



HELL ON EARTH™
Road Warriors



Road Warriors

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Dedicated to:
George Miller, for starting us all down this road.

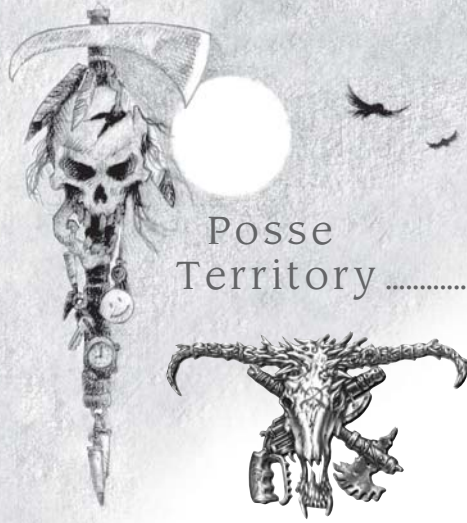
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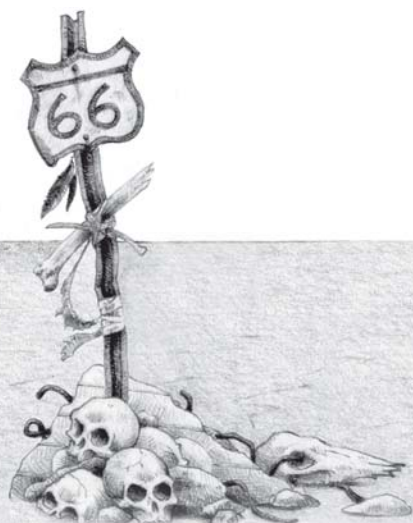
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Posse Territory



Rise of the Road Warrior



Posse: 6



Chapter One:

Rise of the Road Warrior



When the ghost-rock bombs fell, the devastation was enormous: entire cities were leveled, dams collapsed flooding the towns below them, fertile farmland was ruined, governments fell, and billions died. Then, just when it seemed things couldn't get any worse, the Reckoners appeared and did the Texas two-step across the West.

After the Reckoners disappeared over the Mississippi, the shell-shocked survivors emerged from beneath whatever rocks they had hidden under and started to go about the harsh business of daily survival. For most this meant banding together with the few like-minded people they could find and trying to build some sort of haven from the horrors that now stalked the Wasted West.

Wanderlust

Not everyone was content to play "Farmer in the Dell," though. Many of those who survived the devastation of civilization did so through sheer ruthlessness, and the most ruthless of those decided to let others do the work and then just take what they needed at gunpoint. Some of these types set themselves up as petty warlords (or not so petty in Throckmorton's case) and extorted food and valuables from those unfortunate enough to live within their stomping grounds. Others formed gangs and headed out on the highway.

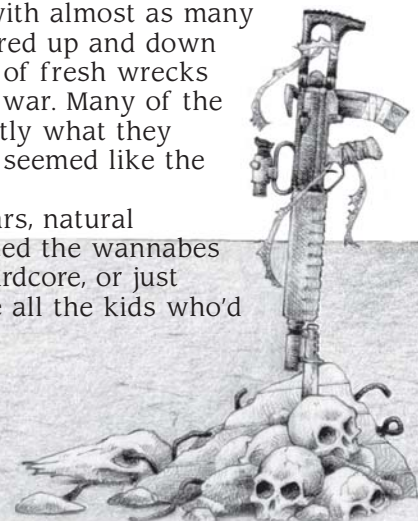
Despite the destruction caused by the Last War, thousands of miles of interstates, highways, and back-country roads were still relatively intact. These roads served as vital links between small pockets of struggling survivors. Traders traveled these lifelines, transporting desperately needed items from settlement to settlement. These highways became the hunting grounds of the road gangs.

Heavy Traffic

In the first few years after the Last War, would-be road warriors were as thick on the interstates as fleas on the mangy mutts that now roamed the ruins. Every brainer who had a car and had watched a few post-holocaust movies sawed the barrels off of his great-granddaddy's antique double-barrel, raided the local pharmacy for a knee brace, and hit the highways.

Running gun battles with almost as many sides as participants roared up and down the roads, adding scores of fresh wrecks to the rubble left by the war. Many of the drivers had no idea exactly what they were fighting for—it just seemed like the thing to do.

Over the next two years, natural selection quickly separated the wannabes from the truly skilled, hardcore, or just plain lucky drivers. Once all the kids who'd



Rise of the Road Warrior



tied blocks of wood to their feet so they could drive their old man's station wagons had been sent home (or into a ditch), it was time for the adults to play.

The Salad Days

The next three years are considered the "good old days" by veterans of the road wars. That period has taken on an almost legendary quality, and with good reason. Gas and ammunition were still easy to come by, spare parts could be found on the shelves of the local S-Mart, and if a waster's ride got shot up, he could just go grab a new one out of someone's garage.

Interstate Buffet

Life was easy for those of the criminal persuasion. The aftermath of the Last War and the appearance of the Reckoners kept the roads filled with defenseless caravans of frightened refugees that were easy pickings for well-armed gangs. If the Reckoners and their minions got to be a problem, most gangs just hopped on the nearest interstate and moved to greener pastures.

When gangs weren't busy shooting up fleeing refugees, they spent their time looting. Many an individual was fortunate enough to survive the war and the Reckoning that followed it, only to be done in by a road gang descending on his home like a biblical plague of old.

The gangs devoured towns like locusts ate crops. They moved in, cowed the local populace, and then stripped the area bare of anything useful, leaving behind only orphans, empty buildings, and violated women.

Highway Heroes

The criminal gangs didn't have it all their way, though. Here and there, people had the courage to fight back. More often than not, they were crushed out of hand by the superior numbers of their enemy, but at least they tried.

A few exceptional heroes like Afterburner Brown and Christine "Roadkill" Coniff tried to put a stop to the slaughter, but it was like slapping a Band-Aid on a shotgun wound—you plug one hole, but the blood just squirts out another. Very few of these early road warriors are alive today, and the ones who aren't didn't exactly die of natural causes.

The Convoy

It was during this period that the Convoy appeared on the scene. A bunch of truckers still trying to ply their trade got fed up with serving as every ganger's target practice, so they banded together. Their little group grew as it traveled, and it eventually snowballed into an enormous road caravan with a population bigger than most survivor settlements.

The Convoy was one of the first groups to have any real success against the road gangs, but it wasn't the last.

Hard Times

In the end, it was the road gangs themselves that caused their decline and allowed honest folk to actually entertain the notion of traveling more than a mile or two from where they lived.

The gangs' "what's yours is mine" policy succeeded in destroying or driving away most of the peaceful settlements they depended on for food. The people who managed to escape their clutches moved far from the main roads. The few settlements that remained near the highways were large (by Wasted West standards) walled towns capable of fighting off all but the biggest gangs.

Rise of the Road Warrior

The few unfortunate communities that still lived under gang rule became the sites of bitter turf wars as the gangs turned on each other like starving dogs around a scrap of meat. Towns changed hands on a weekly and sometimes daily basis. Each time this happened, there were a few fewer gang members in the world.

The Tables Turn

As the years wore on, fuel and parts became harder and harder to find, and the gangs had to roam farther from the highways in search of them. Their scrounging took them out into the countryside where many of their former victims had fled. The weakened gangs suddenly found themselves at the receiving end of ambushes that further depleted their ranks. Some gangs were completely wiped out. The rest retreated back toward the highways, leaving the country folk in peace—for now.

Shifting Scales

At present there is an uneasy balance of power between the road gangs and the scattered survivor communities. It's a balance that can easily tip in either direction.

The remaining gangs have been stripped of their fat and are now lean, mean, looting machines. All it would take is a strong leader to unite some of the larger gangs into an unstoppable force capable of shutting down trade and communication over a large area and slowly strangling the walled towns into submission.

Likewise, if the large survivor groups can keep their lines of trade and communication open and work together, they might be able to break the backs of the big gangs and reclaim the highways for their own.

Until then, the standoff continues. The gangs rule the open road, while the independent survivor towns reinforce their walls and keep a keen lookout for trouble.

The Road Warrior

Your hero is about to drive right into the middle of this mess. Her actions may become that tiny straw that tilts the scale in one direction or the other. Whether she is hailed as a hero and has her name whispered in awe by aspiring newbies across the Wasted West—or is shot at on sight and has curses heaped on her head by decent people everywhere—is entirely up to you.

In either case, if she wants to survive, she needs to be able to drive fast, shoot straight, and fix her ride with nothing more than a roll of duct tape and some toenail clippers.

The Layout o' this Book

Like the other *Hell on Earth* books, *Road Warriors* is divided up into three sections: Posse Territory, No Man's Land, and the Marshal's Handbook. Here's a look at what we've got in store for you:

Posse Territory (you're lookin' at it, brainer) contains all kinds of information about life on the open road, as experienced and told by Convoy driver C.W. McCoy. The information C.W. has passed on is the kind of stuff that most heroes of the Wasted West can pick up by tipping back a few with nearly any passing trader, so characters of all types are cleared for the knowledge in this section. Just keep in mind that you shouldn't believe everything you read—things change quickly out on the four-lane. Your Marshal's got the real scoop on what's going on behind the scenes.

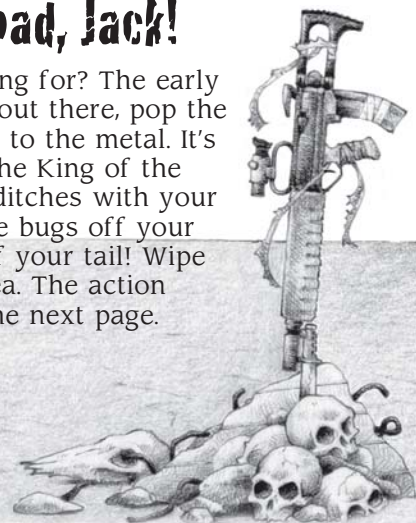
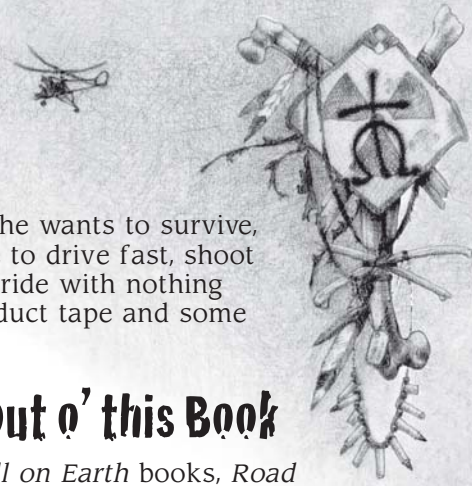
Also in this section are a whole convoy-load of new rules for would-be road warriors. We've got a few new Archetypes for you, and some exciting new ways for your waster to put his ride through its paces.

No Man's Land is chock full of goodies for experienced road warriors. Provided your Marshal gives you the green light, you can learn how to take that stock vehicle from the equipment list and turn it into a red-hot, rolling death machine.

The Marshal's Handbook gives your hardworking Marshal the lowdown on C.W.'s story, some tips for running road combats, and a valve-popping adventure that'll blow your doors off! Keep out of this section unless you're the Marshal, brainer.

Hit the Road, Jack!

So what are you waiting for? The early waster gets the gas. Get out there, pop the clutch, and put the pedal to the metal. It's time to see who's truly the King of the Road. Stay between the ditches with your dirty side down. Keep the bugs off your glasses and the bears off your tail! Wipe the—well, you get the idea. The action starts with the turn of the next page.



The Long, Lonesome Road



Posse: 10

The Long, Lonesome Road

Is that thing on?

Oh, it is? Okay, I guess you can just cut that part out.

Librarian's Note: Much of the information imparted by subject C.W. McCoy duplicated that found in Templar Jo's notes (see the *Wasted West*). This information has been removed and may be found in file CWM1220.2. Only those portions pertaining to new subjects or adding new information on subjects in Jo's memoirs have been retained. Portions of McCoy's discourse have been edited for readability's sake. A raw transcript of this interview can be found in file CWM1220.0.

Librarian Sterling Holmquist

Um, howdy folks, my name is Clarence William McCoy. My friends just call me C.W. If you catch me on the radio, my handle is Gunslinger.

This librarian gent here has asked me to tell him everything I know about traveling around what's left of the West. I've never been one for flapping my gums, but he seems to think it's important—enough to pay me 100 rounds of 7.62 for running my mouth for a while.

Guess I'm as qualified as anyone on this subject. I've been driving a rig for over 20 years now, and 13 of those years have been since the end of the Last War. The past six years I've been driving as a runner for the Convoy. My rig and I have been up to Canada and down to Mexico and nearly every point in between (except Denver, of course, because nobody goes there).

C.W.'s Story

I was hauling a load of furniture to an S-Mart in San Antonio the day the ghost-rock bombs fell. I was on I-10 about 20 miles outside of the city when it was hit.

Damnedest thing I ever saw. There was a blinding flash, and then a huge cloud of smoke and debris mushroomed up over the city, just like in the movies. 'Cept I never saw any cloud like that on the silver screen. I'll swear to my dying day that I saw some kind of skull-like face leering at me out of the cloud.

I'm glad I pulled off onto the shoulder when I saw the cloud, because if I hadn't, the sound of the explosion would've put me in a ditch for sure. It took a few seconds to reach me, and when it did it was all I could do not to hop out of the cab and run screaming down the road. It didn't sound like an explosion at all. It sounded like thousands of people all screaming at once. They weren't screaming in pain or sorrow either. It was an angry scream, full of hate. Like whatever was in the cloud was going to come flying up the highway and turn me into a Happy Meal on legs. It chilled me right down to the soles of my boots.

I don't know how long I sat there on the side of the road, just staring at the cloud, but eventually I got Rolling Thunder (that's my rig) back on the road. I figured that S-Mart wasn't going to be needing my load now, so I got

The Lonesome Road

turned around at the next exit and headed away from San Antonio as fast as my wheels could spin.

I pulled off at a truck stop about 50 miles down the road. It was jammed full of trucks and cars. Nearly everyone had stopped to figure out what to do next. There was a lot of excited talk and plenty of wild stories flying around, only about half of which were true. Once I managed to fight my way to a phone, I tried to put a call through to my folks in Abilene, but the lines were down. I also tried to call my dispatcher, but I couldn't get through to him either.

I camped out at the truck stop for three days. During that time, the news just got worse and worse. The radio didn't work—interference from the bombs I guess—but passing travelers brought reports about this or that city having been hit. With each new report, the people at the stop got crazier and crazier. Fights started breaking out, and not a few people killed themselves. A couple idiots even tried to jack my load of furniture, but I chased them off with the pistol I keep in the cab.

Abilene

I decided I needed to get rolling, just to get away from the insanity if nothing else. I topped off my tanks (that was the last time I can remember paying cash for anything) and got back on the interstate. I decided I was going to head for Abilene and check on my parents.

I had a few narrow scrapes on the way there, with people trying to steal what was in my truck. One of these encounters ended with a few less chuckleheads in the world and myself in the possession of a spiffy new submachine-gun. You can't stop a semi with a Honda—it just don't work. I eventually dumped the whole load outside of Menard, to save on fuel.

Before I got within 100 miles of Abilene, I ran into people heading the other way. They told me the city had been leveled by a bomb. I knew deep down they were telling the truth, but I figured I owed it to my folks to see for myself. I drove as far as I could into the outskirts of the city, but that wasn't too far on account of the wreckage and toppled buildings. I never got closer than five miles to my parents' house, and I got a case of the glows for my trouble.

American Gothic

I wandered kind of aimlessly for a spell. Not long after, things started to get really weird: the weather started acting funny, and strange

critters started popping up all over. Between the weirdness and the bands of looters prowling around, it wasn't safe to be on the road alone. I eventually stopped in Rayland, found an old barn to stow my rig in, and settled in with the people there.

I spent almost seven years there, working the fields alongside some good people. We had the occasional problem with marauders, but we didn't see many monsters. It seems like the worst of the Reckoning (as most folks call it nowadays) passed us by.

The folks I stayed with were hospitable enough, and I definitely earned my keep, but the wanderlust that pulled me into trucking in the first place kept me longing to be back on the road again. I spent many a night staring at the road out of town and wondering what was going on out there. Some nights as I lay in bed, I could swear I heard the growl of a big diesel out on the main highway. On the days I wasn't needed in the fields (which were few and far between), I'd hike out to the highway to see if I could find any evidence that anyone had passed through recently—but all I ever saw were the same few burned-out, rusted hulks.

Visitors

One cold spring day, I was helping Jake break ground on a newly cleared field when I heard the unmistakable grunt of a Detroit Diesel accelerating under a heavy load. It grew louder as I listened, and eventually the rig itself came into sight.

It was like no rig I had ever seen before. The tractor was a cab-over Pete. Steel rods had been welded to the front bumper to form some sort of makeshift cowcatcher, and sheets of metal covered the outside of the engine compartment. The driver couldn't be seen through the heavy metal grillwork that had been welded over the windshield. The trailer also appeared to be armored, and I could make out men in sandbagged fighting positions on the roof. A huge machine-gun stuck out of the sandbags at the rear position, and I could see that all of the men were well armed. A large yellow flag with an enormous bulldog on it flapped from a pole bolted to the side of the tractor.

This monstrosity of a truck rolled right into the middle of town and stopped. By the time Jake and I got there, most of the other folks had already arrived and were talking excitedly with the rig's driver. I recognized him immediately: it was my old driving buddy "Muzzleloader" Lewis.

Muzzleloader and his friends started handing fresh bread out from the back of the truck while he explained that they were part of a group of truckers that was trying to establish contact with isolated survivor towns and set up trade routes between them. His rig had been sent out to scout some of the back roads off the highway and see if there was anyone living in the area. If the people of Rayland were interested, he'd report back and see what could be done about adding the town to a regular delivery route.

On the Road Again

Once the excitement died down some and I was able to get Muzzleloader's attention, we went and had a long talk over some of our home grown "fuel." He told me all about the Convoy (I'll yak about that some more in a minute) and what he'd been up to since the end of the war. When he heard that I still had my rig, he asked me to join up on the spot. Needless to say, I didn't think twice before saying yes.

Even though I'd done my best to keep my truck in good shape, six years of sitting in one place had taken its toll. Some work was needed to get it in running order again. Muzzleloader had enough spare parts and tires—not to mention fuel—on his rig to make the repairs, and I left Rayland three days later to join the Convoy.

I've been with the group ever since. I started out as a convoy driver, but after the Battle of Burnt Tires, I moved up to delivery man and then to runner.



Survivors welcome a Convoy truck.

highway choked with wrecked vehicles. He had just cleared the wrecks and was thinking about pulling off somewhere to catch a few winks when he was attacked by a road gang.

The Convoy

Before I go any further, I guess I should say a few words about exactly what the Convoy is and what it's up to. I heard the story of the Convoy's start from Fuller Mattox himself.

Origins

The Convoy started about three years after the Last War ended. Despite the dangers, some truckers kept their rigs rolling, moving needed goods from one isolated settlement to another.

Fuller "Goose" Mattox was one of these truckers. On June 6, 2084 (he remembered the date because he recalls thinking it was the 140th anniversary of D-Day), he was hauling a load of tractor parts to New Fresno. He had spent a long, dark night snaking his rig through a section of

Mayday

Fuller hit the gas and led them on a wild chase, but his attackers knew what they were doing. They never got close enough for him to whip his big rig around and knock 'em off the road. They just hung back and took shots at his tires. In desperation, Fuller got on his CB and hollered for help. Luck was with him that day because he actually got through to somebody—two somebodies in fact—both fellow truckers.

The other two drivers were nearby, and they raced to the rescue. Between the three of them, they were able to box in Fuller's attackers and knock a few of them off the road. The rest skedaddled.

Safety in Numbers

Fuller's rescuers followed him to his destination in New Fresno. Once in town, he got to meet them face-to-face: Wayne "Jackrabbit"





Trucker Slang

Librarian's Note: The truckers and drivers of the Convoy employ a large volume of colorful slang in their day-to-day communications. Much of this slang predates the Last War and is also in common use by many road gang members. Some of the more common phrases include:

10-4: Affirmative.

10-9: Repeat please.

10-20: A vehicle's or person's location.

10-33: An emergency.

Back Door: The last vehicle in a convoy.

Barbershop: A low or damaged overpass.

Bear: Before the Last War, a police officer.

This term is now applied to road gang members.

Bear Cave: A possible ambush.

Bear in the Air: Hostile aircraft.

Bushel: A half ton of cargo.

Choke and Puke: Before the war, a truck stop. It now refers to a settlement that will feed truckers.

County Mounty: A road vigilante.

Darktime: Night.

Four-Wheeler: Passenger car.

Hammer Down: Driving Fast.

Mix-Master: Highway cloverleaf.

Pregnant Roller Skate: Volkswagen.

Rocking Chair: Vehicle in the middle of a convoy.

Rolling Roadblock: A slow-moving vehicle.

Scraphounds: Road gangers.

Seat Covers: Passengers.

Shake the Leaves: Scout ahead.

Sweeping Leaves: Bringing up the rear.

Tick: A minute.

Window Wash: A rainstorm.

Wrapper: A vehicle's paint job.

Hollins and Calvin "Preacher" Ellis. The three talked for a while, and Fuller suggested they travel together for safety. The other two agreed.

The trio got back on the road to make the rest of their deliveries. As they traveled, they recruited other drivers into their group, and the Convoy was born. Over the months, it eventually grew to such a size that not even the biggest road gang was willing to attack it.

The Convoy Today

The group has continued to grow right up to the present day. The size of the Convoy is roughly 150 big rigs and about the same number of support vehicles: wreckers, chase cars, construction vehicles, and the like. We've even got a few military vehicles we haul around on flatbed trailers and pull out whenever we need big guns. A bunch of the rigs haul trailers that have been specially modified for our needs. We've got mobile machine shops so we can manufacture our own parts, rolling bakeries and breweries, and even a mobile hospital.

The Convoy is like a small, mobile town. All told, we've got about 2,000 people in the convoy. About 300 of them are drivers. The rest are support crews, rig crews, or the wives, husbands, lovers, and children of Convoy members. We've also got some bakers, doctors, and chemists in the group.

The group travels by day and then sets up camp every night. Sometimes we stop in one place for a week or more to do maintenance on the vehicles, do some scrounging in the ruins, and brew up some more fuel.

Most of the vehicles in the group run on ethanol or spook juice, because we have people in the group who know how to make both. Most of the light vehicles run on ethanol, and the big rigs use doctored spook juice (straight spook juice is too hot for the diesels to handle). Whenever the Convoy moves through Texas and Oklahoma, we pick up some gasoline and diesel in Oil Town.

The Convoy has become so large that the main body never leaves the interstate highway system. All deliveries, scouting, and whatnot are done by smaller groups sent out on specific missions.

Goals

The goal of the Convoy is to help reestablish civilization by keeping communication and trade going between the survivors we can find. It often seems like hope is the only thing that keeps people going these days, and we help them out by letting them know that they're not alone.

The Convoy also gives everyone who belongs to it a goal beyond merely living to see another sunrise. Knowing that we're helping others even while we're helping ourselves makes us *want* to see that next sunrise. That's more than a lot of people can say these days.

The Head Honcho

The leader of the Convoy is "the Goose," Fuller Mattox. Goose is in his late 50s and he's been driving a rig now for nearly 30 years. He's a good man, and he really cares about the people who follow him. Most of his day is spent attending to all the details that come with running such a demanding outfit. He's often the first one up in the morning and the last one to bed at night.

He gets some help from his two lieutenants: Wayne "Jackrabbit" Hollins and Calvin "Preacher" Ellis—those same guys who rescued him that fateful day in 2084. These two take care of the daily vehicle and personnel assignments and make sure all of the vehicles are properly maintained. Jackrabbit is usually in charge of the chase and support vehicles, while the Preacher takes care of the big rigs.

These three also take care of personal matters in the Convoy. If someone gets out of hand, he's hauled in front of them. Depending on what the brainer's done, he might get extra duties, incarceration in the prison truck, or even be expelled or executed for more severe crimes like murder.

One crime that always gets the death penalty is spying. Many road gangs have tried to infiltrate the group so they can learn our delivery schedule and ambush a truck. So far, most of these spies have been uncovered quickly, and we've lost very few trucks to their prying eyes.

On the happier side of things, it turns out the Preacher actually was a preacher before he became a truck driver, so he handles things like baptisms and weddings for Convoy members.

The Law of the Road

As long as a person contributes to the group and doesn't cause problems, she's free to do and believe anything she wants. We've got hippies and arch-conservatives living together in peace (if not harmony). Goose has only one rule he expects everyone to live by. He calls it the Law of the Road.

The Law of the Road is simple and in keeping with our goal: all Convoy members must help anyone in distress as long as doing so doesn't jeopardize the Convoy itself.

Failure to live up to this rule usually results in expulsion from the group.

Of course, there's an unspoken corollary to this law. Anyone who takes advantage of this rule to ambush or otherwise harm a Convoy

member had better start learning to breathe dirt, because he's about to be put six feet under. Some road gangs have ambushed our delivery trucks by having one of their members pose as a traveler with car problems, and then attacking when the truck stopped to help.

The few times this has happened, Goose sent out groups to find the people responsible. Once the culprits were caught, they were strapped to the front of a truck's ram plate and driven into a brick wall—repeatedly. What remained was washed off the truck with a hose.

The Route

The Convoy follows an enormous circular route that covers most of the US and CSA west of the Mississippi. Along the way, we stop and trade with known settlements, search out new survivors, scrounge for spare parts, and look for new recruits. It takes about six months for the Convoy to make a full circle. We try to vary our routes slightly each year. This reduces the chance of an ambush and allows us to cover new ground and hopefully find new settlements to trade with.



Trucker extraordinaire Goose Mattox.

The Lonesome Road



Clearing the road. Hey, someone's gotta do it.

This sounds slow, but keeping that many vehicles moving together is hard work, and we often have to stop for repairs, fuel, or food.

The Roads

One of the things that slows the Convoy down is the state of the roads around the country. Most of them haven't seen a repair crew in over 13 years and many, especially ones in the border states between the US and CSA, were torn up pretty badly during the war. The interstates near most cities were heavily damaged by the ghost-rock bombs. The highways and interstates that actually run through major cities are usually choked with the rubble of collapsed buildings and often run right through the storms created by the bombs. Many of the bridges over major rivers have collapsed.

The Convoy tries to repair and clear the roads wherever possible. Any wrecks we encounter are stripped of usable parts and then pushed off the road. We use bulldozers to clear highways of rubble. As for repairs, we don't fill in every little pothole we come across, but whenever we hit a stretch of road which is so badly damaged

it's dangerous to travel, the caravan stops, we unload the construction vehicles, and we spend some time resurfacing the road.

The Drivers and Their Rigs

There's a certain pecking order among the drivers in the Convoy.

Most new recruits and newly-trained drivers start out as caravan drivers until they've proved that they have the skills for more demanding work. Caravan drivers drive the rigs and other vehicles that are part of the main body of the Convoy. These vehicles all travel together at low to medium speeds in a large caravan that stretches for miles.

The rigs in the Convoy's main body are built for defense; they're well armored and heavily armed. The Convoy is too large and slow to outrun anyone, so it relies on heavy overlapping firepower to decimate any unfriendlies that get too close. These trucks usually have two drivers and a crew of six to eight people manning weapons mounted on the roof and sides of the rig. As I mentioned earlier, many of these rigs haul specially-modified trailers such as kitchen or hospital trailers.

Delivery drivers are responsible for actually traveling to settlements which aren't right on the Convoy's route. A settlement is usually contacted by radio or chase car when the Convoy enters an area, to find out what it needs and what it has to trade. Once contact has been made, a truck is loaded up with the requested items and sent out to make the delivery. Delivery drivers need to be able to haggle and make sure they get a fair swap for the merchandise they drop off.

Delivery trucks are usually lightly armed and armored so they can carry larger loads. If they get in trouble, they normally run and holler for backup on the CB. Most delivery trucks have two drivers and a weapons crew of four.

Runners are the high-risk delivery drivers. They need to be excellent drivers who can keep a cool head in a fight. They make deliveries to settlements whose loyalties are suspect or which are inside the territories of known road gangs. More often than not, runners have to shoot their way in and out of their destinations.

Runner rigs are expected to get into trouble, so they are usually very heavily armed and armored. They also sport a large number of performance-enhancing modifications like turbochargers. Most runners have two drivers and a six- to eight-man weapons crew. They

The Lonesome Road

usually carry smaller loads than delivery trucks because much of their available cargo space is filled up with spare parts and ammunition.

Scout drivers run the rigs that range out from the Convoy in all directions in search of new survivor communities. They often operate independently of the Convoy for weeks at a time. Like runners, scouts tend to be combat specialists. They also need to be diplomats when they find new settlements. Hard times make people a little trigger-happy and paranoid. For every settlement a scout finds that wants to trade, he runs into two or three that would rather kill him than let him leave with knowledge of their location. Scouts also keep their eyes out for likely sources of good salvage.

Scout trucks are equipped similarly to runner trucks, but they carry even less cargo. Most of the trailer's cargo space is taken up with sleeping quarters for the weapons crew and spare parts and ammunition. What little space is left is filled with some sort of cargo that can be used as a goodwill offering at any newly discovered settlement (usually bread or some other food), or salvage items the truck comes across. Scout trucks usually have two, sometimes three drivers, and an eight- to 10-man weapons crew. Because they often operate away from the Convoy for weeks—occasionally months—at a time, the crew usually carries some sort of non-cartridge backup weapons like crossbows or black-powder guns.

Last, but definitely not least, are the chase drivers. They don't drive any of the big rigs. They drive the smaller cars, trucks, and motorcycles which accompany the Convoy. These small vehicles are truly the eyes and ears of the caravan. They scout the roads ahead of and behind the Convoy for possible hazards and ambushes. Depending on the area the Convoy is traveling through, they are also sometimes assigned out as escorts for delivery and scout trucks.

A chase vehicle's job is to scout and report back, so they are built for speed and maneuverability. They normally carry a machine-gun or two and the occasional dropped weapon to slow pursuers.

Joining the Convoy

The Convoy is willing to take in anyone of good character who has something to contribute. To help ensure sure we don't get any bad eggs or road-gang spies, a person must get at least three Convoy members to vouch for her.

If a person can get three sponsors, Goose and his lieutenants confer and decide whether or not to let her in. All new members are on probation their first year with the group. If they cause problems or bring grief to other members (we've had a few outlaws try to hide in the Convoy to escape the horde of bounty hunters on their tails), out they go.

The Combine

The only place the Convoy doesn't go is Denver and the area around it. The Combine would like to destroy us. I guess that's 'cause we're strengthening the very settlements Throckmorton hopes to conquer some day.

We've had a few run-ins with the Combine, but after the Battle of Burnt Tires, Throckmorton hasn't made any attacks against the main body of the Convoy in quite a while. We still lose an occasional delivery truck or scout when operating near Combine territory, but for the most part both sides are willing to steer clear of each other.

The Battle of Burnt Tires

The Battle of Burnt Tires occurred about four years ago. The Convoy was driving past the southern portion of the Combine's territory. We had just stopped for the night, and we were beginning to set up camp when Throckmorton's troops struck. They came after us with all sorts of strange equipment I had never seen before and haven't seen since. They had flying gun platforms, armored automatons, and soldiers who looked as if they were half machine.

The Combine troops hit us hard. If it hadn't been for the big guns of the tanks we haul around with us, they would have overrun our camp for sure. As it was, the military units bought us just enough time to get everyone back in the trucks and get rolling again. We knew we couldn't hold where we were. We just hoped that once we were back on the road we might be able to outrun some of their troops.

Trying to get that many vehicles moving and back on the road while simultaneously fighting a pitched battle was sheer chaos, but somehow we managed it. The Combine troops gave chase with their gun platforms, motorcycles, those all-terrain buggies they have, and some trucks loaded up with infantry.

I was part of the rearguard responsible for slowing them down. There wasn't much we could do to stop the gun platforms—they just flew by and whizzed up to the front of the

The Lonesome Road

caravan. Fortunately, the rest of the caravan had enough heavy machine-guns (and a few shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles) to take them down before they could cause a wreck that blocked the road.

That left us to deal with the buggies, motorcycles, and troop trucks. A few of the buggies and motorcycles got too close, and we smashed them between us or ran them off the road. After that they wised up, hung back, and sniped at our tires. We returned fire, but for every one of their vehicles we knocked out, it seemed like two more took their place. We had already lost two rigs to blowouts, and the rest of the trucks were running low on tires. We had to do something and fast!

