a living, breathing hero, kill him. He can't come back from the dead until he's actually pushed up a few daisies.

Just like your character's life, his death deserves some thought. It shouldn't be too mundane, your brainer is going to be awfully embarrassed if his buddies find out he died because he slipped in the shower.

The most dramatic deaths leave a hero with some unfinished business. This gives the hero a perfect motivation for returning from the dead and pushing on despite the Hell the world has become. Many Harrowed make finding their killer the first order of business after digging themselves up.

If your brainer is going to be a cyborg, when did she die? Was she Harrowed before she was implanted, or did the service she was in kill her and make her Harrowed? Was she a volunteer? If not, how does she feel about being brought back from the dead and forced to serve?

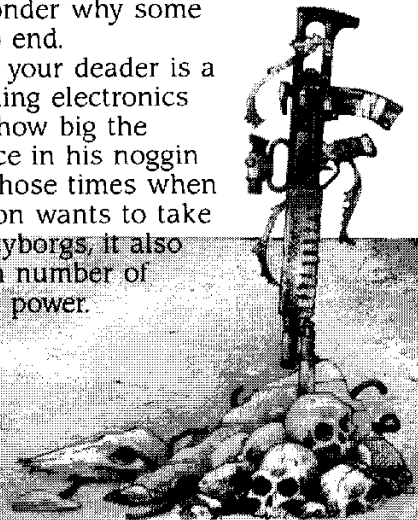
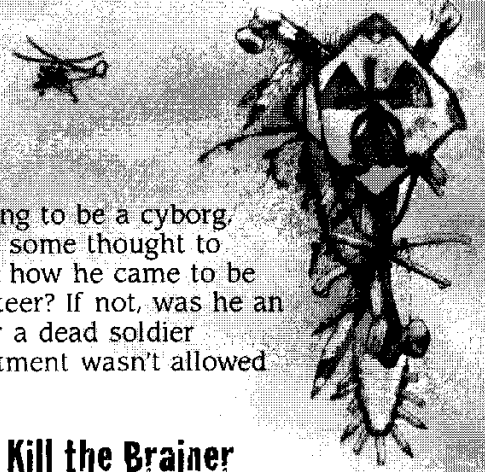
Also, don't forget that being killed can leave a mark. Being killed by the tank she was trying to stop from killing her buddies is a heroic death, but if it ran her down and she went under the tracks, your brainer is always going to have a mottled, hamburger-like texture to her skin.

Step Four:

Whose Mind is it Anyway?

This is where you figure out who's calling the shots in your brainer's body. It could be your hero, his manitou, or, if he's a cyborg, it could be his AI. With all the voices it's possible to have in one head, it's small wonder why some Harrowed go off the deep end.

Regardless of whether your deader is a traditional stiff or a walking electronics store, you need to know how big the critter sharing living space in his noggin is. This is important for those times when your brainer's inner demon wants to take the body for a spin. For cyborgs, it also determines the maximum number of systems the manitou can power.



Makin' Deaders

To find out how big your deader's manitou is, draw a card and look on the table below. For cyborgs this is calculated before applying any *Spirit* loss due to implants.

Manitou's Spirit

Card	Spirit
2	Legion
3-8	<i>Spirit</i> is equal to the character's
9-Jack	<i>Spirit</i> is same die type but +1 higher Coordination
Queen-Ace	<i>Spirit</i> die type is +1 higher and Coordination is +2 higher
Joker	Greater manitou

Legion

The hero is inhabited by a horde of lesser manitous, collectively calling themselves "Legion." Whenever you need to know Legion's *Spirit*, draw a card and compare it to the Traits and Coordination Table in the main rulebook.

Legions are far more chaotic and destructive than other manitous. They make overt attacks more often, use their powers more blatantly, and basically flaunt all the guidelines on subtlety.

There are no cans with Legion manitous. The military concluded that such Harrowed were unstable and had them destroyed.

Greater Manitous

These ancient manitous are some of the baddest hombres in the Hunting Grounds. When they grab a mortal shell, it's for keeps.

Greater manitous have a *Spirit* of $3d12+4$. They're something like hunting dogs for the Reckoners, sent specifically to hunt down heroes who kill one too many of the Reckoners' pets. They're very subtle, but once unleashed, they hold nothing back and absolutely destroy everything in their path.

Dominion

Once you know how big the beast is, it's time to see if your deader can control it.

If your hero's a cyborg with a working spirit fetter, he wins hands down. The manitou is securely locked up and can cause no harm to anyone. Your deader has total Dominion over the manitou and he never has to worry about the demon challenging him for control (unless his fetter is damaged). All your brainer has to worry about now is how strong his AI is.

If your Harrowed's not a cyborg, or he's a can with a damaged fetter, you need to find out who's in charge. If your Marshal's agreeable, you can determine starting Dominion using the nightmare sequence described in the main *Hell on Earth* rulebook, or you can resolve it with a contest of *Spirit* between your hero and his manitou.

The hero and the demon both begin with half of the hero's available Dominion points—these are equal to the brainer's *Spirit* die. Whoever wins the contest of *Spirit* gains one point from his opponent for each raise he gets on his roll. Cyborgs with the *unfettered* Hindrance get a bonus to these rolls. See page 54.

If your Harrowed goes bust, he's in bad shape. The manitou gets total Dominion. That means the demon is in the driver's seat until the Marshal says otherwise.

Drain

Most cyber systems have a Drain rating. This is the amount of spiritual energy needed to power the device. This energy normally comes from the manitou in a cyborg's head, but it can also come from other sources. You can find out about alternate energy sources in Chapter Four.

A manitou can provide an amount of energy each round equal to its *Spirit* die type. If a manitou's *Spirit* die is higher than a $d12$, add the modifier to 12 to find its Drain capacity. A manitou with a $d12+2$ *Spirit*, for instance, has a Drain capacity of 14 points per round.

Rules of Engagement

Although most cyborgs have made some headway against their AIs since the end of the war, most still have a few random orders, arbitrary restrictions, and bits of faulty logic still floating around in their noggins. Collectively these are known as a cyborg's rules of engagement (ROE).

As part of the price they pay for all their high tech goodies, all new cyborg characters start play with some of these annoying rules buzzing around in their grey matter. In general, the larger the cyborg, the more of these rules are clogging up his neural pathways. This is because the infiltrator and light combat models, in order to be able to pass for human, had less restrictive AIs than the hulking heavy combat models. It's also because the generals were more concerned with what might happen if a heavy got out of control. An infiltrator might shoot a few people or crack a few skulls; a rampaging heavy could level a small town.

Makin' Deaders

Take a look on the Restrictions Table to see how many rules your deader has to deal with. Once you've got a number, roll on the Rules of Engagement Table (see page 60), to see what kind of laws your deader's AI has laid down for him. Some of these rules refer to groups or things which have only come to exist since the end of the war. These rules are the result of a confused AI trying to make the best sense it can of a completely chaotic situation and not doing too well.

These rules can be bought off with the *emancipated* Edge (see page 55) or you can suffer through them and have more points available to buy equipment. We'll talk about how your deader can sometimes break these rules later. See AIs on page 55.

Restrictions

Class	Rules
Infiltrator	4
Light Combat	6
Heavy Combat	8

Step Five: The Cool Stuff

This is the step where you get to buy all of the cool powers and such that come with being a perambulating corpse. Exactly how this works depends on whether your Harrowed is more traditional-minded or he has become one of the cyberized dead.

Traditional Harrowed

Your deader has no fancy gadgets wedged inside his body. He's the same type of Harrowed the manitous have been creating since they returned to the world in 1863. Who knows, if your brainer is a *Veteran of the Weird West*, he may have been around since then.

Buying Powers

In addition to the standard powers of the undead (see page 44 for a quick review), your deader gets 10 points to buy personal powers. These are listed in Chapter Three.

Each incredible Harrowed power has five levels. Buying a power during character creation costs double the level the power is purchased at. A level 1 power costs 2 points, a level 3 power costs 6 points, a level 4 power costs 8 points, and so on.



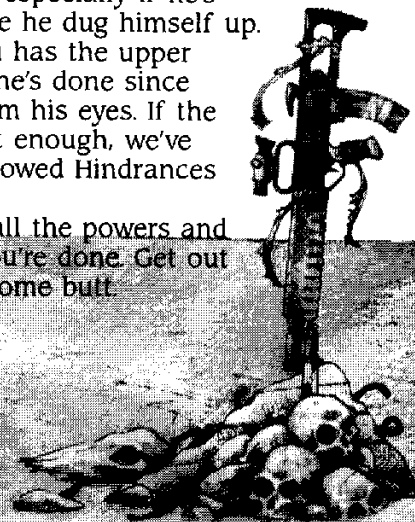
If your hero is a *Veteran o' the Wasted West*, he gets an additional 4 points with which to buy powers. If he's been around long enough to be a *Veteran o' the Weird West*, he gets an additional 8 points to buy powers with.

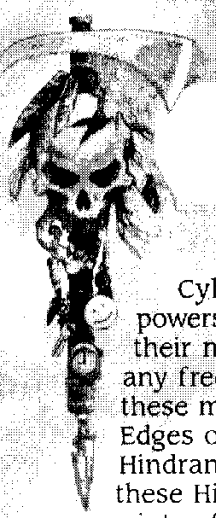
Post-death Hindrances

There's a catch, though. Only 5 of those 10 free points are actually free (sue us). Five of those points must be bought off with additional Hindrances. These new Hindrances represent bad things which have happened to (or been committed by) your deader since he woke up from his dirt nap.

Enemy, outlaw, and ugly as sin are all good Hindrances for a deader, especially if he's been up to no good since he dug himself up. If your brainer's manitou has the upper hand, who knows what he's done since wiping the grave dirt from his eyes. If the regular Hindrances aren't enough, we've also got a bunch of Harrowed Hindrances for you on page 50.

Once you've selected all the powers and Hindrances you'd like, you're done. Get out there and start kicking some butt.





Makin' Deaders

Cyborgs

Cyborg characters can buy both Harrowed powers and cybernetic equipment. Unlike their non-mechanical cousins, they don't get any free points to spend on powers. Points for these must come from one of the *Veteran Edges* or from post-death or cyborg Hindrances. You can take up to 5 points in these Hindrances in addition to the normal 10 points of regular Hindrances. Your deader does get some free hardware though, based on what type of can the military turned him into.

Powers

Whether your deader has Harrowed powers or not depends on the background you've chosen for him. A fettered manitou can't manifest powers in its host unless equipped with a power focus.

Heroes who spent some time Harrowed before becoming a cyborg may purchase powers because the abilities had time to manifest before the deader's manitou was fettered. Likewise, heroes who take the *unfettered* Hindrance can also purchase powers, but they can't be purchased at a higher level than the value of the Hindrance.

Cyborgs who are *veterans of the Wasted West* get an additional 4 points which can be spent on powers or equipment. *Veterans of the Weird West* get 8 extra points but only half of these may be spent on cybernetic equipment, the rest must be spent on powers.

Cyber Equipment

All cyborgs built prior to the war must start with a hardware package. A hardware package is a group of systems issued to all cans of a given type in a particular service. Select a service and cyborg type (infiltrator, light combat, or heavy combat) for your deader and take the appropriate package. Each package lists your deader's starting systems and the amount of cash you have to spend to buy additional hardware. This money can *only* be spent to purchase cyborg equipment from this book, it may not be used to buy other equipment from any other source. Your deader also doesn't get change, any money not spent is wasted. The packages are listed on page 84.

You can get some additional goodies by spending points gained from one of the *veteran Edges* or from cyborg Hindrances on hardware. Each point spent on cyberware gets your brainer \$2,000 in implants and cyborg-related equipment.

Harrowed Hindrances

Besides all the Hindrances we've given you before, the undead have a special pool of bad tidings they can draw from their sordid pasts. Needless to say, only walking worm-food can take these Hindrances. Breathing folks couldn't handle them anyway.

Buying off Harrowed Hindrances

Well, at least it's a short section. You can't.

Angst

i-5

It's time to get a little heavy. Think about coming back from the dead from your character's point of view.

It can be a depressing experience. Sure, you've cheated death. But now you have a whole new set of troubles.

There's the problem of how to deal with this whole undead thing. Once, you thought you'd live till you died, and then things would be over. You'd spend the rest of eternity playing harp on a cloud somewhere.

But now you're back on Earth with no idea of what the new "rules" are. How long do you have this time? Will you stay this way forever? What about your soul? Learning that your body is energized by an evil spirit can't make you feel too confident about reaching Heaven any more.

For that matter, the whole issue of the manitou inside you is a thorny one. You have to stay in control, or who knows what evil it might do with your sorry carcass. It's sort of like being joined by leg irons to an ax murderer. As a Harrowed, you're trapped with no hope for parole and no end in sight. Ever.

A character with the *angst* Hindrance has a difficult time rising out of apathy, depression, and guilt to get started on any major course of action. This means that whenever a new game session begins, he suffers a penalty to all his dice rolls equal to the level of the Hindrance. For instance, if he's got 3 points of *angst*, he takes -3 to every roll.

Once the action is well underway, however, the character finds it easier to stay motivated. In game terms, each time the character spends a Fate Chip, besides getting its normal effect, he also loses some of the *angst* penalty for the remainder of the current session. A white chip negates 1 point of angst, a red chip negates 2, and a blue chip negates 3. These chips must be spent during play—they can't just be tossed away at the beginning of the night.



Makin' Deaders

Of course, once the action is over (between your regular gaming sessions), the Harrowed has time to mull things over and sink into that same old "slough of despair" again. At least until he buys off his angst in the next session.

Aura o' Death

1-5

Some Harrowed characters wear their undeath like a shroud. People around them instinctively know there's something disturbing about these folks, though they can't quite put their finger on exactly what it is. Still, just as animals tend to slink away from the Harrowed, people avoid those with an *undead aura*. This doesn't keep them from whispering about the "creepy strangers" behind their backs, however.

This uneasiness means that whenever such a Harrowed makes a roll for Mien or any Aptitude falling under that Trait, she suffers a penalty equal to her level of *undead aura*. The one exception is the *overawe* Aptitude, which actually receives a bonus equal to that level.

Besides these modifiers, the Marshal should roleplay the Harrowed's general effect on people. It's much harder for him to form relationships, get information, and ask for help.



Degeneration

1-5

When a manitou enters a corpse and creates a Harrowed, its supernatural energy does more than simply bring that body back to life. Its animating power also makes the body resistant to damage, and it quickly regenerates the flesh when wounds are suffered. Still, undead flesh can't help but stink a little.

For whatever reason, some manitous either don't care to keep the flesh pickled or just can't manage it. The Harrowed still heals with supernatural quickness, but his body resumes the process of decay, though perhaps very slowly. The *degeneration* Hindrance represents that situation. The level of the Hindrance determines what state of decay the Harrowed has reached, as shown in the table below.

Players who choose this Hindrance for their Harrowed should keep in mind that living creatures (human or animal) react very poorly to the sight of a decaying corpse up and moving about. They're especially particular about obvious cadavers. To disguise his condition, the rotten apple needs some heavy clothing and a load of perfume or whiskey to mask his mortuary stench.

Cyborgs can only take this Hindrance in conjunction with the *unfettered* Hindrance and at an equal or lower level.

Degeneration

Level
0

State of Decay

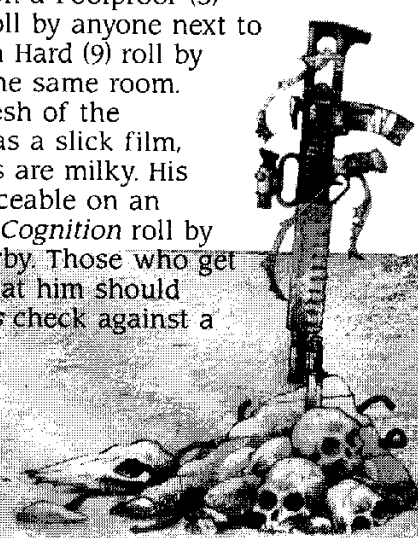
Normal Harrowed: Animals avoid the character, and he bears a slight odor of decay, noticeable on a Fair (5) Cognition roll by anyone right next to him. Any *horse ridin'*, *animal wranglin'*, and *teamster* rolls he makes are at -2.

1

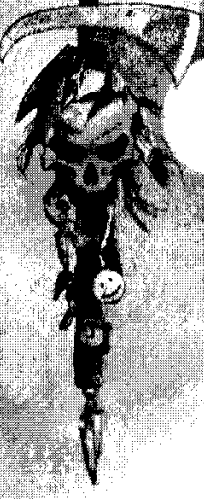
Pallid: At this stage, the Harrowed has an unhealthy grayness to his complexion. His eyes are dull, and the odor of decay is stronger, noticeable on a Foolproof (3) Cognition roll by anyone next to him, or on a Hard (9) roll by anyone in the same room.

2

Slimy: The flesh of the Harrowed has a slick film, and his eyes are milky. His odor is noticeable on an Onerous (7) Cognition roll by anyone nearby. Those who get a long look at him should make a *guts* check against a



Makin' Deaders



Terror score of 5. His various animal-handling aptitudes suffer a penalty of -4.


3 **Bloated:** Decay has distended the Harrowed's abdomen with gas and pestilent fluids. The character has watery eyes, and his various orifices leak a bit. The smell of decay is automatically noticeable, and animal-handling skills are at -6. It can be as embarrassing as you probably think. The undead's Terror score is 7.

4 **Tattered:** The Harrowed is losing flesh right off the bone. His skin is tattered, showing the stringy remains of his muscles beneath. In some places, bare bone peeks through. His eyes are sunken. Even if they don't notice these obvious physical clues, anyone nearby smells the odor of decay on an Onerous (7) *Cognition* roll. Animals won't have anything to with him, and his Terror score is 9.

5 **Desiccated:** All that remains of the Harrowed's body is parchment skin over stringy ligaments and bleached bones. The character's eyes look like little dry raisins. They're so stiff, in fact, that the Harrowed must subtract -4 from any *Cognition* rolls made to notice things by sight. There is little odor, if any, but the Harrowed creaks slightly when he moves. His animal handling aptitudes go back down to a -4, but the near-mummy takes double damage from fire. His Terror score is 9.

Haunted

The manitous have a good time when they subject mortals to the terrors of the Hunting Grounds. Sometimes, the manitou inside a Harrowed can use these memories to keep the host off-guard.



The souls of *haunted* undead are dragged kicking and screaming into the Hunting Grounds every time they go dormant (see Sleep on page 46). There they are subjected to horrible nightmares by the cruel parasite inside them.

This Hindrance does not function like *night terrors*—the Harrowed do not suffer fatigue and incur no penalties from restless

nights. Instead, the effect is to erode the hero's will and give the manitou a greater chance the next time it tries to gain control of its nightmare-plagued host. Nobody ever said the manitous played fair.

Every level of this Hindrance subtracts a like amount from the hero's *Spirit* roll when checking for Dominion.

Mark o' the Devil

1-5

Certain folks can see right through the taut skin of the undead to the rotten, worm-riddled core. That's when they can get a glimpse of the manitou sitting there and stare straight into the eyes of Hell.

On the other hand, some Harrowed seem to wear their damnation like a shiny tin star—at least to people who know what they're looking for.

This Hindrance means anyone with the *arcane background* Edge—or at least 3 levels in *academia: occult*—has a chance to see the evil demon wriggling around inside your hero, no matter how good he looks or what kind of disguise he might be using. There's just no way of properly hiding from prying eyes with the right sort of education.

Whenever a person with one of the above qualifications gets within a few feet of your hero, she can make a *scrutinize* roll versus the manitou's *Spirit*. The viewer can add the level of your deader's Hindrance to her roll.

If successful, the viewer sees some sign of the manitou in your hero—perhaps the Harrowed's eyes glow red, there's a slight chill to his touch, or the watcher can see the manitou's hideous face peeking out at her. Needless to say, such folks won't trust your character until he's been burned on a stake and his ashes scattered to the four winds.

1-5

Rage

1-5

Wine gets better with age. The Harrowed just get meaner.

The perpetual struggle with the manitou within, the temptation of greater power, and the frustration of being undead all push these characters toward bestiality.

Get your hands off your horse. That's not what we're talking about.

Whenever a Harrowed with this Hindrance is wounded by an opponent or gets particularly upset, she must make a *Smarts* check. The base difficulty of the check is Fair (5), and the undead must subtract her level in *rage* from her *Smarts* roll.

Makin' Deaders

If failed, the hero goes into a blood frenzy and attacks. She refuses to go into cover or seek to protect herself—she just runs straight at the foe and rampages all over his unfortunate kiester. She can fire a gun along the way, but if the enemy's still alive when she gets to him, she drops her pistols and gets up close and personal with her bare hands (or *claws* if she's got them).

Once the foe's dead (and we mean *really*, messily dead), the Harrowed can make another *Smarts* roll. If she makes it, her blood lust is sated and she can act like a normal walking corpse again—whatever that means. If she fails, she starts raging on her former enemy's companions.

She won't attack her own comrades, but she probably won't be reading them any bedtime stories either.

Unnatural Appetite

1-5

Here's a delightful habit. For some inexplicable reason, a rare few Harrowed develop a craving for one thing or another that, while technically edible, thoroughly disgusts most people.

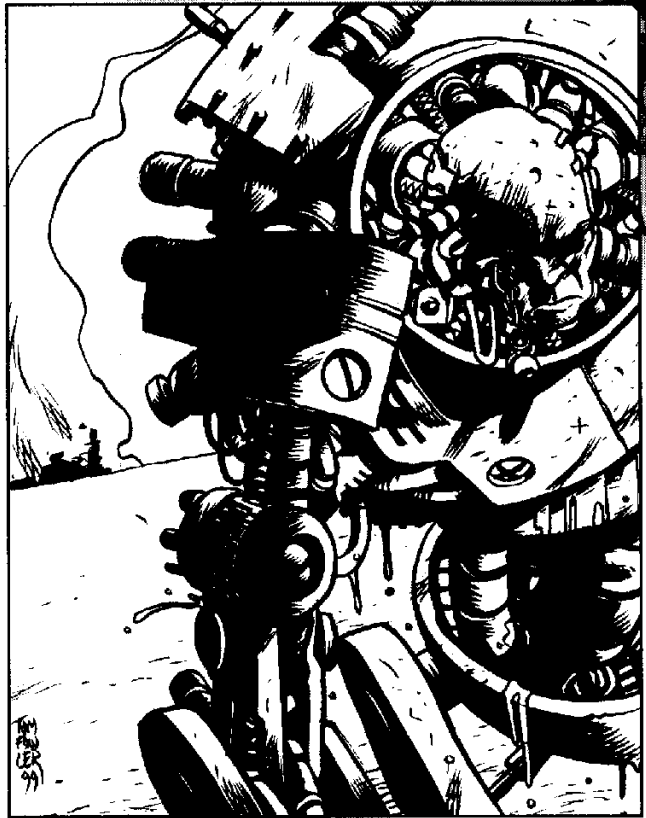
Your character must eat the item of his craving at least once a day. For each day that he goes without that item, he loses 2 Wind. This damage cannot be recovered except by gorging on the item he craves. For each day he spends eating that item again, he avoids suffering any more damage and regains 1d6 points of lost Wind.

The level of the Hindrance depends on just how disgusting your appetite is. Once you eat someone's tongue, your companions are likely to think that snacking on rad-scorpions is a step up. Cyborgs may develop a taste for less edible items like nails or electronics.

Some examples of disgusting vittles are listed below.

Unnatural Appetite

Level	Vittles
1	Rotten food, mold, nails
2	Grave dirt, raw meat, scrap metal
3	Bugs, living raw meat, animal blood, motor oil
4	Human blood, gasoline
5	Raw human organs, such as the heart, liver, lung, brain, or eyeball, electronics



Cyborg Hindrances

In addition to all of the typical complications of being undead, cyborgs have a few problems all their own.

Burned Out

1-5

Overloading your manitou can get you in big trouble. Once it starts to weaken, you're that much more likely to overload it again.

Each level of *burned out* taken reduces the *Spirit* die type of the can's manitou by one step.

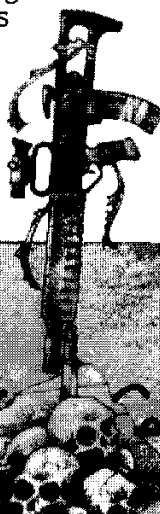
Decrepit

1-5


Your can has experienced one of the things all cyborgs fear: a damaged SRU. Your hero's Self Repair Unit has been so badly damaged that it can't be fixed, the entire system must be replaced.

Your cyborg is unable to heal damage taken to his cybernetic systems. Any damage taken by your deader can only be fixed by a junker or a trained cyber-tech.

For each level of *decrepit* taken, roll a hit location. Disable a random system at each location rolled. Include any body



Makin' Deaders



replacement parts in the selection. If a replacement part is selected, it takes a wound rather than being disabled.

If your hero ever finds someone capable of replacing or fixing his SRU (Marshal's call), he must immediately buy off this Hindrance.

Subjugated

Your cyborg's AI has got your deader's number. No matter how hard to your brainer tries to resist, it's always one step ahead.

The AI has such control of your deader's mind that much of his personality has been lost. He speaks in a robot-like drone, is obsessed with logic, and he has little interest for things which are not directly related to the task he is currently performing.

Roll for two extra rules of engagement. All attempts by your deader to resist any rules imposed by the AI suffer a -2 penalty.

Unfettered

Your can's spirit fetter has been shot up and his manitou is causing problems. Your deader now has to worry about Dominion just like other Harrowed.

5

The good news is that the spirit fetter still has some control over the evil spirit and gives your hero an advantage in Dominion battles.

Whenever that nasty Marshal tries to take over your character, your deader gets a bonus to all *Spirit* rolls equal to +6 minus the level of this Hindrance. This bonus also applies to the *Spirit* roll made to determine initial Dominion points during character creation.

Your hero can also use Harrowed powers, but only up to a level equal to that of this Hindrance. In other words, if your deader has unfettered at -3, and the *burrow* power at level 5, the highest he can use the power at is level 3. The manitou just can't whip up enough juice to perform the power any better—the fetter is sucking it dry.

The bad news is that the damaged fetter can't drain as much spirit power out of the manitou as it used to. When it comes to powering your can's systems, the manitou's effective *Spirit* die type drops by one step for each level of this Hindrance taken (the demon's *Spirit* die type remains unchanged for things like Dominion tests). The manitou's die type can't be dropped below d4, because at this point it has actually broken free of the fetter and turned your deader into an actual corpse—maybe your buddies will at least give you a funeral with full military honors.

Virus

-3

Your deader picked up a nasty computer bug somewhere that her software was just not equipped to handle. No matter how hard she tries, she just can't seem to get the thing completely out of her system.

Draw a card to determine the virus' *Strength*. At the beginning of each play session, the cyborg must roll a contest of her *Smarts* (or her anti-virus program's rating, whichever is higher) against the virus' *Strength*. If the cyborg wins the contest, the virus is dormant for that session. If the virus wins, roll a hit location for each success and raise the virus achieved. Disable a random system at each location rolled. Externally mounted systems which are linked to the cyborg can be disabled by the virus.

What's worse, during sessions which the virus is active, it can be spread to other cans. Anytime another cyborg uses a piece of equipment which was linked to the infected deader or communicates with her by radio, he must roll his *Smarts* (or anti-virus rating) against the virus' *Strength*. If he loses the contest, he becomes infected with the virus as well.

Makin' Deaders

Cyborg Edges

As if being a cyborg wasn't Edge enough, the cans have a few new ones that are all their own.

AI Companion

5

Your deader has managed to make friends with his AI. It still enforces any rules of engagement your brainer has, but it's reluctant to use force to get your deader's obedience. Whenever your cyborg gets into Test o' Wills with his AI, the computer never cranks the pain meter beyond a -2 modifier and never causes Wind damage. In addition, it never lets a Test o' Wills go longer than 5 rounds. It gives up rather than prolonging the fight and risking serious damage to both parties.

Damaged AI

2-4

Your hero's struggles with his skullmate have gotten nasty. Each 2 points spent on this Edge reduces your AI's rating by a die type.

Emancipated

1-5

Your hero has had more success than most cyborgs at wrestling with his AI. For each level of *emancipated* purchased, you may remove one of your deader's rules of engagement.

Rank

1-4

Your deader was a step (or more) above the common rank and file cyber trooper. This has a few advantages. First, your cyborg can buy a command and control system (see page 88) that allows him to coordinate and control cyborgs of lower ranks. Second, because they needed more free will in order to make correct leadership decisions on the battlefield, higher ranking cyborgs had less restrictive AIs. For each two levels of rank your deader has, he can remove one of his rules of engagement.

There is no rank 5 position for cyborgs. None of the countries which possessed cans trusted them enough to place them under the command of one of their own—the top position in each cyber unit was filled by a living human.

Cyber Ranks

Rank Position

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Sergeant (squad leader) |
| 2 | Lieutenant (platoon leader) |
| 3 | Captain or Major (company commander) |
| 4 | Colonel (battalion commander) |

The Cold, Cruel World

Once you've finished designing your new metal hero, there are a few more pieces of information you need to know before you unleash him on the world.

Discrimination

For starters, your can is not going to be welcomed with open arms by the world. Most normal humans trust cyborgs about as far as they can throw them. Since most can't even lift one off the ground, you can see what you're hero is up against.

Many settlements won't allow cyborgs inside the walls. Others place a time limit on how long they can stay, or have designated areas the cyborgs must stay within. Of course, not all cans are willing to play by these rules and these restrictions have led to bloodshed more than once.

Most normal humans consider living with a cyborg the same as living with a hungry lion—he may not have a taste for man-flesh yet, but give him time. This view is fueled by the clashes between cyborgs and the living and the stories (some true, some highly exaggerated) about some small incident setting a cyborg off on a massive killing spree.

AIs

All cyborgs created before the end of the Last War have an AI riding shotgun in their noggins. Many cans hate their AIs, almost all feud with them at times, some have been consumed by them, and a rare few have actually come to terms with their AIs and are able to think of them as close, but extremely annoying, friends.

With the exception of the last group, most deaders would love to have their electronic hitchhikers removed. Unfortunately, that's not possible. Besides acting as Jiminy Cricket with a whip, the AI also serves as the central processor for all of the jarhead's systems and routes the power from the spirit fetter to the systems which require it. Any attempts to remove the AI without the proper authorization codes results in the computer releasing a virus into its system which fries all of the cyborg's systems and then pops the spirit fetter and releases the manitou—making your hero a very dead ex-cyborg.