As we started up a steep incline through a narrow cut with no shoulder, I called for one of our spook juice tankers to fall back from the main body. It dropped back to the rear of the column alongside a rig pulling an open-topped ore trailer filled with old tires. Once we were more than halfway up the hill and the Combine troops had entered the cut, both rigs dropped their load on the road behind them. A couple of

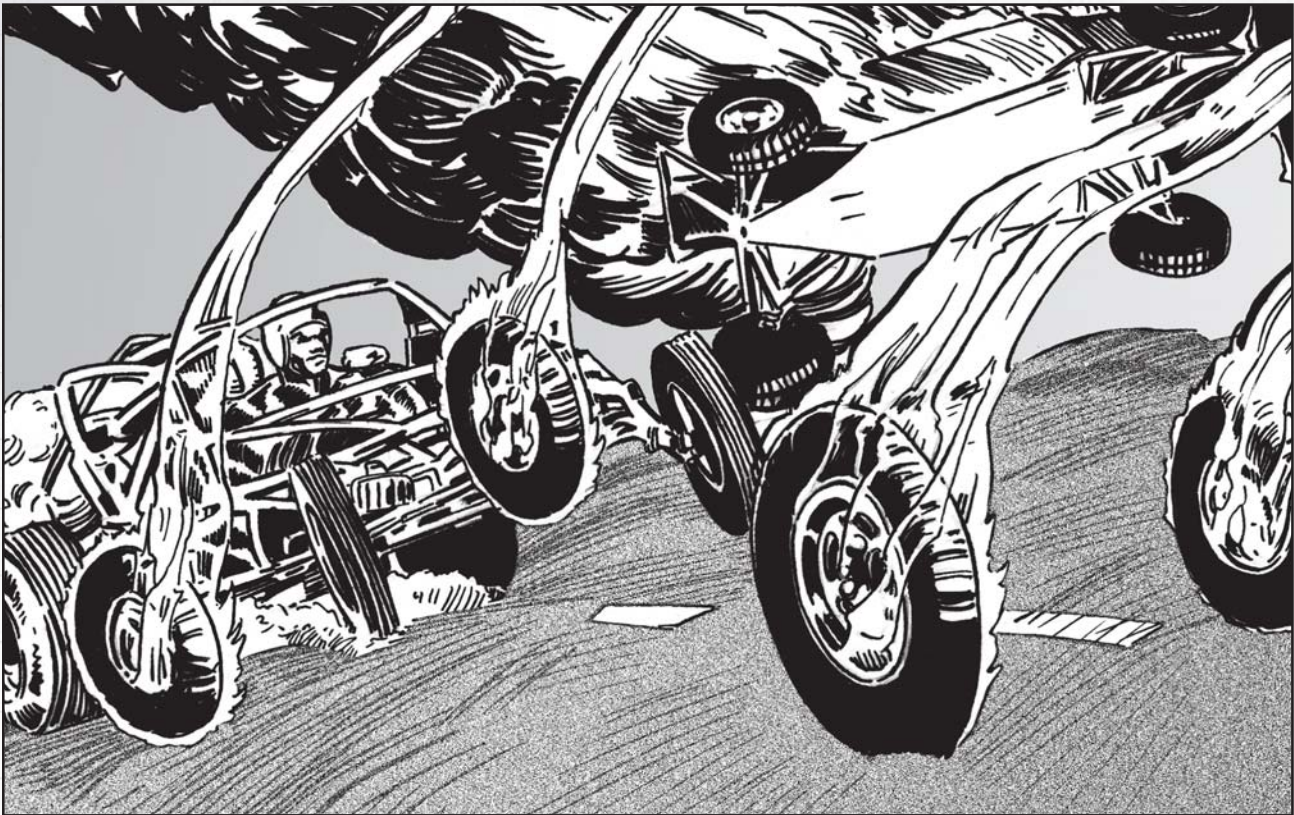
Molotovs were thrown behind us, and suddenly the highway was filled with dozens of bouncing, flaming tires and a burning puddle of fuel.

The lead Combine vehicles were unable to stop before the burning fuel ran under them and lit them up. The vehicles farther back were able to halt short of the fuel, but since they couldn't pull off the road, they were battered and burned by the flaming tires.

We escaped, but the price was costly. We lost 20 rigs that night and over two dozen chase vehicles. We're not really sure how many Combine troops we took out, but it must have been a significant number, because Throckmorton has never tried an attack against the main body like that again.

The Gangs

If you are going to spend any time out on the open roads, you need to be ready to deal with the road gangs. Gang activity is simply a fact of life out on the highway. It's like the weather: it's always there, it's just a question of whether it's good or bad.



Look out! The Battle of Burnt Tires • the last time the Combine really messed with us.

The bad news is that right now gang activity around most of the country is partly cloudy to stormy. There are quite a few people out there who aren't willing to do an honest day's work to keep body and soul together. A good portion of this scum has taken to the road and now depends on stealing the fruits of other folk's labors to get by.

Gang Types

Gangs come in all shapes and sizes, but there are three main types you can count on running into. I'll give you a quick rundown on the basic types here and talk about specific gangs a bit further on.

The Good

"Good" gangs are few and far between. Some, like the Highway Patrol in California (more about them in a second), are made up of folks devoted to cleaning up the mess the Last War made of things. These gangs are the rarest of them all. They work for little or no pay and are extremely dedicated to their cause.

A better label for the majority of the gangs that fall in this category might be "benign." They won't hurt you unless you give them some reason to. Most of these gangs work as mercenaries and sell their services to the highest bidder. Some groups are more trustworthy than others.

The Bad

This is by far the largest group of gangs. These brainers are out to rob you blind. If you look weak to them, you're a few seconds from becoming their next victim. The only good thing about these gangs is that they are looking to come out ahead. They don't want to buy the farm any more than you do. If you can convince them that messing with you is a very bad idea, more often than not they'll let you pass and go look for smaller fish to fry.

A lot of these gangs like to block up major roads and charge tolls for passage by their "tollbooths."

The Ugly

These gangs are just plain loco, or they're devoted to a cause that's not in the general public's best interest. They're really bad news because it's impossible to reason with these types—the lights are on but nobody's home. The Road Orcs in California come to mind when I

think of this type of gang. The best way to deal with wackos like this is to put the pedal to the metal, burn rubber, and leave them in your rearview. If that fails, you better have a good supply of ammunition laid up. Make sure you save the last round for yourself.

One thing to keep in mind is that many of these gangs are held together by a single strong leader. Often, putting a bullet through the leader's head takes the wind out of these groups' sails.

Gang Size

Most of the gangs out there are small potatoes. Very few have more than 20 or so members. There are a couple of reasons for that. The first is that most gang members of the bad or ugly variety are normally very antisocial individuals. In other words, they don't play well with others. Most gangs hit a certain size and sort of stabilize there. If the gang grows beyond this size, all the bickering and petty jealousies cause the gang to split or spark a shoot out that reduces the gang back down to a manageable size.

The second reason is a more practical one. Like an army, a road gang lives on its stomach. As a gang grows, it becomes harder and harder to find sufficient food, fuel, and spare parts to keep the group going. Most gang members join for their own personal profit, so when supplies get low many of them strike out on their own. Eventually the gang shrinks back to a reasonable size and moves on.

Gangs of this size generally roam around hitting targets of opportunity. They're not large enough to tackle anything big, so they usually go after lone vehicles and small survivor groups. A convincing display of firepower is often enough to get these brainers to back off.

Double Trouble

A gang that grows larger than this is a double threat because it means the group has two things: a strong leader or leaders who can keep the rank and file in line, and a steady source of supplies. These gangs tend to be large, well-equipped, and extremely dangerous. They don't think twice about attacking lone vehicles, and they routinely go after small trade convoys.

Some of these gangs become so large that the entire gang doesn't operate as a single group but instead breaks up into smaller sub-gangs. You need to watch out for these. I can tell you from personal experience that overconfidence can be

deadly in these cases. My rig crew and I once took on a small gang we thought we could easily handle, only to round a corner and run smack dab into the middle of 50 of their best friends. That's one of the reasons why it's always a good idea to talk to the locals and have some idea of what gangs are operating in an area.

Years of fighting these bozos has taught me that the very strengths of these large gangs can often be their Achilles' heel. If you take away their leaders or sources of food and fuel, they often self-destruct. They may take a lot of innocent people with them while disintegrating, though, so it's not something I recommend you try just for grins.

Gang Equipment

A typical road gang has a dozen or so motorcycles and a handful of larger vehicles like muscle cars and pickups. Motorcycles, especially dirt bikes, are extremely popular because they're easy to maintain, easy to transport when they do break down, can go nearly anywhere, and run a long time on a single tank of gas.

The most common vehicle modifications I see out on the road are performance enhancers—turbochargers, superchargers, engine upgrades—or attempts at bolting some half-assed armor onto the vehicle. These are all changes a competent mechanic can pull off with the right parts and a few tools.

Smaller gangs rely almost exclusively on personal, handheld weapons when attacking. You might see the occasional pintle-mounted machine-gun over somebody's sun roof, or a heavy weapon bolted down to the hood of a car, but anything more advanced than this is usually beyond the capabilities of the smaller gangs.

The Big Guns

The potential danger goes way up when dealing with the big gangs. They've got a much larger manpower pool to draw from and usually have some skilled mechanics in the mix. Some of these guys and gals can do incredible things with a car. They're also more likely to have some ex-military types in the group who know how to mount and target heavy weapons.

Of course, even big gangs can only work with what they've got on hand, so most of the gang has to make do with vehicles similar to those found in smaller gangs. The bigwigs' rides are usually a sight to behold though. They've got

supercharged engines, custom-fitted armor, remote-controlled weaponry, and whatever nasty little surprises the mechanics can come up with.

The scariest gangs have a junker or two on the payroll. These techno-wizards can literally turn a rusted hunk of junk into a flame-spewing, rubber-burning death machine. The junker-augmented vehicles I've run into have all been highly lethal. I'm just glad we have some working for the Convoy, too.

Running the Roads

Sterling—that's the Librarian interviewing me here—has asked that I try to group the rest of my topics by region (something about compiling the record with Joe somebody's journal). I'm more than happy to oblige, so here goes.

The Great Basin

Deseret (Utah), Nevada, SoCal

The Convoy usually passes through this area during September and October and then again in March and April.

Junkyard

Junkyard is the Convoy's first stop as it swings down out of Idaho. We actually make a long layover here—almost a month—because it's one of the few sizable towns the caravan passes through during our long circle around the continent. Everyone gets some time to blow off steam in town. We keep enough people on duty to guard the vehicles from Junkyard's less-desirable denizens, of course, but everyone else gets a chance to go party, bet on the local deathsports, play chicken, or whatever else floats their boats.

The Convoy does a ton of trading at Junkyard. During our wanderings, we pick up a lot of bizarre objects. Junkyard is often the only place we can find someone willing to trade for them. On top of that, of course, Junkyard is a great place to get parts, weapons, and other gadgets.

The group's mechanics stay the busiest during our visit to Junkyard. This is our longest layover of the year, and it gives the mechanics time to get caught up on preventive maintenance and make all the nonvital repairs they've been putting off. They also inventory the Convoy's stocks of parts and fuel and refill them from Junkyard's stores.

The Road Festival

The Convoy's arrival in Junkyard is the signal to begin the semiannual Road Festival. Road warriors from all over come to Junkyard and pitch a small tent city outside its walls. The next week is filled with parties and all kinds of contests: driving, shooting, racing, knife-throwing, spitting—you name it, and somebody's trying to prove she's better at it than everyone else. Most of these contests stay friendly, but some people have fragile egos, and there are always a fair number of shootings and stabbings each festival.

The festival always seems to attract some of the local weirdness. At the last festival, there was a woman who just walked through the crowds weeping inconsolably for days. On the last day of the festival, during the drag race finals, she walked into the middle of the track just as the cars got the green light. Chuck McCallister swerved to avoid her and rolled his car into the crowd, killing three spectators and breaking his leg. The mysterious woman burst into flames, disappeared, and hasn't been seen again since.

Playing Chicken

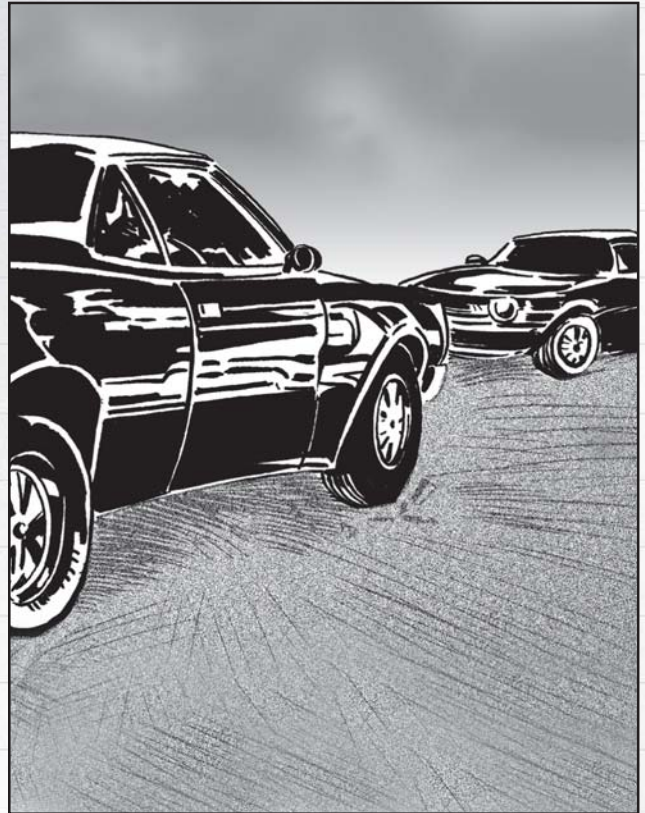
As popular as deathsports are in Junkyard, it didn't take long for people to come up with any number of contests that revolved around motor vehicles. Every week there are demolition derbies, arena duels, full-contact drag races, and the like. The motor sport that's the favorite of every Junker (the citizens, not the scientists), though, is playing chicken.

The way the game is played in Junkyard is slightly different than what most people think of as playing chicken. It's more than just lining up and driving straight at someone. It's closer to some sort of high-tech jousting.

Chicken is usually played out on the salt flats because it requires a lot of room. A lane eight feet wide and a half mile long is marked off on the salt. At the midpoint of the lane, two stakes are driven into the ground 50 yards apart.

Each vehicle can mount a single slug-firing weapon of .50 caliber or less (the slug-firing restriction was added after some junkers began showing up with plasma weapons on their cars); and can only compete against vehicles in the same weight class.

Contestants compete in pairs. Drivers begin the contest with their vehicles at opposite ends of the lane. When the flag drops, both drivers hit the gas and roar down the lane, firing as



Goin' at it in the chicken lane.

they go. If the driver wants to score in the round, he can't leave the lane before he hits the stake closest to him. This leaves a driver roughly 150 feet (provided his opponent is moving at a similar speed) to turn away from his challenger and avoid a collision—tough to do when the two cars are closing at a combined speed of over 200 mph.

The object of the contest is to outscore your opponent. Scoring is dirt simple: 1 point for each mph of speed your vehicle has when it hits the stake closest to your starting end of the lane, and 50 points for hitting your opponent's stake. Leaving the marked lane before the first stake results in a score of 0 for the round. There are normally three rounds of competition with drivers being paired up at random each round. At the end of three rounds, the driver with the highest score wins the meet.

"Smoker" Wade, one of the Convoy's top chase-car drivers, is an undefeated chicken driver. Every time the Convoy pulls into Junkyard, a special match is called, and road warriors from miles around show up just to try to beat him.

The Rattlers

I'm sure you've heard of the infamous Mojave rattlers: enormous burrowing worms as big as a house. Let me tell you, the stories don't do them justice. I've seen rattlers that I swear could swallow entire rigs whole!

The worst part about rattlers is that they don't like trucks. I'm not talking about pickups—I mean the big rigs. I think these trucks are big enough that the creatures actually see them as threats and try to destroy them. Or maybe they just see us as real meat-and-potatoes dishes—more substance than the mere hors-d'ouvres that most cars and trucks must be to them.

The first few times the Convoy entered rattler territory, we lost a lot of trucks to these gigantic beasts. We eventually learned a few tricks, like keeping all the rigs tucked up tight in one large group while driving through these areas. That way when the rattlers come (and they do come—they seem to be able to sense a rig from a long way off) we can mass the maximum amount of firepower possible against

them. Once you put the first two or three down, the others usually back off. Until the next time you roll in, of course.

Most of the major roads in rattler territory are a mess. There's nothing these beasts seem to enjoy more than erupting out of the road right in front of you—leaving enormous, rattler-sized holes in the pavement.

If you need to travel in these areas, I'd recommend taking a light passenger vehicle. That's no guarantee against running into a rattler, but it seems to seriously decrease the odds. If that's not possible, make sure you pack enough hardware to put a serious hurtin' on one of these beasts. Driving like the Reckoners are on your tail probably wouldn't hurt either.

One thing strikes me as odd about these attacks. Before the war, trucks used these highways on a regular basis, and reports of rattler attacks were rare—usually back-cover news in the *Tombstone Epitaph*. I'd really like to know what's got these critters so riled up.

The Dust Devils

If you see a big cloud of dust closing on you fast, it's probably the Dust Devils. Your best bet is to turn tail and run. This gang is big and mean enough that they don't think twice about taking down Convoy delivery trucks. We always retaliate, of course, but they're a slippery bunch, and we can't always find them.

The Convoy has put a bounty of \$2,000 in gear or ammo on the Dust Devils' leader Sirocco.

The Speed Demons

The Speed Demons cruise Route 80 in northern Nevada. They're not a particularly large gang in terms of numbers, but they are extremely dangerous. I'm not sure of the gang's exact size. The most I've seen on the road at one time is six.

It looks as if every gang member has his own car. Every one of these vehicles is a work of art. I almost feel guilty blowing them up. Each car has been highly modified with armor, automated weapon systems, and a powerful engine, and then given a beautiful custom wrapper. These gangsters must touch up the finish on their cars between every raid, because the two times I've run into this gang, their vehicles showed absolutely no sign of battle damage.

It's more than just the hardware that makes these guys dangerous though. They drive like



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A Mojave rattler chows down on some unlucky road warrior.



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men possessed. I've seen them snake their cars through gaps so small I wouldn't have thought you could shoot a possum through them. Speed obviously doesn't bother them much either. The first time I encountered them, I was doing 70, and their two lead cars shot by me like I was standing still.

My theory is that they're hyped up on some sort of combat drug. I pulled a live one out of a wreck after he lost the "who's bigger?" contest with my rig. He didn't appear badly hurt, but his pupils were dilated, and he was shaking harder than a trailer in a tornado. Ten minutes after I pulled him out of the wreck, he just up and died for no obvious reason.

Reward

The Convoy has lost four delivery trucks to these jokers, and we don't intend to lose any more. We sent a hunting expedition through the area once, but came up empty. I think they saw us coming and decided to lay low. They must have some sort of hideout, but we didn't find it.

As nice as their rides are, the Speed Demons must have a well-equipped base somewhere, and access to some sort of supply stockpile. We've been unable to find it, but the Convoy is offering a \$500 reward to anyone who can provide us with information as to its whereabouts. We have a package that needs delivering—with love.

The Great Maze

NorCal, SoCal, The City of Lost Angels

California is one of the worst places for road gangs this side of the Mississippi. The main reason for this is the ghost rock that can still be mined in the Great Maze. Road gangs need the ghost rock to make spook juice for their cars. Since most gang members are way too lazy to mine the stuff for themselves, they just hang around the source and wait for somebody else to mine it for them. Then they run them down and take it.

The Convoy makes a circuit through this area despite the dangers. Like the road gangs, we need the ghost rock—although we're willing to trade for it. Our caravan normally passes through this area in August and February.

The Highway Patrol

There's a new group that's sprung up recently in what's left of California. The members call

themselves the Highway Patrol. I call them good news. Their leader is a fellow by the name of Spence Mercer, but most everybody just calls him "Chief."

Spence was a cop before the war, although to see him behind the wheel you'd think he was a NASCAR driver. He can make a car do things you wouldn't think possible. I've personally seen him thread his patrol car between tumbling boulders at 90 miles an hour during an earthquake.

From what Spence has told me, it seemed he kept pretty much to himself right after the war. He had his car and enough firepower to make anyone but the most persistent pest back off in a hurry. For almost a decade, he was willing to live and let live. Then one day, after coming across a trade caravan that had been slaughtered by a road gang, his conscience emerged from wherever it had taken refuge, and he realized that he had to do something. That something would become the California Highway Patrol.

His campaign to clean up California began as a one-man crusade. He had some success, though, and that attracted some good people to his side. In less than a year, he had over 100 people following him. Some were Law Dogs, some were miners who were tired of being on the wrong end of the stick, and many were just ordinary folks who decided they wanted to make a difference.

The members of the patrol are not out to write any speeding tickets or arrest anyone for DWI—their goal is to simply eliminate all the road gangs in California. That's "eliminate" spelled K-I-L-L.

The Patrols

The Highway Patrol has about 20 vehicles all told. They range in size, but most are large sedans or muscle cars. At least five are ex-police cars. They've all been highly modified with armor, guns, and engines that'll blow your doors off.

The group cruises the major highways, looking to stomp road gangs and help people in trouble. Most patrols consist of four vehicles. They're not shy about taking on much larger groups, but they're not stupid either. If they can get through on the radio, they call for backup. Since most days a radio is no better than a pair of tin cans and a roll of string, the patrol, when faced with superior numbers, normally hits hard, draws blood, and then runs for it.



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The Lonesome Road



They aren't real cops, but they sure have put a dent in CA's road gangs.

Most road gangs aren't full of rocket scientists, and they usually react like a hive of angry bees when attacked. Patrols often inflict more casualties while running away than they do on the attack. They are all equipped with some kind of dropper weapon to spew unpleasantness at their pursuers. If a patrol knows ahead of time that it's going to be fighting a gang in a particular place, the members arrange ambushes or some sort of nasty surprise like hidden mines, a spiked ditch, or a piano-wire choker along their retreat route.

The Highway Patrol has been successful in completely eliminating at least four separate road gangs since it started operating. Unfortunately it seems like most of the larger gangs (like the Road Orcs) that have been repeatedly attacked by the Patrol are beginning to wise up to those tactics, and they have actually stopped chasing when Patrollers break off from a fight. I still wouldn't call these guys brain surgeons, but one unfortunate side-effect of the Highway Patrol's success is that the gangs have learned a thing or two about combat tactics—and that can be bad for the rest of us. Still, I'd rather have the Patrol around than not.

Hidden HQ

The Highway Patrol operates out of a hidden base up in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. They go to great lengths to keep the location a secret. Patrol members often risk death or capture to avoid leading pursuing gangs back to the place. At least two patrol members have been captured and tortured to death, but they refused to reveal the base's location. It's said that Red Fang, the leader of the Road Orcs, has offered a 1,000-bullet reward for anyone who can show him the base's location.

Even though Spence and I became good friends after I gave him a hand stomping out the last of the Rocket Rider Gang, he hasn't told me the location of their headquarters. I'd love to take a look at their shop because some of the things their mechanics have done to their cars are simply magic.

Although I don't know where the base is, I can tell you that it's well-defended. A lot of gangers have gone up into the hills to look for it, and a lot fewer have come back down again.

Thank You for Your Support!

There are number of small settlements that live in fear of the Road Orcs and other gangs. They waited a little too long to wall themselves in, and now it's too late. The gangs have the run of these towns. They take what they want, when they want. Any signs of organized resistance meet with bloody reprisals.

Many of these towns and villages secretly support the Highway Patrol with food, fuel, parts, and even new recruits. Some of these towns have provided hiding places for Patrol members with angry gangs hot on their tails. Those villagers are playing a dangerous game, gambling their lives against the hope that the Patrol will help them win freedom from the road gangs' rule.

The Lone Crusader

Although he has a lot more help these days, Spence still likes to patrol alone. I don't know whether he has a death wish or he's just severely overconfident. I asked him about it once, but all he did was grin. In his eyes, though, I thought I saw a look of great sadness.

Regardless of why he's out there, if you ever get in trouble anywhere along the coast, get on the radio and holler for Ghost Rider. If he can hear you, he'll show up. You'll know it's him by his pale-gray Firebird with the skull painted on the hood.

The Canyon Causeway

Believe it or not, the Canyon Causeway—or at least parts of it—is still open to vehicle traffic.

Some of you youngsters out there may not be familiar with this particular marvel of engineering. The Canyon Causeway (Interstate 3) was built back in 2015. It's an enormous series of bridges and roadways that extends out into the Maze and connects most of the larger mesa towns with the mainland. The causeway begins near Fort Lincoln and runs south from mesa to mesa to the City of Lost Angels. In addition to the massive bridges at each end, smaller causeways connecting the main roadway to the mainland come ashore at Shannonsburg and near Lion's Roar. There was also an entrance bridge at Shan Fan, but it was knocked down by the bomb that leveled the city. All told, the Canyon Causeway is roughly 800 miles of bridges and high-speed interstate through some of the most inhospitable terrain on the face of the Earth.

Well, it was 800 miles before the war. The last 150 miles of road just north of where Lost Angels used to be is undriveable due to the massive ghost-rock fires raging in that area (unless you've got a fireproof vehicle that can withstand temperatures hotter than a self-cleaning oven). Some of the smaller causeways have collapsed, either from battle damage or the earthquakes which have rocked the region since the war (and I know of at least one that was knocked down by a Maze Dragon with a mad-on about something).

The northern half of the causeway is in good shape from Fort Lincoln on down to Shannonsburg. There are only two places where it's necessary to take a ferry from one mesa to another—a hairy proposition with something the size of an 18-wheeler, but better than not being able to get across at all.

The Causeway Collective

Of course all of this assumes you're able to get on the causeway in the first place. There are still people living out in the Maze and they don't want any outsiders from the mainland horning in on their mesa-top paradise.

A group calling itself the Causeway Collective has blocked off the Mazeward side of the entrance bridges at Fort Lincoln, Shannonsburg, and Lion's Roar. They've got a few military vehicles they appropriated from the National Guard, so don't get any ideas about running

their roadblock. The guns on their tanks can gut anything short of another tank with a single shot.

These people aren't complete hermits. They do allow folks to cross over to trade—provided you're willing to pay a hefty toll. Most cars and small trucks have to pay \$50 in trade goods to gain access to the causeway. Big rigs have to pay \$100 to get past the roadblock.

Vehicles from the Convoy are allowed to pass free of charge. Goose worked out a deal with Trig King, the Collective's leader, a while back. In exchange for free passage, the Convoy gives the Collective first crack at any of the trade goods we're carrying, and we use our construction vehicles to put in a week's worth of maintenance work on the bridges. I think Goose also mentioned that we have enough firepower to blow their roadblocks into tiny bits if they become too much of a nuisance.

Movie Town

Movie Town is a guaranteed stop for the Convoy. No matter where we travel across the Wasted West, one of the items we always get requests for is the latest vid slugs from Movie Town. I've seen starving people willing to trade away their last bit of food for one of these things. I guess they figure they'll still be starving tomorrow anyway, so why not find a way to escape from this world for a while.

The Convoy usually leaves a small group behind here each time it passes through. To help pay for the videos we pick up, the drivers and vehicles of this group do free stunt work and serve as extras in many of the films. If you look closely at the driver of the black truck that clips Cole Ballard's hoverbike in *Cole Ballard: Nemesis of Evil*, you can see yours truly at the wheel.

Movie Town cameramen often join the Convoy when it passes through. Some are just hitching a ride to film at a different location, and some tag along to film real-life combat footage of the Convoy vehicles in action. Supposedly they splice this footage into their movies—as expensive as gunpowder is, filming long combat scenes with blanks can get costly right quick.

The Road Orcs

You might be wondering about that group I mentioned earlier, the Road Orcs. They're a foul, nasty gang of muties that runs the road between the ruins of Shan Fan and

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Shannonsburg. Their name might sound a little silly, but believe me they're no laughing matter.

Their leader is a huge mutant who calls himself Red Fang due to his oversized incisors. He spent too much time scrounging at the edges of the Shan Fan storm and got a bad case of the glows. Along with his huge chompers, he developed a mean streak wider than the interstate.

Practice What You Preach

They say that Red Fang likes to give his prisoners an hour-long haranguing just before he kills and eats them. According to those who've had the misfortune to listen to Red Fang speak (preach might be a better word) and actually lived to tell about it, his favorite topic in such speeches is the "mutant versus normal" struggle. About three years ago, he heard a Doomsayer go on about how mutants were the next step in human evolution, and he decided to put the theory to the test. Somehow he got the brilliant idea that the perfect implement of that test would be a road gang.



Red Fang, leader of the Road Orcs. This guy's one mean mutant.

Red Fang began recruiting fellow mutants to his cause, and soon a ragtag band of misfits and outcasts rallied around him. They began roaming the highways, raiding norm settlements and hitting trade caravans that dared to pass through their kingdom.

I hear he dubbed his gang the "Road Orcs" because many of the more-severely mutated members of his gang look like some sort of critter out of a fantasy novel. Or maybe it's that they act like them. I don't know; I never read that stuff.

Dog Eat Dog

In the Road Orcs, the strong rule, and the weak serve. All advancement in the gang is through physical conquest. There are no formal rules—all that's necessary to move up is to defeat an Orc in the pecking order above you. It's not necessary to kill your rival (although it's often a bad idea to leave a defeated opponent alive)—just beat him senseless. Red Fang figures that this competition only serves to make the mutant gene pool stronger by weeding out the weak and sickly. The last I heard, Red Fang had personally "retired" over 30 challengers to his position as gang leader. Needless to say, there's a high turnover rate in this gang.

Red Fang and his "über-mutants" (it seems he's taken to reading Nietzsche by the campfire at night) take this philosophy out on the road with them. Their willingness to tackle anything, and their belief in their own superiority, makes them extremely dangerous. They view heavy casualties as culling the weak from their herd. Don't expect them to stop fighting until you've put a bullet or blade in each and every one of them.

The Road Orcs are one of the largest gangs in the area. Most estimates put the size of the gang at around 200 "Orcs," but this number fluctuates wildly from month to month as new recruits join up and the gang takes losses from battles and personal challenges. Out on the road, you'll most likely run into anywhere from 30 to 50 of them at any one time.

The majority of the gang rides motorcycles, but they have a decent assortment of larger vehicles. The grand poobah himself, Red Fang, drives a heavily modified sport-utility vehicle.

Entering Mordor

Both the Highway Patrol and the local Law Dogs have put a bounty on Red Fang's sizable noggin. The Highway Patrol is offering 600

bullets and the Law Dogs have posted a 1,000-bullet reward. It seems to me you'll burn through a lot more rounds trying to collect his head than you'll get from turning it in.

When not out on the roads causing terror and mayhem, Red Fang and his cohorts hang out in the ruins of Shan Fan with Shanghai and his jolly band of mutants. Many of Red Fang's new recruits come from the growing mutie population there.

The Great Northwest

Idaho, Oregon, Washington

The Convoy usually rolls through this region in September and March. We don't normally stay in this area very long because settlements are few and far between. We send out a few extra scouts each time we pass through here, but they always come back empty-handed—if they come back at all.

The severe winters we've had since the end of the war seem to have been especially vicious in this area. Many of the roads in this area have been heavily damaged by frost heaving and are nearly undriveable.

I have to admit that this area gives me the creeps. It almost seems like nature is reclaiming it as its own. More than any place I've been, the abandoned buildings have collapsed and become overgrown with weeds. In some places, entire towns seem to have been swallowed up by the vegetation and are now little more than green mounds along the side of the road. I suppose you could write it off to the severe winters and hot, wet summers, but somehow it doesn't seem natural.

A Sign of Life

You need to be careful when traveling I-5 between Salem and Portland, because you're driving right into the middle of a warzone. It's one of the most bizarre situations I think I've encountered in my travels.

The Ronin

During the Last War, Japan's membership in the Southern Alliance caused a backlash against the Japanese population in the US (never mind that most of these people's families had been living in the country for four or five generations). Japanese businesses were vandalized, and buying Japanese products was

considered "un-American." The most ignorant advocates of this Japanese-bashing movement revived the idea of internment camps.

Luckily things never progressed that far, but the experience left many Japanese-Americans with a justifiably large chip on their shoulders. In the Portland area, a group of Japanese teens formed a road gang they call the Ronin. The members of this gang have returned to their roots and adopted the code of Bushido as their standard of conduct. They have offered their services to the Daimyo of Portland, who has graciously accepted them.

The Ronin patrol the highways around Portland, stopping everyone they encounter and inquiring as to their business. Anyone who doesn't have business with the Daimyo is forced to pay "tribute" and told to leave the area. Anyone who claims to seek an audience with the Daimyo is escorted there. I've heard that you had better have valid business with the Daimyo. He doesn't like to have his time wasted.

As part of their pride in their Japanese heritage, the Ronin drive only Japanese-built vehicles. All of these are painted bright white and feature a large red rising sun somewhere on the vehicle. Many of the vehicles also sport large flag poles which fly the individual crests and colors of their drivers.

All told, the gang has roughly 50 members and about 30 or so vehicles of assorted shapes and sizes. They are led by an armor-clad samurai (self-appointed, of course) named Fuji Yokahama.

The Wrecking Crew

The Ronin's biggest rival is the Wrecking Crew. These guys and gals are out to prove they're the biggest, baddest thing on the road.

Naturally they take exception to the fact that the Ronin, or "Riceburners" as they like to call them, dare to drive on *their* roads. They've set out to teach these upstarts a lesson. What this boils down to is that both groups open fire on each other on sight. Anyone who gets caught between the two gangs had better duck.

The Wrecking Crew has been around for about five years. It began in northern California as a fairly harmless salvage operation. The group roamed the now-deserted highways in search of wrecks that might contain valuable parts. When they found a likely prospect, they hooked it to their wrecker (that's how they came by their name) and towed it home where they could strip it in safety. Every few months,



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Hugh McCandle loses his brakes and his life.

they made a run down the coast and traded their harvested parts for ghost rock and other essentials.

All of that changed once Billy Hardwick—butmunch extraordinaire—joined the group. After the crew fought off a few gangs who were after their salvage, it occurred to Billy that it would be quicker and easier for the group to salvage parts from fresh wrecks instead of the burned-out or rusting hulks they were stripping. He began to push for the gang to create its own salvage by ambushing unwary travelers along the interstate.

The Wrecking Crew's original leader, Hugh McCandle, nixed the idea. He probably would have booted Billy from the gang as well, if they hadn't been cousins. I guess Billy didn't share Hugh's family loyalty, though, because not long after that his cousin's wrecker experienced a brake failure while coming down a long grade. Hugh took a plunge off a 150-foot cliff, leaving Billy in charge of the gang. Hugh had overhauled the entire vehicle the day before, but few people accept Billy's theory that Hugh left a brake cable loose while working on it.

Billy stepped into Hugh's shoes, and the gang's tactics changed dramatically. Instead of searching for wrecks, they laid ambushes and made their own. Many of the original gang members left at this time (that's when Ezzie, my mechanic, took off), but it wasn't hard for Billy to find fresh cannon fodder.

The gang actually flourished for a while—until it attracted the attention of Cole Ballard. He came to northern California to investigate the disappearance of a friend. When he learned she had died in a Wrecking Crew ambush, he called a few buddies and unleashed his vengeance on the gang. It was probably less spectacular than one of the Director's movies, but the body count was just as high. What remained of the gang beat feet north and went into hiding in the forests of Oregon.

After a few months of living very close to nature, the Wrecking Crew reappeared. The gang shifted its area of operations up I-5 closer to Portland and farther away from the enraged Ballard. That's when they encountered the Ronin and the fireworks started.

The Wrecking Crew has about 30 members. They favor large vehicles like pickup trucks and vans—the extra storage space makes it easier to haul salvaged parts around. The gang also has four wreckers for dragging the remains of their victim's vehicles back to its lair for dismemberment. No one is sure exactly where the gang is currently headquartered.