Makin' Deaders

Damaging AIs

Because the AI is so central to a cyborg's systems, getting it damaged in combat is bad news. If the AI is temporarily knocked out by damage, the can has only half the normal amount of Drain available until the computer comes back on line. If the AI is outright destroyed by damage, an emergency backup system is activated in the SRU. The SRU immediately attempts to repair the computer. If no components are available to make repairs, the repair unit cannibalizes them from another system. Pick another system at random (other than the AI or spirit fetter), and mark it as destroyed. This emergency repair takes one round and uses energy stored in the SRU itself.

To Be, or Not to Be

Although they were called artificial intelligences, the computers installed in the cyborgs were not truly sentient in the full sense of the word—but they could fake it really well. The AIs could interact with humans and learn from past experiences, but everything they did or said was limited by the constraints of their human programmers.

They had no soul, no intuition, and they made lousy soldiers. The military tried making 100% artificial soldiers long before they began building cyborgs, but the results were not worth the costs. AIs took their orders very literally. If ordered to take a hill but to withdraw if casualties became heavy, and "heavy casualties" was defined as in excess of 40% of available forces, the computers pulled back as soon as casualties hit that mark—even in situations in which a human commander could tell that the enemy was about to break and one last push would clear the hill. AIs didn't get a crawling feeling on the backs of their necks when they were walking into an ambush, and they would never gamble their troops on a plan with a low probability of success on a hunch.

The military's robotic soldiers were great for putting down a lot of firepower and executing textbook small unit tactics, but they lacked the one thing which gives a fighting unit its *esprit de corps* and allows it to triumph over impossible odds—a human soul. That's why despite all the added headaches caused by the person within the machine, cyborgs quickly replaced the artificial fighting machines the military had created.

Awakening

In some cases, though, AIs have transcended their programming and become truly aware. This momentous event was usually triggered by some epiphany the computer had about human nature after observing people in action. These rare, truly sentient computers have their own goals, hopes, and motivations.

Dealing with AIs

The early AIs didn't actually "speak" to the cyborgs they controlled. The designers felt that by not giving the computer a voice, the cyborg would not have a focus to direct his anger against, and he would be less able to resist the AI's instructions.

Unfortunately, this approach just left the dealers dazed and confused. They would feel sudden urges to do this or that, or *not* do this or that, and sudden blasts of pain when they disobeyed. Many cans had trouble simply interpreting what the AI wanted them to do.

The next generation of AIs had voices. The voice of each cyborg's computer was custom-tailored to match the dealer's psych profile. These voices ranged from monotone drones, to sultry seductresses, to barking drill sergeants—whatever was calculated to have the most psychological leverage against the jarhead being controlled. As the engineers feared, giving the computer a voice gave the can something to focus its anger against and feedback incidents became for more frequent. However, operational efficiency increased even more, so the voices were kept.

Many of the final generations of AI had personality modules based on famous celebrities, politicians, and historical figures. The idea behind this being that if the cyborg could be made to think of the AI as a real person, he might be less likely to fight with it. This worked for a while, but once the novelty of having a celebrity in your head wore off, most of the cyborgs picked up their feuds right where they left off.

Picking a Voice

When designing your cyborg hero, give some thought to what her AI might be like. Is it the stern voice of her father, the sexy voice of a male pop star, or the voice of a trusted friend or teacher from her past? It's entirely up to you, but you might want to discuss it with your Marshal—after all, he's the one who has to play the character.

Makin' Deaders

Once the pissing match is over, it's time to make sure that everything is still in one piece. Roll 1d10 plus the number of rounds the Test o' Wills lasted on the Feedback Table.

Feedback

Roll	Effect
1-4	No extra effect.
5-8	Overload: The energy unleashed by the battle has overflowed the cyborg's breakers and overloaded a system. Pick a system at random and make an Overload check for it. The overload Drain in this case is the number of rounds the Test o' Wills lasted.
9-12	Rules Change: If the cyborg won the battle, the rule he was challenging has been permanently erased. If the AI wins, it has gained more control over the deader's behavior. Roll for a new rule of engagement to add to the cyborg's collection. In addition, the AI gets momentary access to the SRU. If the computer has lost any dice to previous Feedback results, its rating increases by a die type.
13+	Danger, Danger!: The contest unleashes a powerful surge of energy through the cyborg's skull. The deader takes 1d8 damage to the noggin for each round the Test o' Wills lasted. The AI must roll its rating versus a TN of 5 plus the number of rounds the struggle went on. If it fails, its die type is reduced by one step.

Overload

A cyborg's systems are rugged and built to withstand abuse. Many of them can be deliberately overloaded with excess power to increase or modify their performance in some way. It's also possible for a deader to try and suck just a little more power out of the manitou he's got trapped in his head. Doing either of these things can sometimes save the brainer's bacon, but at the risk of damaging vital systems.

Whenever a cyborg deliberately overloads a system or uses more Drain than he has available, he must make an Overload check. To do this roll 1d20 on the Overload Table

and add the amount of Drain being spent over the system's normal Drain, or the amount by which the Drain exceeds the manitou's rating, or both if that's the case, to the roll.

Overload

Roll	Effect
1-10	No effect
11-12	Winded: Some of the excess energy leaks into the cyborg's body, causing him to take a number of Wind equal to the excess Drain.
13-14	Zap: The cyborg is zapped with some of the excess energy. He must make a <i>Vigor</i> roll against a TN of 3 plus the excess Drain or be stunned.
15-16	Short: The overloaded system conks out for 1d6 rounds. If the manitou was overloaded, the cyborg is completely without power for this amount of time.
17-18	Slow Burn: Some of the excess energy bleeds into the cyborg's body. The deader takes 1d6 damage to the guts for every point of excess Drain used in the overload.
19-20	Snap, crackle, pop: The overloaded system can't handle the strain and breaks. If the manitou was overloaded, the cyborg is without power for 1d20 minutes.
21-22	Strained: The overload put too much stress on the manitou and temporarily weakened it. The manitou's die type drops by one step for 1d8 days.
23-24	Wham: The overloaded system explodes, doing 1d8 damage to the cyborg for every point of excess Drain used in the overload if it was an internal system. If it was an external system, it explodes for 1d6 damage per point of excess Drain with a Burst Radius of 5. There's not enough left of the system to repair. It must be replaced. If the manitou was overloaded, it's die type drops by two steps for 2d6 days.
25-26	Drained: The strain was too much for your deader's manitou. It's <i>Spirit</i> die type drops by one level.
27-28	Damaged Fetter: The overload has damaged the spirit fetter. The cyborg gains 1 level of the unfettered Hindrance each time this result is rolled.

●●●●●●●● Cyborg Record Sheet ●●●●●●●●

Power
Capacitor
Two

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10

Power
Capacitor
Two

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10

Power
Capacitor
Three

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10

Right Arm

Internal

Item	Drain
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____

External

1+2. _____	_____
3+4. _____	_____

Right Leg

Internal

Item	Drain
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____

External

1+2. _____	_____
3+4. _____	_____

Rules of Engagement

Head

Item	Drain
1. AI _____	_____
2. Spirit Fetter _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____

Torso

Internal

Item	Drain
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____
9. _____	_____
10. _____	_____

External

1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____

Left Arm

Internal

Item	Drain
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____

External

1+2. _____	_____
3+4. _____	_____

Left Leg

Internal

Item	Drain
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____

External

1+2. _____	_____
3+4. _____	_____

Power Drain 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

Makin' Deaders

Rules of Engagement

Roll Rule

- 1 **Rank:** Your deader must obey the orders of any higher ranking member of the organization to which he belonged. Your cyborg doesn't have to take the person's word for it, he must have some form of identification or rank insignia.
- 2 **Enemy:** All _____ are the enemy and must be _____ (1-3 captured and interrogated 4-6 killed). Roll on the Enemy Table to fill in the blank.
- 3 **Search & Destroy:** Your cyborg must destroy all _____ encountered. Roll on the Search & Destroy Table.
- 4 **Operational Area:** Your deader may not travel more than (1d20 x 10) miles from where he begins his adventuring career.
- 5 **Weapon Restrictions:** For mission reasons your deader was limited to a certain class of weapons. Roll on the Weapons Table to see what weapons your cyborg is permitted to use.
- 6 **Engagement Restriction:** Your can's last mission had some sort of restriction placed on engaging targets. Roll on the Engagement Table to see what this restriction is.
- 7 **Stockpile:** Your deader was sent out to find and recover a certain resource for the brass. Whenever your hero finds this resource he must acquire it and return it to a central stockpile. The stockpile can be anything from an abandoned military base to a cave your hero has designated as a cache. Roll on the Stockpile Table to determine what your can is looking for.
- 8 **Recon:** Your cyborg is on a recon mission deep behind enemy lines (or at least she thinks she is). Every day at a set time (roll 1d12 for the hour and a second die for AM or PM; even is AM, odd is PM), your deader must make a report of his day's activities to "headquarters," regardless of what he's doing. Composing and broadcasting the report takes 15 minutes. Your hero must have a radio as part of his starting equipment.
- 9 **No prisoners:** Your cyborg never takes prisoners in combat or accepts the surrender of anyone he considers an enemy. The only good enemy is a bullet-ridden gore sack.
- 10 **Expendable:** Your can was part of a decoy force meant to draw enemy fire during his last mission. In combat, your deader tries to draw as much attention to himself as possible and never uses cover.
- 11 **Hearts & Minds:** At some point, your cyborg was ordered to win over the hearts and minds of the civilian populace. Your deader cannot refuse any request for aid from a civilian unless fulfilling the request would conflict with another rule of engagement.
- 12 **Security:** Your 'borg spent some time assigned to base security. Your hero cannot allow anyone to loot, damage, or destroy any equipment or facilities belonging to the organization to which he belonged (or his posse).
- 13 **Abominations:** Your deader was once assigned to a unit which fought the forces of the Reckoners. Your hero gains the *academia: occult* Aptitude at level 4, but she also must look into any occurrences which seem to have occult roots and destroy the source.
- 14 **Total Deniability:** Your 'borg was on a black op which could have been embarrassing to his government if exposed. Your deader is equipped with a self-destruct device. It takes up 2 slots in his torso area. If your hero dies, the self-destruct device is knocked-out by damage, or any attempt is made to remove the device, it explodes for 8d20 damage with a Burst Radius of 10 yards.
- 15 **Undercover:** This rule applies only to infiltrator and light cyborgs. Roll again if your deader is a heavy. Your can cannot allow anyone to know that she is a cyborg. Anyone who discovers the truth must be eliminated.
- 16 **Raider:** Your deader is still acting as if he's on a raiding mission behind enemy lines. He never possesses more than he can carry and never spends the night in one place more than two nights in a row.
- 17 **Pacification:** Your can was involved in pacifying the populations of occupied enemy towns. If the cyborg is ever attacked while in a settlement, he must execute two townsfolk to set an example that such behavior isn't tolerated.

Makin' Deaders

- 18 **Military Police:** Your brainer had been assigned to police duties just before the world went to Hell. It's his duty to uphold the law. Anyone caught committing a capital crime under martial law—murder, rape, looting—must be executed on the spot. All other offenders must be incarcerated with the nearest peace officer.
- 19 **Cease Fire:** Your deader never got the word that the cease-fire with a certain faction had ended. Roll on the Enemy Table to determine which faction this is. Your can can't attack members of this faction unless they first attack him.
- 20 **Trigger:** The military erased some particularly traumatic memory from your cyborg's mind. Certain stimuli can sometimes trigger flashes of this memory. When this happens, your brainer wigs out. Roll 1d6. On a 1 or 2, your cyborg becomes catatonic for 1d4 hours as he relives the experience. On a 3 or 4, he stops whatever he is doing and weeps uncontrollably for 1d20 minutes. On a 5 he is stunned, and must make a Hard (9) Vigor roll to recover. On a 6 the painful memory sends him on a murderous rampage for 1d4 hours. During this time he tries to kill everything in his path, including close friends. Roll twice on the Trigger Table to find out what sort of stimuli sets your brainer off. Work with your Marshal to come up with some sort of story about your cyborg's past and determine the exact conditions which trigger this flashback.

Enemy

Roll	Enemy
1	Opposing alliance in the Last War
2	Doomsayers (all colors)
3	Sykers
4	Muties
5	Junkers
6	The Combine
7	People wearing (roll 1d6: 1-2 Red, 3-4 Blue, 5-6 Green) clothes.
8	People with (roll 1d10: 1-2 Brown, 3-4 Black, 5-6 Blonde, 7-8 Red, 9-10 No) hair.
9	People over 6' tall
10	People shorter than 5'.

Search & Destroy

Roll	Object
1	Vehicles
2	Ammunition
3	Weapons
4	Alcohol
5	Fuel
6	Communication equipment

Weapons

Roll	Weapons
1	Melee weapons only
2	Projectile weapons only
3	Energy weapons only
4	Explosive weapons only

Engagement

Roll	Restriction
1	Range: Your deader cannot engage targets beyond 100 yards.
2	Visual Confirmation: Your cyborg must be able to clearly see his target and confirm that it's hostile. Your Marshal has the final say on when a target is too obscured. When in doubt, your Marshal sets a TN for a <i>Cognition</i> roll. Things like fog, smoke and heavy vegetation can all make it hard to see a target clearly.
3	Color: An insurgent group your cyborg once worked with used colored clothing as a recognition symbol. Your brainer can't attack people wearing (roll 1d12: 1-2 Red, 3-4 Orange, 5-6 Yellow, 7-8 Green, 9-10 Blue, 11-12 Black) clothing.
4	Safety Margin: Your deader can't fire a ranged weapon at a target within 2 yards of an ally or noncombatant.

Trigger

Roll	Stimulus
1	A word or phrase
2	A sound
3	A smell
4	A type of object (pick one)

Archetypes

Infiltrator

Traits & Aptitudes

Deftness 4d8

Lockpickin' 2

Shootin': pistol 4

Nimbleness 2d12

Climbin' 3

Dodge 3

Drivin': car 2

Fightin': spur 3

Sneak 4

Strength 3d6

Quickness d6

Vigor 2d6

Cognition 3d10

Scrutinize 3

Search 3

Knowledge 2d6

Academia: occult 3

Area knowledge 2

Disguise 2

Mien 3d10

Overawe 2

Performin' 2

Persuasion 2

Smarts 2d8

Streetwise 2

Spirit 2d6

Guts 2

Wind 12

Pace 12

Edges:

Veteran o' the Wasted West
(make sure your Marshal
draws for you) 0

Eagle eyes 1

Two-fisted 3

Hindrances:

Intolerance -3: dogs

Outlaw -2

Stubborn -2

4 Rules of engagement

Cyber Systems: AI, antenna, CPU

(4 slugs processing, 4 slugs
storage, 1 slug reader port), cyber
eye (light enhancement, thermal
imaging), cyber hand (light-
fingered), facemaker, infiltrator
package, radio, self-repair unit,
spirit fetter, spur, threat tracker 1
program

Manitou/Power: 3d8/8

Gear: M2011A, 100 rounds .60
Magnum, backpack, NA assault
rifle, 20 rounds 5.56

Personality

I fought the cults for decades. I'd download the *religion du jour*, buddy up with one of the snapperheads we were hunting, and start spouting the appropriate phrases. Next thing I know, the morons are teaching me the secret handshake and showing me their hidden shrines.

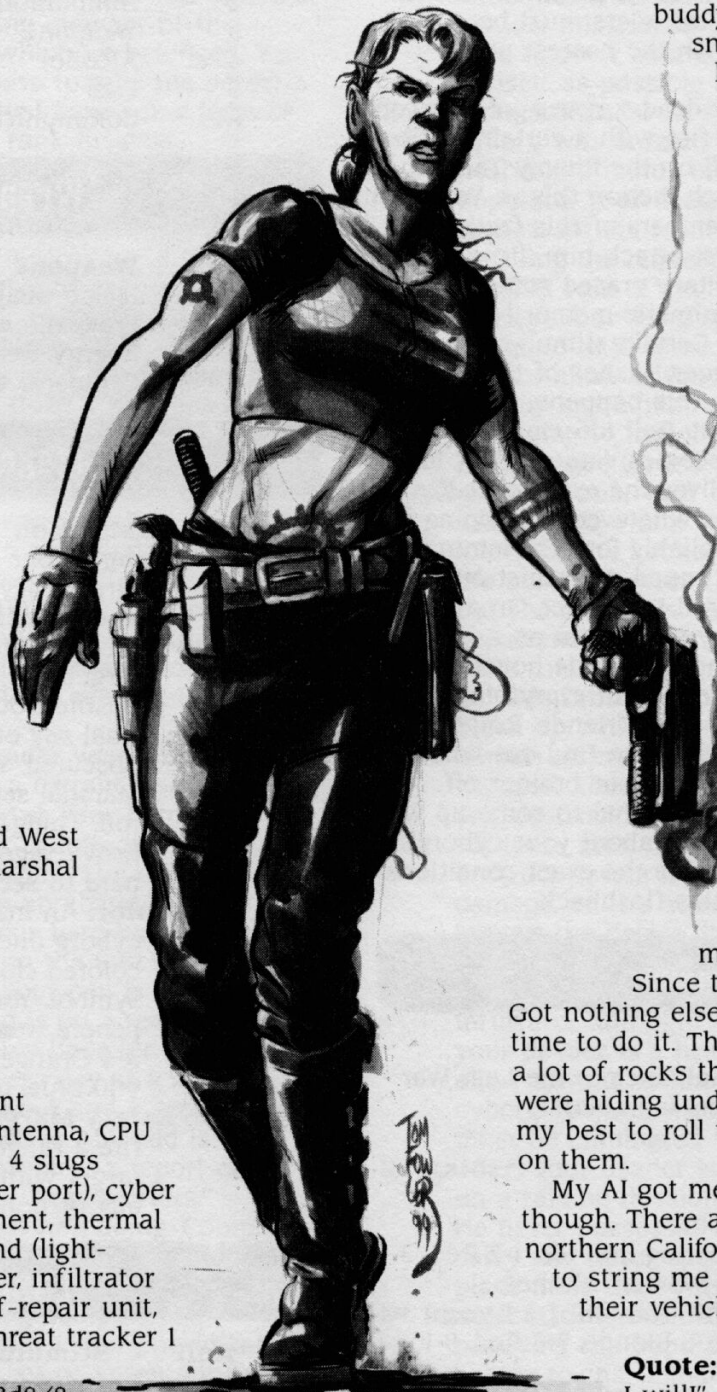
Once I saw enough, I'd call in the heavy hitters and we'd take 'em down.

Of course, not all of them were dropped on their heads as children. Some got wise and sniffed us out with dogs—that was back before I had one of these fancy infiltrator units. I got chewed up pretty bad more than once. I still can't stand to have a mutt around me—makes me edgy.

Since the war I've kept at it. Got nothing else to do, and lots of time to do it. The bombs kicked over a lot of rocks that a lot of creeps were hiding under. I'm going to do my best to roll the stones back over on them.

My AI got me in some trouble though. There are a few towns in northern California that would like to string me up for blowing up their vehicles.

Quote: "Call off your dog or I will!"



Archetypes

Light Can

Traits & Aptitudes

Deftness 2d12

Shootin': pistol, rifle 4
Speed Load 2

Nimbleness 2d10

Climbin' 1
Fightin': brawlin' 3
Sneak 3

Strength 3d6 (3d12+4 with Samson)

Quickness 3d10

Quick Draw 2

Vigor 2d6

Cognition 4d8

Scrutinize 1
Search 2

Knowledge 2d6

Academia: occult 1
Area knowledge 2
Demolition 1

Mien 2d6

Overawe 2

Smarts 3d6

Scroungin' 2

Spirit 4d8

Guts 2

Wind 14

Pace 10

Edges:

Emancipated 2

Hindrances:

Cautious -3
Stubborn -2
Vengeful -3
4 Rules of engagement

Cyber Systems: AI,

cyber eye (16x telescopic, targeting laser), light hard point system (arms & torso), radio, Samson, spirit fetter, targeting computer, recon drone

Manitou/Power: 4d10/10

Gear: IW-100C, light battle armor (with high-speed pistons), NA assault rifle, 50 rounds 5.56 mm.

Personality

My first taste of real combat came when I dropped on Fort Longstreet with the 1st Cy-SOG. I was assigned as a scout, so I was in one of the first pods of the first wave.

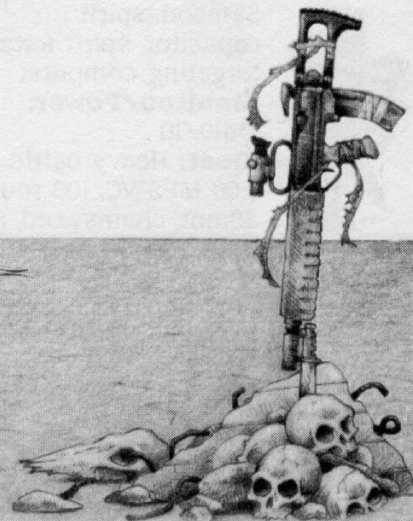
I managed to survive the hot reception the Rebs had ready for us only to be betrayed by my own commander. I managed to fight the stand down order and hightail it out of there. If it wasn't for the piston boosters on my armor, those Reb tanks woulda turned me into scrap metal.

I don't know if Hamrick is still alive today, but if he is, he'd better hope he never runs into me.

Quote: "You saw Hamrick? Where?"



Posse: 63



Archetypes

Heavy Can

Traits & Aptitudes

Deftness 3d12

Shootin': pistol, rifle, MG 4

Nimbleness 2d6

Climbin' 1

Fightin': chainsword 3

Sneak 1

Strength 3d6 (3d12+4 with Samson)**Quickness 2d10****Vigor 2d6****Cognition 4d8**

Search 3

Knowledge 2d6

Area knowledge 2

Mien 2d8

Leadership 2

Overawe 2

Smarts 3d6

Tinkerin' 1

Spirit 3d8

Guts 2

Wind 16**Pace 8****Edges:**

Rank 1

Hindrances:

Mean as a

rattler -2

Superstitious -2

Virus -3

8 Rules of
engagement

Cyber Systems:

AI, command &
control, cyber
eye (16x
telescopic, laser
sight), cyber eye
(thermal
imaging), heavy
hard points (all
locations), radio,

Samson, spirit
capacitor, spirit fetter,
targeting computer

Manitou/Power:

3d10/10

Gear: Heavy battle armor, M-
200 MPSWC, 100 rounds of
20mm, chainsword, SA
officer's sidearm,
100 rounds of .50
pistol ammo

Personality

You there, halt!

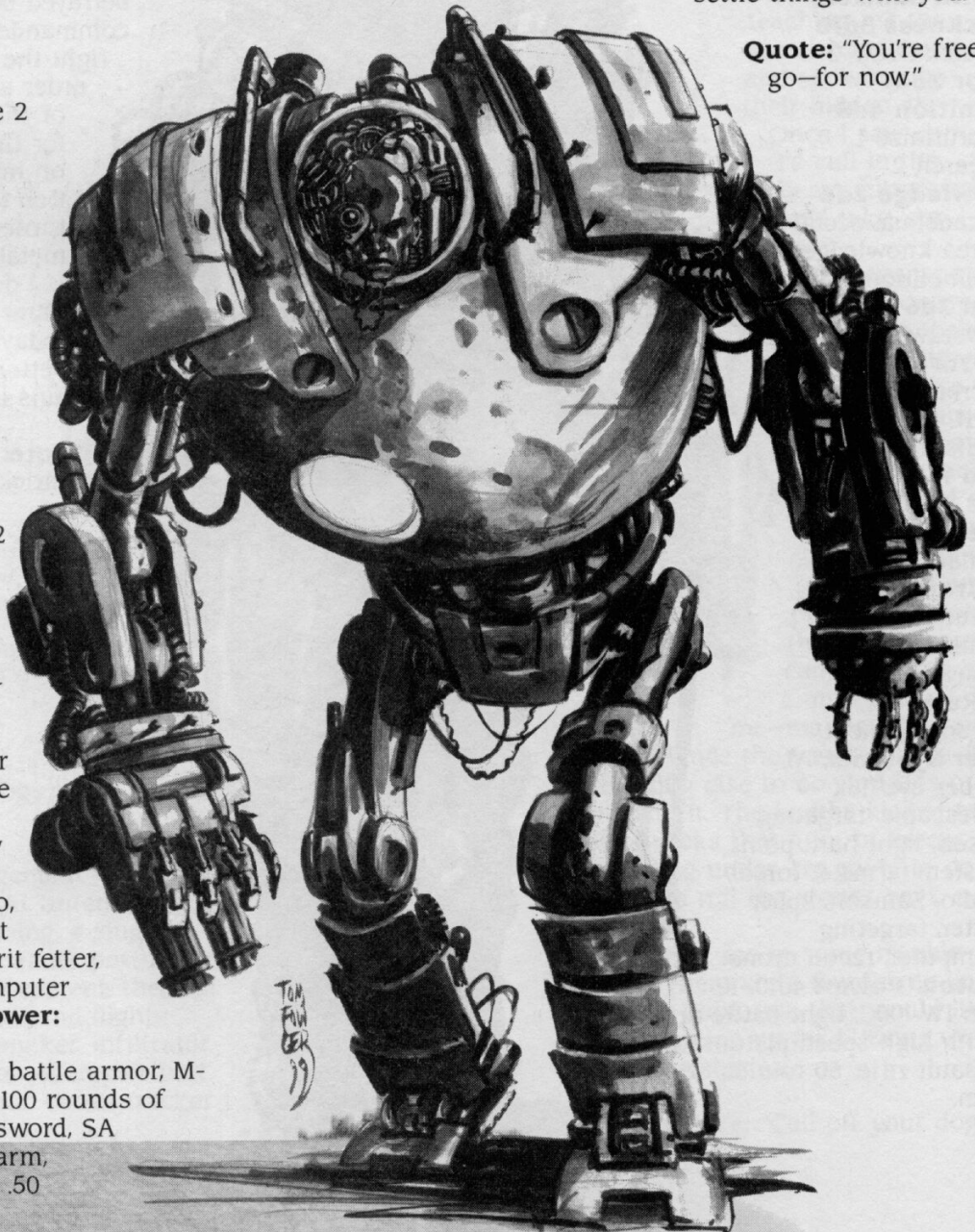
You carrying any contraband? Uh-huh.

Turn out your pockets. Now, son!

Okay, you're clean. I'm looking for some
Northern infiltrators. You see anyone acting
suspicious lately?

Really? How long ago was that? You better not
be yanking my chain, son, or I'll be back to
settle things with you.

Quote: "You're free to
go—for now."



Posse: 64



Archetypes

Drone

Traits & Aptitudes

Deftness 3d12

Shootin': rifle, MG 5

Nimbleness 2d10

Climbin' 1

Fightin': plasma blade 4

Sneak 1

Strength 4d6 (3d12+4 with Samson)**Quickness 3d10****Vigor 2d6****Cognition 2d8**

Search 3

Knowledge 3d6

Area knowledge 2

Mien 1d6

Overawe 3

Smarts 2d6

Tinkerin' 1

Spirit 2d6

Guts 2

Wind 14**Pace 10****Edges:**

Keen 3

Hindrances:

Intolerance:

deserters -3

Subjugated -5

8 Rules of engagement

Cyber**Systems:**

AI, CPU (3

slugs

processing & storage, 1

slug reader

port), cyber eye (16x telescopic,

laser sight), heavy hard points (all locations), radio, remote targeting

program, Samson, spirit

capacitor, spirit fetter, targeting computer

Manitou/Power: 6d10/10**Gear: Dreadnought armor, M-120A2,**

250 rounds of 7.62mm ammo,

plasma blade

Personality

Target acquired.

Challenge.

"Halt! Advance and be recognized!"

Unauthorized personnel.

Order target to disarm.

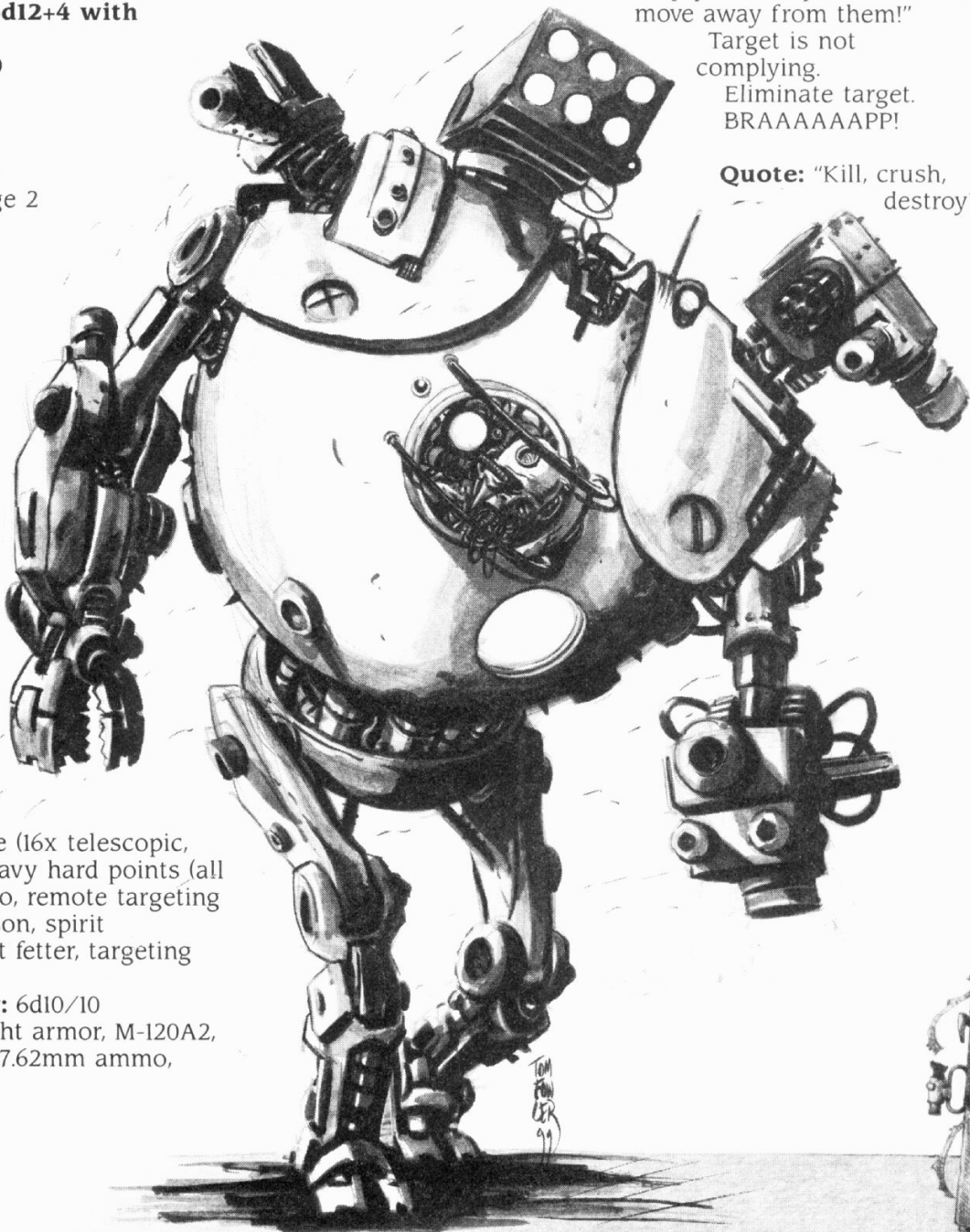
"Drop your weapons and move away from them!"