The Earthers

The Ronin versus Wrecking Crew turf war is bad, but not uncommon. I've seen similar stories in nearly every state, North or South, that I've driven through. What makes this particular battle out of the ordinary is the third participant in the mayhem: the Earthers.

The Earthers are a bunch of tree-hugging types who are out to preserve every living thing on the face of the Earth—except humans, of course. They live in small groups throughout the area's forest. And boy, are they pissed that someone is still driving around in cars fouling up the atmosphere! That's not to say that air pollution isn't a problem, but given the current state of the world—Hell, the Four Horsemen have appeared in the flesh—it seems like other things might take priority.

The Earthers are opposed to both of the road gangs on principle. They go out of their way to make life difficult for both sides—and anyone else who has the misfortune of driving this

particular stretch of highway. They spread glass and nails in the road, drop trees across the highway (only dead ones, mind you), and even plant explosives in potholes.

Their sabotage tactics have worked well. In the past year, they've destroyed three Ronin vehicles and two Wrecking crew rigs, and damaged a score of others. They also almost added my rig to their trophy wall. One of their homemade land mines blew the left rear tires off my rig and nearly caused me to jackknife. Unfortunately for the Earthers, this success has made them a prime target for both road gangs. Both groups send patrols into the woods to find and destroy Earther camps. In all honesty, I wouldn't mind taking a shot at them myself.

Would You Like Fries With That?

The Convoy just recently added a small settlement in southern Idaho to our route (we agreed to keep its exact location a secret). The hardworking people here always have a bumper crop of potatoes they're willing to trade for our merchandise.

Unfortunately for them, they don't seem to have much luck growing anything else.

As a result, they've found some imaginative ways to prepare the spuds. They've got French fries in all their many varieties, potatoes Au Gratin, potato pancakes, hash browns, baked potatoes, mashed potatoes, boiled potatoes, potato soup, potato crepes, potato burgers, potato bread—well, you get the idea. Needless to say, the liquor of choice in the area is vodka.

The Followers

These zipperheads are one of the most unusual gangs I've come across. I have no idea what this gang calls itself, if anything. I like to call them the Followers. It seems as if their

primary stomping ground is I-90 in Washington, between Spokane and Moses Lake.

This gang is not particularly large, skilled, or heavily armed. What they are is relentless. Once you spot them in your rearview mirror, rest assured that they will stay there until you outrun them, outfight them, or outsmart them. The one thing you won't do is outlast them.

The Followers aren't very aggressive. From all reports, they seem to prey on solitary cars or small groups. Their tactics are simple. They get

behind their intended victim, hang back just out of weapon range, and follow their target like a school of hungry sharks. One occasionally zips in close to take a quick shot or two, but then falls back to the safety of his buddies. They follow until their victim turns to fight (at which point they often run unless they have their target extremely outclassed), or the target stops due to driver fatigue or lack of fuel—then they tear in, guns blazing.

The Followers seem tireless. They dogged my truck once for nearly 20 hours without a single break. If I hadn't had two other people onboard who could drive the rig, plus a few extra barrels of fuel, they would have eventually gotten us. They only broke off after we made it back to the main body of the Convoy.

The High Plains

Colorado, Dakota, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Wyoming

The Convoy rumbles through here in November and May. We steer clear of a large portion of this region to avoid confrontations with Throckmorton's goons. Goose believes (and I agree) that the Convoy does more good by trading with and strengthening the survivors all around the Combine's territory than it could possibly accomplish by hitting Throckmorton head-on and risking destruction. For that reason all of Colorado and parts of Wyoming, Nebraska, and Kansas are currently off-limits to Convoy delivery trucks and scouts.

The Montana Irregulars

The Convoy's route through Montana is one of the few subjects that stirs up division in the ranks. There weren't many people living up here before the Last War, and now there are even less.

A good fraction of the prewar population was made up of people a sandwich or two shy of a picnic. Unfortunately, these types tended to be the most likely to have fallout shelters in their backyards (assuming they didn't already live in bunkers) and enormous stockpiles of canned food and ammo.

When the world went to Hell on Judgment Day, these people went from being a sizable minority to a majority overnight. The lunatics are now running the asylum. Forget the road gangs—if you go to Montana, you need to watch out for the local survivors.

The Lonesome Road

A case in point is the Montana Irregulars. Over the past six years, we lost three scout trucks in the area near their "retreat" before a driver finally made contact with them and reported back.

The scout's report was favorable. He said that the group seemed friendly and that they were desperately in need of certain supplies. The Irregulars hadn't seen any trace of the scouts we had lost in previous trips through the area. We made arrangements to trade some parts and fuel to them and sent a small convoy of two trucks and two chase cars to make the delivery.

The trade was going well until I wandered behind the barn to check out the engine noise I heard. It sounded like a big diesel, and my professional curiosity was aroused. When I rounded the rear corner of the building, I was shocked to see "Backfire" (he liked his beans) Costello's tractor up on blocks. Its tires had been removed, and a large belt ran around one of the rear drive wheels to a large generator. Both of the front windows had been shot out, and there were dried blood stains on the dashboard and doors of the truck.

I immediately went back to the front of the barn to warn my friends, but the Irregulars beat me to the punch. The moment they saw me come out from behind the barn, they opened fire. They didn't even bother trying the old, "Ohh, you mean those lost scouts?" ploy. They had men waiting in the loft of the barn, and they opened up on us with assault rifles and a heavy machine-gun.

Only a few of us made it to my rig. I fired it up and we got the Hell out of Dodge. We lost a rig and six men to that ambush. The Irregulars tailed the Convoy and skirmished with our rearguard units for two days following that first attack.

We managed to capture one of these wackos. He told us that the Convoy was part of a US government conspiracy to get survivors of the war dependent on government handouts and weaken their resolve to resist. Drugs in the food the Convoy carried made those who ate it more compliant, and eventually we would come and cart them all away to government reeducation camps. Yeah, right.

Apparently that's the line that the Irregulars' leader, Colonel (self-appointed, I'm sure) Floyd Hamelman, has fed to all his followers. The prisoner went on to say that the Irregulars had been responsible for the disappearance of all three scout trucks and that the drivers and

crews of these trucks had all been slowly tortured to death to extract information about the Convoy.

Goose sent a good-sized force to stomp their guts out, but when we got to the trading site there was no sign of them. It turned out that the barn was just a place they used to brew up moonshine. We torched it and pulled out. To this day we still haven't located their main camp. We've put a price out on their heads: anyone who can tell us where to find these buggers wins a fully decked-out rig—no questions asked.

Restless Natives

Even though this is only a single incident, it's typical of what we encounter on a regular basis in Montana. The Convoy experiences more vehicle losses in Montana, one of the most sparsely populated regions south of Canada, than in any other place on our route.

Many of the Convoy members believe that we should change the route to bypass Montana altogether, but Goose won't hear of it. He argues that there are still some good people living up there, and they deserve all the support they can get. If the Convoy stops deliveries to them, the loonies have won. I suppose he's got a point, but I still don't like it.

Helltown

As if to prove Goose's point, our scouts came across Helltown just last year. This is an entire town of good, but tough—real tough—people living openly in this sea of insanity. They're so confident of their ability to take care of themselves they haven't even bothered to build a wall.

The "I dare you to knock it off" attitude of the Helltowners seems to work. Everyone in town is friendly and polite, and all the outsiders are always on their best behavior. If trouble starts, it doesn't last long. The one time I saw a fight break out there, it lasted all of three seconds. I counted no less than 20 bullet holes appear in the biker who started the scrap before he hit the floor. I haven't seen that many guns in one place since we salvaged that flooded National Guard armory two years ago.

The people of Helltown are obviously proud of their fierce reputation. The flagpole in front of the courthouse in the center of town flies two colonial-era flags: the one with the snake that reads, "Don't tread on me," and one that reads "Live free or die."

The Sioux Nations

Convoy trucks don't spend much time in what used to be the Sioux Nations either. The Old Ways Sioux are doing just fine without us. We don't have anything in our trucks that they either want or need. Plus there isn't much in the way of roads through the territory, just a single modern highway that passes through the blasted rubble of what used to be Deadwood.

There's a small group of Ravenites living at the edge of the ruins of Deadwood. We normally send a caravan of two trucks and a few chase cars to visit them when we pass nearby.

Road Ragers

If you're traveling I-70 in Kansas between Salina and Topeka, watch out for these punks. The Road Ragers are one of those gangs that falls squarely into the ugly category. I think they attack people just to see the pretty fireballs when their victims' vehicles explode.

Luckily it's not too hard to outdrive or outthink these brainers. When they take to the road, most of them have more chemicals in their system than a pharmaceutical warehouse.

Just don't let them corner you. The drugs may make them dumb, but they also make them harder to put down than a bull rhino with a mad-on. Every time we roll through South Dakota, we end up scraping four or five of these bozos off our bumpers, but it seems like there are just as many waiting for us on our next run. I guess it just goes to prove that stupid is as stupid does.

Near Wichita

Not a very imaginative name, but what do you expect from a bunch of hick cattle ranchers? This town is a guaranteed stop for the Convoy because it's one of the few places it's possible to purchase uncontaminated, grain-fed beef. We normally fill three or four reefers with fresh meat before we pull out of there, but on our last trip we could only fill two trucks. Seems they had some sort of trouble with an enormous creature gobbling down their beeves.

Mall of America

The Mall of America in St. Paul, Minnesota, is another big stop for the Convoy. Tony Maluchi, the mall's "owner," depends on our deliveries to keep the place stocked, so we get a big discount.



A responsible citizen of Helltown.

The Lower Mississippi

Arkansas, Louisiana, Missouri

Our caravan usually wanders down toward the Big Easy every December and June.

Mardi Gras

A lot of people couldn't handle the devastation caused by the Last War and all that followed it. Their minds snapped like power lines in a hurricane. Most of these unfortunates have long since done themselves in or run afoul of one of the many nasty predators roaming the ruins, but a few found some pretty inventive ways to cope with the new reality.

In the case of the survivors around what's left of New Orleans, the crazies banded together and came up with a unique way to ignore the fact that the world had fallen down around their ears. Here, every day is Fat Tuesday. The survivors here run around covered in beads (and often not much else) and get falling-down drunk



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every night. The only running vehicles in what passes for a settlement here are a few bedraggled parade floats covered in long-dead flowers. I don't think the people who live there have actually named the place, but we've taken to calling it Mardi Gras.

If you're looking for a good party, this is the place to go. Just don't stay too long, or you may never leave. Each time we pass by here, we expect to find the place deserted, but we're always greeted by a horde of happy people flashing us various portions of their anatomy. There are usually a few familiar faces in the crowd, but it seems like a new group of lunatics crops up every year to take the place of those whose livers have given out.

The people here have nothing useful to trade, but Goose has taken it upon himself to look out for them. As we pass through, we always drop off a load of food and vitamins, as well as any party hats and noisemakers we've found in our travels.

The Night Runners

The Night Runners are another bizarre gang. They haunt the roads running through the swamps and bayous of southern Louisiana. Their name was bestowed upon them by the inhabitants of Thibidoux, a small survivor community about 40 miles southwest of New Orleans. No one knows what they may call themselves, 'cause no one alive has ever spoken to them or seen them outside of their cars.

The group was christened the "Night Runners" because almost all of the encounters with them have been at night. They are able to use the darkness to gain almost total surprise over their victims because they drive without headlights or any other visible means of illumination. This means they are either well-enough equipped to have night-vision systems in all of their cars, or they're all mutants who can see in the dark. Even on a night with a full moon, it can get awfully black back in the bayous.

It would be unusual for that many mutants to all have the same mutation, so my money's on the night-vision gear. From the descriptions I've heard of their vehicles, it sounds like they are well-equipped. All of their cars carry extra armor, including armored window covers, and sport at least one machine-gun each.

The inhabitants of Thibidoux are not sure exactly how many victims the gang has claimed. They have lost nearly 15 people to them, and every now and then they discover a fresh wreck

on a nearby road. No bodies have ever been found, but there are a lot of creepy crawlies out there looking for a snack, so that's not too unusual for this area.

The few people who have managed to escape the Night Runners say they are excellent drivers. The gang is small—most estimates of their size put them at just three to six vehicles. All of them have been highly-modified sports cars.

The Wild Southwest

Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas

The Convoy rolls through this region in January and July. I enjoy driving through this area because there are a lot of flat, open highways that I can get on and just drop the hammer.

Fossil Fuels Forever!

The Southwest rivals the Great Maze for the most road gangs. The reason for this is clear: the oil fields in Texas and Oklahoma draw just as many road monsters as the ghost-rock mines of the West Coast. Most of the drilling sites were badly damaged during the war by constant air strikes and cruise missile attacks, but determined oil company engineers were able to keep some sites open and the oil flowing.

A portion of these rigs were destroyed during the ghost-rock bomb swap on Judgment Day, but a few of them survived. Survivors in the area were quick to lay claim to these places and fortify them. Experienced oil workers were (and still are) treated like royalty. Survivor groups warred over chemical engineers who could get the refineries working again.

Fuel Towns

Once the dust settled, what remained were a handful of well-fortified towns built around working oil wells and refineries. All of these places continue to pump crude oil and refine it into a variety of go-juices and lubricants. Far and away, the biggest of these fuel towns is Oil Town.

Road gangs hover around these towns like flies around a carcass. Some actually trade for their fuel, but most lie in wait outside of town for people who have just topped off their tanks. They run these people down, relieve them of their vehicles, and siphon out the fuel they need.



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Fuel towns are not cheery places. The roads outside of these settlements are littered with 13 years' worth of rusted wrecks and skeletal remains, the air smells of sulfur and other noxious chemicals that spew out of the stacks of the refineries, and the towns and surrounding countryside are covered with an oily grit from burned-off waste products.

The inhabitants of these places live under the constant threat of siege. The loyalties and alliances of the many gangs surrounding each town change with every sunrise, and the defenders never know when enough gangs might band together to completely cut off their outside supplies or actually assault the town. The smarter towns always try to keep a good-sized stockpile of food and ammunition squirreled away.

Despite this, most of the smaller fuel towns have changed hands a number of times. Some were starved into submission; others fell to organized (for the road gangs) attack.

A few places have tried to discourage attacks by threatening to blow up their oil wells and refineries, but this tactic hasn't worked either. In

some cases, the defenders were bluffing and were called on it, in others, the attackers found a traitor to prevent damage to the facilities.

The Creeping Crud

All the craziness around the fuel towns has inspired a slew of tales about strange goings-on and weird critters roaming the countryside. I've never encountered any of these things personally, but I've seen enough strangeness in my travels that I'm not willing to simply write these off as refinery-fume-induced nightmares.

One of the most common stories is that of the "creeping crud." This creature looks just like a small puddle of crude oil—until it starts moving! This thing waits until its victim isn't looking and then slithers up his body, covers his face, and suffocates him. Spotting these things is difficult because there are puddles of oil all over the place inside a fuel town—not to mention oil in your coffee, in your hair, on your clothes... you get the idea.

Another story that's gotten a lot of circulation is the one about the "gas-eaters." These creatures supposedly look just like regular



The stories of the gas-eaters may be farfetched, but a smart waster doesn't discount anything these days.

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Those that tangle with Oil Town tangle with the 3rd.

people—sickly people, but people nonetheless. They feed on gas. Supposedly gas-eaters have long, siphon-like tubes they extend from their mouths that can drain your tank dry in a matter of minutes. From what I've heard, lighting a match around one of these things is not a good idea.

Oil Town

As I mentioned earlier, Oil Town is the biggest of the fuel towns. It's located in Texas about 50 miles west of Waco, just north of Route 84. The Convoy makes a stop here every time it passes through the area. We always buy up a large supply of diesel, gasoline, and assorted motor oils.

Land Grab

Oil Town is the most stable of the fuel towns. It's been in the same hands since the end of the Last War. Before end of the war, the 3rd Regiment of the 25th Armored Division of the Texas National Guard was moved into the oil fields in that area to guard them against Northern Alliance saboteurs. When the war

ended with a bang, the 3rd Armored was one of the few cohesive units that wasn't hit with some sort of tactical bomb. It didn't have anyplace to go, so it stayed put.

The oil company workers kept the rigs pumping, and some engineers were recruited to build a new refinery on the site. Soon the 3rd Armored was the proud owner of one of the largest operational oil refineries in—well, who knows? Probably the whole world.

Civilian survivors from the area migrated to the oil fields where they could be safe under the big guns of the 3rd's tanks. By default, the regiment's commander, Colonel Douglas "Tex" Meadows, became the leader of the largest survivor settlement in Texas. At present, nearly 2,000 souls call Oil Town home.

Fort Oil

Meadows takes his responsibility to the people of Oil Town seriously. His combat engineers have built a sturdy concrete wall around the place, with firing ports for defending troops and prepared positions from which the regiment's tanks can fire while under cover. The area outside the wall is a maze of razorwire, mines, and camouflaged pillboxes.

This impressive fortress and the big guns of the 3rd Armored's tanks are the reason the town has never been taken. The last serious attempt to storm the place was nearly six years ago.

The Fuzzy Dice Massacre

The Silver Bullets and a coalition of smaller gangs, led by "Lucky" Johnny Tyler, threw themselves at Oil Town's walls for two entire days. They made some headway at first, aided by the two salvaged artillery pieces they had towed within range of the town. It didn't take long for Meadows' soldiers to pinpoint the position of these guns, and the defenders' big guns quickly knocked them out with accurate counterbattery fire. From that point on, the battle was a slaughter for Oil Town's defenders.

Tyler's legendary luck finally ran out during this fight. He was personally directing the battle by radio from a nearby hilltop. His transmissions were detected by Meadows' artillery unit, which dumped a salvo of 155mm HE shells right on top of his Camaro. All his gang recovered from the crater was a charred pair of fuzzy dice and one of Tyler's boots.

Once the shooting stopped, 300 gang members lay dead in the wire around Oil Town. The defenders lost 25 people and had 12 wounded.

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Since that day, not a single one of the local gang leaders has made any moves in Oil Town's direction.

The Exclusion Zone

Colonel Meadows took advantage of this lopsided victory to declare the establishment of the Oil Town Exclusion Zone. The Exclusion Zone is a circle 10 miles around Oil Town. It's basically a free-fire zone for Oil Town patrols. No one lives in this area, and only a single road is open to civilian traffic. Anyone found off the road inside the zone is fair game.

Very few road gangs venture inside this area. The Oil Town patrols open fire without warning, and every square inch of the zone is within range of the garrison's 155mm self-propelled howitzers. If a patrol runs into something it can't handle, the patrol leader never hesitates to call for fire support.

The boundaries of the Exclusion Zone are well marked at the most likely points of entry, as is the route open to civilian traffic.

Living in Oil Town

The gates of Oil Town open at six o'clock each morning and close at six o'clock each evening. During this time, anyone who wishes to trade peacefully is welcome to enter town and conduct her business. You may only remain in town overnight if you have a place to stay. This means you must find an inhabitant willing to take you in or take a room at one of the town's two hotels. There is a 2 A.M. curfew. Anyone found wandering the streets after this time is escorted to her lodgings or the main gate.

Those unable to find a place to stay can camp in Merchant Field. This is a cleared area just off the main road, about 500 yards from the town's walls. Anyone can stay there free of charge, as long as he can find a spot to call his own. I don't recommend wandering too far past the posted edges of the field—the surrounding area is mined.

President for Life

Colonel Meadows is the ultimate authority in Oil Town, but he realized early on in his budding political career that he had neither the patience nor the inclination to deal with all the petty politics of civilian life. They took up too much of his time and distracted him from his primary concern, the defense of Oil Town. So he set out to find a way to maintain control over the place without having to actually run it.

Roughly a year after the end of the Last War, Meadows established a six-seat town council to handle the day-to-day details of administering the town. The voting council members are all elected by the citizens of Oil Town, while Meadows' aide, Major Al Stark, has a permanent, nonvoting advisory seat. The council only has as much power as the colonel allows it, of course. The few times the councilors voted to do something that Meadows thought might have an adverse effect on the town, he nixed their resolution.

The current council is packed with prominent traders and professional politicians (if anyone had to die in the Last War, why couldn't it have been them?). The last time I passed through Oil Town, I heard some rumors that the town council had become dissatisfied with the current arrangement and was looking for ways to force Meadows to share his power with them. I don't know how much truth there is behind these stories, but judging by Oil Town's prosperity and the lack of any big external threat, it wouldn't surprise me one bit if the town council was up to something.

The Oil Trade

The main source of Oil Town's prosperity is the settlement's oil wells and refinery. There are three operational wells and a refinery inside the town walls. These operate around the clock.

A portion of the production is automatically set aside for the 3rd Armored, but the rest is traded away to other settlements throughout the Southwest and to passing traders. Oil Town has made a number of standing trade deals with other settlements. Regular fuel shipments, guarded by troops from the regiment, go out to these places each month.

In Oil Town itself, it's possible to buy gasoline for \$5 a gallon. Diesel is even cheaper—only four bucks a gallon. Motor oil, which is nearly impossible to come by in some areas, can be had for \$10 a quart.

OPEC

No, I don't mean that group of foreign countries that used to like to jerk us around by bouncing the price of oil up and down. This OPEC stands for the Oil Producing Economic Council—a bunch of homegrown pains in the keister.

None of the other fuel towns can match Oil Town in either volume or reliability of fuel production. Since this situation is obviously

The Lonesome Road

unfair (as they see it), a few of the larger towns have formed a loose economic alliance to try to compete with their larger neighbor.

There are five principal towns involved in OPEC. Three—New Nacogdoches, Tyler, and Scroggins—are in northeastern Texas. The other two—Durant and Fort Towson—are in southeastern Oklahoma. A number of smaller fuel towns come and go from the alliance, depending on which road gang has captured their oil well this week.

OPEC members pool their production together and use their combined resources to ship their product to other survivor communities in the area. They target settlements that have standing trade deals with Oil Town in particular. OPEC trucks race to get to these towns ahead of the Oil Town caravans and sell their fuel at much lower rates.

The alliance has had some success undercutting its rival. This has angered many of the Oil Town traders and caused some of them to ask General Meadows to take some sort of military action against the OPEC towns. He's refused to do anything rash so far. There

haven't been any shooting incidents between the two groups' convoys yet, but there have been a few tense standoffs when one group arrived in a town only minutes after the other.

The Killer Bugs

You might be tempted to start laughing when you see this group coming, but don't. It's as dangerous as any gang out there.

The reason these folks seem comical is that they all drive VW Bugs. Some are vintage-age cars from the mid-20th century, and some are more recent models. You can't help but chuckle when you see that many pregnant roller skates all zipping down the highway at once.

The Killer Bugs make up for the diminutive stature of their mounts by packing big guns. I've seen at least two vintage bugs that have had that empty front cargo space filled in with an M-120 chaingun, and a newer-model car with a 90mm recoilless rifle running through the passenger compartment and out the front windshield.

The Raubritter

This group is led by Manfred Von Steuben (don't ever forget the Von when addressing him—he'll string you up so fast you'll be dead before you realize your feet have left the ground). He's an ex-German army officer who was over here during the final days of the Last War as a military observer. He's now a self-styled raubritter (that's German for "robber knight").

As long as you show him the proper respect "due his station," Von Steuben is a relatively reasonable individual. Cross him, and you've made an enemy for life—which may be incredibly foreshortened. He is fiercely proud of his German roots—hence the VW fetish—and he takes great offense at the slightest slur to his nation. Just to be confusing, he likes to tell people he is a Junker (he pronounces it "yoonker"), which is an old name for the German nobility.

Von Steuben holds court in an abandoned Medieval Times theme restaurant on the outskirts of Dallas. He and his "knights" have helped themselves to the staff's wardrobe. They all wear armor and carry swords. Visitors to court are heralded by trumpets.

Von Steuben's gang collects "tribute" from anyone it catches passing through his fief, which covers all the land between Routes 35 and 45 north of Dallas as far as their



They say there are hundreds of oil rigs burning off the gulf coast.

The Lonesome Road



The only good thing about the road gangs' violence is that they direct at least as much of it at each other as they do at the rest of us.

intersection with Route 85. He charges the Convoy reasonable rates—about \$20 a rig—but I think that's because he knows we could squash his little castle flat if we took the notion. I've heard that most travelers pay upwards of \$100 a vehicle to pass through.

Herr Von Steuben controls a small survivor settlement—Von Steubenville, of course—on the eastern shore of Lake Lewisville. His “peasants” keep him and his court supplied with food.

The Killer Bugs have roughly 20 vehicles. Most are VW Bugs, but Von Steuben himself and some of his lieutenants drive BMWs and Porsches. In addition to the vehicle crews, the gang also has roughly 40 footsoldiers. All carry swords in addition to any guns they might have.

Gulf Fires

If you stand on the western edge of the Gulf of Mexico on a dark night, it's possible to make out a dark red glow on the horizon. If it's a cloudy night, you can see the glow of great fires reflected off the clouds.

Some of the survivors in New Galveston have actually sailed out toward this glow and report

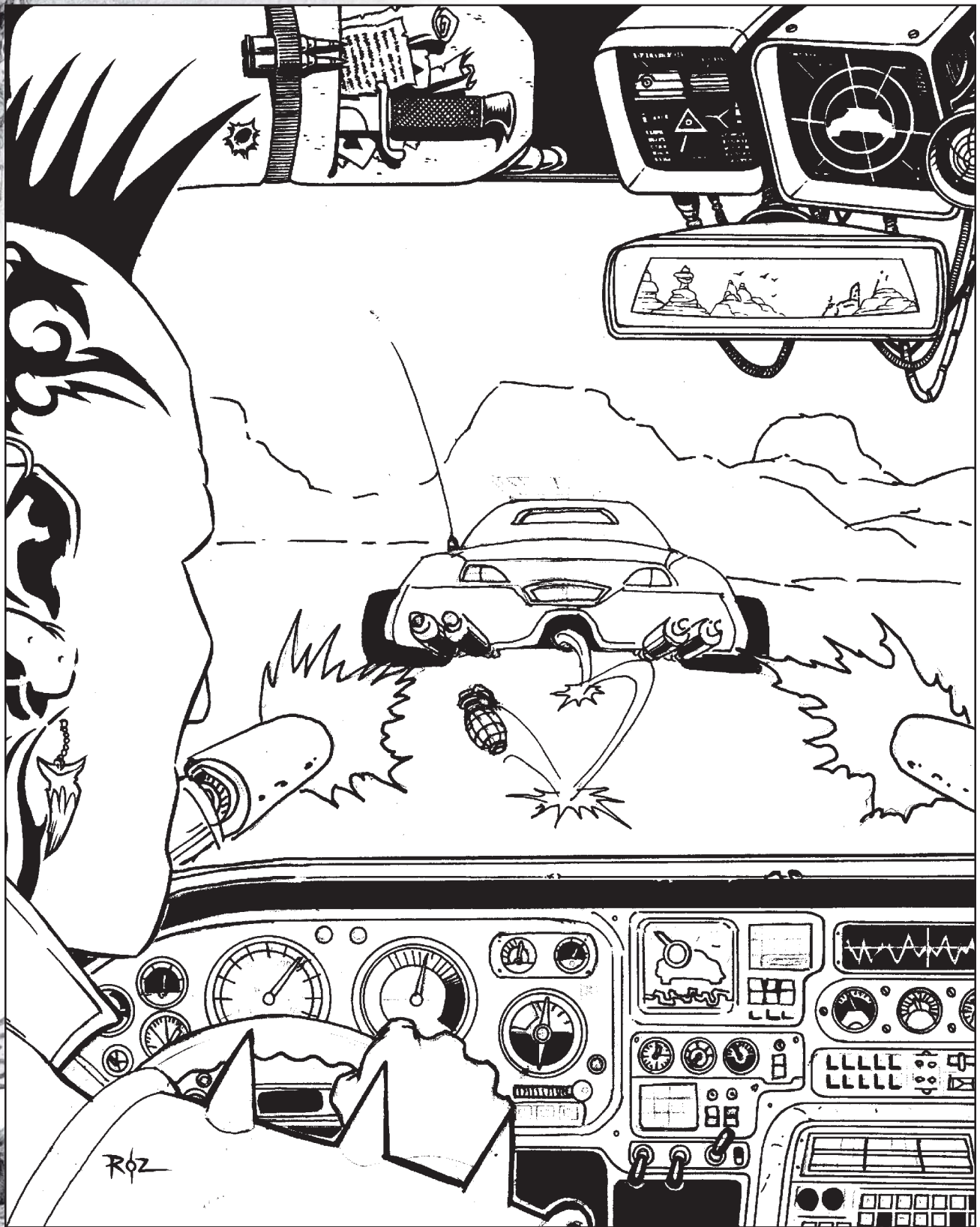
that it's the light of multiple oil-rig fires. They didn't go too far once they determined the source of the strange light, but supposedly the rigs they saw were twisted, crumpled wrecks spouting enormous gouts of flame.

The investigators did get quite a scare on the way home though. Shortly after they turned back, a number of large fins began circling their small motorboat. At least three enormous sharks began pacing their boat and occasionally bumping it from underneath. The beasts followed them for nearly 20 minutes and then suddenly vanished beneath the waves.

A Final Word

Well, wasters, I hope I've given you something to think about in your travels. There's a lot of stuff going on out there, and (contrary to what you might think from my jawin' this past hour or so) it ain't all bad. The more of us peaceable folks get out on the road, the safer it'll become and the more hope we can spread to those lonely settlements of survivors still kicking around out there. Just keep your eyes open, your rifle handy, and your foot to the floor.

Road Rage





Chapter Three:

Road Rage



We gave you a few basic vehicle rules in the *Hell on Earth* rulebook to tide you over until now. We had to keep it short then because we just didn't have enough room to shoehorn all the vehicular mayhem we wanted between those covers. Now we can remedy that with a vengeance. In this chapter, we have not one, but two different ways to resolve fender-benders between wasteland warriors.

The first way is simply an expansion of the basic combat rules found in the *Hell on Earth* rulebook. These new rules go into a little more depth on how to keep track of exactly where your waster's ride is and what kind of maneuvers it's possible to pull off. These rules are better for battles with small numbers of vehicles and for fights that include people on foot.

The second bit deals with one of the most common wasteland road scenarios: the chase. Most road combats are between someone who is trying to take what someone else has and the someone who doesn't want to give it up. These simplified rules allow you to game out chases with large numbers of vehicles quickly and easily.

Counters

We've provided some counters for use with these rules at the back of the book. Just cut them out (or photocopy them if you prefer), and you're ready to go.

Using Minis

It's possible to use these rules with our wonderful *Hell On Earth* miniatures and appropriately-sized model vehicles, but you need to double all listed movement distances if you do. When measuring range at that scale, one inch equals two yards instead of the five used with the counters.

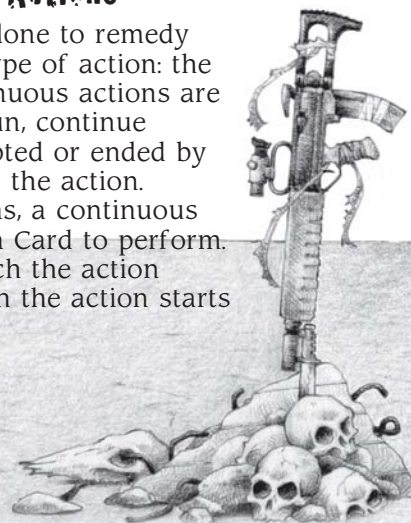
Driving

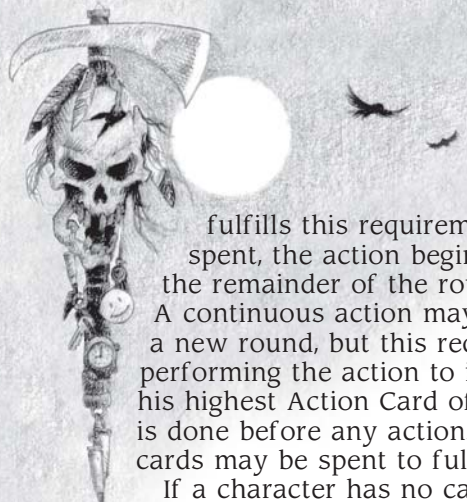
Moving speeding vehicles around on the drivers' Actions Cards can often lead to herky-jerky movement in which the vehicles seem to suddenly teleport from one side of the battle to the other. This new system smooths things out a bit and adds some new maneuvers for your waster to dazzle his opponents with.

Continuous Actions

The first thing we've done to remedy things is to add a new type of action: the continuous action. Continuous actions are actions which, once begun, continue indefinitely until interrupted or ended by the character performing the action.

Like most other actions, a continuous action requires an Action Card to perform. During the round in which the action begins, the card on which the action starts





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fulfills this requirement. Once this card is spent, the action begins and continues for the remainder of the round unless stopped. A continuous action may be maintained into a new round, but this requires the character performing the action to immediately sacrifice his highest Action Card of the new round. This is done before any actions are resolved. Sleeve cards may be spent to fulfill this requirement.

If a character has no cards in a round (due to drawing the Black Joker, for instance) any continuous actions he was performing are ended. A continuous action is also interrupted if the character performing it is stunned.

If a hero has cards remaining after paying to maintain a continuous action, he may perform other actions on these just like he normally would. All such Aptitude rolls made while performing a continuous action automatically receive a -2 modifier, however—except for rolls made for the continuous action.

Continuous Driving

The reason for all that rules lawyerese above is that driving a vehicle is now considered a continuous action. The basic effect of this is

that characters driving vehicles each have one less action per round because they have to pony up their highest card each round to continue driving. However, on each movement phase (covered just below), your waster can attempt a driving maneuver for free, without spending an Action Card.

In situations in which a combat breaks out with the all of the vehicles involved already in motion (a fairly common occurrence), assume that all of the drivers began their driving actions during a previous round. This means they need to cough up their highest card at the beginning of the first combat round to continue driving.

Movement Phases

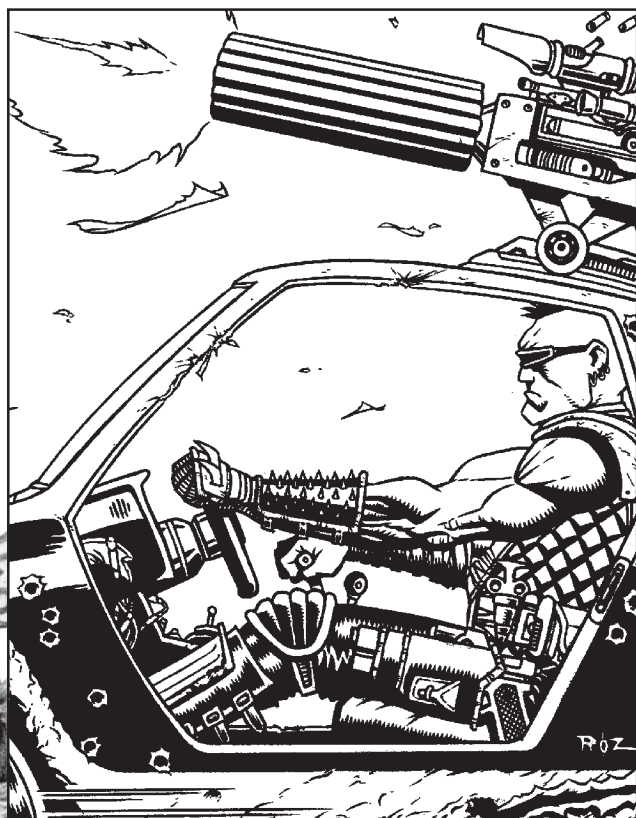
To smooth out vehicle movement, we've added five movement phases to the standard combat round. Just to be completely unoriginal, we've numbered them 1 through 5. During each movement phase, every driver who ponied up a card for a continuous *drivin'* action gets an opportunity to make a driving maneuver without having to spend an Action Card, and every vehicle moves. A driver can make an extra maneuver by spending a sleeve card (or Red Joker) during the movement phase.

The movement phases occur after certain cards in the action order, as shown on the Movement Phase Table below. On each of those cards, after all character actions have taken place, conduct a movement phase.

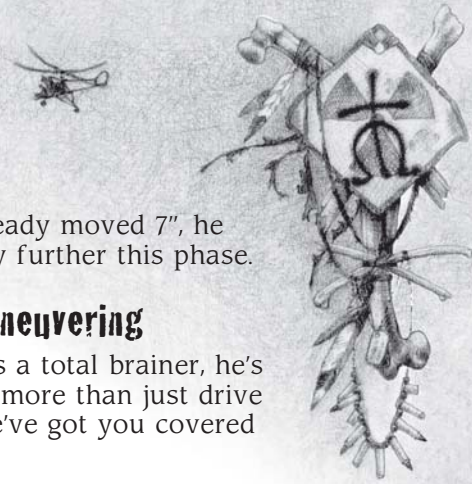
Movement Phases

Phase	Card
1	Ace
2	Queen
3	9
4	5
5	Deuce

It's the beginning of the turn, and Jason, driving a sedan, has ponied up his highest card. He and other characters who have Aces (or the Red Joker or sleeve cards) take their actions in the usual order. After all character actions are done, the first movement phase occurs. Jason can attempt a driving maneuver for free, and can use a sleeve card to attempt a second one if he likes. The Marshal moves all vehicles, then it's on to Kings as usual.



Road Rage



Moving Stuff

All vehicles are moved in each movement phase, regardless of whether the driver has any Action Cards. A vehicle always moves in a straight line unless the driver performs a maneuver (or the vehicle goes out of control). A driver can attempt one such maneuver in each movement phase. Basic maneuvers (simple acceleration, braking, and steering) generally require no roll and, like other simple actions, can be combined with a second maneuver. More sophisticated maneuvers call for *drivin'* rolls. As mentioned above, a road warrior that needs to make an extra maneuver can do so if he's got an Action Card up his sleeve, and he uses it.

Vehicles move in order from fastest to slowest. Ties are resolved by comparing the drivers' highest remaining Action Cards or, if there is still a tie, a contest of *drivin'* (the winner of which may decide whether or not to move first).

The Speedometer

So how far does your hero's car move each phase? We knew you'd ask that, and we're prepared. If you take a look at the vehicle record sheet provided at the back of the book, you'll see a column of numbers running down the left side of the page inside something that looks like a speedometer.

This is used to keep track of your vehicle's speed. Ignore the numbers in the background for now. The numbers in the first column show the vehicle's speed in miles per hour (mph). The smaller number to the right of that is how many inches the vehicle's counter moves each phase (to convert that to yards, simply multiply by 5). As your hero hits the gas or brakes, slide a paper clip up and down the column to the appropriate spot.

Movin' Too Fast?

Occasionally, a vehicle's speed may be radically altered while it's in the middle of moving (due to a collision, damage, or other catastrophe). If the vehicle has already moved as much or more than its new speed, its movement for the phase immediately ceases.

 Jason's sedan is racing along at 80 mph, which means he moves 8" per movement phase. After moving 7", he clips the back of a slow-moving semi. Working out the results of the collision, his new speed is 60 mph, or 6" per phase.

Since he has already moved 7", he cannot move any further this phase.

Maneuvering

Unless your hero's a total brainer, he's going to want to do more than just drive in a straight line. We've got you covered there too.

Using Maneuvers

So what do you do with that chance to maneuver in each movement phase? We've got a bunch of options for you, which we'll detail in a minute.

To perform one of these maneuvers requires a *drivin'* roll (don't forget to add your vehicle's Handling modifier). The base TN for this roll is equal to the TN for the driving surface (check out the table below), plus the maneuver's modifier, plus the speed modifier (just below).

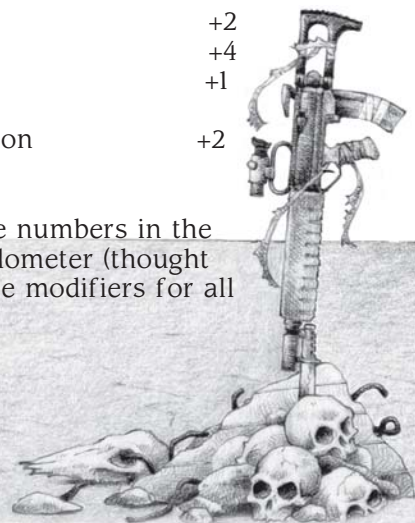
If your hero is stunned or has stopped driving for any other reason, your vehicle just moves in a straight line. It pays to keep a sleeve card handy for emergencies!

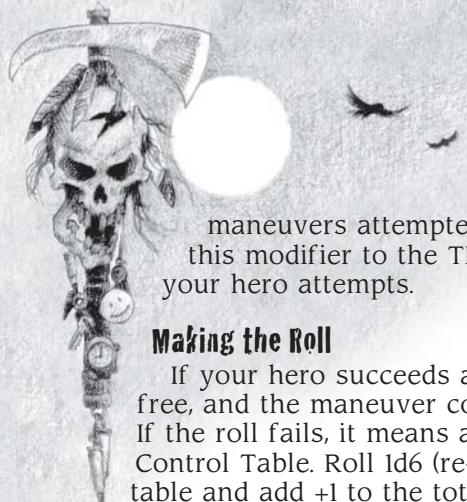
Handlin'

Road Condition	TN
Interstate or other large highway	3
Main road	5
Typical street	5
Dirt road	7
Off-road	9
Modifiers:	
Winding road	+2
Poorly maintained or damaged (most roads; doesn't apply to off-road)	+2
Badly damaged surface	+4
Rain or snow	+2
Ice	+4
Tire lost (for each)	
Car	+2
Motorcycle	+4
Big rig	+1
Off-road without off-road suspension	+2

Speed Kills

Here's the catch. Those numbers in the background on the speedometer (thought we forgot, didn't you?) are modifiers for all





Road Rage

maneuvers attempted at that speed. Add this modifier to the TN of all maneuvers your hero attempts.

Making the Roll

If your hero succeeds at the roll, he's home-free, and the maneuver comes off as planned. If the roll fails, it means a roll on the Outta Control Table. Roll 1d6 (re-rolling aces) on the table and add +1 to the total for each point by which the *drivin'* roll was missed. If the driver goes bust on a roll, roll 2d6 plus the number of points by which the roll was missed.

Sometimes your waster is forced to make *drivin'* rolls between your movements—sometimes you might have to make a whole bunch between movement phases. Go ahead and make any required *drivin'* rolls that come up during your movement as soon as they occur. But if one or more come up between your moves, hold off on making them until immediately before the next time you move. Then, make a single *drivin'* roll (regardless of how many things required them), using the modifier from the hardest required roll.

Driverless Vehicles

A vehicle without a driver, or with a driver who's not driving, moves in a straight line each phase. If it's forced to make a *drivin'* roll by an outside action (like a collision or weapons fire), it automatically fails. Roll 1d6 on the Outta Control Table, adding the current speed modifier.

The Maneuvers

A driver can attempt a maneuver at any time during her vehicle's movement (except for acceleration and braking, which must take place before the vehicle moves). As we mentioned above, she can make more than one maneuver if she uses a sleeve card. Furthermore, certain maneuvers (accelerate, drift, and easy brakes and turns) are simple actions which require no *drivin'* rolls and can be combined with a second maneuver at no penalty. However, a vehicle must always move at least 1" between each maneuver.

Accelerate

TN Modifier: 0 (simple action)

Your waster can hit the gas each movement phase if she desires. Accelerating increases the vehicle's speed by up to its Acceleration rating (though vehicles in our

world always accelerate in 5 mph increments to make bookkeeping easy). Just slide the paper clip down the speedometer to mark the rig's new speed. This speed change takes effect before the vehicle moves.

Accelerating is a simple action (speed 0), so it can be performed in conjunction with another maneuver with no penalty. No roll is required.

Bootlegger Reverse

TN Modifier: 4

The bootlegger reverse is the maneuver to use when your hero's vehicle absolutely needs to be going in the other direction pronto. The back end of the car is sent into a deliberate skid that whips the car around and gets it pointed the opposite way.

A vehicle must be moving at least 25 mph to pull off a bootlegger reverse. If you succeed in this maneuver, pivot the vehicle's counter 180° around one of its front corners. Immediately reduce the rig's speed by 25 mph.

If you fail the *drivin'* roll, the maneuver is not completed. Rotate the counter 90° around a front corner and then roll on the Outta Control Table.

Brake

TN Modifier: 0 (simple action) to +6

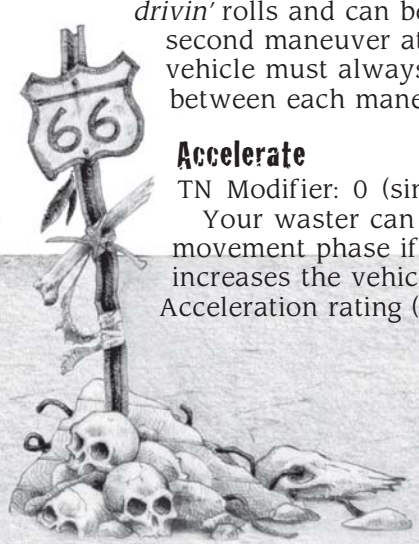
Like acceleration, braking takes place before the vehicle actually moves. The modifier caused by braking (and whether a roll is even needed) depends on how hard the driver stomps down. A vehicle can normally brake up 10 mph each movement phase without the need for a *drivin'* roll—that's a simple action, so a driver can attempt another maneuver the same movement phase. If braking by more than 10 mph, a roll is required, with a +2 TN modifier for each additional 10 mph. The most a vehicle can brake in a single movement phase is 40 mph, regardless of the number of braking maneuvers attempted.

The speed modifier for the roll's TN is based on the speed at which the vehicle began the action. In addition to any problems from the Outta Control Table, a failed braking attempt means the vehicle was only slowed by half the desired amount (round down to the nearest 5 mph increment).

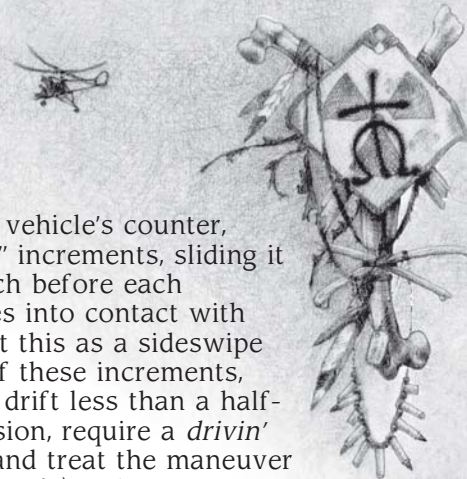
Donut

TN Modifier: 2

A donut can only be performed by a vehicle which is moving at 10 mph or less and has an Acceleration rating of 15 mph or more. This



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maneuver over-revs the engine to spin the wheels, pushing the vehicle in a tight circle and leaving a donut-like skidmark on the pavement.

In performing this maneuver, simply rotate the vehicle's counter around one of its front corners until it's facing the desired direction. Then move it off in that direction with a speed of 5 mph.

A failed donut means the vehicle comes out of its spin sooner or later than intended. Roll 1d4. Rotate the vehicle's counter around a front corner through a number of 90° turns equal to the total on the die, and then apply the result from the Outta Control Table.

Drift

TN Modifier: 0 (simple action)

This maneuver allows a vehicle to drift sideways as it moves, edging a half-inch to either side for each inch it moves forward. It is usually a simple action.

When moving the vehicle's counter, move it forward in 1" increments, sliding it to the side a half-inch before each increment. If it comes into contact with another vehicle, treat this as a sideswipe collision. If, in one of these increments, the driver wishes to drift less than a half-inch to avoid a collision, require a *drivin'* roll (TN modifier 0) and treat the maneuver as a standard (not simple) action.

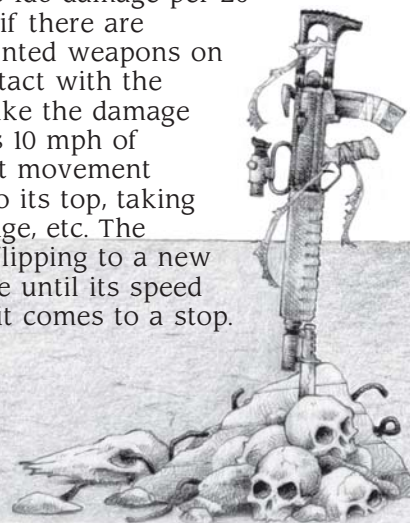
Emergency Jump

TN Modifier: 4

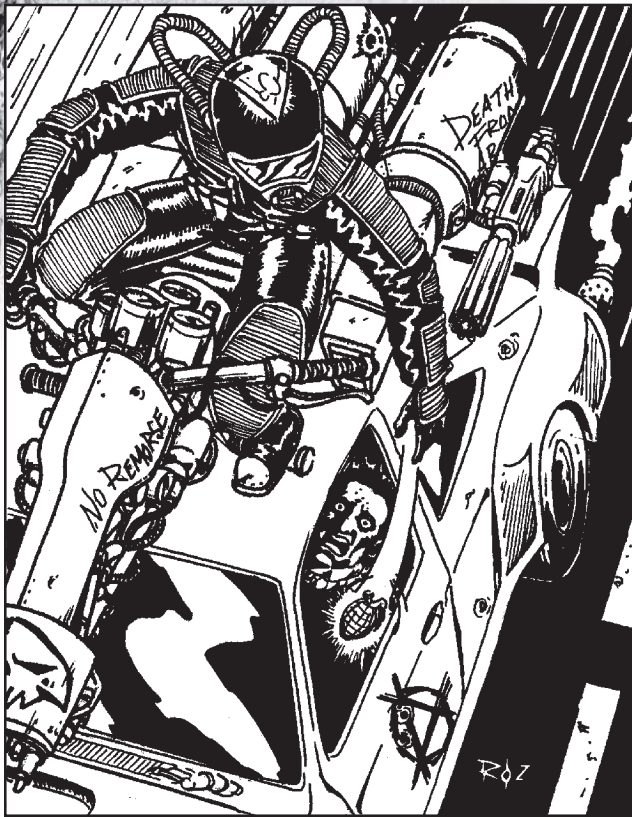
This maneuver can only be performed by hover vehicles. The vehicle's skirt is overpressurized, lifting the vehicle into the air. This allows the vehicle to clear an obstacle roughly 10 feet in height. The vehicle must clear the obstacle by the end of the next movement phase, or it comes down on top of it, suffering 3d6 damage.

Outta Control

Roll	Effect
1-2	Slow Down: Your waster lets off the gas to keep the vehicle under control, immediately slowing the rig by 5 mph.
3-4	Minor Skid: The vehicle slides a half inch to one side. If the vehicle was turning when control was lost, it slides toward the outside of the turn. Otherwise, roll a die: Even, it skids right; odd, it goes left. All fire from the vehicle suffers a -2 penalty for the rest of the round.
5-6	Minor Fishtail: The back end of the rig kicks out to one side. If the vehicle was turning when control was lost, the back end slides toward the outside of the turn. Otherwise, determine direction randomly. Rotate the vehicle 45° around the front corner opposite the direction of the fishtail. All fire from the vehicle suffers a -2 penalty for the rest of the round.
7-8	Major Skid: The vehicle slides 1 inch to one side (determine direction as for a minor skid). All fire from the vehicle suffers a -4 penalty for the rest of the round.
9-10	Major Fishtail: The back end of the vehicle kicks out to one side (determine direction as for a minor
	fishtail). Rotate the vehicle 90° around the front corner opposite the direction of the fishtail. All fire from the vehicle suffers a -4 penalty for the rest of the round.
11-12	Spin: The vehicle begins spinning, continuing to do so through the following phases until it stops or is brought back under control. For every 1 inch it moves forward, rotate it 90° and lose 15 mph of speed. No weapon fire is possible from the vehicle. The driver may attempt a Hard (9) <i>drivin'</i> roll to stop the spin. At the beginning of each round, a spinning rig takes 1 point of damage to each of its tires.
13+	Roll: The vehicle turns 90° (determine direction as for a minor skid), flips on its side, suffers 1d6 damage per 20 mph of speed (if there are externally-mounted weapons on the side in contact with the ground, they take the damage first), and loses 10 mph of speed. The next movement phase it flips to its top, taking the same damage, etc. The vehicle keeps flipping to a new side each phase until its speed reaches 0 and it comes to a stop.



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To perform the maneuver, rotate the vehicle up to 90° around the front corner on the side to which the vehicle is turning.

Hazards

Certain hazards encountered while driving can cause *drivin'* rolls.

Losing a Tire

Whenever a vehicle loses a tire, the driver must make a *drivin'* roll. Don't forget to include the appropriate lost tire modifier from the Handling Table.

Vehicle Damage

The shock of a weapon impacting can throw a vehicle out of control. Whenever a single attack causes damage equal to or greater than a vehicle's Durability step, a *drivin'* roll is required. This roll suffers a penalty of -2 for each multiple of the Durability step inflicted.



A sports car with a Durability of 30/6 takes 13 points of damage from a single attack. This is more than twice the car's Durability step of 6, so the *drivin'* roll suffers a -4 penalty.

Turn

TN Modifier: 0 (simple action) to +4

This maneuver allows a vehicle to perform a facing change. The modifier for the maneuver (and whether a roll is even needed) depends on the severity of the turn. A vehicle can normally turn up to 15° each movement phase without the need for a *drivin'* roll. That's a simple action, so a driver can attempt another maneuver (including another turn) during the same movement phase without having to spend a sleeve card. A turn of up to 30° requires a roll with a +1 TN modifier, with a +2 modifier for turns up to 45° and +4 modifier for turns up to 60°.

To perform this maneuver, rotate the vehicle up to 60° around the rear corner on the side of the turn direction.

Skid

TN Modifier: +2 to +6

This allows the vehicle to turn by deliberately causing the rear wheels to lose traction. The TN varies with the severity of the skid: For turns up to 30°, the TN modifier is +2; for 45°, it's +4; for up to 90°, it's +6.

Backing Up

Most vehicles can move in reverse. A vehicle must spend a movement phase with a speed of 0 before it can begin backing up. While moving backward, a vehicle's top speed is halved, all modifiers due to speed are doubled, and all maneuvers have their TN modifiers upped by +1.

Speeding

The top speed for each vehicle is the maximum speed it can handle without undue stress on the engine. Your waster can push his vehicle past this limit if he wishes, but he risks damaging the vehicle. Each movement phase that a vehicle moves faster than its top speed it must check for damage. Divide the amount by which the top speed has been exceeded (in mph) by five and roll 1d10 against this result. If the die roll is less than or equal to this number, the vehicle suffers an immediate engine critical.

Hills

A good portion of the Wasted West is in mountainous or hilly terrain, and anyone who's

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been stuck behind a semi on a long hill knows what that can do to a vehicle's performance. If a battle takes place in hilly terrain, the Marshal needs to decide exactly how steep it is. Hills are rated in 5 mph increments. The rating is the amount of by which every vehicle on the hill's speed changes each movement phase. A vehicle's Acceleration rating is reduced by this amount each movement phase while going up the hill, and increased by this amount while going down the hill. Most hills, especially those with paved roads, are in the 5 to 10 mph category.

If a hill's uphill rating is larger than a vehicle's Acceleration rating, it actually loses speed each phase equal to the difference. This continues until the vehicle has slowed to 15 mph. At that point, it can continue to grind up the hill in low gear without any further speed loss.

Collisions

What with all manner of harmful objects flying about and unsafe drivers on the road, it's only a matter of time before your brainer's ride smacks into something it shouldn't. This can be bad for both the vehicle and its occupants.

A collision occurs whenever a vehicle's counter overlaps that of another vehicle, a person, or any stationary object capable of causing damage to the rig.

The Laws of Space and Time

A lot of strange things can happen in *Hell on Earth*, but the average vehicle can't alter the laws of physics. In game terms, that means that whenever something like that happens, we close our eyes and ignore it.

Specifically, it's impossible for a slower vehicle to hit a faster vehicle from behind. This situation sometimes occurs when a faster car comes up from behind a slower car and then drifts in front of it. If this happens in your game, simply move the slower car's counter through the faster car's—in this case, that doesn't cause a collision.

If the two vehicle counters overlap after the slower vehicle has finished its movement, the driver of the faster car may move his car up to a half-inch in any direction to avoid a collision. If this isn't possible or they are still overlapping (or the driver of the faster car wants to hit the slower car), resolve the impact as a sideswipe collision.

Collision Types

There are four types of collisions which can occur: head-on, rear-end, sideswipe, and T-bone. It's usually fairly obvious which type of collision is taking place, but to avoid confusion we went ahead and defined them for you.

Head-on collisions occur when two vehicles are heading straight at one-another—each one hits the other in the front. In a head-on collision, add the speeds of the two vehicles together to determine the damage.

After damage is resolved, compare the Durability ratings of the vehicles involved. If they are within 20 points of each other, both vehicles come to a dead stop after impact.

If the difference is larger, the vehicle with the higher Durability has its speed reduced by half the other vehicle's speed. The other vehicle comes to a dead stop and is knocked out of the way. Slide it in the direction which requires the least movement to clear the moving vehicle's path, and rotate it 90° in that direction (determine the direction randomly if the vehicles hit dead center).

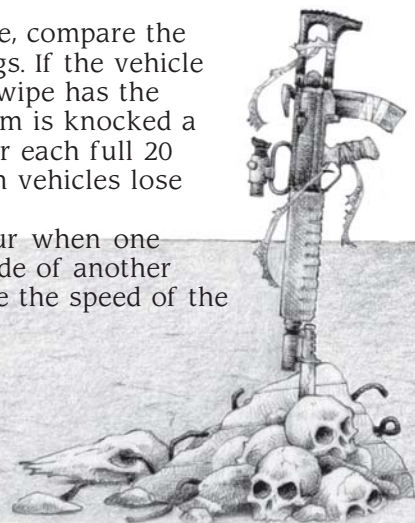
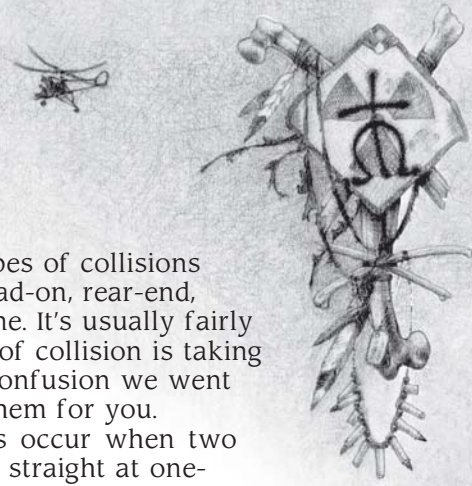
Rear-end collisions occur when one vehicle hits another from behind, striking it in the rear with its front (or rear, if it's moving in reverse). Subtract the speed of the rammed vehicle from that of the ramming vehicle to determine damage.

After resolving damage, compare the vehicles' Durabilities. If they're within 40 points, average both vehicles' speeds and change the speed of each to this average. If the difference is greater, change the smaller vehicle's speed to match the larger. Continue the rammer's movement, if it has any remaining, pushing the rammed vehicle forward. The distance pushed counts against the rammed vehicle's movement for the phase.

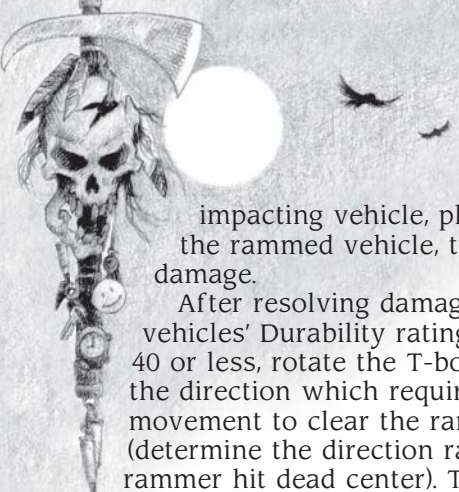
Sideswipes occur when a vehicle hits another with its side rather than its front or rear—the point of impact is on both vehicles' sides. Use half the speed difference to determine damage.

After resolving damage, compare the vehicles' Durability ratings. If the vehicle which initiated the sideswipe has the larger Durability, its victim is knocked a quarter inch sideways for each full 20 points of difference. Both vehicles lose 1d4 x 5 mph of speed.

T-Bone collisions occur when one vehicle drives into the side of another with its front or rear. Use the speed of the



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impacting vehicle, plus half the speed of the rammed vehicle, to determine the damage.

After resolving damage, compare the vehicles' Durability ratings. If the difference is 40 or less, rotate the T-boned vehicle 90° in the direction which requires the least movement to clear the rammer's path (determine the direction randomly if the rammer hit dead center). The rammer loses 1d6 x 5 mph of speed; the T-boned vehicle's speed is reduced by 1d4 x 5 mph.

If the difference is higher than 40, one of two things can happen. If the T-boned vehicle has the higher Durability, the other vehicle comes to a dead stop and the T-boned vehicle loses 1d4 x 5 mph of speed. If the T-boned vehicle has the lower Durability, rotate it a full 180° as described above. It loses 1d8 x 5 mph of speed, and the rig that slammed it loses 1d4 x 5 mph.

Collision Damage

When a vehicle runs into another object, it takes 1d6 damage for every 10 mph of relative speed. Subtract the vehicle's Size modifier and the level of the vehicle's Armor (Armor works differently in a crash—instead of reducing the

die type, it reduces the number of dice) and add the size of the object struck. In the case of vehicles, that's the vehicle's Size modifier (the maximum is +6; use that for tractor-trailer combos). Large, immobile objects like bridge abutments have sizes of +10.

 Jason's sedan (Size +2, Armor 1) smacks into a motorcycle (Size +1, Armor 1) at a combined speed of 70 mph. The base damage is 7d6. The car actually takes 5d6 (7-2-1+1), and the bike takes 7d6 (7-1-1+2).

Passenger Damage

A collision not only hurts the vehicle, but it can shake up the passengers pretty badly also. The amount of damage the passengers take depends on how securely they are strapped in. Riders who are not secured take half the number of dice in damage that the vehicle does. Riders who are wearing their seat belts (or are otherwise strapped safely in) reduce the number of dice taken by -4.

All collision damage is massive damage.

Weapon Damage

Weapons mounted on the fenders and doors take full damage from any collisions which impact their location. Roof-mounted weapons take damage if the vehicle rolls.

Hood Ornaments

People are a lot softer than the average pickup truck. A person hit by a vehicle takes 1d6 damage for every 5 mph of the vehicle's speed, plus 1d6 for every point of its Size modifier. Apply this as massive damage, with armor working as normal.

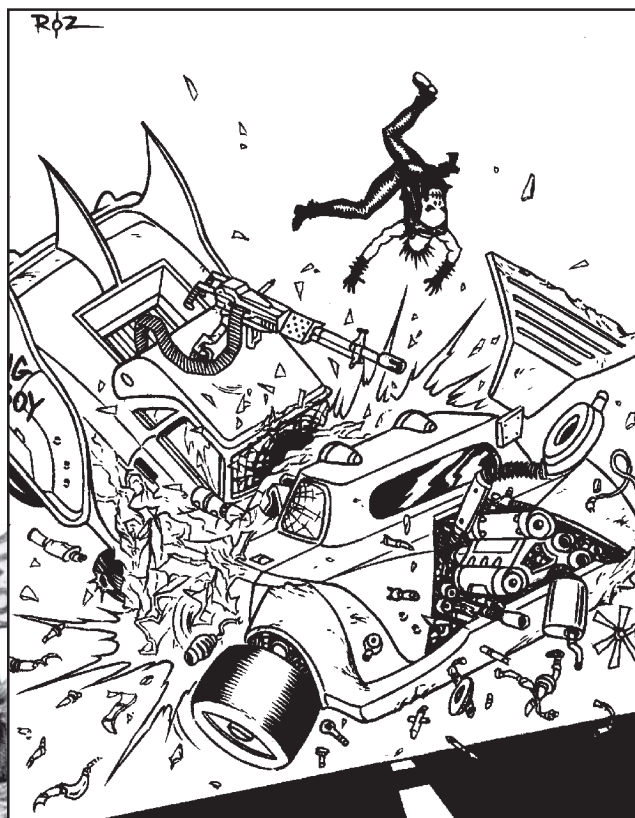
The vehicle gets off lightly. It only takes 1d6 damage for every 20 mph of speed.

Collision Crits

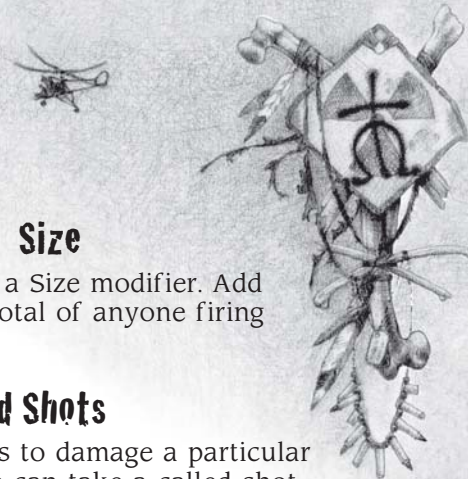
If a vehicle suffers enough damage in a collision to cause multiple critical hits (these are covered below), roll a separate hit location for each one. If a passenger result comes up, select a random passenger. This unlucky person gets to take an additional 3d6 damage as a portion of the vehicle crumples into him.

Losing Control

A collision with another vehicle can really mess with a person's concentration. Being in a collision requires a *drivin'* roll for each driver involved (remember, if it's not your movement,



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hold off on the roll until just before your next move). The TN is modified by +1 for each 10 mph of collision speed (the speed that was used to work out the damage).

Shooting

Now we get to the fun stuff: blowing holes in the bad guys' cars. Not much has changed from the rules in the *Hell on Earth* rulebook, except for a few special modifiers that apply to dealing death at high speeds. All of the normal modifiers apply unless these rules specifically state otherwise.

A character may fire either a personal weapon or a vehicle weapon on each of his actions. This requires an Action Card—drivers do not get to fire vehicle weapons as driving maneuvers. A hero can fire multiple weapons which have linked fire controls as a single action. All linked weapons must be fired at a single target, but make separate attack rolls for each one.

Range

If you are using the counters and movement rules we so thoughtfully provided, simply measure the distance between the shooter and his target. Each inch of distance translates to 5 yards of range. Use the weapon's Range Increment to determine the base TN to hit, just as you would in normal combat.

Speed

Speed affects ranged attacks in a number of ways. For starters, all fire from moving vehicles suffers the -2 "firer mounted" penalty. If the vehicle comes to a halt, of course, you can ignore this penalty.

Relative Speed

Shooters suffer a further -1 penalty to their *shootin'* totals for each 10 mph of the target's speed. If the shooter's vehicle is moving in the same general direction as the target, subtract the slower speed from the faster and base your modifier on this relative speed. If the shooter and target are directly in line with each other, halve this number (since it's much easier to hit a target that is moving in a straight line toward or away from you). If the target is moving across the shooter's path, simply use the target's actual speed.

Size

Every vehicle has a Size modifier. Add this to the *shootin'* total of anyone firing at it.

Called Shots

If your hero wants to damage a particular part of the target, he can take a called shot. The modifiers to hit common vehicle locations are listed on the Vehicle Shootin' Table. When taking a called shot, the vehicle's Size modifier does *not* apply to the *shootin'* total.

Vehicle Shootin'

Situation	Modifier
Firing remote weapon	-4
Called shots:	
Engine	-2
Tire (from side)	-4
Tire (from front or rear)	-6
Passenger	Special*
Window	-4
Weapon	-4
Gas Tank	-6
Target speed	-1/10mph
Size	Vehicle Size

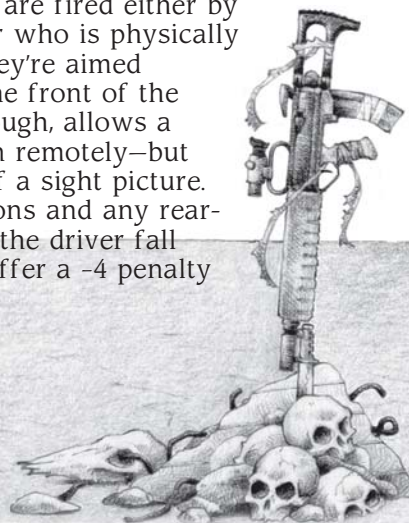
*Roll passenger hit location normally

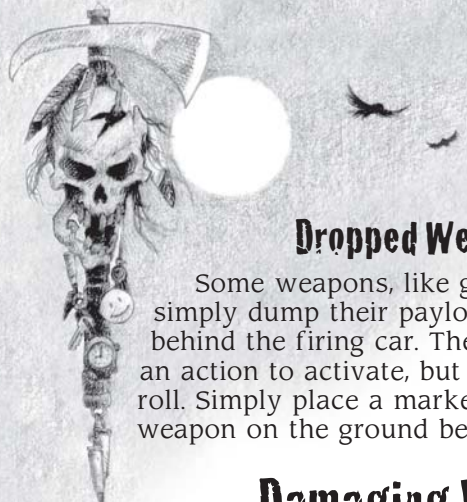
Fixed Weapons

Weapons in fixed mounts must be aimed by pointing the vehicle they are fixed to at the target. This requires not only some driving skill, but the knowledge of when to hit the trigger. When firing these weapons, the driver uses his appropriate *shootin'* Aptitude, but it's based on his *Nimbleness* instead of his *Deftness*.