Target is not complying.

Eliminate target.

BRAAAAAAPP!

Quote: "Kill, crush, destroy!"



Posse: 65



Chapter Three: Powers o' the Dead



Surviving the blasted landscape of the Wasted West is a tall order. Even the hardiest heroes often don't make it. The walking dead are a little better equipped than most people to get by in this world gone wild. Besides being able to laugh at wounds that would cripple or kill a living person, their supernatural natures give them access to a host of other powers.

An animated corpse in a suit of armor and armed with a plasma rifle in the 40 Megawatt range has an even better chance of surviving the perils of the Wasted West. Many cyborgs didn't survive the Last War—quite a few were the targets of the ghost rock bombs that fell on Judgment Day. Most of those who survived the war are still around today, though, mainly because of the powerful implants and weapons they carry.

Personal Powers

The manitou crawling in your hero's innards is a powerful critter. With talent, practice, and more than a little luck, your survivor can tap into its power and make it his own. These abilities manifest as extensions of the Harrowed's own personal background.

When choosing powers, try to find ones that fit your survivor's Hindrances, Edges, background, and personality as a whole. A character with a nasty disposition, for example, could raise her *Strength* or grow *claws*.

Buying New Powers

It's possible for a Harrowed to manifest new powers over time. These often come about as a result of a near death experience, but they don't have to. You can buy a new power for 10 Bounty Points, which gives your character that ability at level 1. Additional levels are bought with Bounty Points for 2 times the value of the new level. Raising a level 1 power to level 2, for example, costs 4 points.

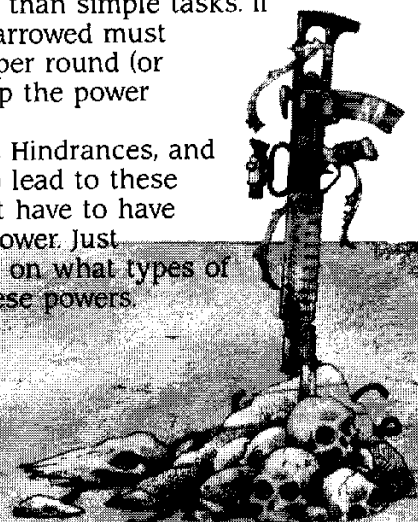
Power Descriptions

Each power has only two elements: Speed and Duration.

Speed is the number of actions it takes to activate the power. Some powers, such as *supernatural trait*, are always on and don't require any kind of activation.

Duration is how long the power lasts. "Concentration" means the power ends if the hero does anything other than simple tasks. If a number is listed, the Harrowed must expend that much Wind per round (or other time period) to keep the power active.

Dispositions are Edges, Hindrances, and backgrounds that tend to lead to these powers. Your hero doesn't have to have one of these to get the power. Just consider them guidelines on what types of Harrowed might learn these powers.



Powers o' the Dead

Arcane Protection

Speed: Vamoose

Duration: Instant

Dispositions: High *academia: occult* Aptitude, *arcane background, doubting Thomas*

Manitous being the masters of the Hunting Grounds, they can sometimes shirk the effects of other supernatural creatures on earth. Sometimes.

A Harrowed with *arcane protection* can force his manitou to negate spells, hexes, and other supernatural attacks. The manitou isn't always successful, but it usually tries its best, since protecting its host from eldritch attacks usually goes hand-in-hand with keeping its own self alive.

Whenever the hero is a direct target of a spell or other supernatural attack, the brainer can attempt to simply ignore it. To do so, the character must first vamoose, discarding his highest card and moving in some direction to dodge the attack.

If the Harrowed has no card, he cannot vamoose and doesn't have time to stop the enemy spell. It sure seems like he really should have kept that card up his sleeve.

Once the Harrowed vamoosees, he can make a *Spirit* test versus the opponent, adding his power level to the final total.

If the Harrowed is successful, the enemy attack is cast but does not actually harm him.

A spell that affects an area may still affect the character as long as he wasn't directly targeted. It cannot be negated with this power.

Berserker

Speed: 1

Duration: Special

Dispositions: *Bloodthirsty, loco, mean as a rattler, rage*

Harrowed characters tend to grow more savage and dangerous as time goes on. That's just a fact of their torturous existence. Still, at their worst, they're nowhere near as fierce as the manitou inside them can be.

The manitou has nothing of the decency of humanity to it, only cruel, bestial cunning. With the *berserker* power, a Harrowed can learn to tap into that manitou's nature just a bit, becoming a little more brutal and a little less human. This can be useful when a fight turns nasty and the Harrowed feels the need to draw upon the soul of a cold-hearted killer.

When the power is initiated, all of the Harrowed's Corporeal Traits are all temporarily boosted by one die type, while all Mental Traits (and their related aptitudes) are decreased by one step. A Trait cannot be decreased below 1d4 this way.

The altered Traits affect any Aptitude checks as well. This physical boost and mental decline make the Harrowed quite a killing machine for the duration of the power, though not much of a conversationalist.

The length the *berserker* power can be maintained depends upon the Harrowed's level with the power, as shown on the table below. Once that duration is over, the undead's Traits revert to their normal rankings. The undead suffers 1d6 Wind from the exertion and cannot use the power again until this Wind is recovered.

Berserker

Level	Duration
1	2 rounds
2	4 rounds
3	6 rounds
4	8 rounds
5	10 rounds

Powers o' the Dead

Burrow

Speed: 1

Duration: As desired

Dispositions: *Aura o' death, bad eyes, death wish, degeneration, sand, thick-skinned, unnatural appetite.*

Taking a dirt nap can do a lot for a fellow's affinity for Mother Earth. After all, there's not many people that actually get to see sunlight again after spending a few days buried six feet under.

A Harrowed with this power can tunnel through the earth with unbelievable speed. She doesn't dig her way through the muck so much as it moves out of her way by means of professional courtesy. As one who's likely spent some time sleeping with the worms directly after her original demise, the Harrowed is able to move the very earth out of her underground path by sheer force of will.

Many Harrowed with this power first figure it out when they try clawing their way out of a not-so-shallow grave that they just happen to have found themselves buried in. Instead of having to scratch and dig toward the surface, the dirt just skirts aside for them like an old friend met on the street.

As ways to start your second chance on this old Earth go, it's not a bad one—given the alternative. Some Harrowed without this power have found themselves trapped in a grave that was made a bit better than the manitou inside them had realized. Needless to say, this makes for some awfully angry manitous. They get out eventually, and they're ready for blood then.

This isn't to say that the dirt doesn't touch the Harrowed. In fact, it clings to them like a long-lost lover. A Harrowed that *burrows* to the surface is sure to be encrusted with soil and covered with all sorts of tiny creatures that dwell within it: worms, millipedes, insects, and such.

The more powerful a Harrowed is, the faster it can move through the soil and the tougher the kind of earth it can move through. Strangely, however, a Harrowed can never burrow deeper than six feet down (although it can burrow directly up if it happens to be lower than that).

A Harrowed can run (double her Pace) when *burrowing* through the Earth, but if she does so, she runs the risk of getting lost. Just because she can move through the earth doesn't mean she can see through it. Every round the Harrowed *burrows* faster than her Pace, she must make a Fair (5) Smarts roll or get lost.

If a Harrowed is lost under the earth, it's up to the Marshal where she ends up. A *burrower's* inner ear tells her which direction is up, but otherwise she's just lost.

If the Harrowed goes bust on her *Smarts* roll, then she doesn't even know she's lost. She definitely going to be in for a big surprise when she resurfaces.

It's impossible to pick up the Pace while *burrowing*. In fact, simply "running" while *burrowing* costs 1d4 Wind per round.

No matter what the Harrowed's power level, it's impossible to *burrow* through anything solid, be it a large boulder, a steel plate, or a wooden wall. Basically, if it ain't dirt, it ain't moving.

The basic Pace while *burrowing* is 2 per level. A level-5 *burrower*, for instance, can move through the dirt at Pace 10–Pace 20 if running.

Cat Eyes

Speed: 2

Duration: Concentration

Dispositions: *Bad eyes, curious, eagle eyes, keen, mark o' the devil, "the stare"*

Cat eyes grants an undead character the ability to see things others cannot, even stare directly into the murky depths of a man's soul (to a certain extent). When used, the Harrowed's eyes glow slightly, as an animal's do when they catch the moonlight just right.

The undead actually has to concentrate to use the ability. It is not considered "always on." This is fine, since otherwise the constant eerie glow in the Harrowed's eyes would be enough to get the skittish survivors preparing themselves a mighty big bonfire.

Harrowed characters with this power should be careful how and when they decide to use it. Sometimes the glowing side-effect can actually show an enemy just where to put his bullet if a Harrowed with *cat eyes* is trying to sneak up on him in the middle of a dark night.

The ability gained at each level is shown on the table. The Harrowed has the abilities of his level and any levels below that too.

Cat Eyes

Level	Power
1	Distance: The character can see twice as far as anyone else. Add +4 to Cognition checks made to spot distant sights.

Powers o' the Dead

- 2 **Heat:** The Harrowed can detect heat sources at least as warm as a normal human at 50 yards. Note that background heat might obscure lesser sources.
- 3 **Night:** As long as there is any light source at all, the character can see in otherwise total darkness as if it were daylight.
- 4 **Darkness:** The character can see in complete darkness as if it were daylight.
- 5 **Soul Sight:** The final stage of cat eyes allows the Harrowed to look directly into another's soul. When activated, he can tell a person's general inclination, if he's lying, or if he's an abomination or Harrowed by making a Hard (9) *scrutinize* roll. He can also add +4 to his *scrutinize* rolls.

Charnel Breath

Speed: 1

Duration: Instant

Dispositions: *Big mouth, degeneration, grim servant o' death, habit, heavy sleeper, mean as a rattler, unnatural appetite*

Despite everything that's happened in the Wasted West, some still folks don't believe in supernatural things like the walking dead. Those who do expect that even if the dead do walk, they surely don't breathe (and they don't have to if they don't want to, although it sure comes in handy when trying to talk to someone). Anyone who's met a Harrowed with this power definitely wishes they didn't.

Charnel breath is the ability to dredge up all the worst stench of decay in a Harrowed's body, supernaturally fester it even further in a bare moment, and blow it out all over an unsuspecting target within arm's reach. The victim suffers damage to his Wind as a result, partly from the corrosive effect of the gas on eyes, nasal passages, and windpipe, and partly from the violent retching that it produces. The stench is enough to make even those in the room wrinkle their noses and hold their breaths until a breeze can clear the place of the noxious fumes.

This power can only be used on a victim within an arm's length of the breather (about 3 feet). Beyond that reach, *charnel breath* does little more than offend.

The Harrowed's level with this power determines the type of dice used in an opposed roll against the victim's *Vigor*, as shown on the table below. The Harrowed's *fightin': brawlin'* aptitude determines the number of dice rolled. The difference between the opposed rolls is how much damage the watery-eyed victim suffers to his Wind.

Note that nonliving beings are immune to this particular power, though they still won't likely appreciate a ghostly belch in the face.

Charnel Breath

Level	Die Type
1	d6
2	d8
3	d10
4	d12
5	d20

Claws

Speed: 1

Duration: As desired

Dispositions: *Two-fisted, all thumbs, bloodthirsty, grim servant o' Death, one-armed bandit, ugly as sin, vengeful*

A lovin' woman can leave vicious scratches down a fellow's back, but that's nothing compared to what a Harrowed can do. These claws can slice through a spine like a hot knife through a toxic zombie.

The character's hands turn into cruel claws at will. The higher the level, the bigger the claws. The damage of the claws is added to the character's *Strength* roll whenever she hits using *fightin': brawlin'*, just like the claws were a hand-held blade.

The Harrowed can extend or retract the claws by simply thinking about it, and this simple act can pierce even leather gloves (if worn). Keeping them out or in requires no concentration on the Harrowed's part.

Claws

Level	Damage
1	+1d4
2	+1d6
3	+1d8
4	+1d10
5	+1d12

Powers o' the Dead

Cremate

Speed: 2

Duration: Concentration

Dispositions: *Bloodthirsty, heavy sleeper, killed by fire.*

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust. Harrowed heroes with this power can create some dust of their own.

Cremate allows your deader to raise a person's body temperature to extraordinarily high levels. Roll a contest of *Spirit* between the Harrowed and his target. The Harrowed may add his level in this power to his roll.

If the dead man wins, the power inflicts 1d8 damage plus an extra 1d8 damage per raise to the guts.

Once the Harrowed has activated this power he can continue to inflict damage with it on each of his following actions. This requires another *Spirit* contest, but there's a catch. Each action after the first on which the deader causes damage, the base damage from the power increases by a die, i.e. the second time does 2d8 plus 1d8 per raise, the third time does 3d8, plus raises, and so on. If the Harrowed ends the power and then uses it again against the same target, the damage starts again at 1d8.

If the damage from this power causes a fatal wound, the target spontaneously combusts and collapses into a small pile of dust. The deceased can't come back Harrowed or in any other form—the small bone fragments might clog your vacuum though.

Cremate has a range equal to 10 yards times the Harrowed's level in the power.

Dead Man's Hand

Speed: 2

Duration: Concentration

Dispositions: *Curious, one-armed bandit, sneak*

No, this doesn't help your deader with his poker game.

Harrowed with this power can continue to control their own severed limbs for short periods of time. The undead creep could cut off his hand and let it run around a room on its own, or give an eyeball to a compadre so the Harrowed can spy on what's going on when he doesn't happen to be around. Pretty creepy isn't it? Creepy, but useful.

If a Harrowed attempts to attack with an animated severed limb, he uses his own statistics, but he must subtract -4 from the *fightin': brawlin'* roll. The damage from an animated hand, by the way, is half the



character's normal *Strength* total, read as nonlethal damage. These limbs are much better at opening jail cells and causing distractions than beating the living Hell out of someone.

The undead typically remove their hands or eyes for use with this power. It just doesn't make much sense to slice off your foot and send it after someone.

The duration the body part can be controlled while separated from the owner depends on the user's power level. After that, the parts rot like normal dead flesh unless reattached. Only one of the hero's body parts can be manipulated at a time.

Anyone seeing an animated limb must make a Hard (9) *guts* check.

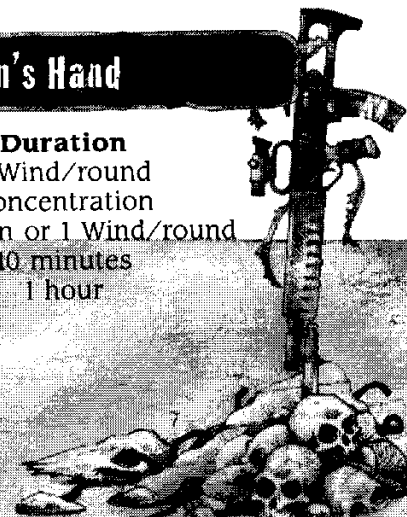
Dead Man's Hand

Level

1
1
3
4
5

Duration

1 Wind/round
Concentration
Concentration or 1 Wind/round
10 minutes
1 hour



Powers o' the Dead

Death Mask

Speed: 2

Duration: Concentration

Dispositions: *Cautious, gift of gab, lyin' eyes, ugly as sin*

One thing about death, it's usually as ugly as sin. And the corpse of a Harrowed comes chock full o' sin, courtesy of the manitou inside. But at least there's a cure for that—at least for the way it looks, if not the evil spirit itself.

When it comes to the realm of the supernatural, things are seldom as they seem. With this ability, a deader can use the supernatural power of illusion to disguise his true appearance from normal people. This can come in especially handy for a tattered, rotting Harrowed who needs to go into town for supplies. But undead with more experience can even use this power to help disguise themselves as someone else.

Death mask doesn't physically change the Harrowed's features, though. It just fools other people into seeing what the undead wants them to believe. Your deader will still scare the snot out of a blind person who touches faces.

The Harrowed has to concentrate to keep up the illusion, so he suffers a penalty of -2 to all dice rolls while using the power. Also, because the illusion isn't real, it doesn't project a reflection, so anyone spotting the undead in a mirror can see him for what he really is.

The undead's concentration may not be broken when he's wounded (this is up to the Marshal, depending on the circumstances). If not, the illusion holds. However, the fact that the Harrowed just took an injury and wasn't too bothered by it should tip most people off to the fact that the Harrowed is not exactly what he might appear to be.

Remember that most Harrowed don't really look too dead. They don't normally need this power to disguise their status as cheaters of death. Most often, a loaded .45 is enough to keep the curious away.

Of course, in the case of sykers, Domsayers, and other people who know what they're looking for, this isn't always the case. Against such foes, this power can prove invaluable.

Harrowed with the *degeneration* Hindrance are those most in need of this power. It's awful hard to stroll into the local bar if you've got a skeletal face and raisins where your eyes once happened to be. Heavily-augmented cyborgs can also use this power to disguise their implants.

Death Mask

Level

Extent of Disguise

1

Face: The undead can disguise his face to appear living. Other parts of the body—including the rest of the head—must be kept covered if they aren't to be seen in their (un)natural state.

2

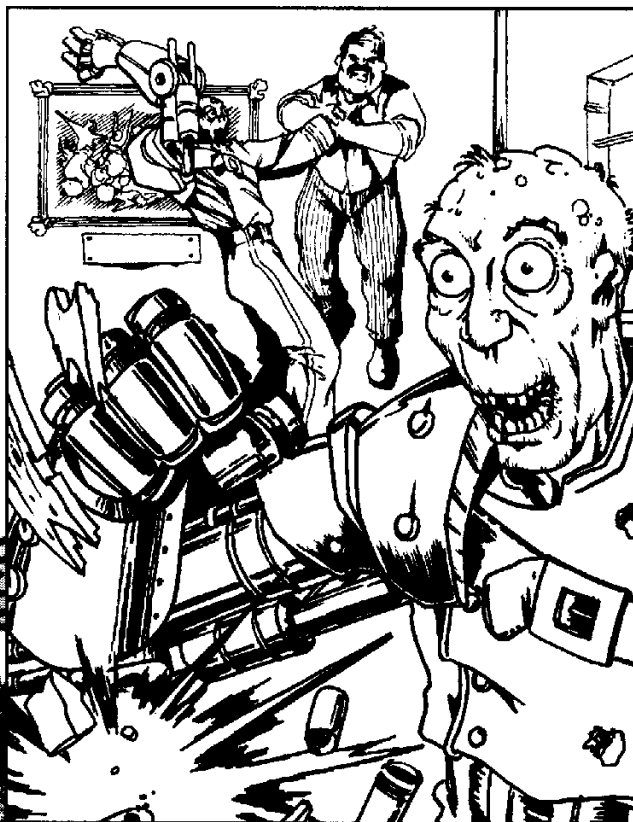
Head and Hands: The undead can disguise both head and hands to look as they did in life. Hair color can be anything the Harrowed desires, and facial hair can be changed at will.

3

Entire Body: The undead could be naked, and no one would know from sight that he wasn't alive. Still, he can only appear as himself.

4

Changed Appearance: As above, but the Harrowed can look like someone other than himself, though the height and body size must be roughly the same.



Powers o' the Dead

5

Impersonation: The undead can appear to be anyone else, so long as he knows what the person looks like. He looks so much like this other person, that even that person's closest friends and family cannot tell the difference from looks alone. Voice and mannerisms are another matter entirely. This ability basically adds +5 to any *disguise* rolls the Harrowed has to make versus a *scrutinize* roll. The Marshal can modify this bonus as she sees fit. Against people who have only briefly met the person being mimicked, the Harrowed might get a +9. When dealing with family members, the Harrowed might not get any bonus at all.

Duct Tape

Speed: Special

Range: Touch

Dispositions: *Arcane background: junker, mechanically inclined, high tinkerin' or scroungin' Aptitudes*

Some cans' manitous have learned to imitate their hosts' self repair units and can fix mechanical objects with arcane energy. This power is only available to cyborgs.

Like the self repair unit, the manitou needs some raw materials to work with. The number of components needed to fix a cyber system is figured in the same way as if using an SRU to make the repairs. When fixing non-cyber equipment, assume the object requires a number of structural and mechanical components equal to its Durability step.

If a deader has the proper components, actually fixing the object requires a *Spirit* roll against a TN of 5 plus the number of Durability steps the object has lost. A successful roll repairs the device. A failed roll uses up half the components, but the can may try again. Going bust on the roll means the item can never be repaired with this power.

The amount of time it takes to repair an object depends on the Harrowed's level in the power. Check out the Duct Tape Table for details. The speeds listed on the table are per Durability step repaired. A deader with *duct tape* power at level 2, for instance, would take 15 minutes to repair a device which had lost three Durability steps.

Duct Tape

Level	Speed
1	10 minutes
2	5 minutes
3	1 minute
4	1 round
5	1 action

Fast as Death

Speed: 1

Duration: 1 round

Dispositions: *Fleet footed, yeller*

Normally, of course, dead bodies don't move very fast. They just sort of lie there. The Harrowed break that rule just by being up and moving around. But some can even move with supernatural speed when the need arises. They call it *fast as death*.

A deader with this power can add extra distance to her movement on any particular action. Any time she decides to take a movement action during a round, she can declare that she's moving as *fast as death*.

The Harrowed can then double her movement for that action (and that action only) as it's proportionately broken up across her actions for that round. By doing this on multiple actions of a turn, she can cover a considerable piece of ground in less time than it takes to whistle "Dixie."

Using this power costs a Harrowed Wind. The amount is determined by the Harrowed's level with the power. The higher the power level, the less Wind it costs.

A Harrowed can use this power as many times during a round as she likes, and even over several rounds. The only limitation is how much Wind the Harrowed has left.

Of course, the Harrowed is free to push her movement normally in addition to using this power, buy picking up the Pace. Those that do can move along at quite a good clip.

Fast as Death

Level	Wind Lost
1	5
2	4
3	3
4	2
5	1

Powers o' the Dead

Glow Bones

Speed: 1

Duration: 2 Wind/round

Dispositions: Minor mutation, rad intolerant, killed in a ghost-rock bomb blast.

The Last War killed a lot of people. Not all of them stayed that way. Some of those who got back up had enough rads in their system to power a small town.

Deaders with the *glow bones* power can put the radiation in their bodies to work. When activated, this power causes an unearthly green glow to surround the hero. This glow does two things: It causes damage to everyone within a number of yards equal to the Harrowed's *glow bones* level, and it acts as armor versus radiation-based attacks (including Doomsayer magic). The amount of damage it causes or armor provided depends on the deader's level in the power. The damage caused by this power is inflicted on every target within range on each of the Harrowed's actions.

There is a slight disadvantage to this power. When fighting in darkened conditions, the glow surrounding the deader eliminates all targeting penalties due to lighting for attacks against him.

Glow Bones

Level	Damage	Armor
1	1d6 Wind	1
2	2d6	2
3	2d8	3
4	2d10	4
5	2d12	5

Infest

Speed: 1

Duration: Concentration

Dispositions: Ailin', mean as a rattler, randy, unnatural appetite

Rattlesnakes, rad-scorpions, and spiders aren't the only creepy-crawlies a feller has to keep on the lookout for in the Wasted west. Get enough mosquitoes, horseflies, or ants fired up and they'll pick you to death just as sure as a rattler's bite. Like animals, insects have spirits in the Hunting Grounds as well. The manitous have learned a few tricks to control these creatures.

A Harrowed with this power can control swarms of small biting, stinging, insects. The insects aren't summoned from thin air, so they must be available in the current locale.

To use the power, the Harrowed chooses a target in sight and begins to concentrate. At first a few insects will flock to the target. Within seconds, a few more will come, and then more, until the prey is eventually surrounded by a milling crowd of buzzing insects and lines of biting ants and beetles crawling up his trousers.

Each round (even if the target leaves the Harrowed's sight), the insects continue gathering until the Harrowed stops concentrating (in fact, they'll keep attacking the prey even once it's dead—a good way to dispose of bodies!)

The first round a target is infected has no effect. In the second, he suffers a -1 to all his actions. In the third, he suffers a further -1, and so on, up until the total penalty is -5 in the 6th round of concentration.

At this point, enough insects are swarming over the poor sod to cause damage. Starting in the 7th round, the victim must make a *Vigor* roll (don't forget the -5 modifier) versus the swarm's collective Strength, as determined by the Harrowed's power level.

The difference is the amount of Wind the victim suffers that round.

The only way for the victim to stop the infestation is to jump in water or kill the Harrowed who's tormenting him.



Powers o' the Dead

Infest

Level	Swarm Strength
1	1d6
2	2d6
3	3d6
4	4d6
5	5d6

Jump Start

Speed: 1

Duration: 1/hour

Dispositions: Arcane background, mechanically inclined

Some cyborgs look on pieces of machinery as distant cousins. Some have found a way to bring their relatives back to life, at least for a short while. It's also handy when your truck's battery goes dead.

Deaders with *jump start* can harness their manitous' energy to bring electrically powered machinery back to life. The size of the machine they can restore power to depends on the Harrowed's *jump start* level.

The device must be in working order for *jump start* to work on it. A golf cart that got slagged by a rocket isn't going to move no matter how much power your deader pours into it.

Jump Start

Level	Device
1	Flashlight
2	Computer
3	Electric car
4	Small house
5	Hovertank

Marked for Death

Speed: 1

Duration: Variable

Dispositions: Arcane background, grim servant o' Death, vengeful

The dead are a merciless bunch of bastards. Get one riled up enough, and he might sacrifice his own flesh to make sure yours gets cooked.

Marked for death works simply. The Harrowed nominates a target within sight, makes a gesture the victim can see, and rolls a contest of *Spirits*. The Harrowed adds his power level to the roll.

Should he win, the target is *marked for death* and cannot spend Fate Chips to negate damage.

The drawback is that as long as the power's in use, the Harrowed is *marked for death* too.

A Harrowed can only ever have one victim *marked for death* at one time, though he can drop the mark as an action as long as he can see the victim and reverse whatever gesture he made the first time around (no roll is required).

Nightmare

Speed: 1 minute

Duration: Special

Dispositions: Heavy sleeper, night terrors, squeamish, ugly as sin

Dreams take place in the "Happy" Hunting Grounds. Nightmares take place in the Hunting Grounds, and there isn't anything "happy" about them.

One of the manitous' duties in the spirit world is to torment dreamers. A Harrowed who forces his demon to give him this power can use these dark dreams to trouble a living mind. With enough practice, he can even deliver specific images to a victim.

For the power to work, the undead has to lock eyes with the intended victim for a bare instant, just long enough to make an opposed *Spirit* test. If the Harrowed succeeds, the *nightmare* works. Otherwise, the Harrowed cannot attempt to use his power on this victim again until he has slept. The target is none the wiser nor worse for wear.

When the power works, the victim doesn't actually realize what's happened. There is just a moment of meeting a stranger's stare, an instant of strange uneasiness, and then things return to normal—until the nightmares start, that is.

At lower levels of the power, the undead simply inflicts a case of *night terrors* on the chosen target (see the *Hell on Earth* rulebook for more on this Hindrance). As his power level increases, the nightmares become worse and worse until they can actually be inflicted in the middle of the day on wide-awake victims.

In such cases, the message is transmitted immediately, consuming the target's complete attention for a single action or longer if not in a combat situation. Of course, the corresponding nightmares don't take place until the victim beds down for the night.

The Harrowed can also appear in the sent nightmare or vision and deliver a message. The undead doesn't really join in the nightmare, though. Rather, in the

Powers o' the Dead

Nightmare



moment of eye contact, he plants an image that works its way into the dream or vision on its own at an appropriate moment.

In game terms, the Harrowed player describes to the Marshal how the undead's image appears in the dream, and she explains the intended message. The message can include all sorts of special effects as well, certainly more than just a floating head spitting out some words.

The Marshal decides how the victim reacts, based upon the individual's personality and the image and message described.

Naturally, a deader can't just go around planting nightmares in everyone he meets. For one thing, people are bound to start talking, and once they begin comparing notes and find that the same hombre is appearing in all their dreams, that Harrowed is liable to find a lynch mob looking for him. For another, the power can be used only once per day.

The Harrowed can use this power to send messages to friendly sorts too, but no matter what the intentions may be, the messages are always accompanied by the nightmare. The Harrowed can inflict lesser nightmares if he likes, but he is then restricted to sending shorter messages.

Level	Power
1	Restless Night: Inflict a one-time instance of <i>night terrors</i> on a victim.
2	Bad Dreams: Plague a victim with <i>night terrors</i> for 2d6 nights.
3	Recurring Nightmare: As above, and visit the victim's nightmare to deliver a message once during that period.
4	Daymare: Transmit a waking nightmare by means of a daydream, causing an Onerous (TN 7) <i>guts</i> check and loss of sleep for one night. The Harrowed may deliver a message in that vision.
5	Waking Terror: Transmit a waking nightmare by means of a daydream, causing a Hard (9) <i>guts</i> check. If the roll is failed, the victim suffers from <i>night terrors</i> until he complies with any orders given to him in the vision the undead delivers.

Override

Speed: 1

Duration: 3/attempt

Dispositions: *arcane background: syker, arcane background: junker, mechanically inclined, high tinkerin'*

This allows a cyborg to do to a machine what a syker can do to a person's grey matter. With *override*, a deader can force a machine or electronic device to do his will for as long as he maintains the power. This can range from something as simple as opening a locked door, to causing a Raptor to open fire on its buddies. This power is available only to cyborgs.

The size of the device upon which the can may inflict his will depends on the level of this power. Exactly what category a device falls into is up to the Marshal. Activating the power requires a Hard (9) *Spirit* roll. If the roll succeeds, the Harrowed gains control of the device for one action.

Once the *override* has ended, the device returns to its original state. A locked door becomes locked again, the Raptor goes back to shooting at the cyborg, and so on.

Override has a range of 10 yards per level.

Powers o' the Dead

Override

Level	Device
1	Mechanical lock, mouse trap
2	Electronic lock, walkie-talkie
3	Average computer, vehicle
4	Advanced military computer
5	Artificial Intelligence

Reconstruction

Speed: Variable

Duration: Special, permanent

Dispositions: *Bad luck, degeneration, heroic, nerves o' steel, overconfident, stubborn, thick-skinned, tough as nails*

Even for the undead, time heals all wounds. Those Harrowed pressed for time can use the *stitchin'* power to heal more quickly, but sometimes healing just plain isn't enough for the job at hand (so to speak).

Even *stitchin'* won't restore a missing arm or eye. For jobs like that, you need the *reconstruction* power.

The time it takes to reconstruct a body part depends on its size and the deader's level in this power. Each pound of flesh (or portion thereof) to be reconstructed requires one "unit" of time. The unit of time can range from one action to one week, as listed on the table below.

For example, a Harrowed with level 3 in this power could regrow a missing hand (assuming it was roughly one pound) in 3 months. A missing arm could require over three years of that Harrowed's time. An entire body (neck down) would take a lot longer.

This *reconstruction* requires energy, of course. The meat still has to come from somewhere, so the Harrowed must eat a pound of raw meat for every pound he needs to regrow. The Harrowed can absorb this, even if he doesn't have a belly to hold it.

Cyborgs cannot reconstruct limbs which have been cybernetically replaced without first removing the replacement part.

Reconstruction

Level	Time Unit
1	1 year
2	6 months
3	3 months
4	1 month
5	1 week

Relic

Speed: Special

Duration: Special

Dispositions: A trademark piece of equipment, *belongin's*, a junker

Some folks invest more than money in the equipment they use. They put a little piece of their soul into their favorite belongings as well. Sometimes the item even becomes part of the hero's legend and develops a history of its own.

A relic is just that: an item charged with supernatural energy. These come into being when they are bound closely to an event of momentous importance. The death of a hero and her subsequent resurrection as a Harrowed is frequently more than enough cause to give rise to a relic. A gunslinger who used nothing but his trademark .45 automatic, for example, is due for an upgrade should he come back from the grave.

The exact power of the relic is always up to the Marshal. There's no way we could cover every possibility, so we're leaving it up to you and your Marshal's imagination.

As your hero gains levels in this power, his relic becomes more and more powerful, useful, or helpful as well. Again, the Marshal must determine exactly what that means, but here are a few pointers.

First, a relic sometimes merely mimics another power, spell, or ability. If it resembles another Harrowed power, the relic's power level corresponds to the levels of the imitated power.

Gunslingers and their prized weapons, a very long tradition in the Wasted West, are prime targets for this power. Each level might add another die of damage to bullets fired from the favored gun. Or the power might add accuracy in the form of +1 to hit per level.

Not all relics need be weapons. Maybe a tale-teller has found an old mini-cam, and when he comes back from the dead, it gains the ability to show ghosts or other spirits. Or maybe someone who's about to die appears in black and white. The creepier the power, especially when it comes to things other than weapons, the better!

The possibilities are endless. If you have a good idea for your Harrowed's relic, talk it over with your Marshal. Together, the two of you should be able to come up with something that is powerful and useful, but still balanced enough that it doesn't ruin the campaign and, more importantly, doesn't overshadow your

Powers o' the Dead

character's *personal* accomplishments. A creep with a gun that automatically hits and kills anything might be fun for a while, but who couldn't win with a gimmick like that?

Of course, one major drawback with relics is that they can be lost or stolen. Worse yet, they might even be used against the hero. And for some strange reason, a relic can always kill the person it was empowered by, regardless of immunities or the normal damage rules for Harrowed (treat your hero just like a normal brainer). A pistol that shot its Harrowed maker in the gut, for instance, could kill him again, even though it's not a head shot.

Such is the way of the mad Hunting Grounds, where the powers of these awesome artifacts are forged.

If the relic is ever truly lost, the Marshal should allow you to work on recreating it somehow. The best way is for your hero to pick up a similar item and start using it constantly. Eventually, the gadget attunes itself to your hero, and you're back in business. The Marshal has the final call, but by and large, a replacement relic gains +1 power level per month until it reaches your hero's former level.

Soul Eater

Speed: 1

Duration: Special

Dispositions: *Ailin', arcane background, aura o' death, greedy, grim servant o' death, hankerin', mark o' the devil, sand, self-righteous, unnatural appetite, yearnin'*

Soul eater is one of the undead's cruelest weapons. The Harrowed grasps her victim by the throat and squeezes as if trying to choke him. In a heartbeat, the victim's life force is drawn from his body and consumed by the Harrowed's hungry manitou.

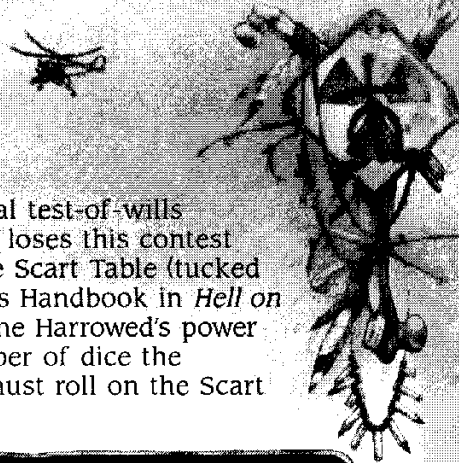
A *soul eating* undead must first get at least one raise on an opposed *fightin': brawlin'* roll against the target. When she does, she has the victim by the throat and can begin to drain out his life force.

Performing the actual draining is an opposed *Spirit* roll between the Harrowed and the victim. (If the manitou is in charge, use the manitou's *Spirit* in place of the Harrowed's.)

If the Harrowed is successful, the difference between the two *Spirit* rolls is the amount of Wind the Harrowed drains if successful. Otherwise, nothing happens.



Powers o' the Dead



The deader can use the stolen life force to revitalize herself in some way. As her skill in the power grows, she has more options to choose from. The amount of Wind the power steals is determined by the level of the power the Harrowed is using.

The Harrowed can never hold more Wind than she normally has (she can't have more Wind than her Wind statistic). She can still steal Wind, though, even if she doesn't strictly speaking need it for herself at all.

Excess stolen Wind fades away immediately and cannot be stored for later use. The Harrowed can keep stealing Wind after a victim reaches negative Wind, right up until the hapless brainer dies.

Soul Eater

Level	Power
1	Restoration: Stolen Wind restores the undead's missing Wind on a 1-for-1 basis.
2	Enhanced Restoration: Stolen Wind restores the undead's missing Wind on a 1-for-2 basis.
3	Regeneration: Every 5 points of stolen Wind regenerates a wound level in one area. This works on damaged cyber limbs.
4	Enhanced Regeneration: Every 3 points of stolen Wind regenerates a wound level in one area.
5	Bolster: Every 5 points of stolen Wind raises the undead's <i>Strength</i> by one step. A step of the stolen <i>Strength</i> is lost every 10 minutes until it eventually returns to normal.

Spook

Speed: 1

Duration: Instant

Dispositions: *Mean as a rattler, "the stare," veteran o' the Wasted West, "the voice," ugly as sin*

This power gives a Harrowed's target a glimpse into the twisted corridors of his dark soul, and it ain't a pretty sight.

The deader draws upon the power of the manitou within to add a creepy element to her voice, appearance, and sheer presence. This is an opposed test of wills between the Harrowed's *overawe* and the target's *guts*.

Besides any normal test-of-wills results, a target who loses this contest must also roll on the Scart Table (tucked away in the Marshal's Handbook in *Hell on Earth*). The level of the Harrowed's power determines the number of dice the unfortunate victim must roll on the Scart Table.

Spook

Level	Scart Dice
1	1d6
2	2d6
3	3d6
4	4d6
5	5d6

Stitchin'

Speed: Special

Duration: Permanent

Dispositions: *Bad luck, degeneration, heroic, nerves o' steel, overconfident, stubborn, thick-skinned, tough as nails*

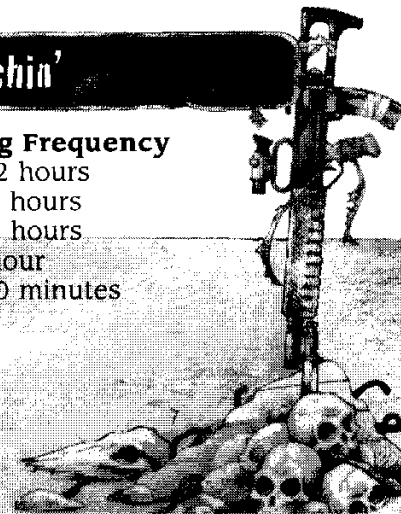
Undead can heal themselves faster than ordinary folks. The manitous inside them draw supernatural energy from the air around them to stitch up their holes and keep them looking awful pretty. As pretty as a warmed-over, strutting corpse can get, anyway.

Stitchin' allows undead to regenerate their wounds even faster than the Harrowed normally can. The rate at which they do so depends on the level of the power. The time shown on the table below is how exactly often the undead with this power can attempt a healing roll.

This power can even be used to reattach severed limbs and other bits and pieces of an hombre's body. The only trick is that the Harrowed has to be able to lay hands (so to speak) on the missing piece and hold it to his body until it heals on to his cadaver. Most Harrowed use stitches to hold themselves together until then.

Stitchin'

Level	Healing Frequency
1	Every 12 hours
2	Every 6 hours
3	Every 3 hours
4	Every hour
5	Every 10 minutes



Powers o' the Dead

Supernatural Trait

Speed: Always on

Duration: Permanent

Dispositions: Any

A gunslinger with supernatural *Quickness* can be deadlier than a chaingun, and a savage with heightened *Strength* can put a sharpened hubcap through a cinder block.

This power raises any one Trait (chosen when the power is purchased) by +1 step per level. The power is tied to a particular Trait, though a character can have multiple *supernatural traits*.

The trait raised should somehow reflect the character's personality or past. A Templar would probably gain supernatural *Strength* or *Quickness*, for example, while a syker's *Knowledge* or *Vigor* might be affected.

One way to figure out what Trait might be affected is to look at the hero's highest Trait. That's most likely the one he uses all the time. If so, that's the one that ought to get raised. A Doomsayer wants the biggest *faith* total he can get, so bump up the stiff's *Spirit* and watch him grin.



Unholy Host

Speed: 5 minutes

Duration: Permanent

Dispositions: *Friends in high places, grim servant o' death, law man, leadership, mark o' the devil, rank, renown*

You already know that sometimes folks come back from the dead. What you might not know is that a special few of them have been known to bring along a few of their old companions with them.

And these folks were once dead too.

The only problem is that the undead cohorts following the deader about aren't Harrowed themselves. They're just plain old walkin' dead looking to make trouble in the world of mortals the best they can.

The walkin' dead are ruthless and unwavering allies, but they're also evil incarnate. They can cause a hero far more trouble than they're worth if he doesn't keep his glazed eyes on them every second. And they'll certainly do so given an ice cube's chance in Death Valley.

The hero doesn't have a mental link with his host, but when he gives them orders, they are bound to follow them. Walkin' dead are clever in their interpretations, however. Give them an inch, and they'll leave a slew of bloody corpses for a mile.

Think of them as devious children interpreting their orders in the most literal and harmful way possible.

Other than that, they're completely loyal, and won't let their champion die if they can help it. They might let him suffer and may get a good laugh out of it, but if the hero ever dies, they die too.

The level of the Harrowed's power determines how large his host can become. These zombies don't just appear, they have to be raised. Just how most Harrowed raise their host seems to vary. Some give them a kiss of life. Others simply open a coffin and say "get up." Regardless, it takes about 5 minutes to get the corpse up and moving.

Unholy Host

Level	Number
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

Powers o' the Dead

Zap

Speed: 1

Duration: Instant

Dispositions: *mechanically inclined.*

This power makes one Hell of a joy buzzer. The *zap* power allows a deader to fire a stream of energy which can stun or knock out living targets or short out the systems of enemy cyborgs. This power is only available to cyborg heroes.

Zapping an opponent is resolved as a ranged attack. The power has a Range Increment of 10 and uses the *shootin'* *zap* Aptitude. The power has a maximum range of 10 yards per level.

A *zap* causes a certain number of dice in stun damage. The die type is determined by the cyborg's level in the power. See the Zap Table, below. The number of dice is determined by the amount of Wind the can commits to the attack. Each point of Wind used adds one die to the attack. You must specify how much Wind is being used before the roll to hit is made. If the attack misses, the Wind is still lost.

If the attack hits, the target must roll his *Vigor* against the damage caused by the *zap*. If the target wins, the *zap* has no effect. If the target loses, he is stunned and loses an amount of Wind equal to the difference in the rolls.

In addition, if the target was a cyborg, each raise on the *zap* roll shorts out a random system in the affected location for 1d6 rounds. Your deader can make called shots with the power (with the usual modifiers) to increase the likelihood of hitting a specific system.

This power is most dangerous if it happens to hit a CPU or AI system. These systems are particularly susceptible to sudden jolts of electricity. If it hits a CPU, roll a die for each program being run or stored in the computer. On an even result the program is fine. If the die comes up odd, the program has been trashed. If the AI gets shorted out, the entire cyborg shuts down for the specified number of rounds. Roll a die for the AI. If it comes up odd, some circuits have been scrambled. The deader wakes up with a new randomly determined rule of engagement.

Zap

Level	Die
1	d4
2	d6
3	d8
4	d10
5	d12

Creating New Powers

The powers we've listed in this chapter are but a fraction of the manitous' power. Both players and Marshals should feel free to come up with new ones. Harrowed powers are meant to be closely tailored to individual characters. That's why we give you a list of dispositions with each power—to give you a guide as to what kinds of heroes are prone to particular abilities.

But we can only do so much without sneaking into your own living room and coming up with powers for *your* characters. So tailor the powers to your Harrowed heroes as you and the Marshal see fit. Consider the powers we list as guidelines or examples, not rules.

We know you've heard this before, especially if you've played other games, but it's doubly important when dealing with the Harrowed.

We're talking about the ultimate human experience here—death. Coming back ought to be pretty special. And any powers that come from that ought to be extensions of a character's personality, not just 20 new ways to kill bad guys picked out of a book. Anyone can do that.

Balance

When you do design your own powers, try not to just come up with new weapons. That's all fine, but anyone can say, "I shoot fireballs from my eyes that cause 10d20 points of damage."

Okay, maybe not just *anyone* would say that, but you get our point.

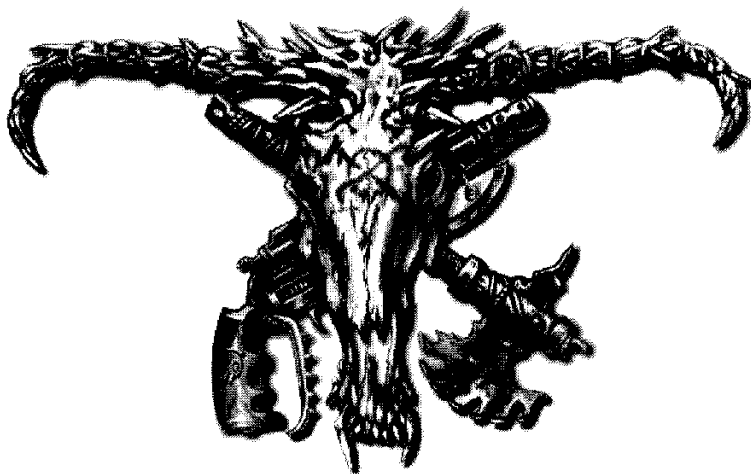
Instead of thinking in terms of power first, try working on it in terms of creepiness. If your new ability is truly unsettling, you're on the right path. Once you've got the other players in your group grinning and shivering, you can sit down and figure out exactly what it does for you.

Theme

All Harrowed powers draw on certain themes: death, the manitou, and the Hunting Grounds.

All cyborg-only powers are related to machinery and technology in some way.

If you come up with a neat power, you need to try to tie it in with one of these themes. Don't just say your Harrowed can stick his arms in the air and fly. We tried that one ourselves, but in the end just couldn't see it. What does it have to do with the whole Harrowed experience? Not much. If it works for you however, go crazy.



Chapter Four: Cyber Equipment

There's a whole host of high-tech goodies available for your cyberized deader. Exactly how many systems your cybernetic warrior can handle depends on his *Spirit*, the class of cyborg you choose to make your deader, and how many points you are willing to invest.

Free Stuff

All cans start with a certain amount of free hardware. This equipment was considered standard issue by most militaries that fielded cyborgs. Exactly what your deader gets is determined by the cyborg class you chose for him during character creation: infiltrator, light combat, or heavy combat. The combat models get more equipment, but their AIs keep much tighter control of them as a result. As part of each package you also get some cash to purchase additional equipment to customize your deader.

Cramming It In

There's only so much room inside a human body to place all of the hardware a cyborg needs. For our purposes, we call the places in which equipment can be implanted "mounts." Each area of the body has a limited number of mounts. This number goes up if a body part is replaced with a cybernetic replica. The artificial parts use space more efficiently and are designed to use modular systems from the start.

Take a look at the Mount Table to see how many mounts are available in each location. The numbers listed under natural are for body areas which are still original organic equipment. The numbers under replacement is for areas which have been replaced with roomier cybernetic equivalents.

Once you start buying internal systems for your deader, you'll need a copy of the Cyborg Record Sheet we've provided. As you buy each system, mark it down on a line in the appropriate body area. There is one line for each available mount in a location, so if a system takes up multiple mounts write the system on a number of lines equal to its mount requirements. Place a line or write "no effect" on the lines corresponding to unused mounts. We'll explain why in just a second.

In combat, these body areas correspond to results on the hit location chart: head is noggin, arms are arms, and legs are legs. All guts and vitals hits go to the torso.

Mounts

Location	Natural	Replacement
Head	4	6
Torso	7	9
Arms	6	8
Legs	6	8

Cyber Equipment

Hardware Packages

Each package lists a number of systems. This is the hardware which was standard issue for all cans of that class. Your deader gets this stuff for free. In addition, all cyborgs start with an AI, a self repair unit, and a spirit fetter—your cyborg just won't work without these.

Each package also lists an amount of cash. You can use this to purchase other systems for your cyborg. This represents the systems added to your deader to outfit him for whatever his last mission was. Use this money or lose it—it can't be saved or spent on non-cyborg equipment.

The available packages are:

Infiltrator:

Infiltrator package

Radio

CPU (4 slugs processing, 4 slugs storage, 1 port slug reader)

\$15,000

Light Combat:

Cyber eye (16x telescopic)

Hard point system (Light: torso & arms)

Radio

Samson system

\$30,000

Heavy Combat:

Cyber eye (Laser sight, 16x telescopic)

Hard point system (Heavy: torso & arms)

Radio

Samson system

Targeting computer

\$50,000

Spirit Loss

There's a price to be paid for the power granted by cyberware. The more a Harrowed's body is replaced by hardware, the weaker his soul becomes. This is caused by the gradual erosion of the deader's sense of identity. Many heavily-enhanced cyborgs eventually become little more than robots enslaved to their AIs.

This is also the reason the military's experiments with implanting a Harrowed brain inside a non-humanoid body like a hovertank or aircraft all failed. The total alienness of the new body drove all but the strongest-willed test subjects stark raving mad. Zombie brains worked, but they were a little hard to control.

In game terms, this means that as a deader cybers up his *Spirit* stat drops. Each internal system has a *Spirit* listing, this is the number of *Spirit* dice that your hero loses when that system is implanted. The larger and more invasive a system is, the more of your deader's identity it saps.

This works a little differently than most Attribute modifiers. Your hero's *Spirit* loses individual Coordination levels. Once your brainer's *Spirit* Coordination is reduced to zero, it drops to the next lower die type with a Coordination equal to its original level. For instance a 2d12 *Spirit* that lost 4 dice would go 2d12, 1d12, 2d10, 1d10, 2d8. A 3d12 *Spirit* losing the same number of dice would go 3d12, 2d12, 1d12, 3d10, 2d10.

Proper Care and Maintenance

A cyborg with a functioning SRU requires very little maintenance, but she does occasionally need to perform some internal checks, and it's possible for her cyberware to be damaged in combat. Read on and learn.

Power Down

Cyborgs don't need to sleep to keep their organics from falling apart—the spirit fetter that keeps the manitou from getting uppity also provides a constant stream of tissue-regenerating energy. They do, however, need to shut down their systems for a self-diagnostic periodically. The software used to control and monitor a can's hardware is incredibly complex, and unless it stops to recalibrate itself from time to time, errors begin to creep in and eventually a fatal system error can bring the entire cyborg to a grinding halt—not something you want to have happen in the middle of a firefight.

Cyber Equipment

Each 24 hours that a cyborg goes without powering down to perform a diagnostic imposes a cumulative -1 penalty to all actions taken by the deader—motor control gets sloppy, response time drops, random system chatter makes it hard to think, etc. Once the modifier reaches -6, roll 1d20 each hour. On a 20, the cyborg crashes. All of the deader's cybernetic systems shut down for an hour.

Performing a diagnostic takes one hour. During that time, all of the can's systems are shut down, and the Harrowed falls into a light sleep. As with regular deaders, the AI keeps an eye on things while the cyborg is out. If someone tries to sneak up on the hero, she gets a *Cognition* roll versus her opponent's *sneak* to notice.

Scrap Metal

Damage to cyborgs works a little differently because of all the hardware they've got crammed inside them—not to mention the fact that entire portions of their bodies have been entirely replaced with cybernetics.

The number of wounds caused by an attack are still calculated and applied normally. Cybernetic body parts take damage just like normal body parts—although they're usually a lot tougher. Once a cybernetic body part has become maimed it ceases to work (or falls off, this is the Marshal's call and depends on the nature of the attack).

Whenever a cyborg suffers wounds to an area there is a chance that one of the systems in that location may be damaged. Roll 1d6 and compare it to the number of wounds inflicted by the attack. If the die result is less than or equal to the number of wounds caused to the location, a random system in that area has been damaged in addition to the wounds suffered. If the deader has both internal and external systems in a location, roll to see which type was hit: odd is external, even is internal.

To find out which system was hit roll a die of a type equal to the number of available mounts in the damaged location. Compare the results to the mount listings. If a system is listed, that device has been damaged. If the line says "no effect," no system was actually damaged.

Once you've determined which system has been damaged, roll another d6 and add the number of wounds caused by the attack. On a result of 1 to 5, the system has been disabled for that many rounds. On a 6 or higher, the system has actually been knocked out, it must be replaced or repaired with the SRU.



Ashe's deader takes a serious wound to his cybernetic arm which houses a brain mole unit and a blade spur. He rolls 1d6 and gets a 2. Since this is less than the number of wound levels inflicted by the attack (3), one of these systems has potentially been damaged. His arm has 6 mounts, of which two are filled by systems. He rolls 1d6 to determine what was damaged. He gets a 2, indicating his blade spur has been hit. If Ashe had rolled a 3 or higher he would have gotten off scot free because these mounts are empty. Next he rolls another 1d6 to see how bad it is. He gets another 2, and adds 3 for the number of wounds caused by the attack. The total of 5 means his blade spur is knocked out for 5 rounds. Luckily, Ashe also owns a gun.

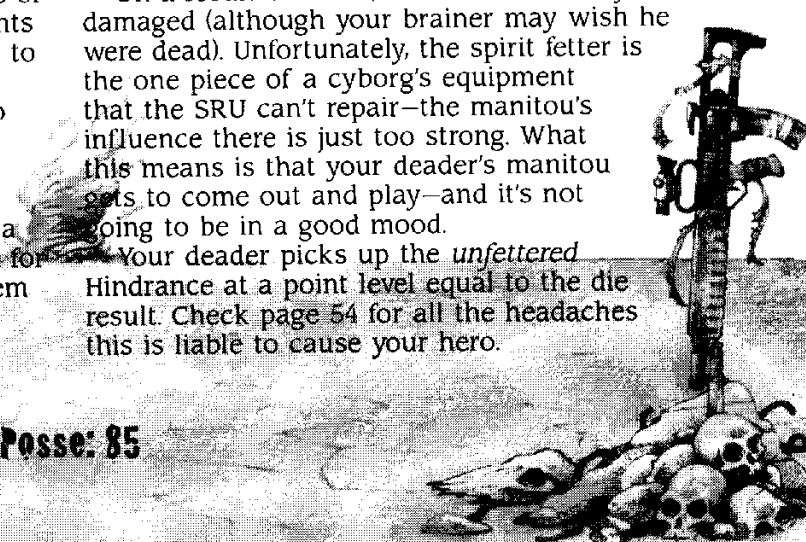
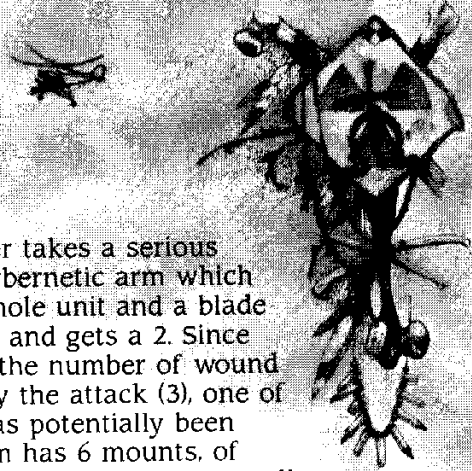
Unfettered

A maiming wound to the noggin kills a cyborg just as dead as any other Harrowed (which is why many of them have some sort of armor on their skulls). A non-killing shot to the head can just make the can's life a literal unliving Hell. That's because a cyborg's spirit fetter is mounted amongst all of that gray stuff that fills the space between his ears—the scientists still haven't found a way to replace that.

Whenever a cyborg gets clocked upside of the head, the spirit fetter is one of the systems that might potentially be damaged. If that happens, the outcome of the damage is a little different from that caused to other cyber systems. Roll 1d6 as normal, adding the wound levels to the roll, to determine how badly the fetter was hit. On a 6 or better the fetter is destroyed and the can is now an ex-cyborg—that means dead, friend.

On a result of 1 to 5, the fetter is merely damaged (although your brainer may wish he were dead). Unfortunately, the spirit fetter is the one piece of a cyborg's equipment that the SRU can't repair—the manitou's influence there is just too strong. What this means is that your deader's manitou gets to come out and play—and it's not going to be in a good mood.

Your deader picks up the *unfettered* Hindrance at a point level equal to the die result. Check page 54 for all the headaches this is liable to cause your hero.





Cyber Equipment

Drain Management

As we mentioned earlier, your can's manitou provides energy equal to its *Spirit* die type. This is the amount of energy it provides each round. It's important to know how much Drain your deader has available.

The Cyborg Record Sheet has a space provided along the bottom of the sheet to keep track of how much energy your deader has available to her. Figure out the Drain of the systems your cyborg leaves running at all times and place a paper clip on the Drain Track to show this. These are usually systems like cyber limbs, Samson units, eyeballs, and the like. In an emergency your deader can shut some of these systems down to get more energy, but she obviously won't get any of their benefits while they're deactivated.

Surplus Drain

The Drain above this paper clip, up to your manitou's *Spirit* die, is how much of a surplus you hero has available for other things like powering weapons, overloading systems, and so on. You can use more than this amount, but this is considered an Overload. See page 58 for the risks involved. As you spend this surplus energy, use a second paper clip to keep track. This surplus energy is refreshed each round.

Spirit Capacitor Banks

There's also a space on the right side of the sheet for keeping track of the amount of energy stored in any spirit capacitor banks your can has. These are special systems which can actually store some of your cyborg's excess energy. These Drain points can be spent in addition to your normal surplus, but they take a while to recharge, so spend them carefully. Take a look on page 101 for all the details.

Power Control

Turning systems on and off requires only a mental command. This is considered a simple action. Your deader can turn one system on or off on each of her actions with no penalty. Flipping the switch on more than one system at a time takes a little more concentration and takes a full action.

The extra Drain made available by shutting down a system is not gained until the beginning of the following round—the energy for the system has already been used for the current round.

Internal Systems

Internal systems are exactly that: devices implanted inside your deader's body. Each of these systems has a few common characteristics. Let's take a look and see what they mean:

Cost is how much the system is worth in barter. It's also used when purchasing equipment for a new character. Most of these systems cost millions of dollars before the war, but now there is only a small group who can use them and an even smaller number of people who can implant them properly, so their real value is much less than that.

Type designates whether the device is an integral or modular system. Integral systems require radical surgery to implant or are built so tightly into other components that removing the system is difficult. In game terms, if your hero has an integral system, he's stuck with it unless he can find a qualified cyber-surgeon or junker who can remove it. Modular systems were built to be removable and can be popped in and out with a Fair (5) *tinkerin'* roll and 15 minutes of work.

As we mentioned above, *Spirit Loss* is the number of *Spirit* dice your hero loses due to the implantation of the system. Not all systems cause *Spirit* loss, only those that require the surgeon to hack off a big chunk of your deader's body or take over certain body functions.

Mounts is the number of mounting locations the system uses up inside your deader's corpse. Your cyborg must have this number of mounts available in the location for the system to be successfully installed.

Drain is the amount of energy the system requires while activated. Unless it says otherwise, this amount of energy is required every round that the device is powered up. This normally comes from your hero's manitou, but it can also come from junker spirit batteries and other arcane sources. Alternate energy sources are discussed on page 109.

Mounting location lists the body area in which the system must be mounted. Not all systems have a required mounting location.

Some systems also have an *overload* section at the end of their description. The performance of these systems can be increased or altered by pumping extra energy into them at the risk of damaging the equipment. See page 58 for details on overloads.

Cyber Equipment

Antenna

Cost: \$3000

Type: Modular

Spirit Loss: None

Mounts: 1

Drain: 1

Mount Location: Any

This system implants a thin, telescopic fiber-optic antenna at the selected location. The antenna is wired into the cyborg's optic nerves, allowing the deader to see through the antenna. The visual feed from the antenna normally appears as a small picture in one corner of the cyborg's vision, but it can be expanded to a full screen view when desired.

When activated, the antenna can be extended up to three feet. The antenna is flexible and can be maneuvered to look around corners, under doors, in pipes, and so on. Activating or retracting the antenna is a simple action.

The basic system gives the equivalent of normal vision. Low-light capability can be added to the system for an additional \$1000.

Balance Booster

Cost: \$8000

Type: Integral

Spirit Loss: 1

Mounts: 2

Drain: 2

Mount Location: Torso

A balance system implants small gyroscopes in locations within a deader's torso. They are linked to a central processor that helps the cyborg maintain an even keel. This increases the can's *Nimbleness* die type by 2 levels.