Remote Weapons

Most vehicle weapons are fired either by the driver or by a gunner who is physically manning the weapon. They're aimed through their sights or the front of the car. Some equipment, though, allows a hero to control a weapon remotely—but that doesn't give much of a sight picture. Remote-controlled weapons and any rear-facing weapons fired by the driver fall into this category and suffer a -4 penalty to all *shootin'* rolls.





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Dropped Weapons

Some weapons, like grenade droppers, simply dump their payloads on the road behind the firing car. These weapons require an action to activate, but require no Aptitude roll. Simply place a marker appropriate to the weapon on the ground behind the rig.

Damaging Vehicles

Before we discuss the actual damage effects, we've got a few key concepts to introduce.

Durability

As we mentioned in *Hell on Earth*, every vehicle has a Durability rating. This is a measure of how much punishment the rig can absorb before it conks out.

Durability Steps

A vehicle's Durability is further broken down into five steps (we called them "damage increments" in *Hell on Earth*, but "Durability Steps" is what we really meant). Each time a

vehicle accumulates damage equal to a Durability Step, all *drivin'* and *shootin'* rolls made for the rig suffer a cumulative -1 penalty.

Once a vehicle accumulates damage equal to its Durability, it's considered knocked out. It has become undriveable and ceases to operate, automatically decelerating at 10 mph per movement phase until it comes to a stop. The driver of the rig may maneuver his KO'd ride as it coasts to a stop, but she may not accelerate.

A vehicle in this condition is not necessarily destroyed. It may still be possible to repair it.

Catastrophic Damage

If a vehicle ever takes damage equal to twice its Durability, it has been destroyed. There's not enough left of it to put back together, although a merciful Marshal might allow your brainer to make a *scroungin'* roll to pick out spare parts.

Weapon Classes

Ranged weapons are divided up into four classes based on their ability to perforate, twist, and otherwise mangle innocent pieces of machinery. The standard damage ratings for weapons are against living flesh; against unfeeling steel, most do significantly less harm.

Small Arms

Most weapons in *Hell on Earth* fall into this class, which includes most handheld personal weapons and light machine-guns. All firearms smaller than .50 caliber—and other ranged weapons with limited damage potential, like crossbows, slingshots, etc.—are small arms.

Small arms damage is divided by 10 (round down) before being subtracted from a vehicle's Durability. It is possible for a shot to do no damage to a vehicle.

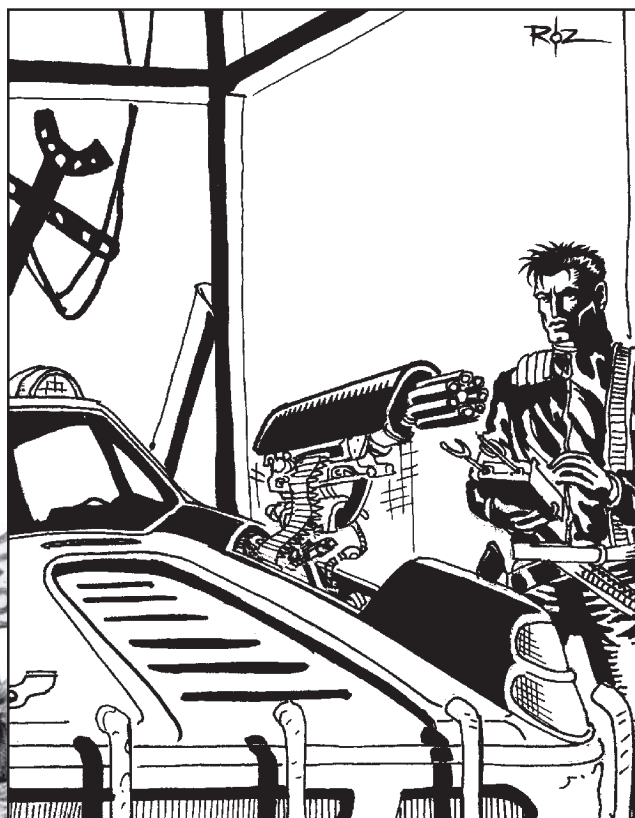
Light Weapons

This class includes most heavy machine-guns and light anti-aircraft weapons—all weapons .50 caliber or larger but less than 25mm. Some oddball weapons like ballistae also belong in this class, as does damage from spells not designed specifically for damaging vehicles.

Divide light weapons damage by 5 (round down) before subtracting it from a vehicle's Durability.

Heavy Weapons

This class includes heavy weapons intended to deal with light armored vehicles and fortifications. Weapons larger than 25mm and



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less than 75mm fall in this category. Certain large primitive weapons like catapults are also classified as heavy support weapons.

Heavy damage is divided by 2 (round down) before being subtracted from Durability.

Anti-Vehicle Weapons

This class includes all weapons 75mm and larger, and all antitank weapons. These bad puppies do full damage against vehicular targets.

Explosives

Explosives (including burst spells such as *nuke*) can do either light or anti-vehicle damage. Any explosive with a Burst Radius of 10 or more, that goes off within its first Burst Radius of the target, is treated as anti-vehicle damage. Any explosive with a Burst Radius of less than 10, or which is more than one radius from a vehicle, does light damage.

Applying Damage

Once your waster puts steel on target, it's time to see how much havoc is wrought.

Roll Hit Location

Unless the attack was a called shot, roll 1d20 on the Vehicle Hit Location Table to see where it impacts. As usual, each raise on the *shootin'* roll can modify the hit location by +1 point.

Vehicle Hit Location

Roll	Location
1-3	Engine
4	Front tire
5-9	Body
10-14	Weapon
15-18	Passenger
19	Rear tire
20	Gas tank

Add +2 to the roll when firing from the rear; subtract -2 when firing from the front.

Location Effects

Engine

Hits to this location rattle around in the engine compartment. Since most of the engine is a giant block o' metal, increase the vehicle's Armor value by +1 in this location.

Tire/Wheel

Damage to this location hits one of the wheels visible to the shooter. Tires normally get no protection from the vehicle's armor. Damage to the tires is kept track of separately from that to the rest of the vehicle. Different types of tires can take different amounts of damage (see Chapter Four for details). When a tire takes all the damage it can withstand, it falls apart.

Body

Damage to this area has no special effect.

Weapon

Hits to this location strike a weapon mounted on the side of the vehicle facing the shooter. If there is more than one, determine which is hit randomly. If there are no weapons on the targeted side, apply the damage to the body instead. Damage to weapons doesn't subtract from Durability.

Externally-mounted weapons normally get no protection from the vehicle's armor, but they have an innate Armor value of 1.

Every time a weapon is damaged, check for a critical hit. Roll 1d6 (re-rolling aces) against the amount of damage done to the weapon. If the roll exceeds the damage, the weapon is fine. Otherwise it suffers a critical hit.

Passenger

The shot has hit the passenger compartment. Roll randomly among the passengers to see who was hit and then roll hit location for the unfortunate victim. If the indicated area is covered by the vehicle, apply the vehicle's Armor rating to the damage. If the hit location is exposed (the upper torso, head, and arms in most cars) the brainer takes full damage.

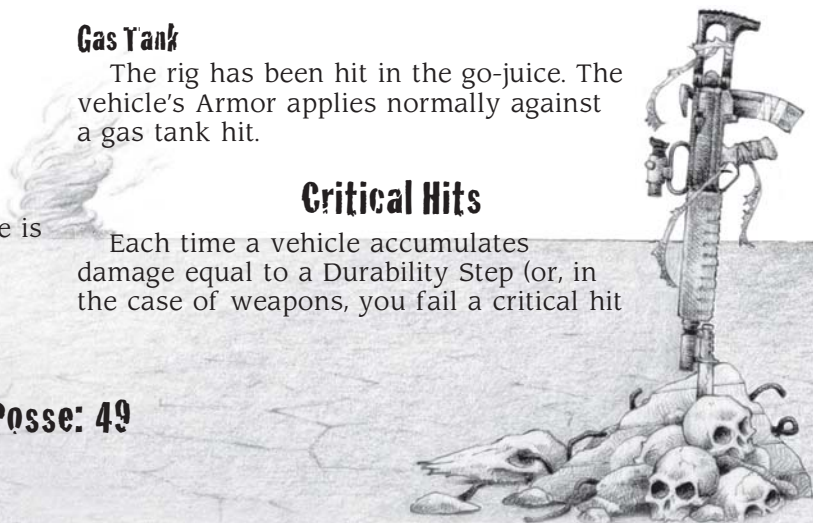
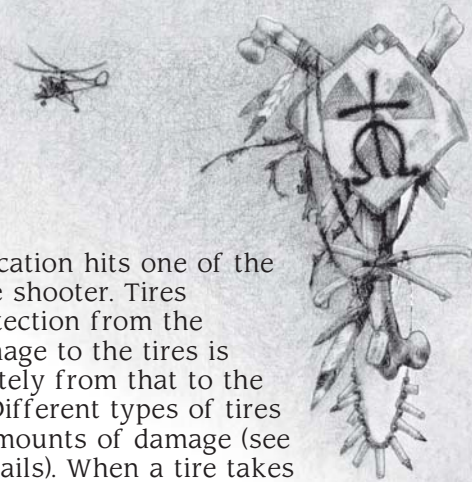
The vehicle itself takes no damage from a passenger hit unless the shot hit a covered location and penetrated the Armor. Treat this as a body hit.

Gas Tank

The rig has been hit in the go-juice. The vehicle's Armor applies normally against a gas tank hit.

Critical Hits

Each time a vehicle accumulates damage equal to a Durability Step (or, in the case of weapons, you fail a critical hit





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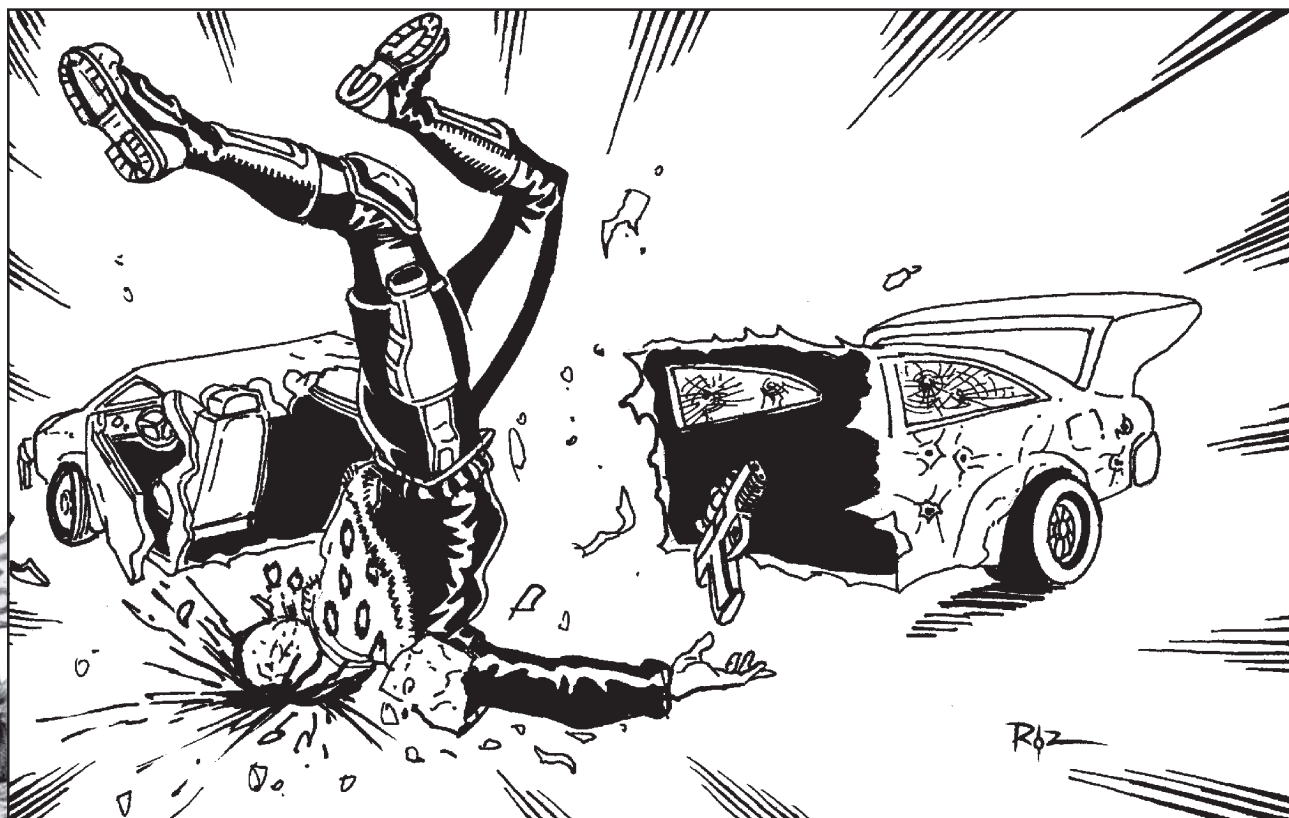
check), the vehicle suffers a critical hit. Roll 2d6 on the critical hit chart for the component which took the damage that caused the critical. There are no passenger critical hits.

Some of the descriptions have notations at the end that start with "Chase." This is a special result for use with the chase rules on page 51; you can ignore it if you're using the regular rules we just covered.

Body Criticals

Roll Effect

- | | | | |
|---|---|-----|--|
| 2 | Collapse: A major structural member can't take the strain and gives way. The vehicle's body rips in two, spilling its occupants out onto the pavement. Passengers take 1d6 damage per 5 mph of speed. The pieces lose 15 mph of speed per phase. Roll 3d6 on the Outta Control table for each half on the next movement phase. (Chase: Treat as a "Crash and Burn" on the Chase Table.) | 4 | Popped the Hood: The damage causes the hood to release and fly open. Hood-mounted weapons cannot be fired. The driver can only see by sticking his head out the window, causing a -4 penalty to all <i>drivin'</i> and <i>shootin'</i> rolls. Roll 1d6 each movement phase the car is in motion. On a 6, the hood rips off and takes any hood-mounted weapons with it. |
| 3 | Saggy: The abused frame sags in the middle, causing the undercarriage to | 5 | Exfoliated: A portion of the damaged side falls off, taking any armor with it. There is now a hole on that side of the vehicle which can be targeted at a -4 penalty. Shots which hit the hole bypass the vehicle's armor rating. |
| | | 6-8 | Lucky! No additional effect. |
| | | 9 | Blew the Doors Off: A randomly chosen door falls off the vehicle. This hole can be targeted at a -2 penalty; shots hitting it bypass the vehicle's Armor. |
| | | 10 | Bent: The vehicle's body has been bent by the force of the blow. The vehicle's Handling rating goes down by -2. |

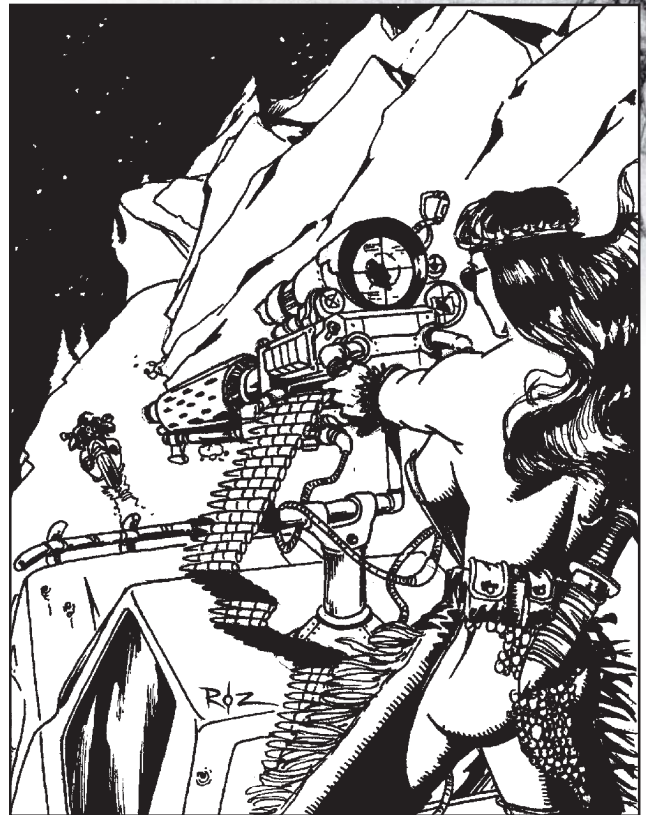


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- 11 Warped: The vehicle's body has horrendously warped by the force of the blow. The vehicle's Handling rating goes down by -4.
- 12 Tin Canned: The vehicle crumples up like a soft drink can. Everyone inside takes 6d6 massive damage and is trapped in the wreckage. Getting them out requires a crowbar and 3d20 minutes. Roll 3d6 on the Outta Control Table for this vehicle the next time it moves. It slows by 15 mph per movement phase.

Weapon Criticals

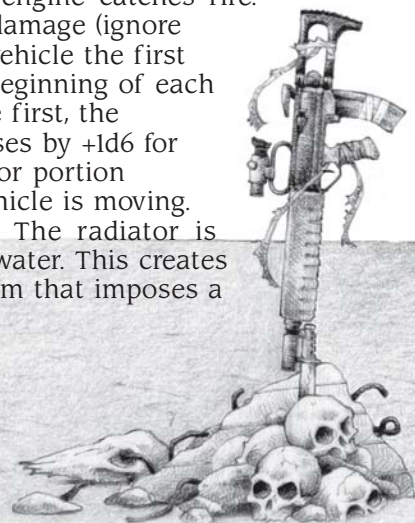
- | Roll | Effect |
|------|--|
| 2 | Ammo Ignited: The impact sets off some of the weapon's ammunition. The vehicle takes damage as if hit by a single round from the weapon. The weapon itself is destroyed. |
| 3 | Ammo Destroyed: All ammunition remaining in the weapon is lost. |
| 4 | Ammo Damaged: The weapon loses 50% of its remaining ammunition. If the weapon is magazine-fed, the magazine continues to function for the remainder of the battle but must be discarded afterward. |
| 5 | Mount Loosened: The weapon mount is coming loose. The shaking caused by this imposes a -4 penalty to all <i>shootin'</i> rolls made for this weapon. |
| 6 | Mount Warped: The weapon's mount has been bent, making it more difficult to aim. All <i>shootin'</i> rolls made for this weapon suffer a -2 modifier. |
| 7 | Lucky! No additional effect. |
| 8 | Jammed: The shock of the impact has caused the weapon's firing mechanism to jam. A Fair (5) <i>tinkerin'</i> or <i>trade: weaponsmith</i> roll can fix the problem. |
| 9 | Mount Stuck: The linkage or mounting pin has been bent. The weapon can no longer be moved. It's stuck in the position it was last fired. |
| 10 | Whoa, Nelly!: The weapon's firing mechanism is activated by the impact, and it begins firing. If the weapon is capable of automatic fire, it fires at its full ROF each phase until empty. |
| 11 | Weapon Lost: The weapon is blown free from its mount, falling off the vehicle. |

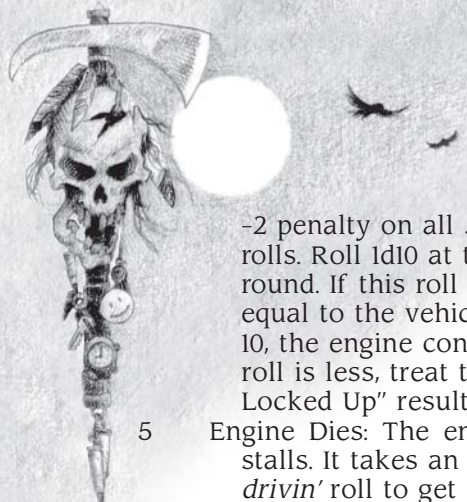


- 12 Insult to Injury: The weapon tears free from the vehicle, taking a portion with it. The vehicle loses another 1d4 Durability. If this damage causes a critical hit, treat it as a body hit.

Engine Criticals

- | Roll | Effect |
|------|---|
| 2 | Engine Blown: The vehicle's engine explodes, doing 3d6 damage (ignore armor) to its body. The rig slows 15 mph per movement phase. (Chase: the rig slows 30 mph per round.) |
| 3 | Engine Fire: The engine catches fire. This does 1d6 damage (ignore armor) to the vehicle the first round. At the beginning of each round after the first, the damage increases by +1d6 for every 20 mph (or portion thereof) the vehicle is moving. |
| 4 | Radiator Leakin': The radiator is rapidly losing water. This creates a cloud of steam that imposes a |

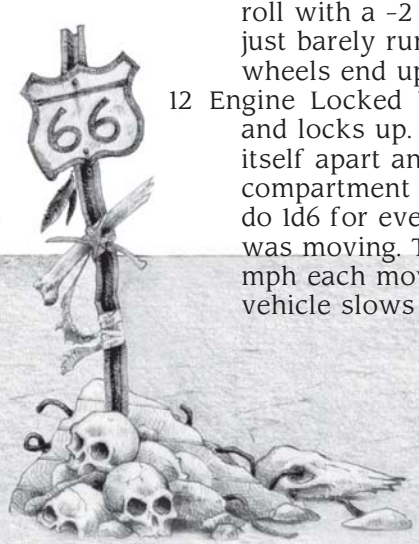




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-2 penalty on all *shootin'* and *drivin'* rolls. Roll 1d10 at the beginning of each round. If this roll is greater than or equal to the vehicle's speed divided by 10, the engine continues to run. If the roll is less, treat this as an "Engine Locked Up" result (see below).

- 5 Engine Dies: The engine sputters and stalls. It takes an action and a Fair (5) *drivin'* roll to get it restarted. The rig slows 10 mph per phase until the engine is restarted. (Chase: Rig slows 20 mph per round until restarted.)
- 6 Losing Power: The vehicle's Acceleration rating drops by 5 mph. This effect is cumulative if it occurs more than once.
- 7 Lucky! No additional effect.
- 8 Sputter: The engine comes close to stalling, but doesn't quite die. Reduce the vehicle's speed by 10 mph. (Chase: -4 on next chase roll.)
- 9 Running Rough: The vehicle's top speed drops by 10 mph. This effect is cumulative if it occurs more than once.
- 10 Case Cracked: The engine block cracks, letting oil into the cylinders. The vehicle's Acceleration drops by 10 mph; its top speed drops by 30 mph. Oily smoke comes out of the exhaust, trailing a dark cloud. All *shootin'* rolls through this cloud suffer a -2 penalty, as do all *drivin'* rolls made inside it.
- 11 Oil Leak: The engine is losing oil—fast! This coats the windshield with oily grime that causes a -4 penalty to all *shootin'* and *drivin'* rolls. Check to see if the engine seizes up each round just like a "Radiator Leakin'" result (above).
It also creates an oil slick: a vehicle-wide trail left behind the rig throughout its movement for the next three phases. Any vehicle coming into contact with the slick risks losing control—have the driver make a *drivin'* roll with a -2 modifier if the vehicle just barely runs over it, or -6 if all wheels end up in the slick.
- 12 Engine Locked Up: The engine seizes and locks up. The transmission tears itself apart and showers the passenger compartment with fragments which do 1d6 for every 10 mph the vehicle was moving. The rig decelerates at 20 mph each movement phase. (Chase: vehicle slows by 40 mph each round.)



Gas Tank Criticals

Roll	Effect
2	Ka-Boom! The gas tank goes up in a flash. This does 3d20 damage plus 1d20 for each gallon left in the tank. Ignore the vehicle's armor.
3	Boom! The tank explodes, but the massive hole vents the force of the explosion away from the vehicle. The explosion does only 3d8 damage (ignore Armor).
4	Pump Hit: The fuel pump has been knocked out. The engine dies, and the vehicle coasts to a stop, losing 10 mph of speed per phase. (Chase: Speed drops by 20 mph per round.)
5	Fuel Supply Interrupted: Treat this as an "Engine Dies" result (from the Engine Criticals Table), except that it cannot be restarted.
6	Big Hole: Lose 1d6 gallons of fuel.
7	Lucky! No additional effect.
8	Steady Leak: The vehicle loses 1 gallon of fuel per round. If the vehicle also suffers a "Saggy" result (from the Body Criticals Table), roll 1d6 at the beginning of each round. On a 6, the fuel has caught fire. Treat this as a "Flaming Slick" (see below).
9	Gushing: The tank loses 1d4 gallons of fuel per round. With a "Saggy" critical, roll for ignition as above, but the fuel catches on a 5 or better.
10	Flaming Slick: The vehicle has suffered a "Steady Leak" (as above), and the leaking fuel has ignited, laying out a flaming slick behind the vehicle until it runs out of fuel. The rig may explode: Roll 1d6 at the beginning of each round; on a 6, the vehicle suffers a "Ka-Boom!" result (above). Vehicles coming into contact with the flaming slick take 1 point of damage to any tires which touch it, and risk catching fire. Roll 1d6; on a 6, the vehicle catches fire. This causes 1d6 damage (ignore armor) the first round, increasing by +1d6 each turn.
11	Fuel Fire: Burning fuel has lit the vehicle on fire. It takes 1d6 damage the first round. This damage increases by +1d6 per round. Check for explosion as in "Flaming Slick" above.

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- 12 I Can Fly! The fuel tank explodes. The good news is that the explosion only does 3d10 damage to the vehicle. The bad news is that it's airborne. Immediately move the vehicle forward 1d6 inches. It lands at this spot and takes 3d6 collision damage plus 1d6 for every 5 mph of speed it had. Any vehicle at the point where it lands takes the same damage. The vehicle's speed drops to 0. Roll 1d4 to see how it lands: 1=Roof, 2=Left side, 3=Right side, 4=Wheels.

The Big Rigs

Oversized vehicles like buses and tractor-trailers are driven in much the same way as smaller vehicles. There are, however, a few special rules to consider for these guys.

Performing Maneuvers

Oversized vehicles have oversized counters, but still perform most maneuvers just like smaller vehicles.

Buses and tractor-trailer rigs may not perform donuts or bootlegger reverses. Any attempt to do so results in a 1d6+6 roll on the Outta Control Table.

Tractor-Trailers

Maneuvering tractor-trailer combos can get tricky. Place the front of the trailer counter over the rear wheels of the tractor. When moving one of these rigs, carry out the movement and all maneuvers with just the tractor counter first. Then move the trailer forward (or backward) until the front of the trailer is even with the tractor's rear wheels. Rotate the trailer until it is pointed directly at the tractor's hitch, and then move it toward the tractor until it is back in its proper position. If it hits anything in the course of this sweep, a collision occurs.

When shooting at a big rig, treat the tractors and trailers as separate targets. Treat engine hits on trailers as body hits. Treat front tire hits on trailers as rear wheel hits on the tractor. Any wheel criticals to the trailer affect the performance of the entire rig.

Acceleration

Oversized vehicles are geared for heavy loads. To reflect this, all big rigs accelerate at 5 mph until reaching a speed of 25 mph. Then the rig can use its normal Acceleration rating.

Boarding

What's a good road chase without someone trying to climb aboard someone else's vehicle?

Jumping from one vehicle to another requires an action and a Fair (5) *Nimbleness* roll. This TN is modified by +1 for every 5 mph of speed difference between the two vehicles. A successful roll gets the boarder safely over to the other vehicle. A roll that is failed by less than 5 points gets the would-be hijacker to the other vehicle, but he takes 1d6 damage for each 5 mph of speed difference between the vehicles and is perhaps left dangling or barely holding on, requiring an action to recover. A roll that is blown by more than 5 points means that the jumper has landed on the pavement between the vehicles, taking 1d6 damage for every 5 mph of speed the jumper's vehicle is moving.

The maximum distance that can be jumped is equal to the half the lower of the jumper's *Strength* or *Nimbleness* die.

Chases

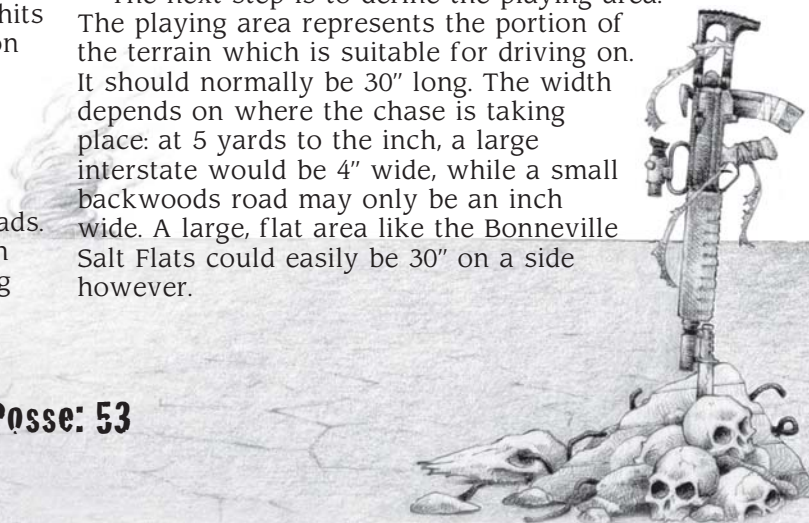
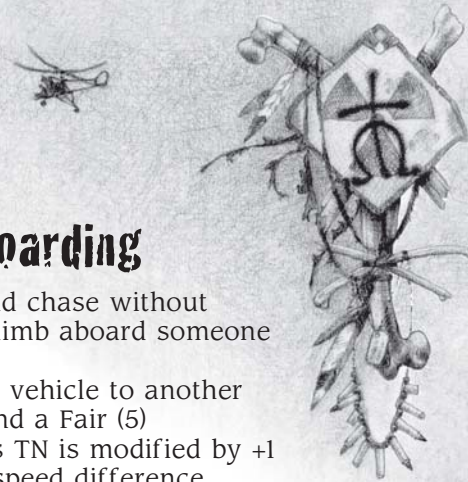
Chases happen every day in the Wasted West. Road gangs looking for loot and salvage ply the roadways on a daily basis. When they spot a likely looking target, they chase the poor unfortunate down like a pack of wolves does a deer (although sometimes these deer have machine-guns too). This is the second system for vehicle combat, which is a bit simpler and faster-paced than the system we just went over.

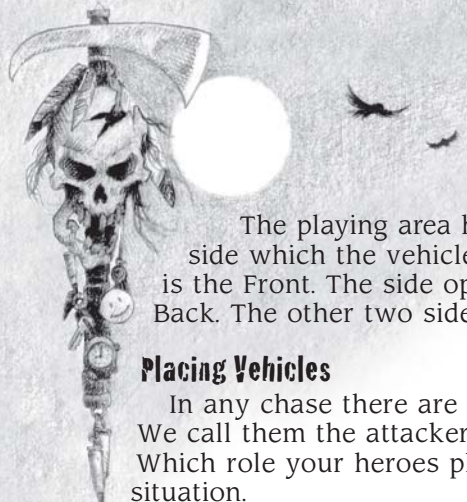
Setting Up

For starters, you need to grab counters for each of the vehicles involved in the affair.

The Playing Area

The next step is to define the playing area. The playing area represents the portion of the terrain which is suitable for driving on. It should normally be 30" long. The width depends on where the chase is taking place: at 5 yards to the inch, a large interstate would be 4" wide, while a small backwoods road may only be an inch wide. A large, flat area like the Bonneville Salt Flats could easily be 30" on a side however.





Road Rage

The playing area has four sides. The side which the vehicles are moving toward is the Front. The side opposite that is the Back. The other two sides are Left and Right.

Placing Vehicles

In any chase there are chasers and chasees. We call them the attackers and the defenders. Which role your heroes play depends on the situation.

The defenders set up their vehicles first. They may be placed in anywhere within 6" of the center of the playing area and must be moving toward the Front.

The attackers set up next. Their vehicles are normally placed within 6" of the Back of the playing area. This setup assumes the attackers are coming up from behind the defenders' vehicles. This can vary with the situation set up by your Marshal. If, for instance, the attackers suddenly merged onto the interstate from an entrance ramp, they might set up right alongside the defenders.

Starting Speed

Once all the vehicles have been placed, each driver must pick a starting speed for his vehicle (less than or equal to the vehicle's top speed, of course). The defending drivers pick their speeds first and must reveal them to the attackers before the attackers set their speeds. Predators always know the speed of their prey.

And They're Off!

Once everything is in place, it's time to wave the green flag and get things underway.

The key concept to remember when using these chase rules is that the actual maneuvering of the vehicles involved is being abstracted with an Aptitude roll—the only thing which is important to these rules is the relative positioning of the vehicles. It doesn't matter whether the chase is taking place on an arrow-straight interstate in Arizona or a winding country road in the foothills of the Rockies—the counters representing the combatants always move straight ahead or side to side.

The Chase is On!

Just as in a regular combat, every driver must sacrifice his highest Action Card each round to perform a driving action.

The Chase Roll

At the beginning of each round, after Action Cards have been dealt and drivers have sacrificed their highest cards, each driver must make a chase roll. The success or failure of this roll determines how well the driver is able to outguess and outmaneuver her opponents while keeping her car between the ditches. Marshal, if you're playing out a large chase, it's easiest to roll once for groups of similar vehicles. If you go bust, apply that result to one of the vehicles in the group and reroll for the rest.

The chase roll uses the driver's *drivin'* Aptitude, modified by the vehicle's Handling. Find the base TN for this roll on the Handling Table (located on page 39) and modify it by +1 for every full 20 mph of speed the vehicle is moving.

The results of this roll affect the speed of the vehicle for the coming round. Failed rolls cause a mandatory reduction in speed. A successful roll gives a driver the option of increasing the speed of her vehicle. Check out the Chase Roll Table for details. There's also a full example at the end of this chapter.