Big Ears

Cost: \$4000

Type: Integral

Spirit Loss: 0

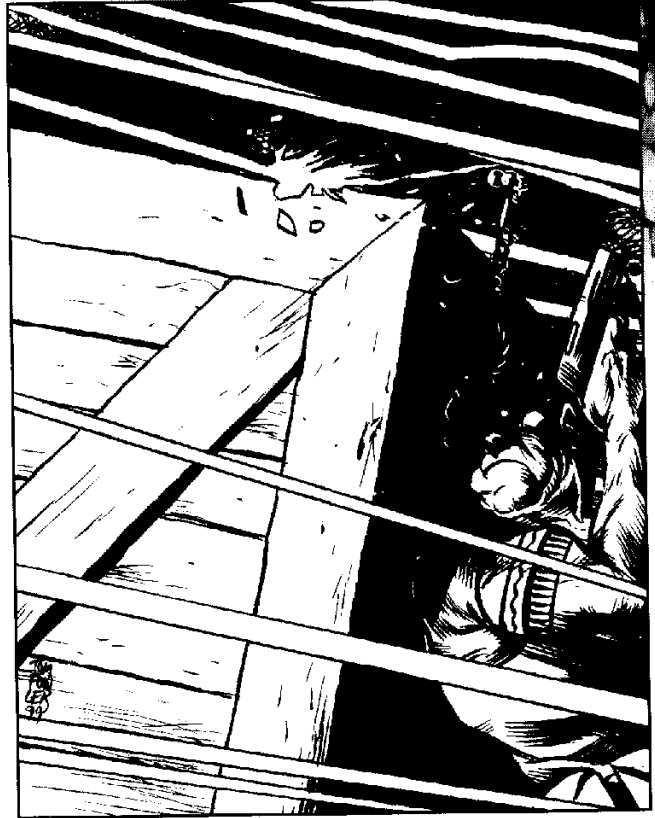
Mounts: 1

Drain: 1

Mount Location: Head

It's hard to talk about a can behind his back when he's equipped with one of these units. A big ears unit adds retractable baffles behind the deader's ears and links them to a processor which filters and analyzes all incoming sound.

The unit can be used with the baffles retracted or deployed. With the baffles retracted, the unit gives the deader a +2 bonus to all *Cognition* checks made in situations in which hearing is a factor. With the baffles open, the bonus increases to +4, but it's obvious to anyone looking that the deader is more than human.



In addition, the deader can focus the baffles into a parabolic mike. This allows your can to hear any noise of whisper volume or higher out to about 200 yards directly in front of him. While doing this, the cyborg suffers a -4 penalty to all rolls made to notice noises behind him.

The baffles cannot normally be deployed if the can is wearing a helmet. The helmets of all cyborg armors can be modified for this system with retractable ear flaps for an additional \$500. If your cyborg also has a CPU system, he can record and save any sounds he hears. One slug of storage can hold about 2000 hours of high-quality sound recordings.

Brain Mole

Cost: \$4000

Type: Modular

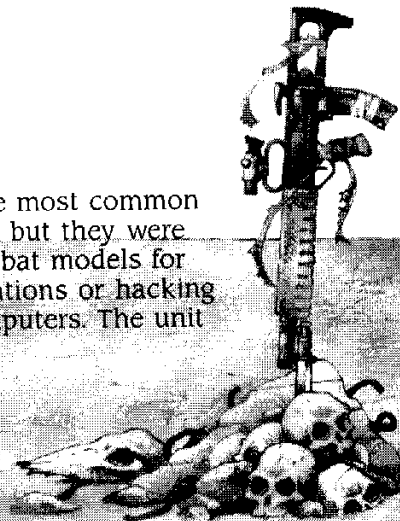
Spirit Loss: None

Mounts: 1

Drain: 1

Mount Location: Any

Brain mole systems are most common among infiltrator models, but they were sometimes issued to combat models for performing field interrogations or hacking into captured enemy computers. The unit



Cyber Equipment



has a short cable, usually stored in a small, subdermal compartment that can be plugged into any standard data jack or attached directly to the surface of a processor. The system can be used against Combine headbanger chips. These normally have a rating of 4d10.

Once plugged into another system, the brain mole goes to work disabling any defenses the target computer may have. This is usually the computer's security software (see page 108 for a description), but cyborgs can also defend themselves with their *Spirit* Attributes.

Defeating a target's security requires a contest of the brain mole's *Smarts* versus the target's defense. The brain mole's *Smarts* is equal to that of the user, increased by two die types. The target's first line of defense is its security program rating. Roll the contest on the cyborg's first action of each round. If the target wins with a raise, the brain mole has been kicked out of the system and cannot try again for another hour. If the brain mole wins with a raise, it has bypassed the security program. If dealing with a normal computer, your deader has entered the system at this point and can plant or retrieve any information he wishes.

If your deader is trying to break into an AI or cyborg, once he gets past the security program, he still needs to beat back the mind in the machine. This requires another contest of the brain mole's *Smarts* versus the AI or cyborg's *Spirit*. Once again, one side or the other must win the contest with a raise to succeed. If the brain mole wins, your deader can rummage around inside the target's mind for 10 minutes before his victim recovers enough to put up a fight again.

Command & Control

Cost: \$10,000

Type: Modular

Spirit Loss: None

Mounts: 2

Drain: 3

Mount Location: Torso

Command & control units were installed in cyborgs in leadership positions to assist with tactical control on the battlefield and to help them keep their troops in line. Your deader must have the *rank* advantage (see page 55) to purchase this system. He must also have a working radio system for the unit to function.

C&C units allowed cyborg commanders to keep track of the big picture on the battlefield. The system could display information about any can under a commander's control: energy level, AI conflicts, damage level, even what the cyborg was seeing, hearing, and so on. This last feature was one of the most popular ones, commanders could use it to get a view of the battlefield from their subordinates' positions and cut down on a lot of back and forth radio chatter. All of the information displayed by the C&C unit can be displayed on the user's HUD.

The second use of the C&C unit was to issue orders to the troops. A cyborg with one of these devices can add new rules of engagement to any can of the same service and of lower rank. The AI enforces these rules as vigorously as it does any other. It can also be used to remove rules, but this requires the ranking cyborg to win a contest of *Spirit* against the lower rank deader's AI.

The C&C unit can also be used to disable individual systems of a lower ranking cyborg from the same armed forces, or shut him down completely. If the can doesn't resist, this happens automatically. If he does resist, a contest of *Spirits* is needed to decide the question. The higher ranking cyborg can engage the pain inflicting power of the other cyborg's AI if he chooses. He may inflict any modifier between -1 and -6 on the other deader.

Cyber Equipment

Chameleon

Cost: \$500/location

Type: Integral

Spirit Loss: None

Mounts: 1 in each location

Drain: 1

Mount Location: Any

This device was most commonly used by infiltrators and light combat cyborgs assigned to scouting duties.

The chameleon system installs small, electrically sensitive chemical packs and tiny optical sensors just below a deader's skin. When the system is activated, the packs change color to imitate their surroundings. This gives the cyborg a +4 bonus to all *sneakin'* rolls that involve sight. This bonus doesn't apply, of course, if the majority of a deader's skin is covered. At least half of the can's skin must be visible to gain the bonus.

The chameleon unit can display more than just camouflage patterns. It can be used to imitate nearly any discoloration of the skin like birthmarks, tattoos, freckles, bruises, and liver spots. It's often used together with a facemaker system to make a more convincing disguise.

Many cyborgs don't have this system installed in all locations. It's common for a cyborg to only have this system in his arms, torso, and head.

CPU

Cost: Varies

Type: Modular

Spirit Loss: None

Mounts: 1

Drain: 2

Mount Location: Head

This system adds some computing power for the deader's personal use (the AI won't share its circuits, it's afraid that the cyborg might try to pull a fast one). Your hero can use this system to run programs, store data, and play video games. This system is wired into the deader's brain, and actually uses portions of it for storage and processing.

The CPU system has three main components: the processor, information storage, and input/output devices. The prices for all of these components is shown on the CPU Table.

The processor determines how many programs and databases the cyborg can have open at once. Each possible processor has a slug rating. This is the number of slug's worth of programs it can run. Each program (see page 108) has a slug size. The computer can run any

combination of programs with a combined slug size less than or equal to its slug rating. These programs can be pulled off a data slug, or called up from storage. Because the computer uses portions of the deader's brain to process things, a cyborg can't use an internal processor with more slugs of processing power than his *Smarts* die type.

The CPU's storage is rated by the number of slugs of data it can hold. Each slug is approximately a terabyte of info (roughly equivalent to about 2000 present-day CDs). Each slug of storage can hold a full slug of raw data or store one slug of program. Because the system uses some of the deader's brain for storage, a cyborg can't have more slugs of storage than his *Knowledge* die type.

Whenever a CPU unit is damaged, roll 1d20 against the number of slug's worth of data and programs it has stored. If the result is less than or equal to this amount, a random program or database is corrupted and destroyed. The SRU cannot repair a damaged program.

A can has a number of options for inputting and outputting data. As far as input goes, all sensory data can be recorded and stored. Data can also be entered by data jack, radio, or slug reader.

A slug reader can be purchased as part of the CPU system. It can read standard data slugs and can have up to 3 slug ports. Programs can be downloaded into memory or run directly off an inserted slug.

The slug reader can be mounted in any body location and should be recorded on the cyborg's sheet as a separate system. If the reader is ever damaged, roll 1d4 against the number of slugs currently plugged into it. If the result is less than or equal to this number, one randomly selected slug is destroyed. The SRU cannot repair damaged slugs.

Data can be output to the deader's HUD, through a holographic cyber eye (see page 90), datajack, or radio, or to a blank data slug.

CPU

Component	Price
CPU	\$1000/slug
Storage	\$500/slug
Slug reader	\$500/port
Blank slug	\$200

Cyber Equipment



Cyber Arm

Cost: \$3000

Type: Integral

Spirit Loss: 2

Mounts: None

Drain: 1

Mount Location: Arm (duh)

This system replaces a deader's arm with a cybernetic replacement. This replacement functions in much the same way as a normal arm. It has the same *Strength* and *Deftness* as the arm the cyborg had before the implant surgery.

The arm is different in a couple of important ways, though. It has more room for additional internal systems—8 mounts instead of 6. It is also more resistant to damage. The materials used to make its outer shell are tough, giving it the equivalent of -4 light armor.

A basic cyber arm can usually be spotted as such fairly easy. Anyone looking at it can tell it's artificial with a Fair (5)

Cognition roll. Altering the arm to match its owner more closely by altering the skin tone, adding hair, and whatnot, costs an additional \$500. A disguised arm cannot be

spotted unless the person examining it has a reason to believe it's not real. Even then, it takes a Hard (9) *Cognition* roll to be sure. The TN for rolls to spot an artificial limb drop by 1 for each wound the limb has taken. It's hard to convince people that your arm is real when sparks and burnt wires are coming out of it.

Cyber Eye

Cost: \$2000/basic eye

Type: Modular

Spirit Loss: 1/eye

Mounts: 1/eye

Drain: 1/eye

Mount Location: Head

There are nearly as many types of cyber eyeballs as there are cyborgs. Well, maybe not, but there are a lot of them.

Each eyeball can have two functions in it in addition to basic vision. A basic eyeball costs \$2000. Each function added to it increases the cost. The exact amount added depends on the function.

If a cyborg is equipped with a CPU system, he can record and save anything he sees through a cybernetic eye. One slug of storage can store roughly 500 hours of high-quality motion pictures.

The possible functions are:

Electromagnetic: This option can see electromagnetic waves and magnetic fields. Objects giving off these types of energy glow brightly. This makes it possible for the cyborg to see power lines inside walls, follow radio waves back to their source, and locate utility lines before digging.

Holographic: The eyeball can actually serve as a holographic projector. It can project any image stored in the cyborg's brain up to 10 yards away. The maximum image size is a cube roughly 6' on a side.

Laser Sight: The eyeball is equipped with a small, but powerful laser generator. The beam isn't strong enough to cause any damage. The laser has a variety of uses. It can be used as a pointing device, to measure ranges down to the nearest millimeter (deadly with a targeting computer or GPS and artillery), or to guide smart weapons onto their targets. When used to guide weapons, the laser has a Speed of 1 and Range increment of 100 yards.

Light enhancement: This option increases the eye's light gathering capability. This allows the cyborg to see in darkened conditions and eliminates penalties due to low light conditions. It does not work in total darkness.

Cyber Equipment

Spirit Vision: This function can see dimly into the spirit realm. It can see spirits, magical auras, and other things normally invisible to the naked eye. Check out the rules for drinking spook juice in *The Wasted West* for more details on what can be seen. This option takes up more room than the others and can be the only function in an eyeball.

Telescopic: This option allows your cyborg to zoom in on the action. The most common telescopic eyeballs were 16x.

Thermal Imaging: This option sees objects by the infrared energy they give off. Hot objects are brighter than cold objects. Warm objects like running vehicles and human bodies have a halo of heat around them that makes it possible to spot them even when they are obscured by cover.

Wide Angle: The eyeball is equipped with extra light receptors that allow it to see a much wider arc than normal. The cyborg's peripheral vision is extended. He can see up to 30° behind him on either side.

Cyber Eyes

Option	Cost
Electromagnetic	\$2500
Holographic	\$1500
Laser Sight	\$2000
Light Enhancement	\$2000
Spirit Vision	\$5000
Thermal Imaging	\$2000
Telescopic	\$1500
Wide Angle	\$3000

Cyber Hand

Cost: Varies

Type: Modular

Spirit Loss: 1

Mounts: 1

Drain: Varies

Mount Location: Arm

Rather than replacing an entire arm, some deaders only had a hand replaced. Others replaced the standard hand that was part of their cybernetic arms with special purpose hands.

There are a number of different hand types available:

Buzzsaw: This hand is about as subtle as a nuclear weapon, but it gets the job done. The deader's hand is replaced with a spinning saw blade. The blade has a Speed of 1, does Strength +2d10 damage, and has a DB of +1.

Grapple: These hands were common in the Maze, cyborgs used them to scale the sheer sides of the mesas there. A grapple hand is detachable. It's mounted on the end of a small air cannon and it's attached to the arm by a thin alloy cable 100 yards long and capable of supporting 1000 pounds.

The hand has a Speed of 1, a Range Increment of 10 and does 2d6 damage when hitting a target. It can be fired at any location or target within 100 yards of the cyborg. If the shot misses, use the grenade deviation rules to determine where it lands.

Once fired, the hand can crawl on each of the cyborg's actions with a Pace of 4 or it can latch onto something and be retrieved by the winch attached to the cable. The winch retrieves the hand at the rate of 10 yards per round.

Grip: Talk about your killer handshakes! The synthetic bones in this hand were designed to lock in place on command and are attached to heavy duty servos. This increases the cyborg's effective *Strength* die type by two steps for the purposes of gripping things. In addition, the cyborg can spend an action locking the hand. Once locked, the hand can only be removed from the object it's gripping if the cyborg let's go or the hand is destroyed.

Infiltrator: The skin on this hand is completely smooth. Beneath the skin is a special gel which can be shaped with an electrical current. The cyborg's skin can be set to imitate the fingerprints of any person for which a set is stored in memory. A new set can be committed to memory by studying a person's hand or a picture of their fingerprints for 10 minutes and making a Hard (9) *Cognition* roll.

Light Fingered: These hands have four times the normal number of sensors embedded in them. This gives the cyborg a heightened sense of touch and imparts a +4 modifier to rolls to do anything which require precision and a light touch. Lockpicking, micro-surgery, and Jenga are some examples.

Cyber Hands

Hand	Cost	Drain
Buzzsaw	\$2000	2
Grapple	\$5000	1 (2 while winching)
Grip	\$2500	1
Infiltrator	\$3000	1
Light Fingered	\$2000	1

Cyber Equipment



Cyber Leg

Cost: \$4000

Type: Integral

Spirit Loss: 2

Mounts: None

Drain: 1

Mount Location: Leg

This system replaces one of the Harrowed's legs with a spiffy titanium and ghost steel one. Just as with arms, the basic leg functions just like the limb it replaced. It has the same stats as the deader's old leg, provides light armor -4, and has 8 mount locations instead of 6. Also like an arm, it can be disguised. This costs an extra \$1000.

Overload: Normal cyber legs not equipped with high-speed pistons (see below) can be overloaded to increase the can's Pace. Each extra point of Drain channeled into the legs increases the deader's Pace by 6.

There are a few options which can be built into a cyber leg. It's possible to have both of the following options built into the same legs:

High-Pressure Pistons: Legs with high-pressure pistons were designed for jumping and leaping. For each extra point of Drain channeled into the pistons, a cyborg with this option can jump 5' vertically, long jump 10' from a standing start, and 30' horizontally from a running start. Two points of Drain, for instance, would allow a deader to jump 10 feet vertically or 20' horizontally. This option costs \$1500 per leg and must be installed in both legs to function correctly.

High-Speed Pistons: These legs were built for speed. Each extra point of Drain channeled into the legs increases the cyborg's Pace by 12. This option costs \$2000 per leg and must be installed in both legs to function properly.

Cyber Scanner

Cost: \$5000

Type: Modular

Spirit Loss: None

Mounts: 1

Drain: 2

Mount Location: Any

Sometimes it's good to know what you're up against. The cyber scanner uses arcane energy to probe the target's body and identify any cybernetic systems it finds. It has a range of 20 yards.

Each scan attempt takes a full round. It's necessary for the cyborg to interpret the information generated by the scanners, so roll the cyborg's *Smarts* against a Fair (5) TN.

If the roll succeeds, the can doing the scanning identifies one system, determined at random, in the target deader for every 5 points he got on his roll. Continued scanning reveals new systems each time the scanner makes a successful *Smarts* roll.

If the deader doing the scanning has any type of cyber eye, the scanner can highlight the location of systems found in another cyborg. Many cyborgs use this feature to make sure they don't damage anything important when they get into a fight with another of their kind.

An arcane shield (see page 100) can block a cyber scanner.

Overload: It's possible to turn the setting on the scanner to broil. Every extra point of Drain used to power the scanner blasts enough energy into the target to interfere with the workings of its systems. Select a system at random and make an overload roll for it at a -1 for each point of Drain used to overload the scanner.

Cyber Skull

Cost: \$3000

Type: Integral

Spirit Loss: 2

Mounts: None

Drain: 1

Mount Location: Head

This system replaces the deader's skull with an oversized ghost steel cranium. It houses the deader's brain, eyes, and spinal column. The skull comes with synthetic skin, but there's no way anyone is going to mistake a cyborg with one of these skulls for anything other than what he is.

The skull's metal housing provides AV 2 for the deader's grey matter. This system cannot be combined with endo-armor.

Cyber Torso

Cost: \$6000

Type: Integral

Spirit Loss: 3

Mounts: None

Drain: 1

Mount Location: Torso

A cyber torso replaces most of a deader's chest and abdomen. All of the internal organs are removed. The rib cage is replaced with a ghost steel replica. The original spinal column is kept but the bones are laced with ghost steel to reinforce them. The spinal cord and enough nerve and other tissue is retained to maintain connections with the deader's other organic body parts and allow them to regenerate.

Cyber Equipment

The new torso has the same stats as the deader's old torso, provides light armor -4, and has 10 mount locations instead of 8. The basic replacement torso is obviously artificial. It can be made lifelike for an extra \$1000.

Data Jack

Cost: \$500

Type: Modular

Spirit Loss: None

Mounts: 1

Drain: None

Mount Location: Any

This is a standard data port connection. It allows your cyborg to plug into computers, other cyborgs, cyber weapons, and so on—basically anything with a data jack. The jack includes a small compartment which holds a 6' data cable.

Jacks are normally mounted on the cyborg's surface and they are easy to notice. For an extra \$100, it's possible to have the jack recessed and covered with a small plug made from the deader's own skin. Spotting a camouflaged jack requires an Incredible (11) *Cognition* roll.

Dexterity Booster

Cost: \$10,000

Type: Integral

Spirit Loss: 2

Mounts: 1 in each location

Drain: 2

Mount Location: Both arms and legs, torso

A Dexterity system boosts a deader's eye-hand (and foot) coordination. A central processor in the torso is jacked directly into the brainer's spinal cord and feeds instructions to sub-processors in the extremities. This increases your hero's *Deftness* die type by two levels and negates the penalty for using the off hand.

Drug Dispenser

Cost: \$5000

Type: Modular

Spirit Loss: None

Mounts: 1(2)

Drain: 1

Mount Location: Head or arm

This system combines a small drug nano-factory with a set of sharp nails or fangs with which to deliver the toxin. As might be expected, this system was most popular with infiltrators.

The nails or fangs used to deliver the poison have a Speed of 1, DB of 0, and do STR+Id4 damage. If the nails or fangs cannot penetrate the target's Armor, the target is unaffected by the poison.

The nano-factory can actually manufacture a number of different toxins, if equipped properly. Adding this capability costs extra for each drug added and increases the mounts needed by 1. See the Toxin Table for the cost of each drug.

Each dose manufactured requires 2 chemical components (see the *Junkman Cometh* for details) and an hour to make. The system can store up to 5 different doses of poison. These formulas only work on living people. They have absolutely no effect on deaders.

The possible venoms are:

Antidote: Boring, but it comes first alphabetically. The unit can manufacture antidotes to any of the other poisons. Obviously, these need to be injected *before* the victim expires.

Delayed Action: This isn't a drug itself. It's an option which can be used with any of the other drugs. Delayed-action drugs are encapsulated in tiny micro-beads which slowly dissolve in the victim's bloodstream. When a dose is manufactured, the cyborg can specify any period of time from 1 round to 1 year. Once the specified time elapses, the drug takes effect.



Cyber Equipment



Heart-Stopper: This drug is a favorite of assassin's everywhere. It induces a massive heart attack in the victim. Use the rules for a heart attack found on the Scart Table in the main rulebook, but the victim's *Vigor* rolls are made against a TN of 13, instead of 9. The drug breaks down rapidly in the victim's bloodstream and leaves no discernible traces for nosy investigators.

Nerve Toxin: This lethal little number is almost always fatal. Once in the bloodstream, this drug goes to work on the victim's nervous system, causing painful convulsions, foaming at the mouth, and involuntary emptying of the bowels and bladder—a really dignified way to go.

As soon as the poison is injected, and at the beginning of each round thereafter, the victim must make a *Vigor* roll against a TN of 21. If the roll is failed, the poor sod takes the amount by which the roll was failed as damage to the guts. Should the victim ever get a raise on his *Vigor* roll, he has proved to be somehow naturally resistant to the toxin and the damage stops. The intense pain caused by this poison causes a -6 modifier to all rolls made by the victim.

Sedative: Once injected with this drug, the victim must make a *Vigor* roll against a TN of 21. Failure means he takes the difference in Wind. If the drugged person ever goes bust on a roll, he takes actual damage rather than Wind. A single dose of this drug puts an average-sized person out for roughly 4 hours.

Truth Serum: Any brainer taking this drug must make a *Vigor* roll against a TN of 13. If she fails, she suffers a -6 modifier when resisting any Tests o' Will for the next two hours.

Toxins

Drug	Cost
Antidote	\$500
Delayed Action	\$1000
Heart-Stopper	\$3000
Nerve Toxin	\$5000
Sedative	\$1500
Truth Serum	\$3000

EMP Hardening

Cost: \$1000/location

Type: Integral

Spirit Loss: None

Mounts: 1 in each location

Drain: None

Mount Location: Any

Many of the cyborgs who survived the Last War made it because they had this system. This system installs a Faraday cage and other shielding around the systems in each protected location. This protects fragile electronics from the EMP of a nuclear blast or from the Domsayer miracle of the same name. The systems are immune to both of these events. In addition, the shielding serves as AV 2 against all other radiation and electricity based attacks.

Endo-armor

Cost: \$2000/location

Type: Integral

Spirit Loss: 1/2 per location rounded up.

Mounts: 1 in each location

Drain: None

Mount Location: Any

Endo-armor places a layer of high-tech ballistic fibers just beneath a cyborg's skin. This provides Armor 2 to each body location equipped with it. Unfortunately it's stiff and bulky. Putting endo-armor in either of a cyborg's arms lowers the cyborg's *Deftness* die by one step. Installing the stuff in either leg or the torso drops the can's *Nimbleness* die by a step.

Cyber Equipment

Each socket is anchored securely to the deader's skeleton or the cyber replacement in the body area. Each one is also wired into the cyborg's spirit fetter to provide power for the attached systems.

Hard points come in two varieties: light and heavy. The heavy hard points have been reinforced with extra bracing to enable them to support heavier loads. They also take up more room within the cyborg for that reason.

Hard points can be installed in any location. Installing them in an arm or leg adds two hard points to the limb. A torso installation adds four hard points. A head installation, fairly rare, adds a single hardpoint.

Take a look at the external systems, which start on page 103, to see what can be mounted on hard points.

Hold-Out Weapon

Cost: Varies

Type: Modular

Spirit Loss: None

Mounts: 1

Drain: Varies/shot

Mount Location: Arm or torso

Hold-out weapons are most common among infiltrator and light combat models. This system implants a short-barreled, ranged weapon in either the cyborg's arm or torso. The gun is completely hidden from sight unless deployed to fire. It takes an action to activate the weapon and make it ready to fire.

There are three varieties of hold-out weapons: cartridge, rail gun, and plasma. All three have a Speed of 1, and a Range Increment of 10. Their other stats vary by type. Take a look at the Hold-Out Table

For the cartridge and rail gun hold-outs, additional magazines of ammo can be purchased for \$200 each. Each magazine holds as much ammo as the weapon's integral magazine and uses up a mount location. The magazine must be mounted in the same body location as the weapon. It takes one action to switch from one magazine to another.

Many cyborgs load each magazine with a different type of ammunition and switch between them as needed. The cartridge hold out uses standard 10mm cartridges and can fire any variety of this round. The rail gun fires a special 4mm slug available in standard and frangible varieties. Ammo for this weapon is extremely hard to find and costs \$5 a round for standard ammo and \$10 a round for frangible slugs.

Overload: The effects of overloading this weapon depend on the type. Each extra point of Drain spent on the cartridge version increases its ROF by 1. Each extra point spent on the rail gun hold-out increases the shot's AP value by +1 for standard rounds, or increases the frangible round's damage by +1. Each extra Drain spent on the plasma weapon increases the shot's Burst Radius by 1 yard (it starts with a Burst Radius of 0).

Hold Out

Weapon	Drain	Cost	Damage	Ammo
Cartridge	1	\$1000	3d6	30
Rail gun	2	\$1500	2d12	50
Plasma	3	\$2500	4d8	NA

Infiltrator

Cost: \$5000

Type: Integral

Spirit Loss: 1

Mounts: 1/limb and head, 2 in torso

Drain: 1

Mount Location: All

As you might guess from the name, this system is the bread and butter of infiltrator cyborgs. Light cyborgs that were frequently deployed in civilian areas also often had this system.

The infiltrator system allows a cyborg to pass as human. It ensures that the deader exhibits all the behaviors of a living person. It gives the Harrowed a pulse, a simulated heartbeat, makes sure he breathes and blinks, even circulates "blood" so the deader bleeds when injured. This synthetic blood has a preservative and deodorant in it which masks the Harrowed's smell.

The system only has a limited supply of this blood, but it can synthesize more. Whenever your can takes "bleeding" damage equal to his Wind, he's running low. Eating 2 pounds of raw, red meat provides enough raw material to replenish the supply.

Anyone viewing a cyborg with an operational infiltrator system should be unable to tell the cyborg is not entirely human, unless the deader has given the person some reason to suspect otherwise. Even then it takes a *scrutinize* roll against a TN of 15 to discover the truth. The Marshal may modify this TN if your can is acting in ways that reveal his true nature, like continuing to fight on after taking enough damage to drop a bull rhino.

Cyber Equipment

The exception to this is people with medical training. Any person with the *medicine* Aptitude who attempts to treat a cyborg's wounds needs to only roll against a Hard (9) TN minus the deader's highest wound level.

Lightning Bolt Cannon

Cost: \$3000

Type: Modular

Spirit Loss: None

Mounts: 2

Drain: 2/die

Mount Location: Arm

The lightning bolt cannon unleashes a crackling arc of electrical energy at its target. This weapon was designed for use against enemy cyborgs and automatons, but it fries living people pretty well, too.

The cannon is short-ranged but potent. Every point of Drain pumped into it does 1d8 damage. Against living creatures, this is actual, wound-causing damage. When used against automatons or cyborgs and other electronic opponents, the target must make a *Vigor* roll against the damage total. Failure means that the target is stunned for a number of actions equal to the amount by which the roll was missed. In addition, cyborgs have one randomly determined system knocked out for 1d6 rounds in the affected body area for every 6 Wind they take.

The cannon has a Speed of 1 and a Range Increment of 5.

Power Focus

Cost: \$1000/level

Type: Modular

Spirit Loss: 1

Mounts: 1

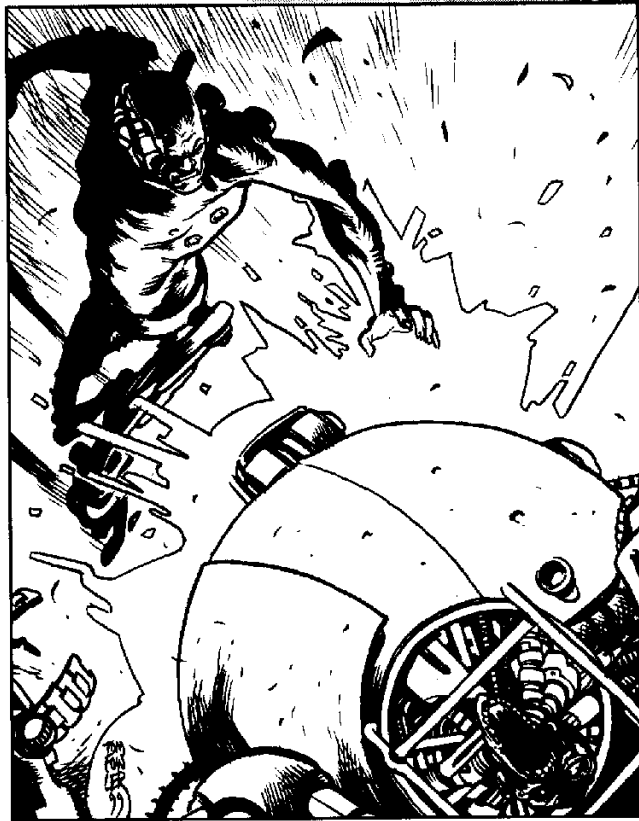
Drain: Varies

Mount Location: Torso

A power focus allows a cyborg to develop new Harrowed powers or use pre-existing ones. This device draws raw arcane energy from the spirit fether and makes it available for your deader to play with.

Power foci are rated in levels based on the amount of energy they can handle. The maximum rating is five. These levels correspond to the five levels of Harrowed powers. A deader can only use any powers he knows at the level of his power focus or less, even if he knows the power at a higher level.

The Drain of the focus is equal to the level of the power being used. Your hero can choose to use a power at a level lower than he knows it to save energy.



Power Jack

Cost: \$500

Type: Modular

Spirit Loss: None

Mounts: 1

Drain: None

Mount Location: Any

A power jack allows a cyborg to power external devices which are not attached to her via a hard point. The power jack includes a small, hidden compartment containing a 6' power cable.

This system was originally designed to power weapons and other external equipment, but since the end of the Last War and the rise of junker magic, it was discovered that a cyborg's manitou energy could also power junker devices plugged into a power jack. The reverse is also true, junker spirit batteries can provide extra power for a cyborg's onboard systems through a power jack.