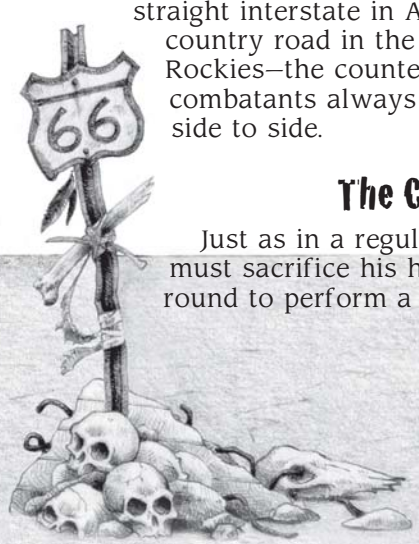
Chase Roll

Chase Roll	Result
Failed by 5 or more	Roll on Hot Pursuit Table
Failed by less than 5	Vehicle's speed drops by 5 mph per point missed.
Success	May increase speed by an amount equal to the vehicle's Acceleration.
Each Raise	May increase speed again by an amount equal to the vehicle's Acceleration.

Set Your Speed!

Once everyone has made their *drivin'* rolls, each driver sets his speed for the coming round (within the restrictions of the chase roll result). Drivers set their speeds starting with the vehicle furthest ahead, working backward. Break ties by comparing remaining Action Cards. If there is still a tie, roll a contest of *Quickness*.

Vehicles cannot slow down by more than 50 mph per round (a mandatory speed loss due to a failed chase roll does not increase this maximum braking rate). Vehicles may accelerate at any rate, given a good enough chase roll.



Road Rage

Chase Speed

The next step is to determine the chase speed for the round. Add the speed of the slowest vehicle to the speed of the highest vehicle and divide that result by two. Round to the nearest multiple of 5. This number is the chase speed for the round.

A better way to do it if you're fighting a small battle with only a few vehicles is to add up all their speeds and divide by the number of vehicles. This gives you a true average speed for the chase.

Again, refer to the end of this chapter for an example.

Movement

Move all vehicles prior to resolving any other actions in the round. Start with the fastest vehicle and work your way down to the slowest, breaking ties by comparing the drivers' Action Cards.

If a vehicle is going faster than the chase speed, move it 1" toward the Front of the playing area for each full 10 mph of speed it has over the chase speed. It may drift a half-inch to either side for each inch it moves forward. Move the vehicle in 1" increments, drifting it before moving it each increment.

If the vehicle is moving at the chase speed or within 5 mph of it, it does not move forward or backward, but may drift a half inch to either side.

If the vehicle is moving slower than the chase speed, move it 1" toward the Back of the playing area for each full 10 mph difference. Again, drift before moving each inch backwards.

Ramming Speed

As a vehicle is moved, its counter may overlap with those of other vehicles. This might or might not cause a collision.

If the driver of the moving vehicle wishes to ram, roll a contest of *drivin'* (if both drivers wish for the collision to occur it happens automatically). If the ramming driver wins, the collision takes place. If he loses, the two cars miss each other (move the ramming vehicle past the target vehicle, or, if they're going to end up on top of one another, adjust them so that they are adjacent), and the driver that tried to ram must make a roll on the Hot Pursuit Table (on page 55).

If the collision does occur, determine relative speed and damage using the regular collision rules above. After damage from the ram is



resolved, both drivers must make a *drivin'* roll at the same TN as the chase roll. Failure means a roll on the Hot Pursuit Table.

The Space-Time Continuum

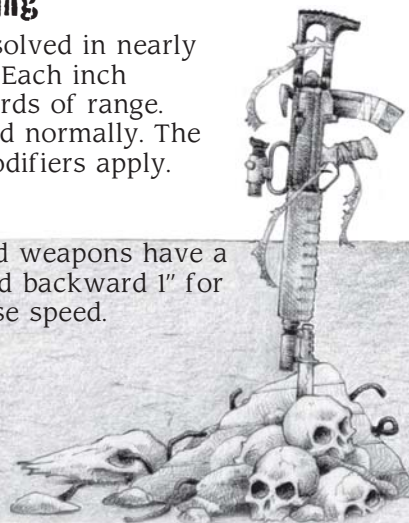
There are two exceptions to this collision stuff: A vehicle moving forward may not ram a faster vehicle, and a vehicle moving backward may not ram a slower vehicle. If either of these situations occur, simply move the vehicle's counters over one another. If they're going to end their movement on top of each other, drift them apart until they're just touching, and resolve the situation as a sideswipe collision.

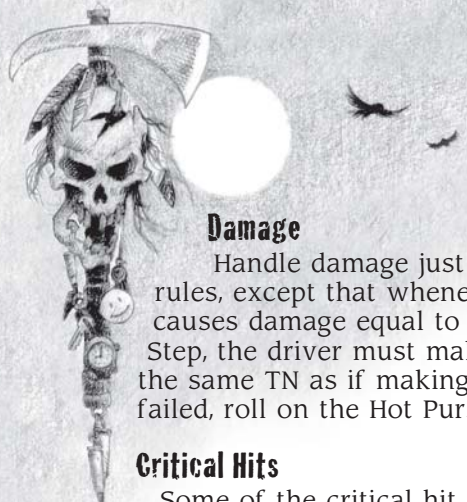
Shooting

Ranged attacks are resolved in nearly the same way as before. Each inch between counters is 5 yards of range. Firing arcs are determined normally. The normal relative speed modifiers apply.

Dropped Weapons

Counters from dropped weapons have a speed of 0 and are moved backward 1" for every full 10 mph of chase speed.





Road Rage

Damage

Handle damage just as in the regular rules, except that whenever a single attack causes damage equal to a vehicle's Durability Step, the driver must make a *drivin'* roll at the same TN as if making a chase roll. If failed, roll on the Hot Pursuit Table.

Critical Hits

Some of the critical hit descriptions have notations at the end (reading "Chase:"). Follow these results; they clarify or amend the result for use with these chase rules.

Crashing

If a vehicle is knocked out or otherwise disabled, it is no longer necessary for the driver to make a chase roll at the beginning of each turn. Once the rig's speed drops to 0, it automatically moves backward at the beginning of each round, 1" for every full 10 mph of the chase speed.

The disabled vehicle cannot maneuver, so it's up to the other cars to get out of the way.

Getting Left Behind

Damage or a series of failed *drivin'* rolls may cause a functioning vehicle to be moved backward out of the play area. The driver of the car that was left behind may make a *drivin'* roll against its chase TN at the start of each round. A successful roll allows the vehicle to reappear at the Back edge of the playing area at the end of the round. If the roll is failed, the vehicle remains out of play, and cannot attack.

Each round a vehicle fails to reenter play, the TN for its next chase roll increases by +1. If a vehicle fails to reenter play three rounds in a row, it's been left in the dust and is out of the chase.

Getting Away

It's also possible for a fast-moving vehicle to go shooting out the Front side of the play area. Until the vehicle moves back into the play area, it is effectively out of the chase (it's always just around a bend or in a dip that the other vehicles can't see). The passengers of this car can't take any physical actions against the other participants. It's still possible to perform actions like overawes and such over the radio, but no shooting is allowed. If the

speedster wants to get back in the thick of things, he just needs to reduce his speed to a level that moves him back into play.

Leaving the Road

Sometimes a Hot Pursuit Table result may cause a vehicle to move outside the established playing area. Moving out the Back of the area is not a problem—the vehicle just needs to rejoin the chase using the rules described under Getting Left Behind.

Moving out the sides of the play area can be a problem, depending on what type of terrain flanks the road. Your Marshal defines that terrain based on your situation and location. It might be clear terrain, only forcing those who slide off the road to slow down a bit (say, 1d4 x 5 mph), or it might be forested or rocky, so impassable that vehicles leaving the road suffer severe damage (2d6 to 3d6). It might even be ruined (or intact) buildings or water—the type of terrain that would nearly destroy any vehicle that runs into it at speed (4 d6 damage or more), and certainly remove it from the chase. The terrain can remain constant or vary from round to round as the chase moves down the road. If it varies, Marshal, tell the players what type of terrain is around them at the beginning of each round before anyone moves.

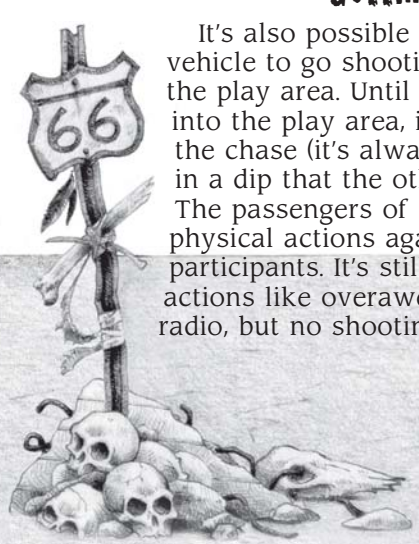
Vehicles which get left behind while off-road are assumed to get back on the road before trying to catch up. They may ignore the effects of the off-road area while left behind.

Hazards and Obstructions

The last bit of unpleasantness your hero has to worry about as he whizzes down the highway are hazards and obstructions. The appearance of these is determined by the Action Cards drawn by the Marshal for the bad guys, and the Marshal can also place them himself, depending on what sorts of dangers he decides lie along his roadway.

When a hazard or obstacle comes up, place a pencil or similar item across the Front of the play area. At the beginning of each round (including the one in which it appeared), move it backward 1" for each full 10 mph of the chase speed.

Obstacles and hazards span the entire width of the road—they cannot be outright avoided. Of course, the Marshal can also choose to place smaller items on the road (like vehicle markers representing old wrecks) that can be avoided.



Road Rage

Hazards

If one of the Marshal's cards is a Black Joker, a hazard appears in the roadway. Hazards are things that vehicles shouldn't hit: anything from a string of craters and potholes to wrecked tractor-trailers across the road.

Hazards are rated from 1 to 10: 1s are pretty minor; 10s are large and difficult to avoid. For randomly drawn hazards, roll 1d10 to determine the hazard's rating.

As the front end of each vehicle passes the hazard, the driver must make a *drivin'* roll against the vehicle's chase TN plus the hazard's rating. A failed roll means a trip to the Hot Pursuit Table.

Obstructions

If the Marshal draws a Red Joker, an obstruction appears. This is something which blocks line of sight beyond it. It could be a bend in the road, a hill, or a dark tunnel. The game effect is that vehicles on one side of it cannot target vehicles on the other side of it. It has no effect on driving and does not require any sort of roll.

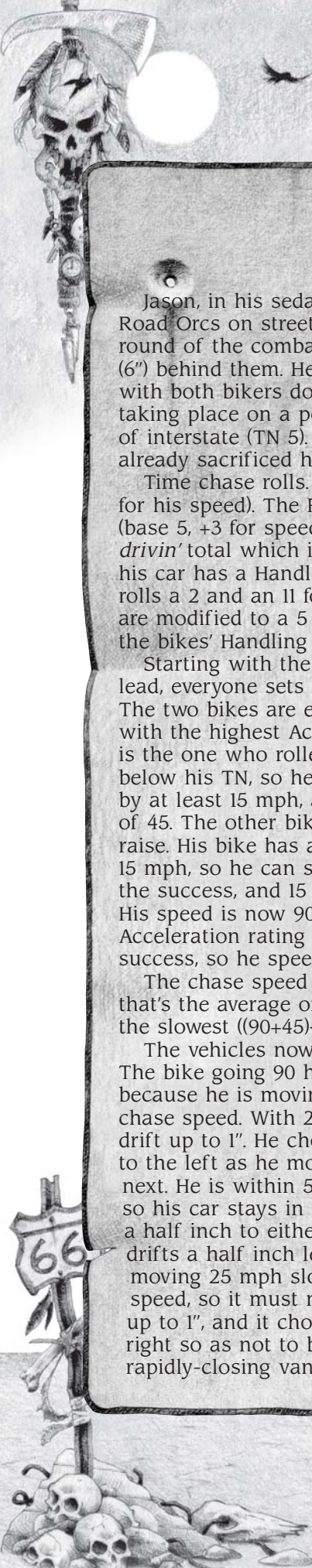
Hot Pursuit

Roll 1d6 plus the number of points by which the *drivin'* roll was missed. Reroll all aces.

Roll	Effect
1-3	Losing Ground: A momentary loss of control forces your hero to hit the brakes. His vehicle loses 5 mph of speed.
4-6	Road Zombie: Your hero is driving like the fabled little old lady from Pasadena. His vehicle slows by 1d4 x 5 mph.
7-9	Minor Skid: A momentary loss of traction sends your waster's car sliding sideways across the road. His vehicle slows by 1d4 x 5 mph and slides a half inch to one side. Roll a die. On an even result, the vehicle skids to the right. On an odd roll, it skids left.
10-12	Fishtail: Your hero can't seem to choose a lane. His vehicle slows by 1d4 x 5 mph and slides 1d2" to one side.
13-15	Major Skid: Hold on! Your hero's vehicle slows by 1d6 x 5 mph and slides 1d4" to one side. In addition, it takes 1 point of damage to each of its tires.

- 16-18 Spin: You've lost it, brainer! The vehicle begins spinning out of control. Reduce its speed by 1d8 x 5 mph. Each tire takes 2 points of damage. At the start of the next round, the spin stops, but next round's chase roll suffers a -4 penalty.
- 19-21 Roll: Your hero's vehicle starts to spin, thinks better of it, and flips. The vehicle takes 1d6 damage for every 10 mph of speed, then slows by 1d10 x 5 mph. Roll a die to see how the vehicle lands: An odd result lands it on its roof, putting it out of the chase; an even roll lands it on its wheels, causing 1 point of damage to each tire but leaving it in the chase. The chase roll for the next round suffers a -8 penalty.
- 21+ Crash and Burn: The vehicle skids off the nearest side of the play area and comes to rest against some sort of large, immovable object. It takes 1d6 damage for every 5 mph of speed. Even if operational, it's out of the chase.





Road Rage

Lead, Follow, or Get Out of the Way!

Jason, in his sedan, is chasing down two Road Orcs on street bikes. It's the second round of the combat, and he's only 30 yards (6") behind them. He's moving at 50 mph, with both bikers doing 60. The chase is taking place on a poorly maintained stretch of interstate (TN 5). Each of the drivers has already sacrificed his highest Action Card.

Time chase rolls. Jason's TN is 7 (base 5, +2 for his speed). The Road Orcs have a TN of 8 (base 5, +3 for speed). Jason gets a 9 on his *drivin'* total which is modified to a 7 because his car has a Handling of -2. The Marshal rolls a 2 and an 11 for the bikers. These totals are modified to a 5 and 13 respectively, for the bikes' Handling of +3.

Starting with the vehicle farthest in the lead, everyone sets and declares his speed. The two bikes are even, so the Road Orc with the highest Action Card goes first. This is the one who rolled a 5. That's 3 points below his TN, so he is forced to slow down by at least 15 mph, and he drops to a speed of 45. The other biker got a success and a raise. His bike has an Acceleration rating of 15 mph, so he can speed up by 30 mph (15 for the success, and 15 for the raise) and does. His speed is now 90 mph. Jason's car has an Acceleration rating of 15 and he got a success, so he speeds up from 50 to 65 mph.

The chase speed for this round is 70 mph—that's the average of the fastest vehicle and the slowest $((90+45)\div 2=67.5$ rounded to 70).

The vehicles now move in order of speed. The bike going 90 has 2" of movement because he is moving at 20 mph over the chase speed. With 2" of movement, he can drift up to 1". He chooses to slide a full inch to the left as he moves forward 2". Jason is next. He is within 5 mph of the chase speed, so his car stays in position. He can still drift a half inch to either side however. Jason drifts a half inch left. The last bike is moving 25 mph slower than the chase speed, so it must move 2" back. It can drift up to 1", and it chooses to drift a half-inch right so as not to be in front of Jason's rapidly-closing van.

Once movement is over, it's time to perform actions. Jason has the highest Action Card and goes first. He triggers a single burst from the four linked SA assault rifles on his van at the closest bike, which is now only 4" (20 yards) away. He needs a 7 to hit (base 5, +2 for range). He rolls his *shootin'* (using his *Nimbleness* because these are fixed weapons) for each gun and gets a 7, 11, 12, and 5 to hit. These rolls are modified to 5, 9, 10, and 3 (-2 for firing from moving vehicle, +1 for the bike's Size modifier, and -1 for relative speed). He hits with one round each from two guns.

Jason rolls for hit location (adding +2 for firing from behind) and gets a body and weapon hit. The motorcycle has no mounted weapons, so that hit is resolved as an additional body hit. The bike has an AV of 1, so the assault rifle's damage is reduced from 4d8 to 4d6. Jason rolls twice for damage and gets a 14 and a 20. Since the assault rifle is considered a small arm, the damage is divided by 10 and rounded down. This results in 3 points of damage to the bike.

The motorcycle has a Durability of 10 with a Step of 2. The 3 points inflicted by Jason's shots drops the Durability past its first step, causing a body critical. Jason rolls 2d6 on the Body Criticals Table and gets a 10. The damage has bent the bike's frame reducing its Handling by -2. In addition, all further *drivin'* rolls for the bike are at -1 because the vehicle has lost a Step of Durability.

Since a Step of Durability was lost to a single attack, the Road Orc must make a *drivin'* roll to keep under control. The TN for is 7 (base 5, +2 for speed). The Marshal rolls a 4. This is modified by -1 for damage and +1 for the bike's reduced Handling. Since the roll was failed, the Marshal rolls on the Hot Pursuit Table to see what happens.

Rolling 1d6 and adding 3 (the amount by which the roll was missed), gives a result of 8: "Minor Skid." The bike drifts a half inch left. A roll of 2 on 1d4 indicates the vehicle slows by 10 mph, dropping the motorcycle's speed for the following round to 35 mph.

Archetypes

Courier

Traits & Aptitudes

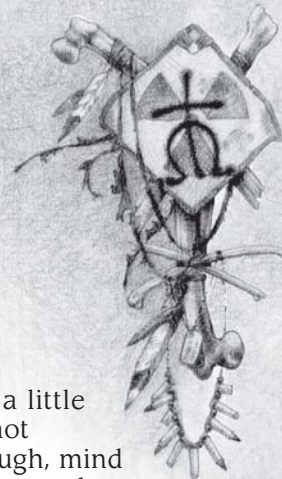
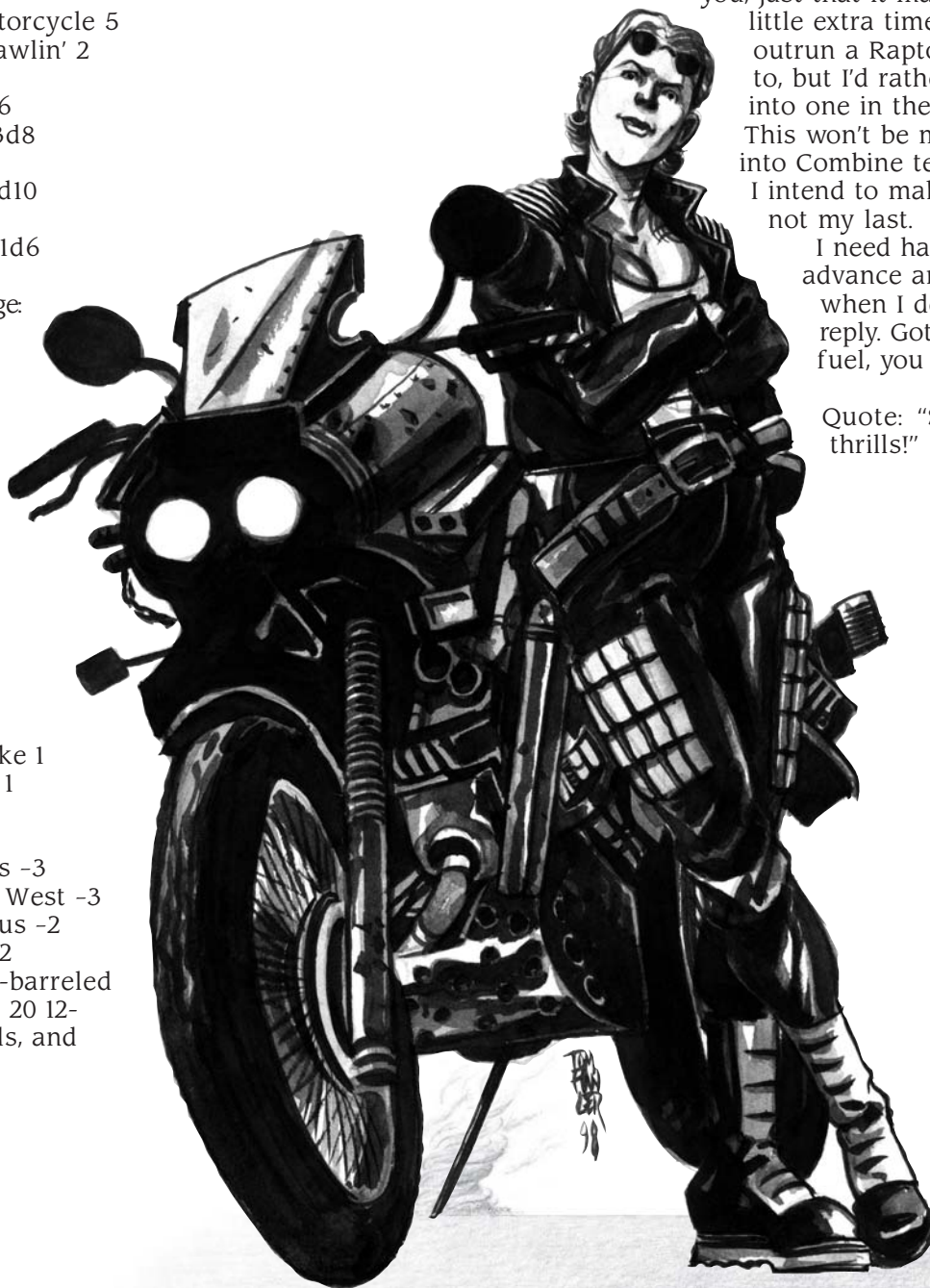
Deftness 2d10
 Shootin': shotgun 3
Nimbleness 2d12
 Climbin' 1
 Drivin': motorcycle 5
 Fightin': brawlin' 2
 Sneak 2
Strength 3d6
Quickness 3d8
Vigor 4d6
Cognition 4d10
 Search 3
Knowledge 1d6
 Area
 knowledge:
 Wasted
 west 3
Mien 2d8
 Overawe 3
Smarts 2d6
 Scroungin'
 2
 Survival 2
 Tinkerin' 3
Spirit 4d6
 Guts 2
Wind 12
Pace 12
Edges:
 Belongin's:
 street bike 1
 Eagle-eyes 1
 Keen 3
Hindrances:
 Big britches -3
 Law o' the West -3
 Superstitious -2
 Stubborn -2
Gear: Double-barreled
 scattergun, 20 12-
 gauge shells, and
 \$90.

Personality

Silverton will cost you extra. It's a little close to Denver for my tastes. I'm not saying I can't get the message through, mind you, just that it may take a little extra time. I can outrun a Raptor if I have to, but I'd rather not run into one in the first place. This won't be my first run into Combine territory, and I intend to make sure it's not my last.

I need half in advance and half when I deliver the reply. Gotta pay for fuel, you know.

Quote: "Speed thrills!"



Archetypes

Gunner/Mechanic

Traits & Aptitudes

Deftness 2d12
Shootin': MG, rifle,
crossbow 5
Speed load 2
Nimbleness 2d6
Climbin' 1
Drivin': tractor-trailer
2
Fightin': brawl' 3
Sneak 1
Strength 4d8
Quickness 2d10
Vigor 3d6
Cognition 2d8
Search 2
Knowledge 1d6
Area knowledge 2
Mien 2d6
Smarts 3d10
Scroungin' 2
Survival 2
Tinkerin' 4
Spirit 4d6
Guts 2
Wind 12
Pace 6
Edges:
Belongin's: A full set of
mechanics' tools 1
Mechanically inclined 1
Hindrances:
Bad ears -3
Cautious -3
Heavy sleeper -1
Yearnin': Own his own rig -3
Gear: Kevlar vest, SA assault
rifle, 30 rounds 7.62mm,
knife, and \$10.

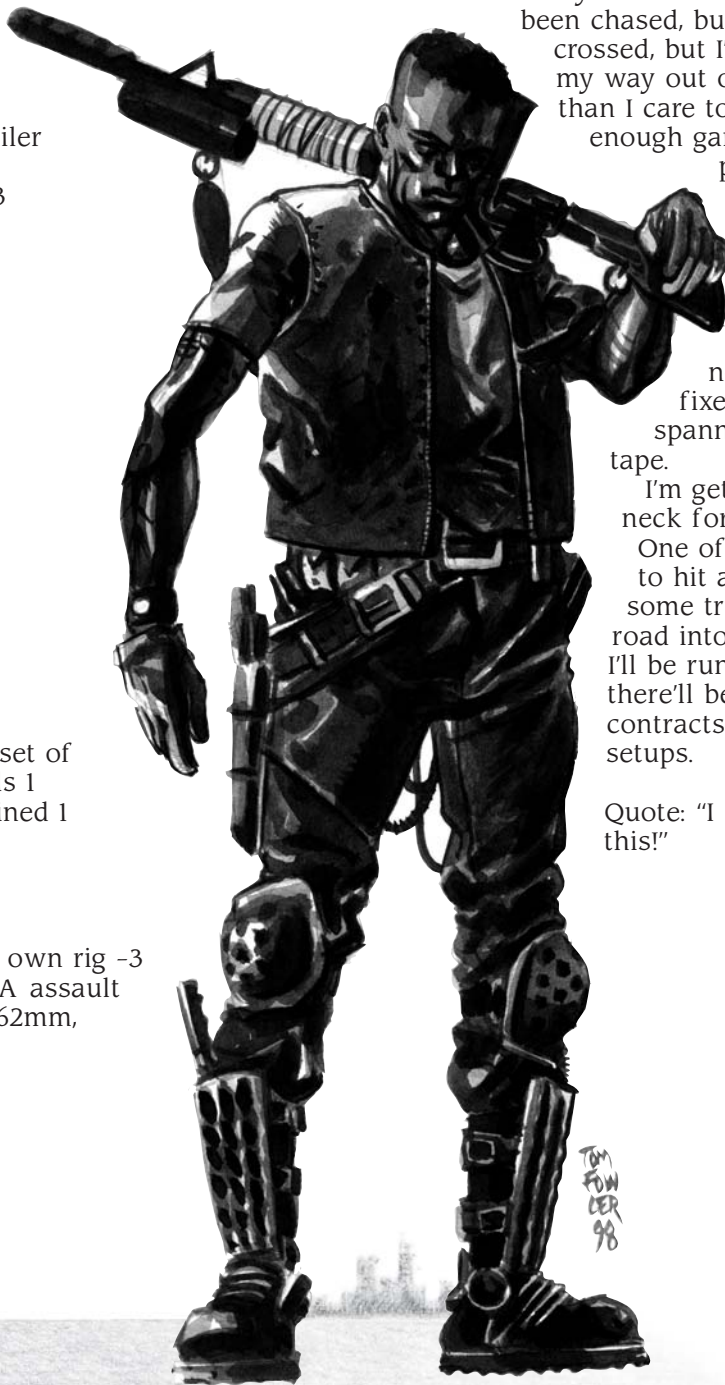
Personality

I've ridden with some of the best drivers on the road today. In the course of my travels I've been chased, bushwacked, and double-crossed, but I'm still kickin'. I've shot my way out of more hairy situations than I care to remember, and I've put enough gangers six feet under to populate a small town.

Once the shootin's over, I get to slap whatever piece of junk I happen to be riding in back together. There's nothing that can't be fixed with an 18-inch spanner and a roll of duct tape.

I'm getting tired of risking my neck for someone else's gain. One of these days, I'm going to hit a big score, and I'll talk some trucker who's tired of the road into giving up his rig. Then I'll be running the show, and there'll be no more taking contracts that are obvious setups.

Quote: "I don't like the looks of this!"



Posse: 60

Archetypes

Road Vigilante

Traits & Aptitudes

Deftness d10
Shootin': MG, pistol 4
Speed-load: pistol 2
Nimbleness d12
Climbin' 1
Fightin': brawlin' 2
Drivin': car 5
Sneak 1
Strength d6
Quickness d8
Quick draw 2
Vigor d10
Cognition d8
Search 3
Knowledge d6
Area knowledge 2
Mien d6
Overawe 3
Smarts d6
Scroungin' 3
Streetwise 3
Survival 2
Tinkerin' 3
Spirit d6
Guts 3
Wind 16
Pace 8
Edges:
Belongin's: Muscle car with
\$2,000 of custom work 5
"The stare" 1
"The voice" 1
Veteran o' the Wasted West (Make
sure your Marshal draws for
you.)
Hindrances:
Enemy -2 (small road gang)
Grim servant o' Death -5
Lame -3
Gear: Police pistol, 50 10mm
rounds, spare magazine,
sunglasses, and \$70.

Personality

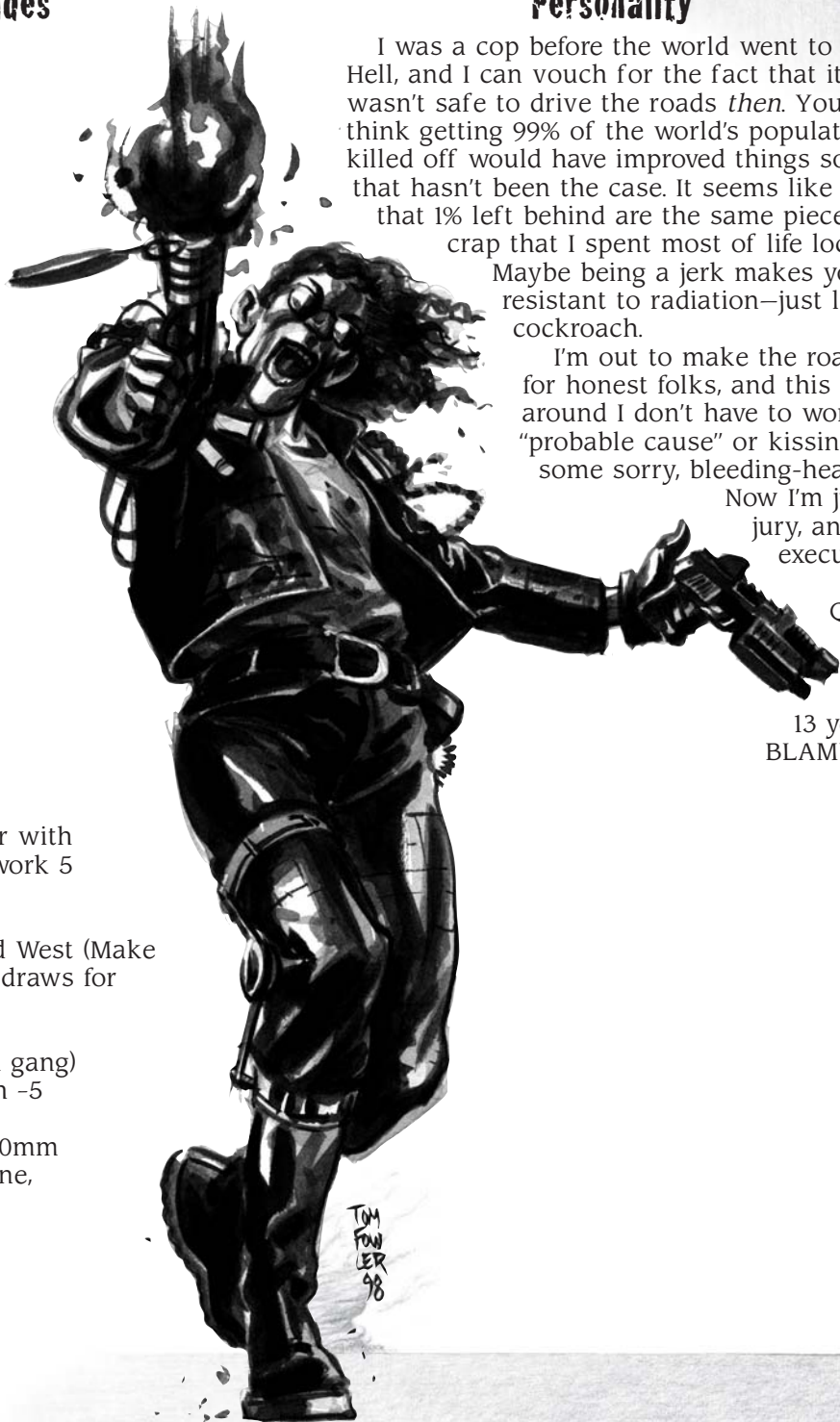
I was a cop before the world went to Hell, and I can vouch for the fact that it wasn't safe to drive the roads *then*. You'd think getting 99% of the world's population killed off would have improved things some, but that hasn't been the case. It seems like most of that 1% left behind are the same pieces of crap that I spent most of life locking up.

Maybe being a jerk makes you resistant to radiation—just like a cockroach.

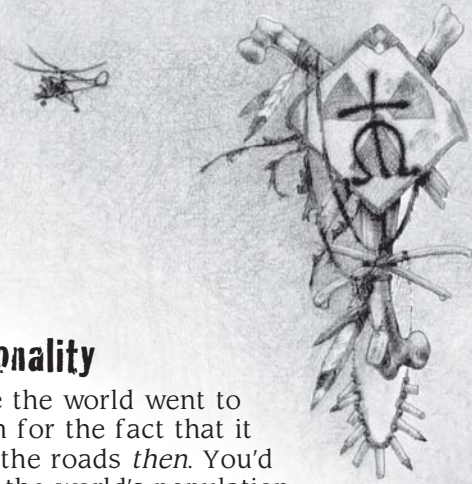
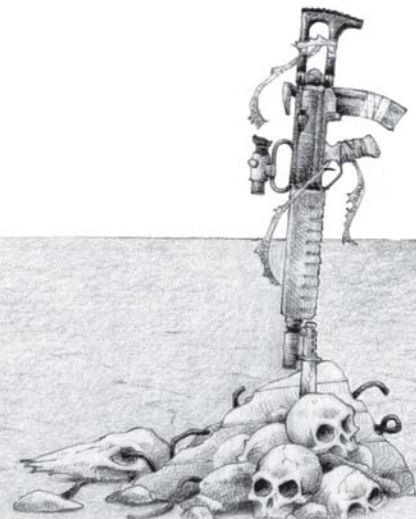
I'm out to make the roads safe for honest folks, and this time around I don't have to worry about "probable cause" or kissing up to some sorry, bleeding-heart judge.