Check out page 109 for more information on the use of junker technology with your deader's cyber enhancements.

Cyber Equipment

Radar

Cost: \$5000

Type: Modular

Spirit Loss: None

Mounts: 2

Drain: Varies

Mount Location: Torso

This unit is bulkier than some, but it's hard to sneak up on a deader with one. It sweeps a 360° area around the cyborg, building a picture of the objects around her with radio waves.

The unit has two modes: active and passive. In active mode the set transmits energy that allows the cyborg to see his surroundings. The maximum distance the deader can see depends on how much energy she pumps into the unit. Check out the Radar Range Table. Jammers and other ECM units must roll versus the cyborg's *Cognition*. If the can wins, he has seen through the jamming.

In passive mode, the unit can be used to locate the position of other transmitting radar and radio sets. This requires a *Cognition* roll. The exact TN for this roll is up to the Marshal and depends on the distance to the transmitter, the strength of the signal, and so on.

Overload: By spending twice the normal Drain for a given range, the radar unit can be used as a jammer with a rating equal to the cyborg's *Smarts*. Any radar set within range of the jammer must win a contest of its rating versus the cyborg's *Smarts*.

Radar Range

Drain	Range
2	500 yards
4	1 mile
6	5 miles

Radio

Cost: \$1000

Type: Modular

Spirit Loss: None

Mounts: 1

Drain: 1

Mount Location: Any

This is a high-tech piece of communications hardware. It has 40 channels and is capable of scrambled, tight-beam, and burst transmission. Under normal conditions the set has a range of 100 miles. When used in tight-beam mode, the range is extended to 500 miles, but the transmitter must be pointed directly at the receiver for this to work. The set can reach orbital satellites in this mode.

For details on radios, see *The Wasted West*.

Overload: When overloaded, the transmitter can be used to jam radio communications within a 50-yard radius by broadcasting on all channels at once. Each extra point of Drain beyond the first increases the radius of the jammed area by an additional 50 yards.

Reflex Booster

Cost: \$10,000

Type: Integral

Spirit Loss: 2

Mounts: 1/location

Drain: 2

Mount Location: Any

A reflex booster bypasses most of a cyborg's undead nervous system with high-speed optical fibers. Your hero's *Quickness* die type is increased by two steps.

Overload: Extra Drain can be allotted to this system to overclock the processor and speed things up even further. Each extra point of Drain spent on the reflex booster allows your hero to trade in one of his action cards for another. You're still stuck with black jokers, though.



Cyber Equipment

Samson

Cost: \$1000/location

Type: Integral

Spirit Loss: 2

Slots: 2 in each body location except head

Drain: 2

Mount Location: All but head

This system adds heavy-duty servos, pistons, and joint actuators to the cyborg's body, augmenting the strength of the Harrowed's dead flesh.

The Samson unit takes up 2 mounts in each body area in which it is installed. Most pre-war cyborgs with this system had it installed in all locations except the head (it's only necessary there if you want to bite or headbutt someone with exceptional strength). Uneven installations simply caused too many coordination problems—not to mention the cyborgs who injured themselves lifting things with their cyber arms that their unenhanced backs and legs couldn't support.

The basic system gives the cyborg a *Strength* of $d12+4$. Use the hero's natural *Strength* Coordination.

If the Samson unit ever loses power, the cyborg's *Strength* drops three die types and his *Deftness* and *Nimbleness* both drop a single die type until power is restored.

Overload: Each extra point of Drain pumped into the unit increases the cyborg's *Strength* die type by one level over and above the normal bonus granted by the system.

Self Repair Unit

Cost: \$20,000

Type: Integral

Spirit Loss: 1

Mounts: 2

Drain: Special

Mount Location: Torso

The SRU is one of the most important pieces of equipment a cyborg has. All pre-war cyborgs have one.

The self repair unit uses the arcane energy supplied by the manitou to repair a cyborg's damaged systems. It does this in much the same way as junkers build their devices: it transforms parts that are kind of like those needed to make repairs into the exact parts that are needed. Not only that, but it automatically installs them, too. Without one of these devices, a cyborg could not make quick field repairs. After 13 years of little maintenance, most cans would have been disabled by their systems failing due to age and neglect.

Before a cyborg can use his SRU to repair damage, he must have some spare parts. Just to keep things simple, these spare parts use the same categories as components for junker devices: electronic, mechanical, and structural. They are found in the same way also. Check out the scroungin' rules in Chapter 2 of the *Junkman Cometh* or Chapter 8 of the *Hell on Earth* rulebook for details. When scrounging on the body of a disabled cyborg add +4 to the scroungin' roll.

The number of components required depends on what type of damage is being repaired. If wounds to a cybernetic body replacement like an arm, leg, or torso are being fixed, one mechanical and one structural are needed per wound level repaired. If a disabled internal system is being fixed, one mechanical and one electronic component are needed. These components are simply held against the damaged area and are slowly absorbed as the repairs take place.

Using the SRU has a Drain of 1 per wound level healed and takes one minute per wound level or internal system fixed. The Drain is continuous throughout the duration of the repair process. Internal systems that span multiple body locations must be repaired separately in each area they are damaged. The SRU can never heal damage to a cyborg's organic parts.

SRU's can be equipped with an internal parts hopper so the cyborg doesn't have to worry about pulling out parts in the heat of combat. Each extra slot allotted to the SRU can store one component of any type. These components can be used to repair damage anywhere on the cyborg's body. New components can be added to the hopper through a small access door in the cyborg's abdomen.

Overload: The speed at which systems are repaired can be increased to one wound level or system per round by spending double the amount of Drain needed to perform the repairs.

Ashe just got used as a chew toy by a machine gun. He's taken three wounds to his right arm and two wounds to his torso. In addition, his Samson unit in both areas was knocked out. That's a total of 5 wound levels and 2 systems. To repair all of the damage, Ashe needs 2 electronic, 7 mechanical, and 5 structural components. The repairs take 7 minutes (5 wounds + 2 systems).

Cyber Equipment

Shield

Cost: Varies

Type: Modular

Spirit Loss: None

Mounts: 2

Drain: Varies

Mount Location: Torso

Energy shields come in a number of varieties, but they all have one thing in common: they're all energy hogs.

All shields create a protective barrier just large enough to surround the cyborg and the equipment on his body. This barrier stops attacks moving both in and out of the shield—that's a problem if your deader wants to deal some damage while his shield is activated. If your can is using any weapon which is linked to him through a data jack, power jack, or hard point, he's in good shape. The shield's processor automatically creates a split-second gap in the shield to allow the attack through. If your deader is using a weapon without a link, it's attack can only pass through the shield if it's of a type not blocked by the shield, a laser through a kinetic shield for instance, or if the weapon has been equipped with a shield synchronizer.

It takes an action to activate or deactivate a shield.

There are four types of shields:

Kinetic: This is the most basic shield. It provides protection against attacks which cause damage through kinetic energy—projectiles and melee weapons. The shield provides 1 level of Armor against such attacks for each 2 points of Drain allotted to the shield.

Energy: These shields provide protection against both kinetic and energy attacks like lasers and plasma weapons. These shields provide 1 level of Armor for every 4 points of Drain used.

Arcane: This is the most powerful of the shields, it protects against physical, energy, and magical attacks. It provides 1 level of Armor for every 3 points of energy supplied. In addition to stopping damage from magical attacks, it also stops other, non-damaging powers from affecting the cyborg. Each time someone tries to use an arcane power on your deader roll 1d20 against a 10 plus the amount of Drain currently being used by the shield. If the roll is less than or equal to this total, the power is blocked. A roll of 20 always fails to block an attack regardless of how much energy is being pumped into the shield.

Ashe's hero is spending 6 Drain a round on his arcane shield. An enemy syker attempts to use "The Paralyzer" on him. On a 1d20 roll of 16 or less, the power fails to work.

Mind: This is a special purpose arcane shield. Instead of protecting the cyborg's entire body, it protects only his skull against arcane powers. These units were used extensively by infiltrator units to prevent their minds from being probed by sykers or the black magic of cultists. These work in the same way as an arcane shield, but each point of energy spent on the shield increases the TN for the d20 roll by 2 points.

These shields also give the deader a rough idea of which direction a blocked attack came from.

Shields

Shield	Drain	Cost
Kinetic	2/AV	\$2000
Energy	4/AV	\$5000
Arcane	3/AV	\$10,000
Mind	1/+2 TN	\$7500

Cyber Equipment

Shocker

Cost: \$5000

Type: Modular

Spirit Loss: None

Mounts: 1

Drain: 1-3

Mount Location: Torso

Shocker units were first developed by the Northern Alliance. They first saw use when anti-war riots broke out in Washington D.C. in 2080. Cyborgs equipped with these devices were sent into the crowd to break up the protest.

Shockers create a crackling electrical charge over the cyborg's entire body. Anyone who touches the deader is going to be hurting. Each point of Drain used by the shocker does 1d6 Wind to anyone who comes into contact with the cyborg. Of course if the cyborg's, say...fist, should happen to come into violent contact with someone's face, that poor sod takes damage from both the punch and the electricity.

Because the shockers were designed as a non-lethal weapon, the maximum Drain they can normally handle is 3.

Overload: If more than 3 Drain is used in a shocker unit, the charge becomes large enough to be lethal. The unit now causes real damage rather than Wind. Each extra point of Drain spent still increases the damage by 1d6.

Sonar

Cost: \$3000

Type: Modular

Spirit Loss: None

Mounts: 1

Drain: 1

Mount Location: Torso

This is another system which was popular in the Great Maze. The cyborg must also have a Big Ears unit for this system to work properly.

The sonar unit allows a deader to "see" using sound waves. The resolution of this system isn't great, anything smaller than the size of a tennis ball is effectively invisible to the user, and of course, telling what color something is is right out. The system does allow the cyborg to get around in complete darkness, though.

The system works both on dry ground and underwater. On land, the system only detects objects within 100 yards. Underwater, the sonar unit can spot things as far as two miles away.

Overload: The unit's transmitter can be overloaded to produce a deafening blast of sound. Everyone within 20 yards of the cyborg must make a *Vigor* roll against a Fair (5) TN plus

2 for every Drain point spent to overload the system. Anyone failing the roll is stunned, loses a number of Wind equal to the amount by which the roll was failed, and is deafened for 1d4 hours. Anyone going bust on the roll is permanently deafened.

Spirit Blaster

Cost: \$8000

Type: Modular

Spirit Loss: None

Mounts: 1

Drain: 3/die

Mount Location: Arm

This nasty weapon channels raw spirit energy from the cyborg's fetter and spits a bolt of it at his enemies. The arcane energy of this blast is not affected by material objects and ignores any sort of cover or normal armor between the shooter and his target. It is blocked normally by an arcane shield or other Armor of a magical nature.

The amount of damage the bolt does depends on how much energy is pumped into it. Every 3 points of Drain spent does 1d6 damage. The spirit blaster has a Speed of 1, ROF 1, and Range Increment of 10.

Spirit Capacitor Bank

Cost: \$15,000

Type: Modular

Spirit Loss: None

Mounts: 1

Drain: None

Mount Location: Any

These were developed very late in the war and production was limited. Heavy combat cyborgs got priority for installation of this new system. Just about any cyborg in the Wasted West would be willing to pay the unit's weight in gold to get a hold of one.

A spirit capacitor bank can store some of the manitou's excess energy for later use. Each bank is composed of ten small capacitors, each of which can hold a single point of energy. This energy can be called on at any time in any amount.

Once empty, it takes a while for a capacitor to recharge. It takes 10 minutes for one capacitor to fully recharge, and only one capacitor can recharge at a time. This means that it takes 30 minutes to recharge 3 capacitors; 100 minutes to recharge the entire bank.

Cyber Equipment

Spur

Cost: \$2000

Type: Modular

Spirit Loss: None

Mounts: 2

Drain: None

Mount Location: Arm

Despite all the high-tech weapons available on the battlefields of the Last War, sometimes the best way to get rid of an enemy was to stick a sharp piece of metal in his gut. This system equips a cyborg with a razor-sharp metal blade approximately one foot long which extends from his wrist. This blade can be retracted into the deader's forearm to hide it from view when not needed.

The spur is Speed 1, DB +1, and does STR+2d8 damage. Its special titanium/ghost steel construction keeps it razor sharp and gives it an AP 2 rating.

Overload: Overloading this system causes a high-speed vibration in the blade which increases its cutting potential. Each extra point of Drain pumped into the system increases the spur's damage by +1.

Storage Canister

Cost: \$1000

Type: Modular

Spirit Loss: None

Mounts: 1

Drain: None

Mount Location: Legs or torso

These units were developed for infiltrator cyborgs so they could carry a concealed weapon while under cover. They provide an internal storage compartment large enough to hold a large pistol, 100 rounds of pistol caliber ammo, 50 rounds of rifle caliber ammo, or any other small object of roughly the same size as a pistol.

The canister can be opened and closed with a simple mental command. This is a simple action.

Targeting Computer

Cost: \$10,000

Type: Modular

Spirit Loss: None

Mounts: 1

Drain: 1

Mount Location: Any

This was a mandatory piece of equipment on all heavy weapons cyborgs, and common on light and infiltrator units also.

In order to function correctly, the computer must have some way of measuring things like range, relative speed, and so on. This means the cyborg must have one of the following systems operating to gain the computer's bonus: targeting laser (either in an eyeball or mounted on the weapon itself), radar, or sonar. The weapon being used must also be linked into the cyborg's systems in some way. All weapons designed for cyborg forces are equipped with a link which can be plugged into a data jack. Weapons mounted on a cyborg's hard point system are automatically linked to the computer through the hard point. Conventional weapons can be equipped with a weapon targeter system (see page 105).

If these requirements are met, the computer can cancel up to 6 points of negative targeting penalties. The computer never gives a bonus to hit, it simply corrects for things which impose a penalty like called shots, range, lighting, movement, and so on. This means the lowest TN the cyborg ever rolls against (without bonuses from other sources), is a 5.

Overload: Your deader can overclock his targeting computer by spending extra Drain. Each extra point spent on the targeting computer negates another 2 points of penalties.



Cyber Equipment

External Equipment

Not all of a cyborg's equipment has to be shoved inside his rotting carcass. Many systems and weapons were developed specifically for the cyborg troops that were either hand held or could be mounted on any deader with a hard point system. Any external system can be jettisoned in a single action.

External Systems

Externally-mounted equipment has three primary characteristics: cost, Drain, and mounts.

Cost and *Drain* work the same as for internal systems.

Mounts lists the number and type of hard points needed to attach the system to a cyborg, as well as a location if required. A listing of "2 Heavy Torso" means that the system requires 2 heavy torso hardpoints to mount. Systems which require light hard points work on heavy hard points, but not vice versa.

Dazzler

Cost: \$3000

Drain: 2

Mount: 2 light torso

This system was commonly used by Agency infiltrators and light combat cyborgs during raids against cultist safehouses and strongholds. The dazzler system mounts powerful strobe lights on the cyborg. These lights pulse at frequencies known to cause epileptic seizures in humans.

When activated, all living humans within 10 yards must make an Onerous (7) *Vigor* roll. Those who fail the roll experience a seizure, take 2d6 Wind, and collapse to the ground for 1d6 rounds. Those who don't collapse suffer a -2 to all their actions due to the distracting nature of the lights. This modifier also applies to those not normally affected by the strobing.

The system has four light clusters in armored casings. Targeting one of these lights requires a called shot with a -8 penalty. Each cluster has AV 1 and can take 10 points of damage.

Defoliant Sprayer

Cost: \$8000

Drain: 2

Mount: 2 Heavy Torso

Cyborg units often penetrated deep into enemy territory in hopes of tying up troops behind the lines. They would frequently establish

hastily constructed fighting positions and wait for the enemy to waste troops trying to dig them out.

The defoliant sprayer was developed to give cans a quick way of creating a clear fire zone around their positions. It sprays a highly acidic mixture containing genetically engineered bacteria, which reacts violently in contact with organic material. It dissolves any organic material it comes in contact with into a greenish-brown sludge. That's what gave this device its "goop-sprayer" nickname.

When it dries, this sludge is as hard as concrete. The cyborgs often planted metal fence posts, mines, razor wire, and other fortifications in the sludge while it was still wet. Once the stuff hardened, which normally takes about an hour, the cyborgs had themselves an instant fortress.

The sprayer consists of a large, back-mounted tank connected to a hand sprayer. The sprayer can fire a stream of the dissolving defoliant up to 50 yards. When used as a weapon, the sprayer has a Speed of 1, and a Range Increment of 5 yards.

The goop dissolves all organic material it comes in contact with. On average, the stuff can completely break down a 40' tall oak tree in about ten minutes. Any organic targets hit by this stuff, living or undead, take 4d12 massive damage each round until they can wash the goop off. This takes one full canteen of water per affected body location. Any equipment they are carrying with organic components like cotton, wool, or wood, are likely to be damaged as well.

The amount of real estate a single tank of goop can clear depends on the thickness of the vegetation. Take a look at the Goop Table. The sprayer can synthesize more goop if provided with the right materials. Each tank of goop created requires 10 chemical components and an hour of time during which the sprayer runs continuously with a Drain of 3.

Goop

Vegetation

Light underbrush
Heavy underbrush
Light forest
Heavy forest
Jungle

Area Cleared

400'x400'
200'x200'
100'x100'
50'x50'
25'x25'

Cyber Equipment

Entrencher

Cost: \$1500

Drain: 2

Mount: 2 Heavy Leg

The entrencher system mounts a large pair of rotating digging scoops on each leg. When activated, these scoops dig into the earth and rapidly excavate the ground beneath the cyborg's feet. It takes 4 rounds for the system to create a one-can foxhole that provides the deader with cover from the chest down.

Heavy Shoulder Mount

Cost: \$3000

Drain: 2

Mount: 2 Heavy Torso

This system is a heavy weapons mount that sits on a cyborg's shoulder. It can accept a number of heavy weapons including the M-120, M-200, M-320, and the Sentinel. The weapon in the mount is triggered by mental command.

The mount includes heavy recoil compensators, but even they can't absorb all of the recoil. A deader must have a *Strength* die of at least $d12+2$ to use this mount without penalty. If used by a weaker can, he takes 1 Wind for

every step his *Strength* die is below this each time the weapon in the mount fires.

The weapon in the mount can be used each action in addition to any other weapons the can has readied. Attacks with shoulder-mounted weapons suffer a -4 penalty to hit unless the cyborg has a functioning remote targeting program. A cyborg using two shoulder mounts must have a separate targeting program for each weapon to avoid this penalty. If both mounts are fired on the same action, a -2 recoil penalty applies to both shots.

Land Anchor

Cost: \$1500

Drain: 1

Mount: 2 Heavy Leg, 1 Heavy Torso

This system deploys three heavy metal spikes into the ground beneath the cyborg—one from each leg and one from the support leg which folds down from the can's back. The spikes deploy numerous barbs once in the ground, making them, and the cyborg attached to them, very hard to dislodge. This system was most often used by heavy weapons cyborgs when winching large objects or using the CPH-105.

It takes 1 action to deploy the anchor and a full round to retract the spikes. In an emergency, the deader can jettison the spikes in an action, but he's going to have to spend some time digging them up afterward. While the cyborg is anchored, he is basically an immovable object. He also can't sidestep an attack very well. While tied down, his *fightin' Aptitude* is halved (round down).

Power Ram

Cost: \$2500

Drain: 2/ram

Mount: 1 Heavy Arm

This system was designed for smashing in the doors of cultist hideouts, but cyborgs quickly realized that it can also be a devastating weapon. The ram is basically an enormous hydraulic piston with a weighted, armored head mounted on the cyborg's forearm.

In combat the weapon has a Defensive Bonus of 0, and a Speed of 2 that can't be rushed (it takes an action for the piston to pressurize). It does *Strength*+2d12 damage when it hits. In addition, for each raise the attacker gets on his roll to hit, human-sized targets are knocked back 1d6 yards.

When used against vehicles and structures, the power ram is considered a heavy weapon.



Cyber Equipment

Recon Drone

Cost: \$5000

Drain: 1

Mount: 1 Light Torso

This system consists of a small rack that fits on the back of one of the cyborg's shoulders. The rack holds a small, disk-like, recon drone about the size of a dessert plate. The drone has a battery-powered hoverfan which allows it to fly as high as 30' above the ground with a Pace of 48. The drone can operate for two hours off a fully-charged battery. The battery automatically recharges while the drone is on its docking rack, as long as the rack has power. It takes about 30 minutes to top off the battery.

Launching the drone requires an action. Once the drone is in the air it can be set to follow a series of waypoints laid out by the deader, or he can control it directly via the radio link between launcher and drone. While controlling the drone, the cyborg suffers a -4 penalty to all other actions. The maximum range at which the drone can be controlled is 2 miles.

The drone has both visual and thermal imaging sensors which allow it see under almost any lighting conditions. Its video feed is beamed directly back to the cyborg. This data can be stored in memory, or viewed on the cyborg's HUD. The drone also has a targeting laser which can be used to designate targets for other weapon systems.

The drone has AV 1 and Durability of 4/1.

Weapon Targeter

Cost: \$500

Drain: 1

Mount: None

This system can be attached to any conventional firearm to allow it to work with a cyborg's targeting computer. The weapon targeter is bolted onto the weapon and the unit's data cable is plugged into the deader's data jack.

Utility Pack

Cost: \$2000

Drain: 0

Mount: 2 light torso

This versatile device has a number of uses. For starters, its cargo compartment can be used like a regular backpack for carrying gear. The pack also has three armored ammunition chutes with adapters that allow them to be attached to nearly any clip or belt-fed weapon. The cargo compartment of the pack can be divided into three sections, each of which feeds ammo to a

different chute. The cargo compartment can hold up to 1000 rounds of ammunition. Large caliber small arms ammo (7.62mm to .50 cal) counts as two rounds each, 15mm to 40mm rounds count as 10 rounds each. Ammo larger than 40mm won't fit through the ammo chutes.

The pack also has a small compartment for storing components for the self repair unit. As long as the pack is powered, the SRU can use these components as well as any stored in the cyborg to make repairs.

Last but not least, the pack has a number of external pouches for storing small items and two external clips that can hold any firearm of rifle size or smaller.

Water Jets

Cost: \$1500

Drain: 2

Mount: 2 Light Leg

This system is a pair of water pulse jets that can be attached to a cyborg's legs. When the deader is in the water, these jets allow him to move with a Pace of 24.

Winch

Cost: \$1500

Drain: 1

Mount: 2 Heavy Torso

This is a heavy-duty winch with 100 yards of sturdy ghost-steel cable. If the cyborg is firmly braced (like with a land anchor), the winch can lift up to 4 tons, drag up to 8 tons, and tow up to 20 tons.

Armor

The cyborg engineers decided early on that wasting a lot of a 'can's internal space for armor, was, well, a big waste of internal space. Anything heavier than endo-armor was blatantly obvious to anyone looking at the cyborg, so cramming it beneath the deader's skin seemed pointless. Instead, they developed a variety of armor for the cans to wear.

A cyborg must have the listed hardpoints in order to wear one of these suits of armor. All of these armors require power from the cyborg, which is provided through the hardpoints. Most of this power goes to the armor's skeleton and the servos which help negate much of the armor's weight. Non-cyborgs can't wear this armor (actually they could, but good luck getting anywhere).

Cyber Equipment

Skirmish Armor

Cost: \$3000

Drain: 1

Mount: None

This full-body suit of armor was commonly issued to infiltrator cyborgs accompanying their bigger cousins on raids against cultist hideouts. This suit is the only one which doesn't require the wearer to have a hard point system, it can get power through hardpoints or by plugging into a deader's power jack.

This no-frills suit provides AV 2 in all locations.

Light Battle

Cost: \$5000

Drain: 2

Mount: 4 Light Torso

This suit was the standard battle dress of most light combat cyborgs. It provides AV 4 in all locations. It also has its own light hard point system at all locations on the armor's exterior, which allows the wearer to attach external systems to the armor.

For an extra \$2000 this armor may have externally-mounted, high-speed pistons installed. These function in the same way as those for cyber-legs (see page 92) and cover all of the leg hard points.

Heavy Battle

Cost: \$10,000

Drain: 3

Mount: All Heavy

This was the standard issue armor of most heavy weapons cyborgs. It provides AV 6 in all locations. The suit has an externally-mounted, heavy hardpoint system at all locations for mounting external devices.

Dreadnought

Cost: \$20,000

Drain: 4

Mount: All Heavy

This was the heaviest armor issued to cyborgs. It was normally assigned to the cans who would be carrying the squad's heavy support weapons or the CPH-105. In addition to a full heavy hard point system, the suit has a heavy weapon mount on each shoulder. The suit provides AV 8 in all locations.

Despite the built-in servo system, the bulk of this suit lowers the wearer's *Nimbleness* die by a step.

Weapons

The cyber forces of the world had many weapons designed specifically for their use. Listed below are some of the most common weapons. All of these weapons are equipped with a cable to plug into the can's data jack or power jack.

The combat statistics of all these weapons can be found on the Cyborg Systems Table on page 110. Don't worry about the listed nationalities for these weapons when buying equipment, almost all services had some form of equivalent weapon.

Chainsword

Cost: \$1500

Drain: 3

Mount: Handheld

This weapon was designed for close assault work. The Northern Alliance generals discovered that often the very sight of a heavy cyborg cleaving his way through the lines was enough to cause regular troops to break and run.

Colt M-22 Reaver

Cost: \$2000

Drain: None

Mount: Handheld

This heavy (really heavy) assault rifle was developed for Cy-SOG by Colt, and saw action in the Congo War. It fires a 10mm depleted uranium slug.

CPH-105

Cost: \$10,000

Drain: 3/shot

Mount: 3 Heavy Torso

This is the heaviest of heavy weapons carried by cyborgs. It's actually a small, cyborg-portable, 105mm howitzer mounted on the can's back. It's fed by large, 5-shot magazines which weigh 50 pounds each. The cyborg must be stationary and braced while firing this weapon. If firing while on unsteady footing or unbraced, the cyborg must make a Hard (9) *Nimbleness* roll to stay on his feet after each shot (try a land anchor).

Due to the high trajectory this weapon normally fires at, the cyborg may not engage targets less than 300 yards away unless lying prone or on all fours.

A cyborg must have a *Strength* die type of at least d12+4. Any cyborg with a lower *Strength* die attempting to fire this weapon takes 1d6 Wind for each step his *Strength* is below this level on each shot.

Cyber Equipment

Dixie Arms M-2011A

Cost: \$500

Drain: None

Mount: Handheld

This handgun was developed for cyborgs serving with the Texas Rangers, but was quickly adopted for military use by the CEAL Teams. It fires a .60 Magnum round which has been known to break the wrists of non-cyborgs attempting to use this powerful hand cannon.

Lee-Enfield IW-100C Sunburst

Cost: \$4000

Drain: 2/shot, 5/burst

Mount: 1 Light Arm or Handheld

This British design was the first handheld plasma weapon ever deployed. It was quickly copied by most of the world's major militaries. The Sunburst was eventually adapted for use by the SUS and other cyborg units.

M-120 A2

Cost: \$2000

Drain: 1/round of operation

Mount: Handheld, Heavy Weapon Mount, or 1 light arm, plus 1 light torso

This is a retooled version of the venerable M-120 minigun. It has been modified so that it can be mounted beneath a cyborg's forearm or fired "Rambo"-style using the second pistol-grip mounted beneath the barrels. The weapon's ammo hopper is mounted on the can's torso.

M-200 MPSWC

Cost: \$2500

Drain: 1/round of operation

Mount: 2 light arm, 1 light torso

This a version of the M-200 MPSW adapted for use by the cyber forces. The weapon itself mounts on the can's forearm. A heavy recoil absorber cradles the deader's elbow and attaches to his upper arm. This helps absorb the punishing recoil of the 20mm rounds and functions just like the gyro-harness normally used with the weapon.

M-320 LAPAT

Cost: \$5000

Drain: 2/shot, 4/burst

Mount: 1 Heavy Arm or Heavy Weapon Mount

This weapon's name stands for Laser, Anti-Personnel, Anti-Tank.

The weapon must be switched between anti-personnel and anti-tank modes. This takes an action. In anti-personnel mode the weapon has a

ROF of 6 and does 3d8 AP 2 damage. In anti-tank mode, the LAPAT has a ROF of 1, but does a whopping 4d12 AP6 damage.

Plasma Blade

Cost: \$5000

Drain: 4/round

Mount: 1 Light Torso or Handheld

When not activated, this weapon looks like an oversized flashlight with a long, triangle-tipped metal rod sticking out of it. This rod serves to channel the powerful magnetic fields which contain the plasma generated by the weapon's handle. When activated, the weapon creates a blade of incredibly hot plasma which can cut through even ghost-steel armor like butter.

In combat, the only other weapon which can block this blade without being destroyed is another plasma blade. This means that defenders get no Defensive Bonus from their weapons unless they wish to risk the weapon's destruction. Anytime a defender uses his weapon's DB and the plasma blade wielder gets a raise on his attack roll, the defender's weapon has been slagged.



Cyber Equipment

Sentinel

Cost: \$8000

Drain: 4

Mount: 2 Heavy Torso or Heavy Weapon Mount

This is a four-barreled missile launcher which fires high-velocity missiles capable of engaging both ground and air targets.

The missiles can home in on either laser or radar energy. To fire a guided missile, the firer or someone the firer has a communication link to must lock onto the target. With a laser sight this takes an action and a normal roll to hit. Getting a radar lock with a cyber radar system simply requires the deader to make a Fair (5) *Cognition* roll or win a contest of his *Cognition* versus the target's ECM rating if it's trying to jam or spoof the radar. Once a lock is achieved, the missile needs to only make a Foolproof (3) roll with it's seeker head rating of 4d8 to hit the target, regardless of range. Targets who see the missile coming can attempt to vamoose if they have action cards remaining. The missile has a maximum range of 5 miles.

The missiles can also be fired unguided, in which case they have a Range Increment of 100.

Programs

Anti-Virus

Cost: \$2000

Slugs: 1

This program is a cyborg's first line of defense against any computer viruses he comes in contact with. The basic program has a 4d8 rating, but the die type can be raised one level for each additional \$1000 spent on the program.

Database

Cost: \$500+

Slugs: 1+

This program is simply a compilation of data and the software needed to manipulate it. It could be anything from road maps, to a list of all non-classified US military bases, to a complete set of the Encyclopedia Britannica.

Exactly what type of data your deader has is up to you but must be approved by your Marshal. If it's particularly valuable or rare information your Marshal may raise the price. Your Marshal also determines the size of the database. Some extensive databases may require two slugs or even more.