Now I'm judge, jury, and executioner.

Quote:
"Your license expired
13 years ago.
BLAM!"



Posse: 61



Archetypes

Trucker

Traits & Aptitudes



Deftness d8
Shootin': pistol 3
Nimbleness d12
Climbin' 1
Drivin': tractor-trailer 5
Fightin': brawlin' 2
Sneak 1
Strength d8
Quickness d6
Vigor d10
Cognition d6
Search 2
Knowledge d6
Area knowledge 2
Mien d6
Persuasion 2
Smarts d10
Scrougin' 2
Tinkerin' 3
Spirit d6
Guts 2
Wind 16
Pace 12
Edges:
Belongin's 15: Tractor and trailer.
Veteran o' the Wasted West
(Make sure your Marshal draws for you.)
Hindrances:
Big mouth -3
Curious -3
Habit -1 (chews toothpicks)
Loyal (to rig crew) -3
Gear: Long-nosed tractor, 40-foot box trailer, SA officer's sidearm, 50 .50 pistol rounds, and a tool kit.



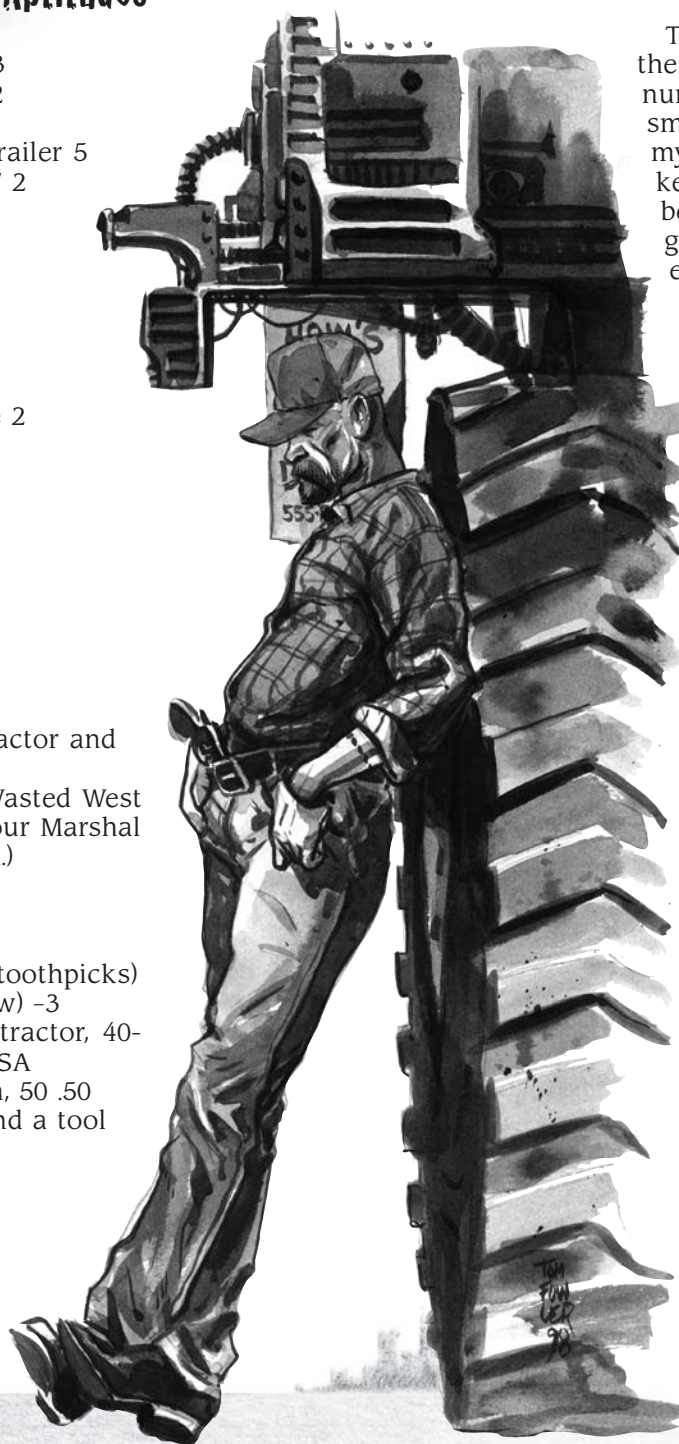
Personality

There's a lot of evil afoot in the world, and it seems like the number of good people left gets smaller every day. I've made it my job to see that these people keep in touch with each other, because the only way we're going to beat this thing is if everyone pulls together.

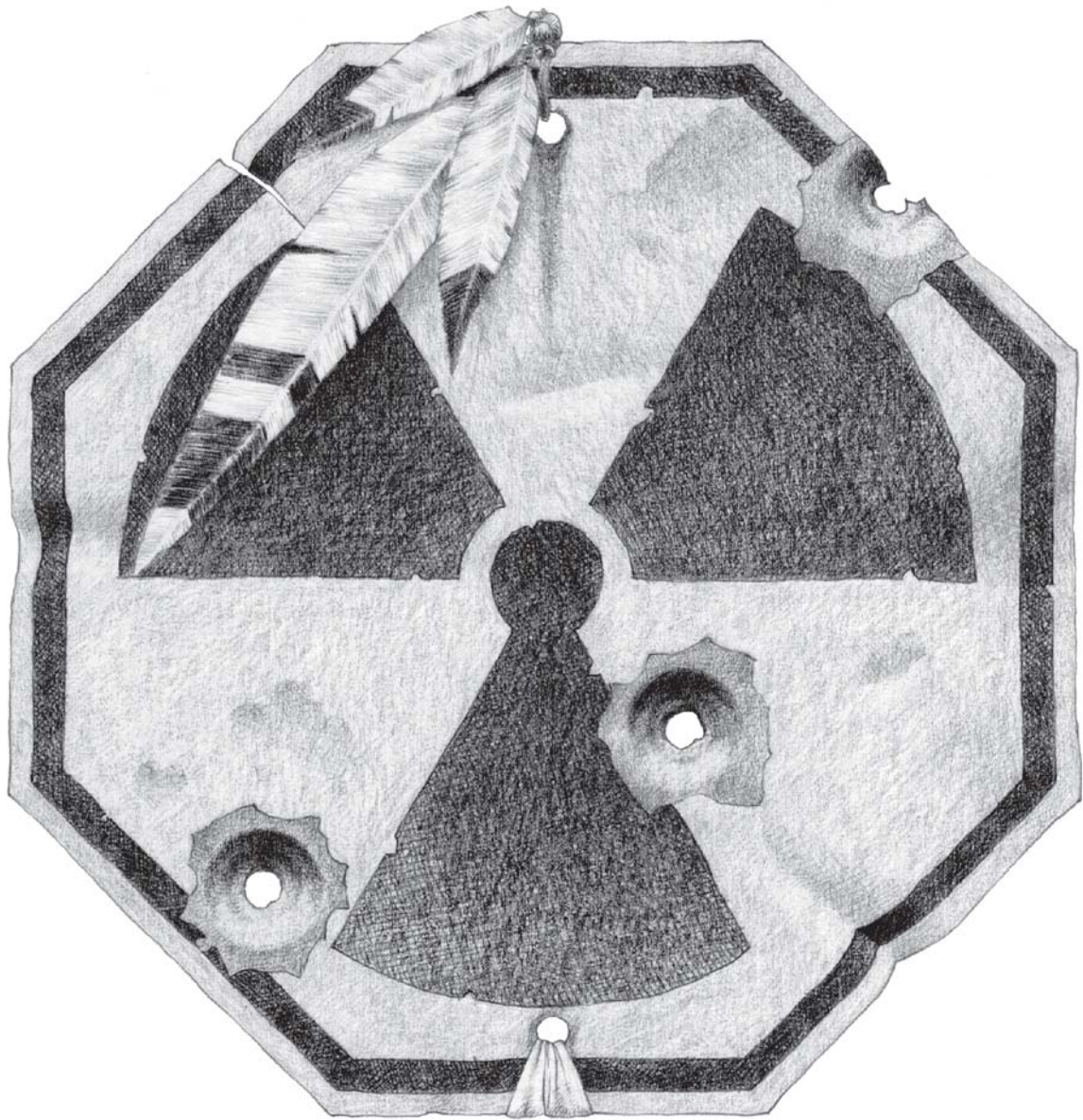
Driving an 18-wheeler isn't like it used to be. Instead of watching out for smokies and getting indigestion from eating in too many greasy spoons, I've got to keep my eyes peeled for gangers, and I'm often wondering where my next meal is coming from. At least I don't have to doctor my log book and worry about weigh stations any more.

One thing hasn't changed though. There are still too many miles to cover in too few hours—and just try to find a decent cup of coffee these days!

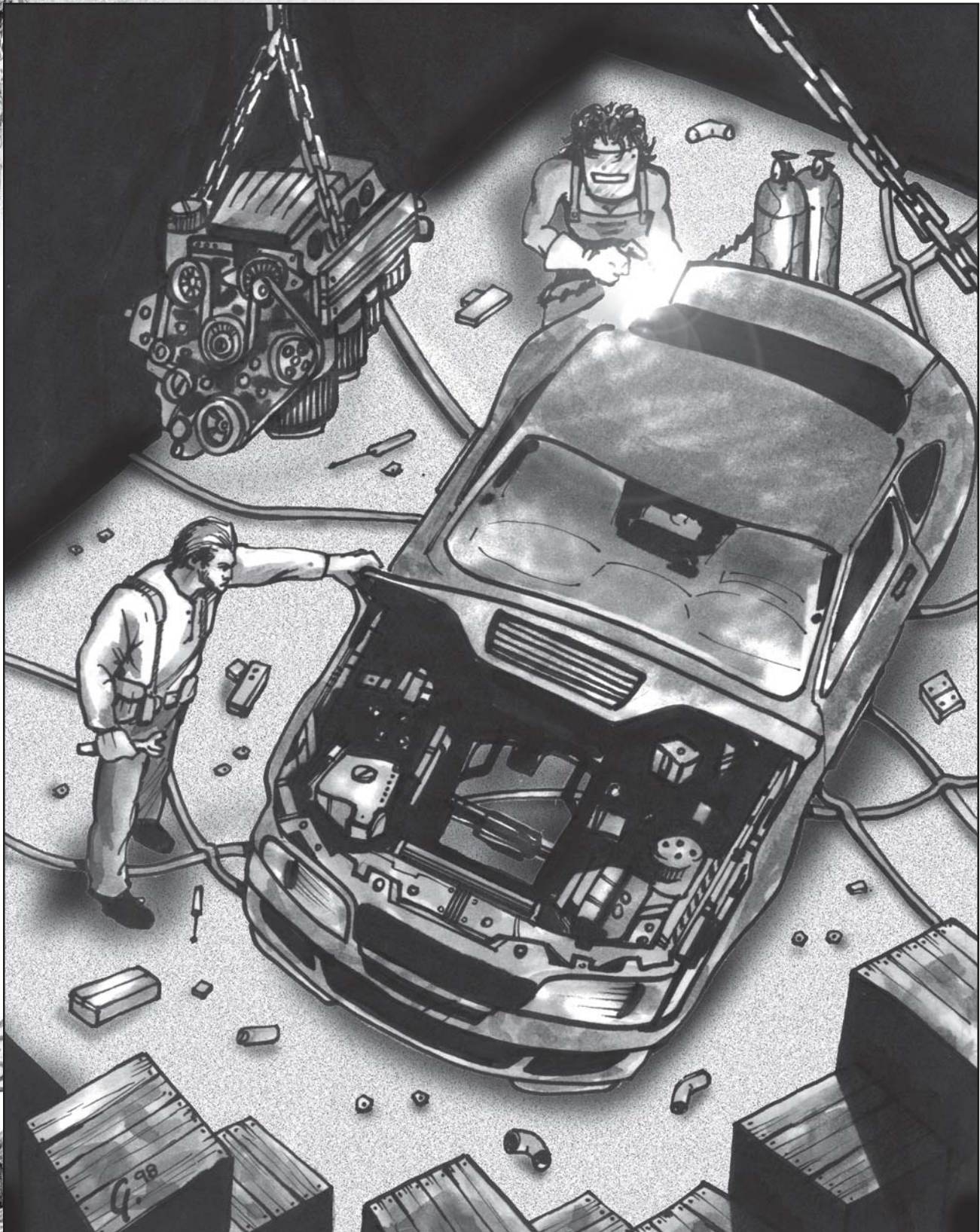
Quote: "Found the problem. There were zombie brains clogging up the air intake again."



No Man's Land



Fixin' Up Your Ride



No Man's Land: 64



Chapter Four:

Fixin' Up Your Ride



At the end of the Last War, there were a lot less people in the world. A lot less cars, too, but the human population declined much quicker than the four-wheeled variety. The end result was that, for a while at least, those who were left had their choice of rides. Anyone who cared to could whiz through the ruins in the latest-model sports car.

Of course these days, the latest-model sports car is 13 years old and very few filling stations have any gas. Between the dangers posed by the road gangs (and worse) roaming the highways, and the simple lack of spare parts, many more vehicles lie rusting on the side of the road than rushing down it.

Once outside of the safe confines of a walled settlement, the only traffic that's likely to be encountered are heavily-armed trade convoys and the road gangs that prey on them. If your brainer plans on heading out onto the open road, he better be part master mechanic and part Indy-car driver.

Of course, it doesn't matter how good your wasteland warrior is if he's puttering down the highway in an ancient VW bug that's only firing on two cylinders. Anyone who plans on traveling the interstates (and surviving) invests a

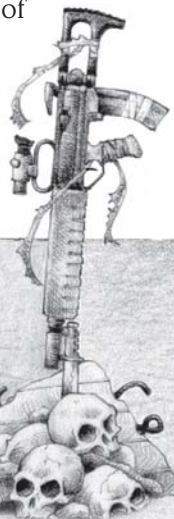
lot of time and sweat in his mount before he rolls his wheels.

After 13 years of continuous running and gunning along the highways of the Wasted West, many of the veteran drivers have honed their skills to a razor's edge and have put together vehicles that can outrun the wind. If your waster plans on competing, he needs more than just a car. He needs a custom-built ride.

Off the Lot

The first step in building your hero the ultimate road machine is to pick a stock model to customize. We've got a selection of models listed below. The stats for these vehicles represent the rigs as if they just rolled out of a dealer's showroom, and most vehicles still on the road in 2094 bear little resemblance to these factory-fresh cars. After 13 years of bad roads, vicious combat, and lousy maintenance, most vehicles are in significantly worse shape than before the big boom.

The exceptions to this, of course, are the vehicles of the dedicated road warriors. The sweat and affection lavished



Fixin' Up Your Ride



on these rigs would make any mate jealous, and nearly overcomes the decade of neglect most vehicles have suffered. The rides of the true gearheads have been nearly restored to their former glory.

Window Sticker

Before we enter the showroom, there are a few vehicle statistics (some old, some new) we need to go over. We'll skip a few of the stats (such as the number of passengers and wheels) that are pretty self-explanatory.

Cost

The cost listed is to buy a basic car of that type. Any modifications to the basic car must be bought separately, and these can often cost as much or more than the car itself. That's because most of the materials needed for these mods are hard to come by and often belong to people who don't want to give them up.

Engine

This is the size of the engine that comes in the standard model. Changing the size of the engine has a significant effect on performance.

Gas Tank

This is the size of the gas tank in gallons. Multiplying this by the vehicle's average miles per gallon (MPG) gives you how far you can get on single tank.

Suspension

This is the type of suspension the vehicle is equipped with. Unless your waster builds her car from the ground up (something these rules don't cover), any vehicle she gets her hands on is stuck with the suspension it came with. There are four types of suspensions: standard, racing, off-road, and hover.

Standard suspension is the garden-variety conventional suspension found on most vehicles. It's intended for use on paved roads and doesn't do so well off-road.

A vehicle with a standard suspension suffers a +1 TN modifier to all maneuvers performed off-road. In addition, any attempt to perform a maneuver that has a TN modifier of +4 or higher while off-road risks damaging the vehicle. When this occurs, roll 1d10 against the vehicle's speed in mph divided by 10. If the roll is higher, the vehicle is undamaged. Otherwise it takes 1d6 damage to the body per 10 mph of speed.

Racing suspensions are found on many sports cars. They tend to have less ground clearance than standard suspensions, but they're stiffened to handle hard cornering. Vehicles with racing suspensions tend to be more maneuverable, but they handle off-road travel even worse than standard suspensions.

When traveling off-road, a vehicle with a racing suspension suffers the same negative modifiers and chance for damage as a standard suspension, except that it must check for damage any time it performs a maneuver that has a TN modifier of +2 or greater.

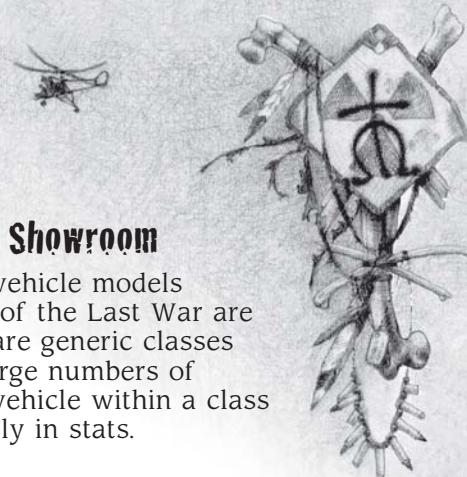
Off-Road suspensions are found on most four-wheel drive vehicles. They have high ground clearance and stiff springs to handle off-road terrain. A vehicle with an off-road suspension suffers no penalties for driving cross-country.

Hover vehicles, though in military service for almost two decades, were just making their way into civilian use when the Last War began. The most common of such vehicles were hoverbikes driven by high-powered gas-turbine engines.

Hover vehicles don't use the standard road TNs like other vehicles. All relatively flat surfaces have TNs of 3. Irregular surfaces like cratered fields or choppy water have TNs of 5.



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One drawback of hover vehicles is that since they don't actually stay in contact with the ground, strong winds can blow them off course. The Marshal may increase the TNS of all *drivin'* rolls by +2 or more in such conditions.

Acceleration

A vehicle's Acceleration rating is a measure of how much it can increase its speed in a single movement phase. A car with an Acceleration of 10 mph, for instance, can increase its speed by up to 10 mph per movement phase. Just to keep the bookkeeping simple, this is always measured in 5 mph increments.

Durability

This is the total damage a vehicle can take. The number after the slash represents the amount of damage in each Durability Step.

Armor

A vehicle's basic Armor rating reflects its general resistance to damage. Unless extra armor is added to specific areas, the general Armor rating is the same over the entire vehicle (not including the windows).

Handling

Remember that vehicle statistic listed in the main book called the Turn Number? Well, forget it. It sounded too much like Target Number (especially when abbreviated), so we decided to ditch it. In its place, we now have a new and improved stat called Handling.

Handling is a measure of how responsive a vehicle is to its controls and how quickly it recovers from high-speed maneuvering. Handling is a modifier to all *drivin'* rolls made for a vehicle.

Load Limit

This is a measure of how much extra junk your hero can slap on his rig and still have it move. Each piece of equipment has a Load Point (LP) rating. If their total exceeds the Load Limit, performance goes down—how much depends on how far you exceed the limit.

Mounting Locations

The mounting locations listed are the places where it's possible to mount weapons on the vehicle (yeah, we know you'd never even think of such a thing). The number following the location is the Load Point maximum for gear and weaponry that can be mounted there.

The Showroom

Several common vehicle models available at the end of the Last War are listed below. These are generic classes which encompass large numbers of vehicles—a specific vehicle within a class may vary dramatically in stats.

Economy Car

This is your standard econo-box. It's not particularly fast or sturdy, but it gets good mileage. As was mentioned in *The Wasted West*, these cars were some of the most common vehicles on the road before the world went sour, so any *scroungin'* roll made to find parts for these cars gets a +2 bonus.

Most road-gangers want nothing to do with these cars, and some of the tougher gangs (at least in their own minds) fire at them on general principal. If your hero drives one of these machines, he should be prepared for some abuse.

Economy Car

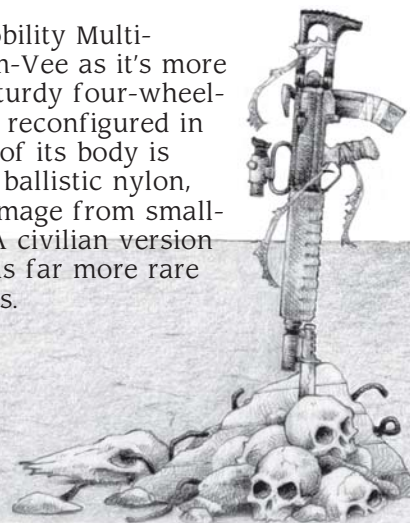
Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas Tank	MPG
\$2,000	4	V-4	10 gallons	40
Suspen.	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.
Standard	4	90	225	10 mph
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size Load	Limit
20/4	1	0	+2	12

Mounting Locations: Door (x 2) 2, hood 6, front fenders (x 2) 2, rear fenders (x 2) 2, rear 6, roof 6.

HMMWV

This is the standard military transport of both the US and CSA armies. It was developed jointly by the two countries in the late 20th century at a time when relations were much better than in 2081.

The HMMWV (High Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicle), or Hum-Vee as it's more commonly known, is a sturdy four-wheel-drive vehicle that can be reconfigured in a variety of ways. Much of its body is constructed of hardened ballistic nylon, making it resistant to damage from small-arms fire and shrapnel. A civilian version was also made, but it was far more rare than the military varieties.



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HMMVW



HMMVW

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas Tank	MPG
\$10,000	8	V-6	30 gallons	20
Suspen.	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.
Off-road	4	90	225	10 mph
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size Load	Limit
45/9	2	-1	+3	24

Mounting Locations: Hood 8, front fenders (x 2) 4, rear fenders (x 2) 4, rear 10, roof 12.

Hoverbike



Hoverbike

Hoverbikes have been in use by the military since the beginning of the 21st century, but they didn't become popular in the civilian sector until the 2050s. This was because the early bikes were incredible fuel guzzlers. This changed in 2049 when Smith & Robards inventors developed a high-efficiency gas-turbine engine that had sufficient power to both lift and propel small vehicles.

Most of the output of a hoverbike's engine drives two powerful lift fans. These blow air down into the vehicle's skirt and create a cushion of air that the bike floats on. The turbine's exhaust is vented out the rear of the bike to propel it forward. Some of this exhaust is also vented out small maneuvering thrusters which steer the bike and help keep it on course in high winds.

In emergencies, the turbine exhaust can be temporarily vented down into the skirt. This gives the bike enough lift to jump roughly 10 feet in the air, to clear small obstacles. See the emergency jump maneuver in Chapter Three for more information.

Hover-Bike

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas Tank	MPG
\$4,000	2	Turbine	12 gallons	50
Suspen.	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.
Hover	0	140	350	20 mph
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size Load	Limit
10/2	1	+3	+1	6

Mounting Locations: Handlebars 2, rear 2, sides (x 2) 4.

Jeep

This class of car includes a host of small four-wheel-drive vehicles popular before the war with young people and those with (real or imagined) independent natures. Most have removable tops and sides made of canvas or occasionally fiberglass. Although this provides little cover for the occupants, it does make it easy to mount a weapon with a 360° traverse in the rear passenger area.

Jeep



Fixin' Up Your Ride

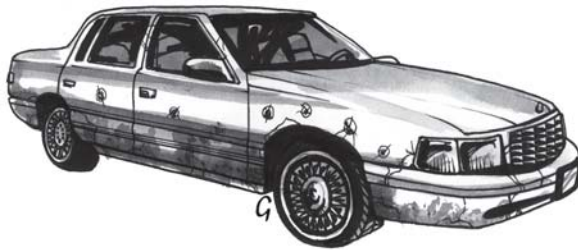
Jeep

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas Tank	MPG
\$4,000	4	V-6	25 gallons	30
Suspen.	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.
Off-road	4	90	225	10 mph
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size Load	Limit
30/6	1	0	+2	18

Mounting Locations: Hood 8, front fenders (x 2) 4, rear fenders (x 2) 2, rear 10.

Luxury Car

Even after the war, big luxury cars like Lincolns and Caddies are still status symbols. They are often the rides of choice for gang leaders and other important (in their own fevered little minds, at least) personages.



Luxury Car

Luxury Car

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas Tank	MPG
\$5,000	6	V-8	20 gallons	30
Suspen.	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.
Standard	4	120	300	10 mph
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size Load	Limit
40/8	1	0	+3	16

Mounting Locations: Hood 12, doors (x 2) 4, front fenders (x 2) 6, rear fenders (x 2) 6, rear 10, roof 10.

Motorcycle: Dirt Bike

The dirt bike is one of the more common vehicle types in use in the Wasted West. Dirt bikes get good gas mileage and can go nearly anywhere. That's an important consideration



Dirt Bike

because many roads are impassable, clogged with abandoned or destroyed vehicles.

The dirt bike's versatility makes it a common choice of ride for road-gang scouts.

Dirt Bike

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas Tank	MPG
\$1,000	2	250cc	3 gallons	80
Suspen.	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.
Off-road	2	100	250	10 mph
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size Load	Limit
10/2	1	+2	+1	6

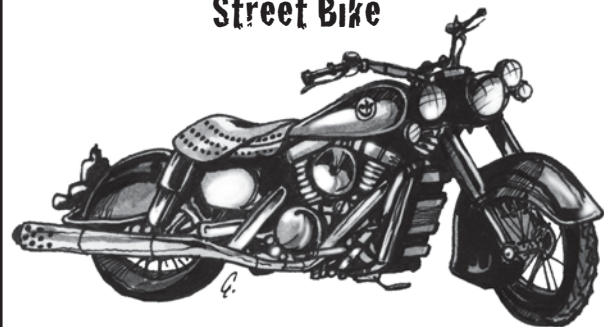
Mounting Locations: Handlebars 2, rear 2, sides (x 2) 4.

Motorcycle: Street Bike

Although not quite as versatile as dirt bikes, these high-speed motorcycles are more popular with most road gangers because of their sexier look.

A single motorcycle is not much of a threat, but they are rarely encountered individually. A pack of determined bikers can be awfully hard to shake.

Street Bike





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Dirt Bike

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas Tank	MPG
\$1,000	2	750cc	3 gallons	100
Suspen. Standard	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.
	2	120	300	15 mph
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size Load	Limit
10/2	1	+3	+1	6

Mounting Locations: Handlebars 2, rear 2, sides (x 2) 4.

Pickup Truck: Mid-sized

This class of vehicles includes most small- to medium-sized pickup trucks. They are not really built for off-road use and don't have much cargo capacity in the bed—just enough to ensure you get a phone call every time your friends move. The listed passenger capacity represents three people in the cab and eight in the bed of the truck—where they have little cover unless the bed is outfitted with a capper. The gas tank listing represents two actual tanks: a 20-gallon main tank and a 10-gallon reserve.

Mid-sized Pickup Truck

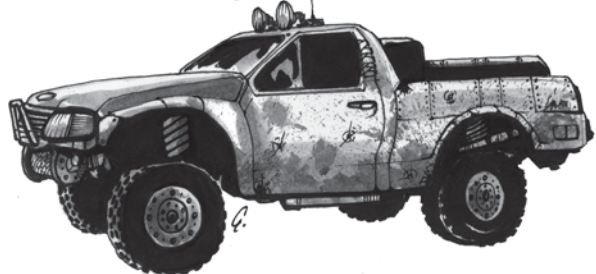
Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas Tank	MPG
\$5,000	3+8	V-6	20+10 gallons	30
Suspen. Standard	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.
	4	90	225	10 mph
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size Load	Limit
40/8	1	0	+3	20

Mounting Locations: Doors (x 2) 4, hood 10, front fenders (x 2) 4, rear fenders (x 2) 2, bed 12, roof 8.

Pickup Truck: Full-sized

This group includes large-bed, six-cylinder work trucks like the Ford F150 series. Most models produced just before Judgment Day came with shift-on-the-fly four-wheel drive, a rugged off-road suspension, and a hard plastic bedliner. As with the lighter truck above, the passenger listing indicates cab plus bed capacity, while the gas tank total actually represents two tanks: in this case a 30-gallon main tank and a 20-gallon reserve.

Full-size Pickup



Full-sized Pickup Truck

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas Tank	MPG
\$7,000	3+10	V-6	30+20 gallons	30
Suspen. Off-road	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.
	4	90	225	10 mph
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size Load	Limit
45/9	1	-1	+3	24

Mounting Locations: Doors (x 2) 4, hood 10, front fenders (x 2) 4, rear fenders (x 2) 2, bed 16, roof 8.

Sedan

This broad class includes most mid-sized passenger cars. Built for safety and reliability, many of these former family vehicles have survived the 13 years since the Last War and now roam the interstates of the Wasted West (albeit in a highly modified condition).

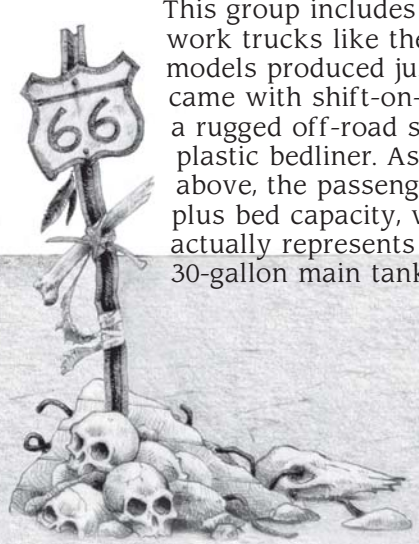
Sedan

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas Tank	MPG
\$3,000	5	V-4	12 gallons	35
Suspen. Standard	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.
	4	90	225	10 mph
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size Load	Limit
30/6	1	0	+2	16

Mounting Locations: Doors (x 2) 4, hood 10, front fenders (x 2) 4, rear fenders (x 2) 4, rear 10, roof 8.

Sports Car: Large (Muscle)

This class of cars includes low-budget sports cars, along with versions of sedans dressed up



Fixin' Up Your Ride

and sold as sports cars because they have a few extra horses under the hood.

Muscle Car

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas Tank	MPG
\$3,000	4	V-6	12 gallons	30
Suspen.	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.
Racing	4	120	300	15 mph
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size Load	Limit
30/6	1	+2	+2	15

Mounting Locations: Doors (x 2) 4, hood 8, front fenders (x 2) 4, rear fenders (x 2) 4, rear 8, roof 8.

Muscle Car



Sports Car: Small

This category covers all real sports cars. They've got plenty of horsepower, corner like they're on rails, and crumple up really well when they smack into concrete abutments at 150 mph. The listed V-8 engine includes a turbocharger.

Sports Car

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas Tank	MPG
\$5,000	2	V-8	20 gallons	25
Suspen.	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.
Racing	4	180	450	20 mph
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size Load	Limit
25/5	1	+3	+2	12

Mounting Locations: Doors (x 2) 4, hood 8, front fenders (x 2) 4, rear fenders (x 2) 2, rear 8, roof 6.



Sports Car

Sport-Utility Vehicle

Vehicles in this class all have four-wheel drive and off-road suspensions, although very few of them actually traveled off-road prior to the Last War—despite the commercials that always placed them at the tops of snowy mountains or the edges of great desert canyons, far more were sold to yuppies and affluent businessmen than to true outdoorsmen. Unlike jeeps, sport-utility vehicles have hard sides and tops.

Sports Utility Vehicle

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas Tank	MPG
\$5,000	5	V-6	30 gallons	30
Suspen.	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.
Off-road	4	90	225	10 mph
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size Load	Limit
35/7	1	0	+3	20

Mounting Locations: Hood 10, doors (x 2) 4, front fenders (x 2) 4, rear fenders (x 2) 4, rear 10, roof 12.



Sport-Utility Vehicle



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Station Wagon

This class includes all station wagons and mini-vans. Despite their un-chic reputation as family vehicles, they are actually popular among road-gangers because they get good gas mileage and have a decent amount of cargo capacity.

Station Wagon

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas Tank	MPG
\$3,500	5	V-4	20 gallons	35
Suspen.	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.
Standard	4	90	225	10 mph
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size Load	Limit
35/7	1	0	+3	18

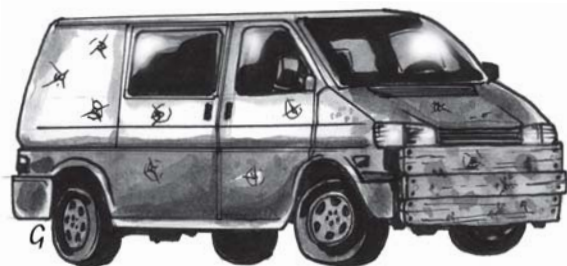
Mounting Locations: Hood 10, doors (x 2) 4, front fenders (x 2) 4, rear fenders (x 2) 4, rear 10, roof 10.

Van

Full-sized vans are a favorite mount of many Law Dogs. They often operate alone for extended periods, and vans allow them to haul along all the supplies they need. It also gives them a safe place to sleep and take shelter when the black rain comes.

Van

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas Tank	MPG
\$5,000	8	V-6	20 gallons	25
Suspen.	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.
Standard	4	90	225	10 mph
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size Load	Limit
45/9	1	-2	+3	24



Van

Mounting Locations: Hood 4, doors (x 2) 4, front fenders (x 2) 2, rear fenders (x 2) 8, rear 10, roof 12.

The Big Stuff

These are the really big vehicles, rigs generally too expensive for heroes to start the game with. For the most part, they run on diesel, not gasoline.

Bus

This is your typical highway-going tour bus. A stock model comes with 30 passenger seats and a small restroom, but many of the buses on the roads of the Wasted West have highly-modified interiors with kitchens, sleeping quarters, and, of course, guns.

Bus

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas Tank	MPG
\$15,000	30	V-6	50 gallons	20
Suspen.	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.
Standard	8	90	225	5 mph
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size Load	Limit
80/16	2	-3	+5	40

Mounting Locations: Front 12, rear 12, roof 24, left side (x 5) 8, right side (x 5) 8.