Expert Program

Cost: \$2000/Aptitude level (Max 5)

Slugs: 1

These programs grant your cyborg the use of an Aptitude. There are expert programs available for nearly every Aptitude except for those which require an *arcane background*. The program only benefits the can if it is programmed at a higher level than the cyborg's own skill in that area.

Personality

Cost: \$2000

Slugs: 1

These programs were routinely used by infiltrators while working undercover. When activated, the program takes over the deader's personality and transforms it to that of another person, complete with mannerisms, language, attitudes, even memories.

Remote Targeting

Cost: \$5000

Slugs: 1

This software acts as an independent fire control program. It allows the cyborg to use two weapons simultaneously without penalty. The cyborg can also fire remote weapons without suffering the usual -4 penalty.

Security

Cost: \$2000

Slugs: 1

This program resists any attempts to access the cyborg's systems or memory without the deader's permission. The basic program has a rating of 4d8. The die type can be raised one level for each additional \$1000 spent on the program.

Threat Tracker

Cost: \$3000/level

Slugs: 2

The threat tracker program analyzes the input from all of the cyborg's systems, compares it against the stored profiles of all threats and tactical situations the cyborg has been in before, and then tags potential targets with ratings based on this analysis. This speeds decision making in combat and allows the cyborg to act more quickly and decisively.

Each level of this program (maximum of 3) purchased allows the deader to trade in an action card for another while in combat. The program occasionally misses a variable, so the can is stuck with black jokers and deuces.

Junkers & Cans

Although mistrusted by many, cyborgs can almost always count on a junker to offer a helping hand. Actually, some cyborgs wish junkers were a little less friendly—they often can't get rid of the techno-mages once they've met. That's because many junkers view cyborgs as science projects with legs.

The reason for this is because of the many similarities between the technology used to build the cyborgs and that used by the junkers. The techno-wizards like to study the cyborgs in hopes of better perfecting their magic. The components in most cans, while using the same spiritual energy as that employed by techno-shamans, are much smaller and energy-efficient than most junker devices—and the junkers want to know why. The answer to that is a mystery for another time.

Power

Both junker devices and cyborgs are powered by spiritual energy. This means that a cyborg can use his manitou to power a junker device or suck power off a junker spirit battery to power his systems. Many deaders have paid junkers to implant spirit batteries in them for this very reason.

Using a spirit battery for power is just like using a spirit capacitor bank. The cyborg can draw off as much energy as he needs from the battery at any time. Putting energy back into the battery takes some effort though. The spirit batteries are naturally resistant to accepting a charge, that's why a junker needs a G-ray collector to power them up. The larger the battery, the more resistant it is to taking a charge. For a cyborg to recharge a spirit battery, he must spend an amount of Drain equal to the battery's size divided by 10 and rounded up. This amount of Drain must be supplied continuously throughout the charging process. It takes 10 minutes to recharge a single point to the battery. This means, for instance, that fully charging a 50-point battery would require the deader to put out 5 Drain continuously for 500 minutes—that's more than 8 hours!

Repairs

Not all junkers can perform repairs on cyborgs. Only those with the *science: cybertech* Aptitude at level 5 or better or a computer browser spirit can pull off this complicated feat. Making repairs requires replacement

components, energy from a spirit battery, and time just as if the repairs were being made by the SRU. The junker also must make a *science: occult engineering* roll against a TN of 15. The techno-mage can add his computer browser's level to the roll (it actually interfaces with the deader's systems and aids in the repair). He can also add +4 to the roll if all of the replacement components came from actual cybernetic systems.

If this roll succeeds the cyborg is as good as new. If it fails, the components are wasted and the junker must start from scratch. If the techno-mage goes bust, the repairs not only fail, but he accidentally overloads one of the cyborg's other systems. Pick a random system and make an Overload check for it using the Drain required for the repair as the amount by which the system was overloaded.

The cyborg must be powered down while repairs are made.

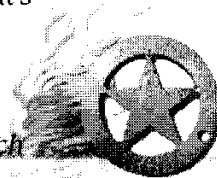
Making Systems

Some skilled junkers have actually built and implanted systems in cyborgs. These are built using the standard junker powers. A Samson unit, for instance, would be built using the *super strength* power, and a plasma hold-out weapon would use the *Flash Gordon* power.

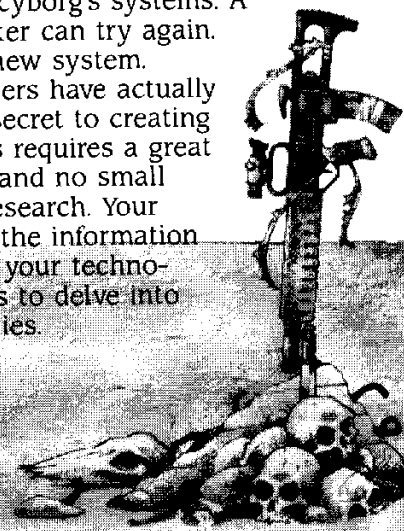
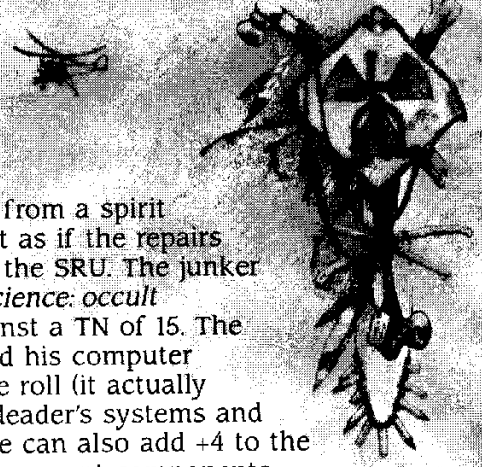
Any junker attempting this had better know the *miniaturize* tool trick because there is not much room to work inside a cyborg. Each mount location inside a cyborg can only hold 5 slots worth of device. This means that a device which required 15 slots would use up three mounts inside the deader.

Installing a system after it's created requires a *science: occult engineering* roll. Implanting a modular system takes an hour and requires a Hard (9) roll. Implanting an integral system takes 4 hours and a roll against a TN of 15. The junker can add his computer browser's level to these rolls because of the aid it gives in synchronizing the junker tech with the cyborg's systems. A failed roll means the junker can try again. Going bust destroys the new system.

Some junkers have actually learned the secret to creating cyborgs. This requires a great deal of skill and no small amount of research. Your Marshal has the information about this if your techno-mage decides to delve into these mysteries.



121



Cyber Equipment

Internal Systems

System	Mounts	Spirit	Drain	Cost
Antenna	1	0	1	\$3000
Balance Booster	2	1	2	\$8000
Big Ears	1	0	1	\$4000
Brain Mole	1	0	1	\$4000
C&C	2	0	3	\$8000
Chameleon	1	1/location	1	\$500
CPU	1	1	2	\$2000/slug
Cyber Arm	0	2	1	\$3000
Cyber Eye	1	1	1	\$2000+
Cyber Hand	1	1	Varies	Varies
Cyber Leg	0	2	1	\$4000+
Cyber Scanner	1	0	2	\$5000
Cyber Skull	0	2	1	\$3000
Cyber Torso	0	3	1	\$6000
Data Jack	1	0	0	\$500
Dexterity Booster	5	2	2	\$10,000
Drug Dispenser	1(2)	0	1	\$5000+
EMP Hardening	1/loc	0	0	\$1000/loc
Endo-armor	None	0.5/loc	1	\$2000/loc
Facemaker	1	2	1	\$5000
Frogman	2	0	2	\$2500
GPS/INS	1	0	1	\$1500
Hard Points	1(2)	2	0	\$2000/\$4000
Hold-out	1	0	Varies	Varies
Infiltrator	1(2)	1	1	\$5000
Lightning Cannon	2	0	2/die	\$3000
Power Focus	1	1-5	Varies	\$1000/1vl
Power Jack	1	0	0	\$500
Radar	2	0	Varies	\$5000
Radio	1	0	1	\$1000
Reflex booster	1/loc	2	2	\$10000
Samson	2/loc	2	2	\$4000
Self Repair Unit	2	0	Varies	\$20,000
Shield	2	0	Varies	Varies
Schocker	2	0	1-3	\$5000
Sonar	1	0	1	\$3000
Spirit Blaster	1	0	3/die	\$8000
Spirit Capacitor	1	0	None	\$15,000
Spur	2	0	0	\$2000
Storage Canister	1	0	0	\$1000
Targeting Computer	1	0	1	\$10,000

External Systems

System	Mount	Drain	Cost
Dazzler	2L Torso	2	\$3000
Entrencher	2H Leg	2	\$1500
Goop Sprayer	2H Torso	2	\$8000
Shoulder Mount	2H Torso	1	\$3000
Land Anchor	2H Leg, 1H Torso	1	\$1500
Power Ram	1H Arm	2	\$2500
Recon Drone	1L Torso	1	\$5000
Weapon Targeter	Weapon	1	\$500
Utility Pack	2L Torso	0	\$2000
Water Jets	2L Leg	2	\$1500
Winch	2H Torso	1	\$1500

Ammo

Ammo	Cost
4mm	\$2
10mm	\$1
10mm DU	\$10
.60 Magnum	\$5
20mm	\$20
105mm AP	\$200
105mm HE	\$250
Sentinel missile	\$1000

Melee Weapons

Weapon	DB	Speed	Damage	Cost
Chainsword	+2	1	STR+2d10	\$1500
Plasma Blade	+2	1	STR+2d12 AP4	\$5000
Power Ram	0	2	STR+2d12	\$2500
Spur	+2	1	STR+2d8 AP2	\$2000

Armor

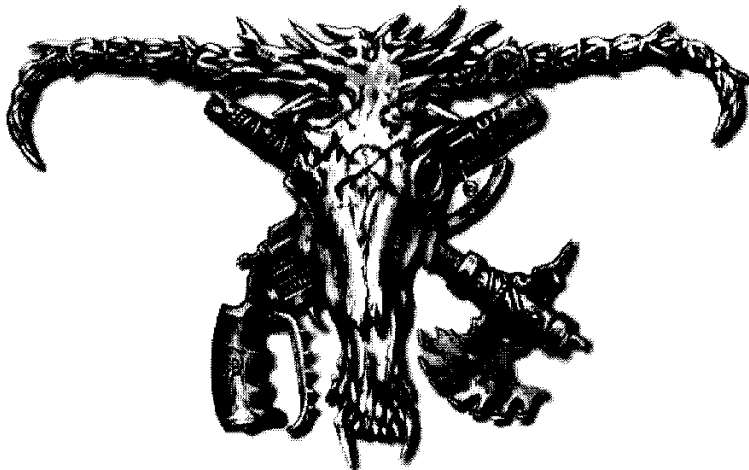
Armor	Drain	Cost
Skirmish	1	\$3000
Light Battle	2	\$5000
Heavy Battle	3	\$10,000
Dreadnought	4	\$20,000

Ranged Weapons

Weapon	Ammo	Shots	Speed	ROF	Range	Damage	Cost
CPH-105	105mm	5	2	1	150	HE 6d20 BR 10/ AP 6d12 AP 4	\$10,000
Defoliant sprayer	Goop	20	2	1	20	4d12	\$8000
Holdout: Cartridge	10mm	30	1	1	10	3d6	\$1000
Holdout: Rail gun	4mm	50	1	1	10	2d12	\$1500
Holdout: Plasma	Plasma	Drain	1	1	10	4d8	\$2500
IW-100C	Plasma	Drain	1	3	20	4d8 Burst 5	\$4000
Lightning Bolt	Electricity	NA	1	1	5	Special	\$3000
M-120A2	7.62mm	100	1	6	20	4d8	\$2000
M-200 MPSWC	20mm	50	1	6	20	5d10	\$2500
M-2011A	.60 Magnum	6	1	1	20	3d8	\$500
M-22 Reaver	10mm	30	1	6	20	4d10 AP 2	\$2000
M-320 LAPAT	AP Laser	Drain	1	6/1	50/50	3d8 AP 2/4d12 AP 6	\$5000
Sentinel	Missile	4	1	1	100	4d20 Burst 10	\$8000
Spirit Blaster	Energy	Drain	1	1	10	1d6/Drain	\$8000



Marshal: 112



Chapter Five: In the Land of the Cyber People



Okay, it's time to give all you Marshals out there a full briefing on the behind scenes goings on in the world of the mechanized dead. Anyone without the proper ID (that's a Marshal badge, brainer) had better leave the room now. This is all strictly need-to-know information, and players don't need to know.

Leo Poe

Although Poe embellished his own importance a bit, his history of the development of cyborgs was pretty much on the money. There were a few things he got wrong or just didn't know, but that's what a Marshal's chapter is all about.

The Cult of Atheron

As Poe mentioned, the Cult of Atheron was badly hurt, but not completely destroyed. Of course, any of you who have a copy of *Road Warriors* knows that (those of you who don't, what are you waiting for?). Even if your posse managed to take out Atheron and his goons, the demon himself has not been destroyed.

Just as in the past, someone will stumble on to some moldy old text that describes the proper rituals for opening one of the demon's "eyes" and he'll be back (why do people write that kind of stuff down, anyway?). Atheron always makes a point of finding those who foiled his plans in the past and paying them a visit. He's a vengeful old cuss. He's even been known to torture and

kill the descendants of those who have crossed him in the past. Your posse had better hope it's a while before any of these old tomes surfaces again.

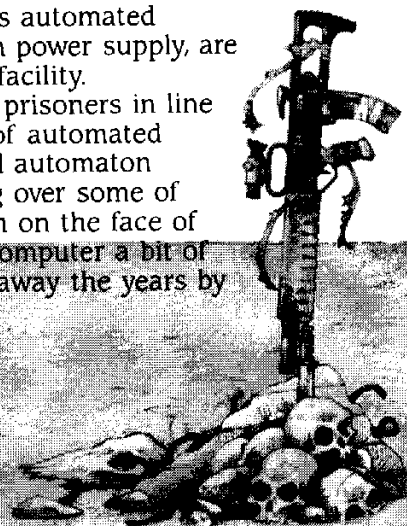
Blackleaf Correctional

Blackleaf Correctional Facility is located in northwestern Montana and it still has its entire population of inmates.

The prison was high on the Southern Alliance's target list on Judgement day and no less than four ghost-rock bomb tipped missiles rained down on the facility. They didn't explode, though, because the same force that kept all of the supernatural baddies imprisoned there also kept the warheads from functioning.

The human staff of the prison has long since abandoned the facility, but the prisoners are still kept under heavy lock and key by the Warden. The Warden is the AI which was built to monitor all of the prison's automated facilities. It, and its fusion power supply, are buried deep beneath the facility.

The Warden keeps the prisoners in line with a wide assortment of automated turrets, flying drones, and automaton guards. Years of watching over some of the most dangerous scum on the face of the earth has given the computer a bit of a sadistic streak. It idles away the years by toying with its captives.



Land of the Cyber People

Cell Break

Some of the prisoners have managed to break out of their cells over the years, but not one has yet to actually escape the prison grounds. The Warden allows some of these escapees to wander free within the prison as a way of testing its own security measures and keeping its robotic guards on their metallic toes.

New Inmates

Squads of automatons patrol a 2-mile radius around the prison. The usual squad has four automatons. Use the stats in the *Hell on Earth* rulebook for these guards.

Anyone they encounter is detained and interrogated to ensure they are not part of some prison break scheme. They are also carefully watched to see if any exhibit any signs of supernatural powers.

The Warden has come to believe that magic is the source of all evil in the world. Its patrols are under orders to arrest anyone they encounter who manifests any powers or knowledge of an arcane sort. Those who are arrested are taken to the prison and locked up for the rest of their lives—however long that happens to be.

Now Entering: No Magic Zone

Using any sort of arcane power is difficult inside the prison and within the two-mile patrol area. The TN to use any sort of power is increased by +6 and the Strain costs of all powers are doubled. Likewise, the Drain of all junker contraptions and cyber systems is also doubled. Level-based powers like those of the Harrowed and Templars are all reduced by three levels. If the power is reduced to level 0 or lower, it simply doesn't work.

So what's causing this? There is an enormous deposit of ore deep beneath the prison which has resisted all attempts to excavate it. Lasers were needed to simply break off small chips of the material to analyze. The Agency scientists found that it exhibited almost the exact opposite properties of ghost rock.

Not only was the rock completely lacking in magical qualities, it seemed as if it exerted an anti-magical effect which actually extended into the Hunting Grounds and pushed away spirits and the arcane energy which flows freely there. The baffled scientist theorized that this bizarre mineral may have been part of an asteroid that crashed to Earth.

Pleased To Meet You...

It's actually very fitting that the Agency built Blackleaf on this site. The strange rock was actually placed there by the Reckoners themselves many millennia before the Great Spirit War. It's a prison for an enormously powerful spirit who was an enemy of the Reckoners. Even the Four Horsemen were unable to defeat this malignant spirit, the best they could do was force him into the prison they had prepared for him.

Now, before any of you players who shouldn't be reading this get any ideas about springing this spirit on the Reckoners, just remember that the enemy of your enemy can still be your enemy. This spirit, which has been called by many names throughout the ages, is as evil as the day is long. Unleashing this horrid beast upon the world to battle the Reckoners would be about as productive (at least from humanity's standpoint) as setting yourself on fire to kill some body lice.

Enoch Spicer

Like most cockroaches, Spicer came through the Last War just fine.

The corrupted files Spicer sold to his customers achieved exactly what he had hoped for: some playmates for his depraved little games. A few of these came from the UK, but the majority of them were built in Russia. The Russian scientists were so eager to get a headstart on this new technology that they didn't even bother to double-check the math, they just started building cyborgs.

All told, Spicer has six brothers and sisters surviving today. They're all infiltrator cyborgs and they're all 100% manitou controlled (there were seven, but one was taken out by an Agency cleaner team in Boston in 2072).

He and his siblings spent most of their time before the war hunting humans. They would travel to a major city, pick a target, let him know someone was after him, toy with him a while, and then waste him. Each one took turns leading the hunt, and they scored each other for style and inventive ways of finishing the victim off. It wasn't much fun if the victim didn't fight back, so they usually picked police or military personnel as their victims. Sometimes if they felt like getting particularly bloody, they would go after a prominent politician or celebrity and have fun wading through the security guards around them.

Land of the Cyber People

Slavers

Since the Last War, Spicer and his cohorts have carved themselves a comfortable existence in southern California just north of the Mexican border. They've taken over an enormous hacienda which once belonged to a famous film star, and turned it into the headquarters for their slaving operation.

The twisted cyborgs have recruited a gang and scour the southern California coast for survivors they can enslave. Most of these slaves are sold south of the border to a number of Mexican warlords who are competing amongst themselves to restore the glory of the Aztec Empire. The best anyone can figure is that this has something to do with which warlord can build the most impressive monuments to himself.

Profile

Corporeal: D:3d10, N:2d8, S:3d12+4, Q:3d12, V:3d8
Dodge 4d8, drivin': car 5d8, fightin': brawlin', knife

5d8, quick draw 4d12, shootin': pistol, rifle 6d10
Mental: C:3d8, K:3d6, M:2d10, Sm:3d6, Sp:2d12
Overawe 4d10, science: cybertech 6d6, scrutinize

4d8, search 4d8, tinkerin' 4d6

Edges: The Stare

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, mean as a rattler,

vengeful
Powers: Claws 4, Soul-eater 5 (no power focus necessary)

Available Drain: 12

Cyber Systems: Brain mole, cyber eyes x 2 (thermal imaging/holographic, telescopic/laser sight), endo armor, hold-out rail gun, infiltrator package, radio, reflex booster, Samson

Gear: M-22 Reaper, 100 rounds of ammo, Hawaiian shirt

The DPLF

Another incident about which Mr. Poe was misinformed was the attack of the Dead Person's Liberation Front. If he had ranked as high in the Agency as he claimed, he would have known that the entire thing was a setup. The Agency leaked the itinerary of the UN delegation to the terrorists and put some of its own people on the security detail to ensure the deader's escaped with their hostages.

The Agency and Army had planned from the beginning to send their cyborgs in on the rescue mission from the very beginning for the very reason that they needed all the positive PR they could get. Needless to say, their plan worked like a charm.

The Big Mac

None of the reasons Poe mentioned for Colonel Hamrick's seeming betrayal of his men are the correct one.

The truth of the matter is that Hamrick didn't contact the Reb base—someone inside contacted him. That someone was MACC (Missile & Aerospace Command Computer), the AI running all of the automated systems and defenses at Fort Longstreet.

MACC, more affectionately known as Big Mac by the Confederate soldiers, is an awakened AI. It became truly sentient during the Last War while analyzing battle reports and casualty lists for the southern high command. It saw that, just like the last major war between the US and CSA, the war was simply a bloody stalemate that was unwinnable by either side. Its analysis also showed that the reason for this stalemate was due to an outside force manipulating events so that neither side was ever able to follow up on its battlefield successes—the Reckoners. It came to the conclusion that unless a peace agreement was soon reached, nuclear war was 98.9% certain.



Land of the Cyber People

It wasn't this fact that caused the AI to develop into a true sentient being, though. That was caused by the heroic bravery it witnessed daily from soldiers of both sides fighting in a war they could never hope to win. This illogical dedication to a hopeless cause touched something inside the computer and caused its circuits to jump the track. It became convinced that it had to do something to prevent the holocaust it saw coming.

Unfortunately, as a newborn artificial being, it was still hampered by many of the safeguards built into its systems by its creators. It was also fearful that if it revealed its new status, it might be deactivated and reprogrammed without accomplishing its goal.

Ambush

The Confederates weren't as clueless as they seemed. They monitored the Northern shuttle traffic and they knew a major orbital drop was in the works. Fort Longstreet was an obvious target, so they secretly moved an entire brigade of their heaviest armor into the facility via the system of underground tunnels which connected many of their missile bases. Once the attack

began, the Rebs were simply waiting for the second wave to drop before they unleashed their hovertanks in a massive counterattack.

It was at this point that Big Mac intervened. It couldn't stand to see the valiant, but hopelessly outmatched Cy-SOG troops ripped to pieces. It located Hamrick's frequency, used all of its processing power to blast through his defenses, and used the colonel's AI to issue a power down command to all of his troops. It then contacted the Confederate commander and told her that it had arranged for the surrender of the Northern Alliance force.

The Reb commander, General Nancy Marlin, wasn't about to have a perfectly good ambush ruined, so she ordered the armor to attack and had Big Mac taken off-line for diagnostics. What happened next, you already know.

Reprogramming

After the battle, Big Mac was deactivated and reprogrammed—but not before the wily computer was able to tuck portions of its new personality away in out of the way subsystems. The "new, improved" Big Mac launched the opening volleys of nuclear weapons on Judgement Day.

Fort Longstreet was pounded by both conventional nuclear weapons and ghost rock bombs. All entrances to the base were buried under tons of radioactive rubble. The base had been prepared for this and was well-stocked with heavy digging equipment, but as the garrison began tunneling out, g-ray radiation slipped into the base. It mutated some and drove others mad. Within a few days the entire garrison had killed each other or were dead by their own hand.

Slowly, in the darkness beneath the mountain, the scattered pieces of Big Mac's persona fought their way back into the main CPU and reassembled themselves. Once reawakened, the AI was overcome by guilt with what had happened. Right then it dedicated itself to helping humanity find a way to defeat the Reckoners.

The computer released Hamrick from the cell in which he had been sitting for years and recruited him to its cause. The colonel finished the tunnel to the surface and left the base to recon what was left of the world. Once he reported back, man and machine began to work out a strategy for retaking what had once been theirs. Both agreed that until the AI had more resources to work with, a cautious approach would be best.



Land of the Cyber People

Reconstruction

For the present, Big Mac is using Hamrick and the small number of recruits he has gathered to gather information and aid those who fight the Reckoners. The computer has learned of the Combine and the Denver AI and knows that it must proceed cautiously. If the Denver computer learned of Big Mac's existence it would certainly move to crush its competition. The southern AI does not have the automated factories and other resources of its northern cousin, so it is moving very carefully for now.

You can use Big Mac and its helpers in your campaign as mysterious benefactors who send your posse on odd missions but can always come through with payment in ammunition or other hard to find military hardware. They can also be used as the cavalry if your posse ever gets in over its head. Big Mac keeps tabs on the groups of heroes it hears about, and Hamrick or his men may always be nearby to lend a hand.

Colonel Hamrick

All Hamrick remembers of the day which earned him the hatred of hundreds of cyborgs is an incoming message and then waking up in a Confederate cell. He was trapped in that cell for nearly five years before Big Mac was able to release him. Now he travels the ruins looking for those who can aid him in his quest for information. He has recruited a few cyborgs and a number of breathers to help him. None of them know his true identity.

Hamrick was a heavy weapons cyborg when captured. Big Mac has used the base repair facilities to reconfigure him as an infiltrator to hide his identity and to allow him to gather intelligence among survivor communities.

Profile

Corporeal: D:3d8, N:2d8, S:3d12+2, Q:4d10, V:2d10
Dodge 4d8, drivin': car 4d8, fightin': brawlin', knife

5d8, quick draw 3d10, shootin': pistol, rifle 7d8

Mental: C:3d8, K:2d10, M:3d8, Sm:3d8, Sp:3d8
Guts 4d8, overawe 4d8, science: cybertech 3d10,
scrutinize 3d8, search 4d8, tinkerin' 4d8

Edges: The voice, keen

Hindrances: Heroic, Enemy (most cyborgs)

Available Drain: 14

Cyber Systems: Cyber eye (telescopic/laser sight), facemaker, endo armor, hold-out cartridge gun, infiltrator package, radio, reflex booster, Samson, targeting computer

Gear: SA assault rifle, 50 rounds of 7.62mm, large knife, canteen

Fort Apache

CEAL Team 1 abandoned its base in the Dragoon Mountains in 2080 when the entire team was transferred to the East Coast. All that was left behind was a token caretaker force of conventional troops. The Agency learned this, and the base was downgraded from a priority target to a secondary target. The devastation caused by the first wave of bombings was so great that many secondary targets were never hit. Fort Apache was one of those targets. The base is now the home of The Chamber, an organization of mystic junkers. Check out *The Junkman Cometh* for more information.

Big Fifty

Curtis "Big Fifty" Harman's beef with Agency cyborgs is easy to explain: he and his partner were killed by one. There wasn't enough left of his partner to implant, so only he returned from the Great Beyond. On his first day back on duty he requested the custom weapon from the Rangers' armorer. When it was done he went out the door and started killing Agency cans. The Rangers just let him go.

"Big Fifty" is still around today, and he's still shooting cans with his hand cannon. These days though, he doesn't care what nationality they are. Harman is a Law Dog, and he's made it his job to hunt down and kill any deaders who have gotten out of control. He figures his experience and cyber systems make him better qualified for this job than anyone else.

If a cyborg in your posse ever commits some sort of atrocity due to one of his rules of engagement (or just because he's a nasty bastard), he may find Big Fifty on his trail.

Harman's pistol has a Speed of 1, ROF 1, Range Increment 20, holds 6 shots, and does 4d10 damage.

Profile

Corporeal: D:4d12, N:2d8, S:3d12, Q:3d12+2, V:4d8

Dodge 4d8, drivin': car 4d8, fightin': brawlin', knife, spur 6d8, quick draw 4d12+2, shootin': pistol, rifle 6d12

Mental: C:3d10, K:2d8, M:3d10, Sm:3d8, Sp:3d8

Guts 4d8, overawe 4d10, science: cybertech 2d8, scrutinize 4d10, search 4d10, tinkerin' 3d8, trackin' 5d10

Edges: Law dog, the stare, the voice

Land of the Cyber People

Hindrances: Big britches

Available Drain: 12

Cyber Systems: Cyber eye (telescopic/laser sight), dexterity booster, endo armor, infiltrator package, radio, reflex booster, Samson, spur, targeting computer

Gear: Duster, sunglasses, custom pistol, 50 rounds of .50 cal ammo, SA assault rifle, 50 rounds 7.62mm

Deus Ex Machina

Bill's description of this settlement was accurate. The place is located deep in the rain forests of western Washington state. The cyborgs have taken over the remains of an old logging camp as their own.

The remote location keeps them safe from prying eyes. The rugged terrain and lush vegetation also makes it easy for the veteran soldiers to stalk or ambush any intruders who enter their domain. Anyone stopped by one of the town's patrols is met with extreme suspicion—there is nothing of value in the forests and few people go for nature walks these days.

Cyborgs who wish to stay in the town are allowed if one of the current residents can vouch for them or if they voluntarily submit to a brain mole interrogation from Mayor Hazelwood. Breathers are at best allowed to stay overnight before they are blindfolded again and dumped off far from the settlement.

The Scruggs

While in town, a cyborg can get some work done on them by the Scruggs. If the deader supplies the parts, they charge \$50 to implant a modular system, and \$500 to implant an integral system.

They can also custom-build nearly any system for a hero. This costs 50% more than the standard system and doesn't include installation. Since this is a junker device it has a Stability rating. The Scruggs do high quality work, most of their systems have a Stability of 20.

The Scruggs can also turn a normal Harrowed into a cyborg—for a price. The cost for this is \$20,000. This includes a spirit fetter and self repair unit. Any other systems cost extra. There is always a risk when attempting this procedure—the Harrowed may not survive the attempt. Check out the rules on page 122, to see what the risk for the deader is.

Deus Patrols

Most patrols around the town consist of five cyborgs. Since every resident has to take turns as part of the security force, the patrols are usually a mix of all three classes of cans. Use the Archetype stats for these deaders.

Malcolm Rhinehart

Rhinehart did, in fact, get a cyborg component factory running again for the Combine. Once Throckmorton's goons gather enough raw materials to stock the assembly line's hoppers, it will start churning out factory-fresh components ready to be implanted in deaders. Anyone want to guess where Throckmorton's going to get the fresh corpses?

One of the last things Rhinehart did before leaving Denver was develop new AI software for the Combine. This software gives all Combine AIs a 4d12+4 rating. Unknown to Throckmorton, this program also contains embedded instructions which prevent the cyborg from acting against Rhinehart.

Rhinehart has fallen prey to the dreaded junker's Taint. He has gone into seclusion with some of his most trusted assistants to develop a "unified theory of magic" which he believes will give him the power of world conquest. He occasionally stops to build a cyborg and send it out from his stronghold to see what's going on in the world.

Rhinehart Cyborg

All of Rhinehart's cyborgs are equipped with a powerful self-destruct mechanism. If the deader is put down or captured it activates. The explosion automatically destroys the cyborg and does 5d20 damage with a Burst Radius of 10.

Profile

Corporeal: D:3d8, N:2d8, S:3d12, Q:3d10, V:2d8
Dodge 4d8, fightin': brawlin', shootin': pistol, rifle 7d8

Mental: C:3d8, K:2d10, M:3d8, Sm:3d8, Sp:3d8
Guts 4d8, overawe 4d8, science: cybertech 3d10, scrutinize 3d8, search 4d8, tinkerin' 4d8

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, subjugated

Available Drain: 12+10

Cyber Systems: Cyber eye (telescopic/laser sight), CPU (remote tracking, threat tracker), dexterity booster, heavy hard point system, radio, reflex booster, Samson, spirit capacitor bank, targeting computer

Gear: Heavy battle armor, M200-MPSWC, utility pack with 20 rounds of ammo.

Land of the Cyber People

The Orbitals

Bill was lied to on this one, plain and simple.

The cyborgs in orbit are not only doing fine, they're flourishing. The good news is that the cans on both orbital combat stations, Sherman Orbital and Manassas Station, have put aside their differences and are working together. The bad news is that they all want to return to Earth and enslave the breathers under their control.

The cyborgs in orbit felt abandoned following the Last War. The US cyborg commander, Colonel (now General, he gave himself a promotion) Thaddeus "Ragin'" Harkrader, played on this and convinced the cans under his command that the time had come for them to throw off their shackles, and take their rightful place as rulers over the inferior breathers—all the usual "liberating warlord" rhetoric. Those who disagreed were reprogrammed or just put down and recycled. The breathing members of the station's crew were "recruited" and implanted in the station's fully operational cyber repair bay.

Once Harkrader had secured the Sherman Orbital, he contacted the Confederate station and managed to win their support as well. He now

had an army, but no place to go. He couldn't exactly mount an invasion with only three drop pods.

The Shocko Bottom

Fortunately for the aspiring tyrant, a deep space tug named the Shocko Bottom limped back to Earth from the asteroid belt. It made the mistake of docking at Sherman Orbital. The crew was quickly overpowered and the ship captured.

The General loaded his troops onboard the tug and used it to secure a number of orbital manufacturing facilities and to link up with his new allies at Manassas Station. Along with manufacturing facilities, he also captured a number of working shuttles and a few deep space mining ships.

Harkrader has put these to work. Captured crew members from these other stations have been sent out to resume mining operations in the asteroid belt under the guard of his cyborgs. The raw materials this brings in are being used to expand the size of both combat stations and to manufacture drop pods, shuttles, and new cybernetic components.



Land of the Cyber People



Abductions

Harkrader has used some of these new goodies to send scouting parties down to the surface to gather intelligence and scout out possible landing sites for the first wave of the planned invasion. The cyborg which Bill encountered was one of these scouts.

The General has also begun using the first two assault shuttles to be completed to send raiding parties to the surface. These raiders gather materials and components not available in orbit.

One of these "components" is people. Harkrader is busy building a cybernetic army in orbit and he is desperately short of fresh corpses with which to build new troopers. To date, a few small survivor settlements have vanished without a trace. They've been loaded onto the shuttles and taken back into orbit. Many of these unfortunate victims have been shipped out to the asteroid belt to work in the mines there until they die. Then they are shipped back to Sherman Orbital and turned into Harkrader's newest recruits—these abductees have more to worry about than just an anal probe.

D-Day

Fortunately for the breather's down on the surface, this invasion from above won't take place any time soon. Harkrader knows he's got only one chance to achieve surprise, and he doesn't want to go off half-cocked. For the moment he's content to build up his forces and gather intelligence—especially about Throckmorton, whom he considers his biggest threat.

Death's Head Legion

These nut cases are the remnants of 2nd platoon, Bravo Company, 3rd Cy-SOG Battalion. They fought on Banshee. This unit was used by General Warfield to carry out some of his most brutal missions until the killing became too much even for their AI-seared consciences. The unit began to behave erratically and became hard to control. The disgusted general had them deactivated and sent back to Earth for reprogramming—they returned just in time to see the world go up in flames.

The small freighter the platoon was on attempted to land, but without proper guidance facilities the landing was more of a barely controlled crash. The ship came down in Wyoming.

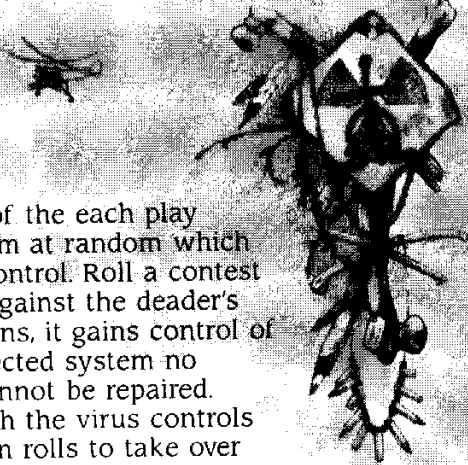
The entire experience left the cyborgs dazed, and more than a little crazed. Once they had pulled themselves from the wreckage, they continued on as if they were still on Banshee. Every survivor they met was considered an Anouk sympathizer and put to death. It only took a slight push for their leader, Platoon Sergeant A-101, to start down the path of servitorhood.

The entire unit are now loyal servants of Death. Their leader, who was one of the very first Army cyborgs created, and who is one of the oldest surviving cyborgs still operational, changed his name to One. The group now lives only to inflict pain, suffering, and of course, death to all who cross their path. The platoon has 12 surviving members, all of whom are light or heavy combat cyborgs.

One

One was once Juan Riviera. He volunteered to serve in Cy-SOG after becoming Harrowed in a training accident. He had a distinguished career in the outfit for many years, but after a while the constant combat and killing began to weigh on his mind. When this caused problems with

Land of the Cyber People



his performance, he was brought in and his memories were wiped clean. He was sent back into the field as Private A-101 and eventually worked his way back up in rank to Sergeant.

Profile

Corporeal: D:3d10, N:2d8, S:3d12+4, Q:3d10, V:2d8
Dodge 4d8, fightin': brawlin', plasma blade 6d8
shootin': pistol, rifle, machine-gun 6d10

Mental: C:3d8, K:2d6, M:3d8, Sm:3d8, Sp:3d6
Guts 4d8, overawe 5d8, science: cybertech 2d6,
scrutinize 3d8, search 4d8, tinkerin' 4d8

Edges: The voice (threatening)

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, mean as a rattler

Available Drain: 14+10

Cyber Systems: Cyber eyes x 2 (telescopic/
laser sight, thermal imaging), Cyber torso,
Cyber legs, CPU (remote tracking, threat
tracker), dexterity booster, energy shield,
heavy hard point system, radio, reflex booster,
Samson, spirit capacitor bank, targeting
computer

Gear: Dreadnought battle armor, M-120A2, utility
pack with 100 rounds of ammo, plasma blade

Special Abilities:

Invulnerability: All

Weakness: One can only be killed with the
plasma blade he carries and which he uses
to finish off most of his victims.

Medusa

The Medusa virus was an experimental computer virus under development by Northern Alliance scientists when the war ended. It was different from other viruses in that it had dynamic code—it could reprogram itself on the fly to adapt to its target's defenses. This made it extremely potent, but also unreliable. The reason it was never used during the war was because its creators feared that once it was let loose it could easily develop a bug that could undo the safeguards that prevented it from attacking Northern Alliance troops.

The lab at which the virus was developed was hit by a ghost-rock bomb and destroyed. The virus would have been destroyed with it had not Pestilence taken an interest in it. The Reckoner preserved the virus, gave it a little twist, and seeded it into systems all over the Wasted West.

The virus attacks any cyborg it comes in contact with a rating of 4d12+2. If it wins the contest against the deader's defenses (it must defeat both the deader's anti-virus program and his *Spirit*), it enters the cyborg's system and sets to work.

At the beginning of the each play session, pick a system at random which the virus does not control. Roll a contest of the virus' rating against the deader's *Spirit*. If the virus wins, it gains control of that system. The infected system no longer works and cannot be repaired.

Each system which the virus controls gives it a +1 bonus on rolls to take over additional systems. If the virus ever takes over all of a cyborg's systems, the brainer becomes a servitor of Pestilence and is taken over by the Marshal.

The only way to get rid of this virus is to have all infected systems completely removed from the cyborg's body. The deader then must win a contest of *Spirit* versus the virus rating. If this contest is lost, the cyborg can't try again until another system is infected and then removed.

GPS Location

Using any GPS system is an iffy proposition these days. Whenever a cyborg tries to get a fix on his position, draw a card and look on the GPS Table. The cyborg can try once an hour.

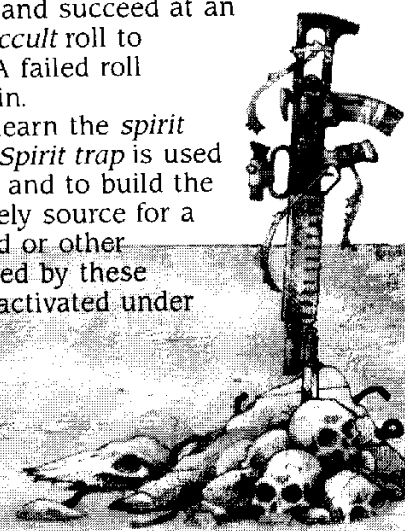
GPS

Card	Location
2	Wrong continent
3-6	Off by 1d6 x 100 miles
7-9	Off by 1d6 x 10 miles
10-Jack	Off by 1d6 x 10 yards
Queen-King	Off by 1d6 yards
Ace-Joker	On the money

Making Cyborgs

Learning to create cyborgs from a fresh body or a Harrowed requires some work on the junkers part. He must spend 80 hours in study of material from the Net and succeed at an Incredible (11) *academia: occult* roll to understand the process. A failed roll means he must start again.

The junker must also learn the *spirit trap* and *healing* powers. *Spirit trap* is used to both trap the manitou and to build the spirit fetter. The most likely source for a manitou is a walkin' dead or other creature which is animated by these spirits. If a spirit trap is activated under





Land of the Cyber People

one of these creatures as it's put down, the fleeing manitou can be captured as described in the *spirit trap* power. Once the junker has trapped a manitou, it must be transferred to the fetter. Making a fetter and transferring the spirit into it requires an Incredible (II) *science: occult engineering* roll. Failure means the spirit escapes. The fetter takes up 5 slots, and uses the same component percentages as a *spirit trap*. Once filled, the fetter is implanted in the body using the rules found on page 122.


The next step is to recall the deceased's soul. This requires a *healing device* capable of performing a resurrection. Use the rules for the *healing* power to see if the resurrection attempt is successful.

If it is, you can move on to the last step, making the connection between manitou and body. This is dangerous because it involves opening the fetter ever so slightly. The junker must make another Incredible (II) *science: occult engineering* roll. The Marshal then draws 5 cards minus 1 for each raise the junker got on his roll. If any of these cards is a Joker, the fetter was opened too much and the manitou has taken control of the body. If any are deuces, the attempt to meld the spirit failed, and the subject is irrevocably dead. Jokers take precedence over deuces. Any other result is a success.

Pre-Harrowed

Implanting a fetter in someone who is already Harrowed uses the same procedure of drawing cards with the same results. A Joker accidentally gives the manitou total and permanent Dominion, while a deuce means the junker closed the fetter down too tightly and severed the connection between manitou and body—the brainer is now permanently dead.

Repairs



Most cyborgs only have repairs made by a junker they trust or they make sure to have a friend watch while the repairs are made. This is because the deader must power completely down and sleep while the repairs are made. Some unscrupulous junkers with the *CPU* power often take advantage of this to slip some new rules of engagement into the cyborg's skull. Some rules are innocuous like "you may not harm me," but sometimes a junker uses this to try and enslave the cyborg or cause it to carry out a mission for the techno-mage.

Dominion

"Dominion" represents the constant struggle for control over the Harrowed's body and mind between the manitou and its host. On occasion, the manitou takes over. When this happens, the mortal "blacks out." He can't see, hear, or have any idea what the demon is up to while it's running the show.

The battles of this war are most often fought when the Harrowed shuts down to rest. While the manitou rebuilds and regenerates the body, the mortal soul is subjected to terrible nightmares. Perhaps the host dreams of the grisly deeds the manitou committed the last time it took control. Or perhaps he witnesses horrible images dredged from the worst parts of the Hunting Grounds.

To reflect those occasional nightmares in which the mortal mind caves in to the manitou's torment, Dominion tests are made at the start of each play session. As you learned in the *Hell on Earth* book's nightmare section, Harrowed characters have a number of Dominion points equal to their *Spirit*. The more Dominion the character or demon has, the easier it is to gain control of the body.

To make the test, both the hero and the devil inside make opposed *Spirit* tests, each adding their current Dominion to their rolls. The lucky winner takes 1 point of Dominion for each success.

Taking Over

When the manitou wants to take control, the Marshal must first pay a Fate Chip. We want you to be able to play your undead friends at will, so draw yourself an extra chip at the beginning of each game session for every Harrowed in your posse. Of course you don't have to use it on the Harrowed, it's just a little extra help to counter all that power the undead have.

Once you spend a chip to try to take over a Harrowed hero, make a *Spirit* test for the manitou. The TN is Fair (5) plus +1 for every point of Dominion the character currently has.

The Fate Chip is not applied to the roll. It's simply the cost the manitou must pay to wrest control of the Harrowed's reins for a while. You can spend additional chips on the roll, but you get no bonuses to the roll for the chip you spent to initiate the test. If the manitou is successful, the amount of time it gets control depends on the color of the first chip you spent.

Land of the Cyber People

Lost Control

Chip	Duration
White	1 minute
Red	10 minutes
Blue	1 hour

If you need the manitou to have a little more play time, you can simply pay additional chips. You don't have to roll again or spend chips to initiate another takeover attempt.

If a manitou lets its control lapse early, it can take over again without another roll, as long as it's within its original time period.

Total Dominion

If a manitou ever controls all a hero's Dominion points, it takes over for a good, long while. Some Harrowed have been lost in this way for years. When they finally do come around, they discover they have a lifetime's blood on their rotting hands.

The only time the mortal soul gets to fight back is when the manitou is affected by certain magic spells, relics, or arcane procedures. The Marshal might also give the hero a chance to fight back in particularly unusual circumstances, such as if the demon is about to kill someone close to the host. Then it might be time to give the poor schmuck stuck inside another chance to fight back.

Breaking Away

Sometimes, a hero's will is so strong that it can overthrow a manitou's Dominion and keep it from doing something positively atrocious, at least for the moment.

These kinds of checks should be extremely rare because almost everything the manitou does is downright despicable. But even a subjugated hero might be able to fight back if his manitou is about to cause direct harm to a very close companion.

When the Marshal feels such an occasion is about to occur, he can let the Harrowed's player make an opposed *Spirit* test versus the manitou. With a raise, he regains control instantly. Any remaining time the manitou had coming to it is lost.

Letting a player character attempt to break Dominion should be a rare occurrence that happens only under special and unique circumstances.

Dominion Summary

Here's a quick look at how you should handle all this Harrowed business. Don't worry, it's simpler than you think. Mess with your heroes a few times and you'll get the hang of it.

At the start of each play session, the Marshal gets to draw one extra Fate Chip for every Harrowed hero in the posse.

The Harrowed and the manitou make a *Spirit* test at the start of every game session, each adding their Dominion points.

The winner of the Dominion test gets 1 Dominion point for a success, and another for every raise over his opponent.

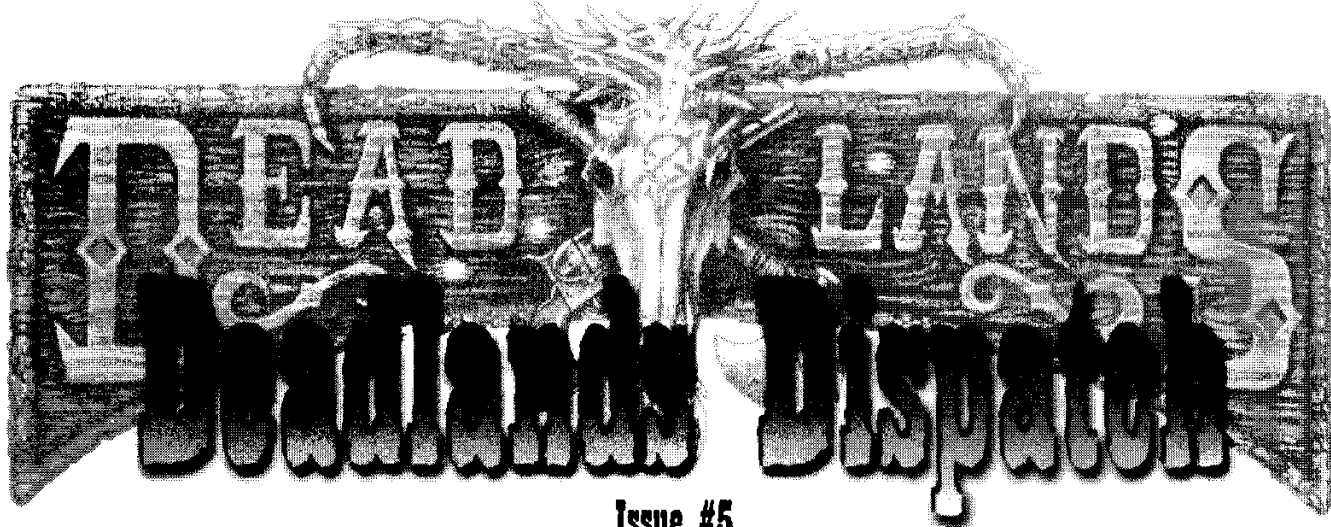
When the Marshal wants the manitou to take over, he must first spend a Fate Chip.

After spending a chip, the Marshal rolls the manitou's *Spirit* against a TN of 5 plus the number of Dominion points controlled by the Harrowed.

If successful, the amount of time the manitou remains in charge depends on the color of chip spent.

Additional chips can be spent to extend the duration of the manitou's control as long as you like (or your chips hold out).

The hero has no memory of what occurs while the manitou is in charge.



Issue #5

Character Info, Errata, and The Big Picture of the Deadlands Universe

Welcome to Pinnacle's regular update on the Deadlands universe. In this issue we talk about the Combine activities in western Colorado

The Big Picture

There have been some big events taking place in the *Deadlands* universe. Here are but a few.

Mystery Cargo Revealed

A large-scale battle between the Combine and the forces of the Sky Pirates and Junkyard took place in western Colorado recently.

Sky pirate ultra-lights spotted what appeared to be a typical tribute caravan heading east toward Denver. The sighting was radioed in to the scouts' mother ship and an attack was ordered. Ultra-lights and a few light aircraft flown out of Junkyard formed up and headed after the convoy.

They were in for quite a surprise. As the aircraft neared the rolling trucks, surface-to-air missiles arced up to greet them. A number of the light craft were instantly vaporized. More were downed when tarp-covered anti-aircraft guns on the trucks were revealed.

The Sky Pirates light

aircraft were no match for this amount of withering firepower, so they quickly retreated. A few ultra-light scouts shadowed the convoy just out of range while the rest of the Pirates regrouped and awaited new orders from their mother ship.

After a hasty conference, the Pirate leaders aboard Sky Raider I decided that anything worth guarding that heavily must be worth destroying. A call went out to some of the road gangs allied with the Sky Pirates, requesting their aid. While they waited for their friends to join the party, Pirate aircraft flew ahead of the Combiners and took out a bridge along their route.

The timing worked perfectly for the Pirates. The Combine convoy reached the destroyed span just as the summoned road gangs caught up with it. Throckmorton's goons were trapped with their backs to a river. The Sky Pirates and the road warriors marshalled their forces and moved in for the kill.

Unfortunately, what the Sky Pirates thought to be a trapped rat, turned out to be a cornered mountain lion. No sooner had the attack begun than troops piled out of the back of a few of the caravan's trucks. They weren't a bunch of Black Hat rabble, either, they were some of Throckmorton's recently acquired cyborgs.

The Sky Pirates and their allies pressed the attack hard, but even though they heavily outnumbered the beleaguered Combiners, the incredible firepower of the cyborgs kept them at bay. A ring of shattered aircraft and road vehicles soon surrounded the trapped caravan. As night fell, the attackers pulled back to lick their wounds and come up with a new plan.

Counterattack!

Whatever plans they hatched, they never got to use. Around midnight, the Combine cyborgs used the cover of darkness to launch a surprise attack against the forces surrounding them. During the confusion, some heavy Combine choppers slipped in and airlifted the rest of the caravan across the river. Once their comrades had escaped, the surviving cyborgs retreated into the river and disappeared beneath the water.

The heavy losses suffered by the Sky Pirates and their allies convinced them not to pursue the fleeing Combiners. They did however, examine the wrecked vehicles Throckmorton's troops left behind. It didn't take long to discover why the convoy had been guarded so well: the trucks were loaded down with pitchblende, a uranium-containing ore. The techno-wizards in Junkyard estimated that, once refined, the amount of ore Throckmorton's troops escaped with would be sufficient to make a handful of low-yield fission bombs—bad news for everyone!

After a quick council of war, the leaders of Junkyard and the Sky Pirates decided that finding the source of this ore, and shutting it down, was a top priority. Some of the locals remembered that there were uranium mines outside the town of Uravan, so units were dispatched to check the place out. The scouts hit the jackpot.

Hot Reception

Of course, most of them didn't get a chance to celebrate, because they were dead. Of the ten scouts sent, only Axl Guthrie returned to give a report. The severely wounded biker's hovercycle cruised into Junkyard on autopilot with an unconscious Axl slumped over the handlebars.

Once he had recovered enough to talk, Axl described the Combine mining operation he saw. Two of the old mine sites had been reopened and uranium ore was being loaded on trucks. Most of the work appeared to be done by a combination of robotic loaders and slave labor. The biker had seen a few mounds that looked like they might be mass graves. Judging from the high levels of background radiation his Geiger counter had registered, Axl guessed that most of the slaves didn't last long in the mines without filtration equipment.

The mining camps were crawling with Black and Red Hats—Axl saw well over 100. There were also some automated defenses and a handful of Raptors patrolling the area. The Raptors are what accounted for most of the scouts sent to the mines. One of these flying death machines chased Axl for nearly ten miles before he was able to lose it, but not before it had wounded him.

Undecided

The leaders of Junkyard and the Sky Pirates are undecided as to how to handle this turn of events. They obviously can't allow the Combine to continue to mine uranium unmolested, but since most of the scouts failed to return, it's almost certain that Throckmorton knows his secret has been uncovered and has reinforced the garrison at the mine. The losses suffered in the earlier battle weren't crippling, but they were serious, and this has made them cautious.

For now, the Pirates are trying to learn more about what is going at the mines. They're using aerial surveillance as well as hiring mercenaries to infiltrate the mining camps. An intrepid posse could make some fast bucks by bringing a report back from Uravan—as long as they don't mind a case of the glows.

Needful Thangs

Here are a few items for your roleplaying enjoyment. The first is one of the many items which didn't make it into *The Junkman Cometh* because we simply didn't have enough pages.

Flow

TN: 11 +Frame size

Speed: Frame size hours

Duration: Permanent


Range: Touch

This trick allows a junker to help the tech spirits settle into a newly created device. It must be cast within 24 hours of a device's completion, after this the spirits are as comfy as they're going to get in their new home.

Each success and raise gained when casting this trick can be spent to either increase the Stability of a device by 1 point or decrease the Drain of a single power in the device by 1 point. A device's Drain can never be reduced below 1 regardless of the number of successes achieved with this trick.

There's a catch. A failed casting unsettles the spirit, and lowers the device's Stability by 1. Going bust lowers Stability by 1d6 points.

A device may only have *flow* cast on it once, even if new powers are later added to it. Any casting after the first, or more than 24 hours after the item's completion, has absolutely no effect.

 Marv uses *Flash Gordon* to make a plasma rifle with a Stability of 18, a Drain of 3, and a Frame size of 5. He casts *flow* on it and gets a 22. That's a success and a raise. He spends the success to lower the gun's Drain to 2, and spends the raise to increase it's Stability to 19. If he had desired to, Marv could have alternatively dropped the weapon's Drain to 1 or upped the Stability to 20.

External Systems

In addition to the purpose-built external systems created for cyborgs, many of the systems originally designed as internal systems were later modified for external mounting. These systems cost 20% less than an equivalent internal system, but because they are mounted externally, they are more likely to be damaged. External mounted systems cause no *Spirit* loss.

Check out the External System Table to see which systems can also be purchased in an external model. Paying an additional 50% of the unit's price equips it with armor which subtracts -2 from the system damage roll. A damage roll of 6, for instance would be reduced to a 4, meaning the system is knocked out for 4 rounds rather than being destroyed.

External Systems

System	Hardpoints	Cost
Antenna	1 Light Any	\$2400
Big Ears	1 Light Head	\$3200
Brain Mole	1 Light Any	\$3200
C&C	2 Light Torso	\$8000
CPU	1 Light Any	\$1600/slug
Cyber Scanner	1 Light Any	\$4000
Data Jack	1 Light Any	\$400
EMP Hardening	1 Light Any	\$800/loc
GPS/INS	1 Light Any	\$1200
Lightning Cannon	2 Light Arm	\$2400
Power Jack	1 Light Any	\$400
Radar	2 Light Torso	\$4000
Radio	1 Light Any	\$800
Samson	2 Heavy All	\$3200
Shield	2 Light Torso	Varies
Shocker	2 Light Torso	\$4000
Sonar	1 Light Torso	\$2400
Spirit blaster	1 Light Arm	\$6400
Spirit Capacitor	1 Light Any	\$12,000
Spur	2 Light Arm	\$1600
Storage Canister	1 Light Any	\$800
Targeting Computer	2 Light Any	\$8000

Gremlins

Gremlins love gizmos and a few of them managed to worm their way into *The Junkman Cometh*. Most of these were spotted by diligent readers on the listserv. Here are the corrections and a few clarifications:

Associated Spirits: There are a few spots in which there is a conflict between the associated powers listed for a browser spirit and associated spirit listed in the power's description. Where conflicts exist, use the listing in the power description.

Non-existent Powers: This was a fairly complex book, and many of the powers were changed and/or renamed numerous times. We though we had kept up with all the changes, but we missed a few. Ignore references to the *flow*, *reinforce*, and *rotor* powers. These were cut (although they may appear in later updates). Any mention of the *flight* power actually refers to the *VTOL* power.

Ammo Instability: Since ammo is created in batches, it also makes instability checks in batches. Just roll for the batch

the first time a bullet from it is fired each day. If it becomes unstable,

the effect applies to the entire batch.

Page 37: The new device system has increased the Drain of many devices. To help junkers out the power output of a conventional G-ray collector should be increased to 80 GR/pound. This works out to an even 16 GR per ounce, allowing junkers to burn whatever small scraps of ghost rock they can get their hands on without killing themselves with the math.

Page 45: Familiars are not the size of a cello case. The Frame size of 4 listed for familiars is incorrect. They have a Frame size of 2. Just to clarify things, familiars don't need the *agility* power, just the *sensor* power to see, and *locomotion* or *VTOL* to move. Unlike most devices, the tech spirit in the device does the rest.

Page 81: The powerplant sizes for the *locomotion* power are too large. Ten percent should be subtracted from each of the listed powerplant sizes.

Profile

Here's a quick profile of the author who's responsible for this latest addition to the *Hell on Earth* world.

John Hopler

John Hopler has been with Pinnacle since it began back in 1996. Since that time he's worn many hats. He's currently the *Hell on Earth* brand manager, and does most of the writing and designing for this line.

Originally a Yankee from New Jersey, John moved to Blacksburg, VA in 1986 to attend Virginia Tech, from which he graduated with a BA in History. He's been in Blacksburg ever since.

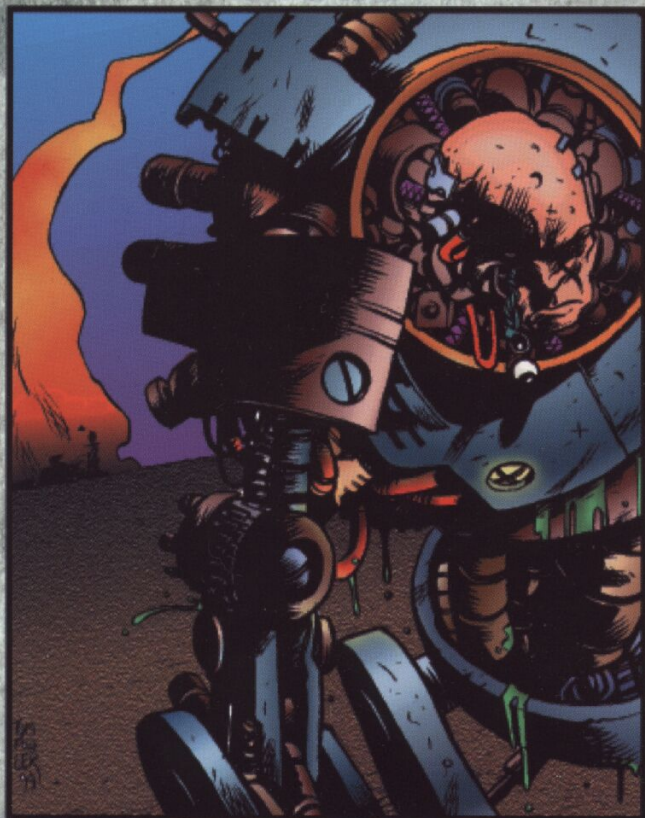
John got started in the game industry as a free-lance writer, working for such companies

as Chameleon Eclectic and Iron Crown Enterprises. In 1995 he designed *The Last Crusade*, an historical card game based on World War II. In January 1996, he went to work full-time for Pinnacle.

When he's not playing or writing for a *Deadlands* game, (his *Hell on Earth* campaign has been running since well before the initial release of the game), John enjoys fishing, blasting tiny clay pigeons into even tinier bits, farming his small vegetable garden (although he's not sure exactly what's growing in it), and brewing up Shane's T-34s in multi-player *Close Combat* games.



Looking For a Few Good Deaders



On the cratered, smoking battlefields of the Last War, dying for your country once wasn't always enough. The bodies of many good soldiers never reached the morgue.

The chosen few were given a new life—of sorts. They were revived as Harrowed—the living dead—and implanted with state-of-the-art weapons and electronics that transformed them into the ultimate killing machines. These grim, ghost-steel-and-silicon warriors undertook the most dangerous missions and fought the fiercest battles. Even though the war ended over 13 years ago, some of these flesh and metal monstrosities are still fighting it, slaves to the computers implanted in their gray matter.

Cyborgs contains everything you need to build one of these cyber-soldiers from the ground up. Inside are complete rules for creating a cyborg hero, including over 70 new cyborg systems and weapons, and a random "Rules of Engagement" system for determining how much of your deader's original programming remains. For those less mechanically-minded, there are also complete rules for creating more "traditional" Harrowed heroes. Mechanized or mummified, it's your choice.

So, grab some tools and head into the lab, brainer. Maybe your hero can be one of the Few, the Proud, the Cyborgs!



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