Bus

Cab-Over Tractor

Cab-over tractors are built with the cab over the engine (hence the name). They have flat fronts and are usually fairly boxy looking. Their design gives them a shorter wheel base than long-nosed tractors, allowing them to maneuver in tighter spaces. Getting at the engine for

Fixin' Up Your Ride

repairs can be a pain though. The entire cab must be unlatched and tilted forward to open the engine compartment.

Cab-Over Tractor

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas Tank	MPG
\$15,000	3	V-6	50 gallons	20
Suspen.	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.
Standard	10	90	225	5/10 mph
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size Load	Limit
60/12	2	-1	+4	80

Mounting Locations: Left fender 8, right fender 8, rear 16 (may not pull trailer if weapons are mounted here), roof 12.



Cab-Over Tractor

Long-Nosed Tractor

Long-nosed tractors are built with their engines forward of the cab. This can make repairs easier, but it has the disadvantage of a slightly longer wheel base which makes it harder to maneuver in tight places.

Long-Nosed Tractor

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas Tank	MPG
\$12,000	3	V-6	50 gallons	20
Suspen.	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.
Standard	10	90	225	5/10 mph
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size Load	Limit
60/12	2	-1	+4	80

Mounting Locations: Left fender 8, right fender 8, hood 12, rear 16 (may not pull trailer if weapons are mounted here), roof 12.

Trailers

What's a tractor without a trailer? One big mother of a cab, that's for sure, but without the trailer, the tractor's missing out on one of the key reasons folks drive these gas-guzzling monstrosities: the means to haul literally tons of cargo at once.

Trailers by themselves have no performance characteristics of their own. After all, without the tractor that's pulling them around, they're basically just large boxes on wheels.

The load points of the trailer are added to any load points the tractor may have, and this total is used to determine the tractor's load and performance, just like normal.

When hauling cargo, assume that each 25% of the trailer filled adds 60 Load Points to the trailer's weight. That's for average materials—the Marshal may adjust this up or down if the cargo is particularly heavy or light. Liquids, for instance, are incredibly heavy compared to most kinds of cargo. Also, the liquids fill the area entirely, leaving no extra air around like you get with regular cargo in a box trailer.

Box Trailer

This is your typical 40-foot cargo trailer. It can hold roughly 3,000 cubic feet of cargo. The passenger listing represents 40 passengers inside the trailer, with up to another 20 up on the roof.

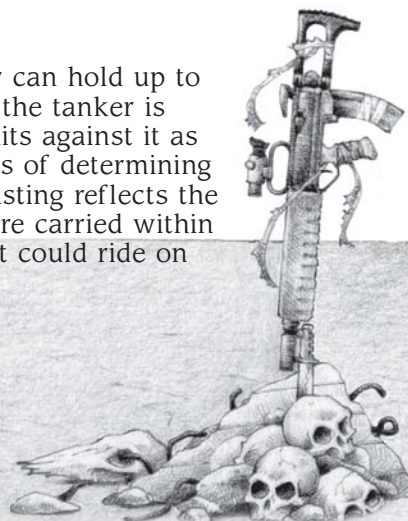
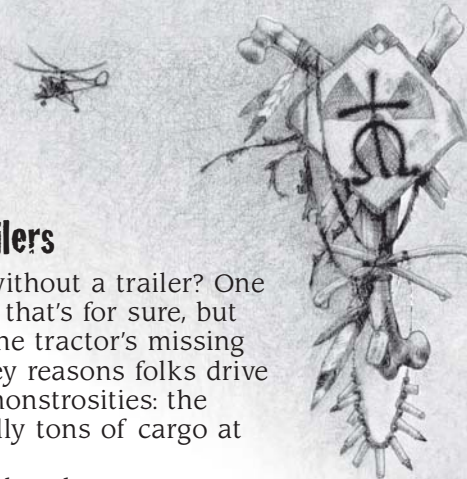
Box Trailer

Cost	Passengers	Suspension	Wheels
\$3,000	40+20	Standard	8
Durability	Armor	Size	
80/16	1	+6	

Mounting Locations: Left side (x 6) 8, right side (x 6) 8, rear 12, roof 40.

Tanker

A typical tanker trailer can hold up to 3,200 gallons of liquid. If the tanker is hauling fuel, treat body hits against it as gas tank hits for purposes of determining criticals. The passenger listing reflects the fact that no passengers are carried within the trailer, but up to eight could ride on top.



Fixin' Up Your Ride



Tanker Trailer

Box Trailer

Cost	Passengers	Suspension	Wheels
\$10,000	0+8	Standard	8
Durability	Armor	Size	
80/16	2	+4	

Mounting Locations: Left side (x 2) 6, right side (x 2) 6, rear 12, roof 24.

Up On Blocks

Once you've picked out a vehicle for your waster, it's time to crack open the toolbox and get to work. This next section gives you everything you need to customize your hero's rig. The steps outlined below don't have to be done in the listed order—in fact, as you work out the details you'll probably jump back and forth between sections to squeak out the performance you want.

One thing to keep in mind at all times while building your hero's dream car is that the Marshal has the final say on the prices and availability of all equipment.

Installation

Outside of the custom chop shops in Junkyard, there are very few service stations open for business in the Wasted West. This means that any modifications your road warrior wants made to his car are going to have to be done by himself or one of his buddies.

Although a few items, like engines, require some discussion about installation, most items can use a standard installation procedure. These items have the installation

information listed just below their headers. The basic information listed is cost, Load Points, installation TN, time, and raise.

Cost is self-explanatory.

Load Points is how many LPs the item adds to the vehicle's load. Total load affects the rig's performance, and the load for individual items can limit the placement of equipment.

Installation TN is the base Target Number for the *tinkerin'* roll needed to install the item. A failed roll means the mechanic has to start over from scratch. Going bust may have a special effect detailed in the item's description. If not, it's up to the Marshal to decide the results.

Time is the base amount of time an installation attempt requires.

Raise is the amount by which the base time is reduced for each raise achieved on the *tinkerin'* roll. No matter how many raises are rolled, the installation time can never be reduced to less than a third of the base time.

Step 1: The Engine

Each of the vehicle types has an engine listed for it. For our purposes, there are three engine sizes for each vehicle type: small, medium, and large (though for flavor's sale we've given them cooler designations).

Engines

Engine	Cost
Motorcycles:	
250cc (small)	\$100
750cc (medium)	\$500
1250cc (large)	\$1,000
Cars, pickups & vans:	
V-4 (small)	\$300
V-6 (medium)	\$1,000
V-8 (large)	\$3,000
Oversized vehicles:	
V-4 Diesel (small)	\$500
V-6 Diesel (medium)	\$1,500
V-8 Diesel (large)	\$5,000

Swapping Engines

The costs listed on the Engines Table are to purchase a engines outright. If you're designing a car for a new character, you don't have to pay the full price for an upgrade—you can subtract the cost of the old engine. For example, upgrading a newly created car from a V-6 to a V-8 adds only (\$3,000-\$1,000=) \$2000 to its cost.

Fixin' Up Your Ride

If you're upgrading an existing character's ride, any refunds are up to the Marshal. Of course, if you're stripping the new engine out of the car of the dead brainer who tried to run you off the road, it's free. Regardless of how the engine was obtained, it takes about eight hours of work and a *tinkerin'* roll to install it. The TN for the roll depends on the size difference between the new engine and the original. Cramming a V-8 into an econo-box can be done, but it's going to be a tight fit.

A successful roll gets the engine installed. Each raise shaves an hour off the installation time. A failed roll means something went wrong and it's necessary to start over from scratch. If the roll is failed by five points or more, it means your hero has seriously misjudged things. The engine just won't work with this particular vehicle—ever. Going bust means that not only won't the new engine work with this car, your brainer managed to damage it while installing it.

Engine Installation

Size Difference	TN
Same size	7
1 step larger or smaller	9
2 steps larger or smaller	11

Giddyup!

Changing the size of a vehicle's engine affects its performance. Each level the engine size is changed up or down changes the car's top speed by 20 mph, its Acceleration Rating by 5 mph, and reduces its MPG by 10%. That means if your hero is able to shoehorn a V-8 into his HI Tracer econo-box, it now has a top speed of 130 mph, an Acceleration rating of 20, and gets 32 MPG.

Engine Accessories

There are other ways to boost a vehicle's performance besides cramming a huge engine in it—it can pay to accessorize. These items have cumulative effects. It is possible to bolt on two or even all three of them and gain the advantages of each.

Nitrous Oxide

Cost: \$600 (includes one canister of gas)

Load Points: 1

Installation:

TN: 7

Time: 1 hour

Raise: 10 minutes

This highly flammable gas comes in small canisters and can provide an amazing, although temporary, boost to a car's performance.

It takes an action to activate or deactivate the gas. Once it's turned on, the vehicle's Acceleration rating increases by 10 mph and its top speed increases by 20 mph. This effect lasts for as long as the nitrous is left on. A standard canister contains enough of the gas for six rounds of boosted performance.

Refill canisters cost \$200.

Supercharger

Cost: \$250

Load Points: 0

Installation:

TN: 7

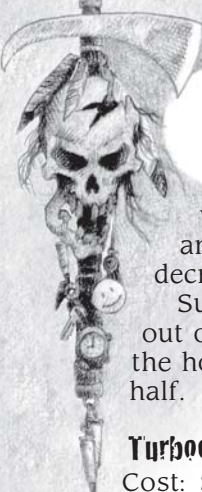
Time: 4 hours

Raise: 20 minutes

A supercharger increases an engine's performance by forcing additional air into the pistons. This provides more oxygen for combustion and increases the engine's power. Superchargers are driven by the vehicle's crankshaft and tend to be more effective at lower RPMs. A supercharger increases a



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vehicle's Acceleration rating by 5 mph and its top speed by 20 mph. It also decreases a vehicle's MPG by 10%.

Superchargers are big, and often stick right out of the car's hood. Cut the load limit for the hood of any supercharger-equipped rig in half.

Turbocharger

Cost: \$300

Load Points: 1

Installation:

TN: 7

Time: 8 hours

Raise: 30 minutes

A turbocharger performs the same general function as a supercharger, but instead of being driven by the crankshaft, it's driven by a small turbine in the vehicle's exhaust system. Because of this, turbochargers tend to lag slightly and don't provide much benefit until the engine RPMs have reached a certain level.

Turbochargers increase a vehicle's Acceleration rating by 5 mph, but only at speeds greater than 40 mph. A turbocharger also increases a vehicle's top speed by 20 mph and decreases its MPG by 10%.

Step 2: Armor

Another popular addition to vehicles in the Wasted West is armor—and lots of it! Nothing is more demoralizing to the enemy than emptying an entire magazine into your waster's car only to see that it just chipped off a little rust.

Body Armor

Cost: \$50 x Armor level x Size per side

Load Points: 2 LP x Armor level x Size per side

Installation:

TN: 5

Time: 1 hour/side

Raise: 10 minutes

Armor is cheap to buy and fairly easy to find; nearly any piece of scrap metal can be turned into armor. Unfortunately, it's also extremely heavy. Body armor only protects the vehicle's body and the vital components inside it. It does not cover the windows or the wheels.

Armor is bought individually for the front, rear, left side, right side, roof, and undercarriage. Each level of Armor rating bought adds to the vehicle's basic Armor. It's not necessary to buy levels evenly all around the car, but opposite sides should be fairly balanced—each point of difference in Armor rating between opposite sides of a car decreases its Handling by -1.

When a shot hits a vehicle, use the Armor rating of the side from which the shot came to reduce the damage. Roof armor only applies against attacks striking the vehicle's roof and against collision damage from rolls. Undercarriage armor protects against mine damage and damage caused by driving off-road.

Adding armor to a vehicle is a fairly straightforward process of anchoring the metal to major structural members of the car's frame. Make a *tinkerin'* roll for each side to which armor is attached. Going bust during installation means the armor was attached to something it shouldn't have been, weakening the car's frame. Reduce its Durability by 5.

Chicken Wire

Cost: \$15

Load Points: 1

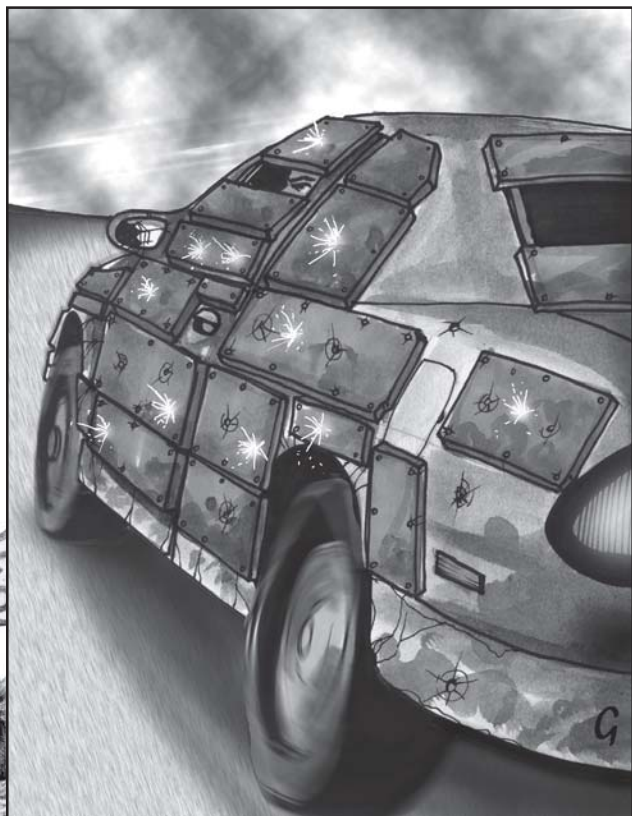
Installation:

TN: 5

Time: 1 hour

Raise: 10 minutes

This is the poor man's window panel. Many cars on the road these days have long ago had their windows shot out. Although this keeps the



Fixin' Up Your Ride

car cool on hot, sunny days, it doesn't do much to keep foreign debris like rocks, thrown cinderblocks, and grenades out of the car.

Many road gangers have taken to covering their open windows with a triple layer of chicken wire. It can't stop a bullet, but it does keep other undesirable objects out.

Gas Tank Armor

Cost: \$10/Armor level

Load Points: 1 LP/Armor level

Installation:

TN: 5

Time: 2 hours

Raise: 20 minutes

Given the gas tank's capacity for destruction, putting an armored box around it is not a bad idea. This armor adds to a vehicle's regular Armor value against shots which hit the tank. In addition, if the gas tank explodes, the Armor reduces the damage to the vehicle.

Window Panels

Cost: Basic \$30/Armor level x Size;

Hinged \$50/Armor level x Size

Load Points: 2 LP x Armor level x Size

Installation:

TN: 5 (Basic), 7 (Hinged)

Time: 2 hours

Raise: 15 minutes

Armoring the windows increases the passenger's safety at the expense of visibility. If the windows are armored, the occupants can only look out through small slits in the vehicle's armor. Firing at a passenger through one of these slits requires a called shot at -8. Unfortunately, the narrow field of view offered by the slits imposes a -2 on all *drivin'* and *shootin'* rolls from within and a -4 on all *Cognition* rolls to notice things outside the vehicle (like ambushes).

A window panel's Armor rating is applied against any shots that hit a passenger in a location normally visible through a window. Since the panel is protecting against a shot that would normally be going through an open window, it protects with its Armor rating only. Don't add the basic Armor of the vehicle to it.

Some brainer came up with the bright idea of hinging his window panels so they could be folded down when not needed. Hinged panels cost a little more in materials than normal ones, but they can be a real lifesaver on hot days.

The cost and weight listed are for armoring all of the windows on a vehicle.

Wheel Covers

Cost: \$10/Armor level per wheel

Load Points: 1 LP x Armor level per wheel

Installation:

TN: 5

Time: 1 hour

Raise: 10 minutes

One of a vehicle's most vulnerable points is its wheels. It's possible to protect them with armor, but it takes a little more work than just slapping a sheet of metal over them—otherwise your brainer's going to need a blowtorch every time he has to change a tire. In addition, any armor over the front wheels has to provide enough space to allow them to pivot and steer the car. What this boils down to is that any armor put over the wheels must be custom-fitted to the car.

Wheel covers have no effect on shots against the tire from the front or back. If the shot comes from the side, roll 1d6. On a 5 or 6, the shot actually hits the bare tire. Any other result hits the cover. Apply the cover's Armor rating against the damage before resolving it like a normal wheel hit.

Step 3: Buy Tires

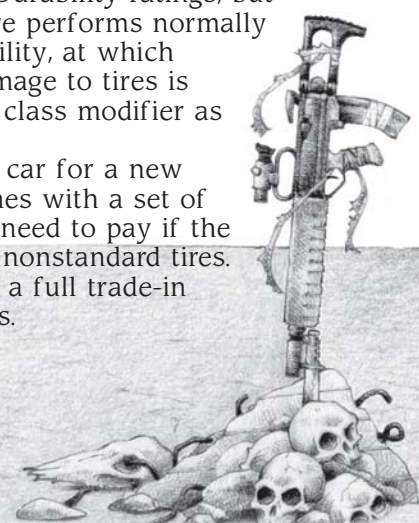
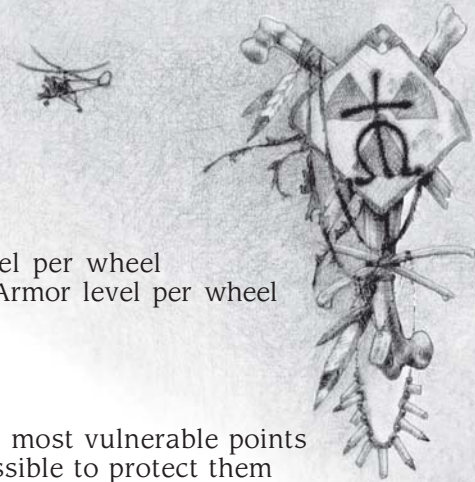
A vehicle can't go far without tires.

The tires of the 21st century are a bit more durable than those of the 20th. Run-while-flat, self-sealing tires made of extremely rugged materials are the norm even on the cheapest of civilian vehicles.

A vehicle can mount any sort of tire, but all of the tires on a rig must be of the same type (except for tractor-trailer rigs, which can have separate types on the tractor and the trailer). Any mismatched tire not only inflicts the vehicle with the full negative modifier for its type, but it also reduces the vehicle's Handling by -1 without conferring any of the tire type's benefit (except perhaps a higher Durability).

Tires have their own Durability ratings, but no Durability Steps. A tire performs normally until reduced to 0 Durability, at which point it is destroyed. Damage to tires is divided by the weapon's class modifier as usual.

If you are designing a car for a new character, assume it comes with a set of standard tires. You only need to pay if the vehicle is equipped with nonstandard tires. As with engines, you get a full trade-in price for the original tires.





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Tires

Type	Cost	Dur.	Effects
Standard:			
Normal vehicles	\$50	3	None
Oversized rigs	\$100	8	
Solid	\$300	6	-2 Handling
Racing Slicks	\$150	4	+2 Handling (-2 in bad weather or off-road)

Step 4: Firepower

Okay, your waster's car can take abuse. Now it's time to dish some out.

Keep one thing in mind when considering how and where to add firepower to your brainer's vehicle: the car is not being built from the ground up as a combat vehicle. The weapons are being retrofitted to an existing (in most cases) *civilian* vehicle. These vehicles have been engineered to make best possible use of all available interior space. It's possible to make room by ripping out unnecessary components and intruding into the passenger and cargo space, but by and large most weapons are going to be strapped to the outside of the vehicle.

You might come up with some new and unusual ways of mounting a particular weapon on a car. If your Marshal clears it, have fun!

Where to Mount Those Weapons?

Each of the stock vehicle descriptions lists the places where it's possible to mount weapons on the car or truck. We'll take a look at exactly what these locations mean below, but first here's an overview of the types of mounts available and the potential firing arcs these locations cover.

Mount Types

There are four types of weapons mounts: articulated mounts, fixed mounts, pintle mounts, and ring mounts. Each has its own strengths and weaknesses, the details of which (and the costs of installing them) are covered in detail here. For now, just remember that fixed mounts lock the weapon into a single direction of fire, articulated mounts let them move a little bit, generally by remote control, and pintle and ring mounts give the weapons the most mobility, whether controlled in person or by

remote. These differences in mobility affect the fire arcs of weapons, based on where they are placed on the rig.

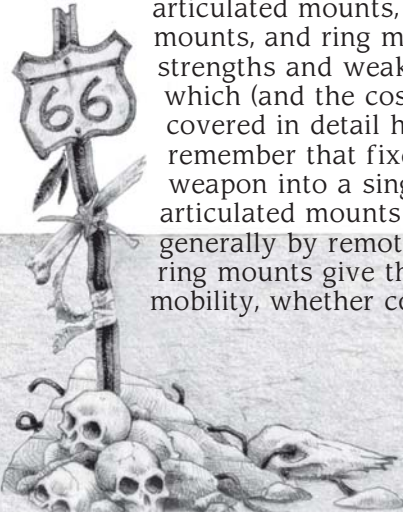
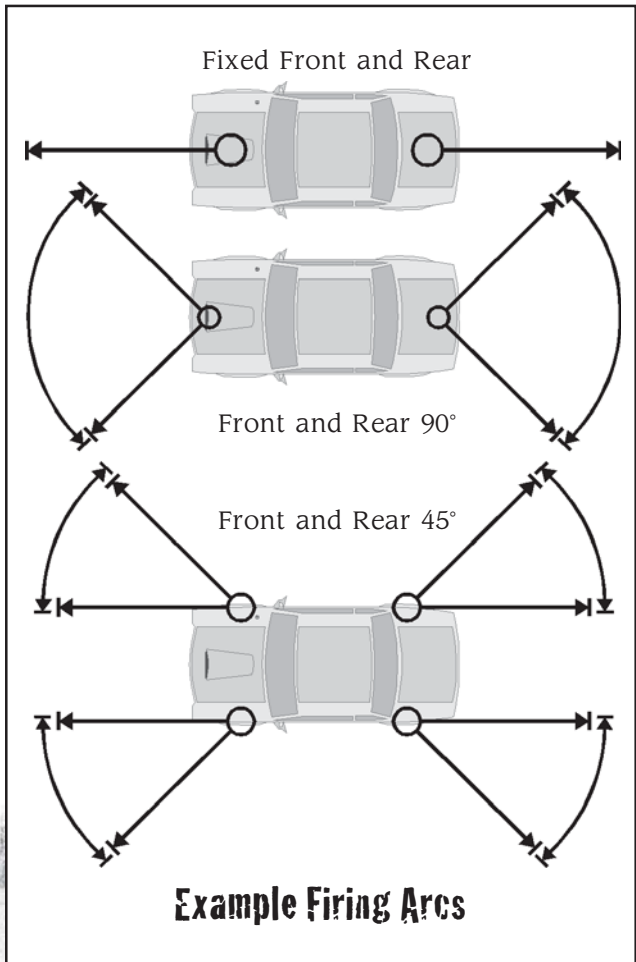
Firing Arcs

Each of the mounting location descriptions lists the possible firing arcs for the mounts permitted at the location. Let's run through those quickly:

Fixed Front or Rear positions fix a weapon in place, where it may only engage targets directly in front of (or behind) the vehicle.

Front or Rear 90° positions let the weapon cover a 90° arc at the front or rear of the vehicle. It may engage targets up to 45° to either side of the vehicle's centerline.

Front or Rear 45° positions are generally along the fenders. They allow the weapon to engage targets within a 45° arc of the vehicle's centerline, outward from the side on which the weapon is mounted.



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Left, Right, Front, or Rear 180° positions let the weapon cover a 180° arc extending out from the face of the vehicle on which the weapon is mounted.

360° positions let the weapon cover targets on any side of the vehicle.

Mount Locations

Hood

Articulated: Front 90°

Fixed: Fixed Front

Pintle: Front 90°

Weapons here are mounted on top of the car's hood. If the car has a supercharger, halve the number of LPs that can be mounted at this position. Pintle-mounted weapons can only be placed on the hood if the vehicle's windshield has been removed, allowing a front-seat passenger to lean forward and operate the weapon. Removal of the windshield also allows hood-mounted weapons to be reloaded by a front-seat passenger.

Front Fenders

Articulated: Front 45°, Rear 45°

Fixed: Fixed Front, Fixed Rear

Weapons mounted here are attached along the outside of the car in the space between the front doors and the bumper.

Doors

Articulated: Front 45°, Rear 45°

Fixed: Fixed Front, Fixed Rear

Pintle: Left 180°, Right 180°

Weapons mounted here can be reloaded through an open window.

Roof

Articulated: Front 90°, Rear 90°

Fixed: Fixed Front, Fixed Rear

Pintle: Front 180°, Left 180°, Right 180°, Rear 180°

Ring: 360°

Most vehicles can only mount a single ring mount on the roof. Long vehicles like vans and station wagons can actually carry two.

Side

Articulated: Front 45°, Rear 45°

Fixed: Fixed Front, Fixed Rear

Pintle: Left or Right 180°

This location covers the long sides of big rigs like buses and trailers. Each location represents roughly six feet of space along the vehicle side.

Rear Fenders

Articulated: Front 45°, Rear 45°

Fixed: Fixed Rear

Pintle: Left 180°, Right 180 (station wagons, pickups, and vans only)

Pintle-mounted weapons at these locations can be fired by passengers in the bed or rear cargo area of pickups, vans, and station wagons.

Rear

Articulated: Rear 90°

Fixed: Fixed Rear

Pintle: Rear 180°

This area includes the trunk and back seats of most vehicles. Pintle-mounted weapons can only be used in this location if the rear window has been removed.

Bed

Articulated: Rear 90°

Fixed: Fixed Rear

Pintle: 360°

Only trucks with open beds may mount weapons in this location. Weapons mounted low in the bed can be easily concealed by leaving the tailgate up. A fire control may be added at the usual cost to drop the tailgate.

Mounts and Controls

There are four basic weapon mounts available.

Articulated Mount

Cost: \$50/LP

Load Points: 2/weapon LP

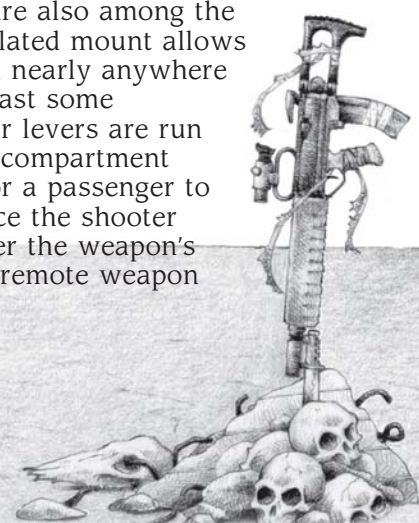
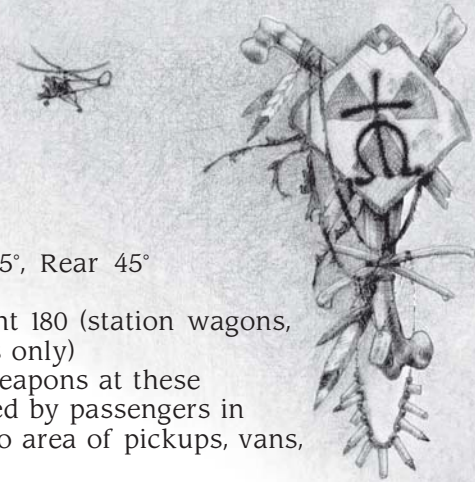
Installation:

TN: 9

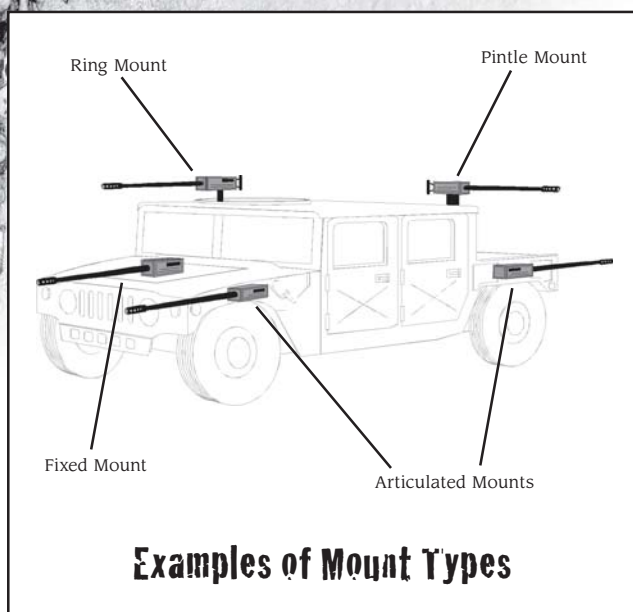
Time: 4 hours

Raise: 20 minutes

These mounts are normally for weapons mounted out of reach of the person firing them. They are more complicated than most of the other mount types, but are also among the most versatile. An articulated mount allows a weapon to be attached nearly anywhere on the vehicle with at least some traverse. Control wires or levers are run back into the passenger compartment which allow the driver or a passenger to operate the weapon. Since the shooter isn't actually looking over the weapon's sights, he suffers the -4 remote weapon penalty.



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Extra Fire Controls

Cost: \$30

Load Points: 1

Installation:

TN: 5

Time: 1 hour

Raise: 10 minutes

It's possible to hook up multiple sets of controls for a mount to allow more than one person to control the weapon. It's also possible to link multiple weapons to a single control to allow them to be aimed and fired together. Each linked weapon needs a set of extra fire controls.

The Load Points for the extra controls do not count against the mounting area's Load Limit.

Fixed Mount

Cost: \$5/LP

Load Points: 1/weapon LP

Installation:

TN: 5

Time: 1 hour

Raise: 10 minutes

Fixed mounts are the simplest type out there. The weapon is bolted onto the rig's frame, and a simple trigger mechanism is run to the gunner's seat.

These mounts lock the weapon in a single position. The weapon can only fire straight out in whatever direction it's pointed and can only be aimed by turning the vehicle. Dropped weapons always have fixed mounts.

Pintle Mount

Cost: \$10/LP

Load Points: 1/weapon LP + 2

Installation:

TN: 5

Time: 30 minutes

Raise: 5 minutes

Pintle mounts are also fairly straightforward. The basic mount is simply a post the weapon can be mounted on, with some additional reinforcement to the vehicle's frame in the area around the post to ensure it can handle the recoil. The advantage of these mounts is that the weapon can rotate and cover a larger arc of fire.

Pintle-mounted weapons are normally operated by a gunner, but it's possible to add a remote trigger system to the weapon for \$20. When no gunner is available, the weapon can be locked facing forward or rear. It can then be fired by the driver just like a fixed mount.

Ring Mount

Cost: \$25/weapon LP

Load Points: 2/weapon LP

Installation:

TN: 5

Time: 1 hour

Raise: 10 minutes

This roof-only mount combines a pintle mount with a rotating ring around the gunner. This allows the gunner to swing the weapon through a full 360 degrees. Just like the pintle-mount, ring mounts can be locked down and used with remote triggers as a fixed mount.

Servo Controls

Cost: \$100/weapon LP

Load Points: 1/weapon LP

Installation:

TN: 7

Time: 2 hours

Raise: 20 minutes

The basic weapon controls used for most remote weapons are mechanical wire-and-pulley systems with electric firing switches. These work fine for the limited firing arcs of articulated mounts, but not for pintle or ring mounts.

A road warrior sometimes ends up with more guns on his car than he has friends to fire them. Servo controls give him a way around this. These controls can be hooked to pintle or ring-mounted weapons, giving the driver full control over them. This means instead of locking them

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down and using them as fixed weapons when a gunner is unavailable, they can be rotated through their full firing arc.

There are a few disadvantages to these controls. Because it's necessary to attach heavy-duty electrical servos to the weapon mount, the LPs from these controls count against the mounting area's Load Limit. If the vehicle's electrical system fails, the controls stop working. And since the shooter isn't actually looking over the weapon's sights, he suffers the -4 remote weapon penalty.

The Weapons

Nearly any weapon can be mounted on a vehicle, from pistols to rocket launchers. The most common weapons by far are machine-guns and light support weapons.

To mount a weapon, simply pick a weapon and a mount type, determine the total Load Points for the combination, and compare it to the Load Limit of the area you wish to mount it in. As long as the LPs of the weapon/mount combo (plus the LPs of any other gear mounted in the same location) don't exceed the limit, you're okay.

Listed to the right are weapons from *Hell on Earth*, *The Wasted West*, and some new weapons introduced in this book. Not all of the weapons from each book are listed—only those that would conceivably be mounted on a vehicle are included. (Sure, it's possible to mount a pistol on a car, but why bother?)

New Weapons

We have a few new weapons to increase your driving pleasure.

Block Dropper

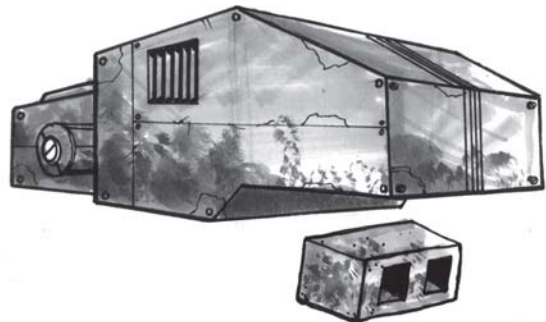
This is simply a rack filled with cinderblocks. Each time it's activated, it drops one on the road behind it. Place a marker directly behind the dropping vehicle.

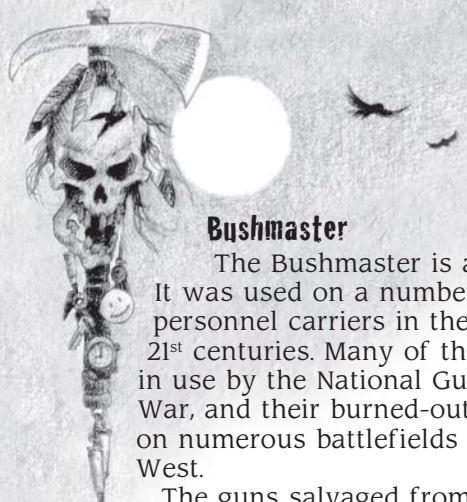
Roll 1d6 for any vehicle which drives over it. On an even result, the cinderblock goes under the wheels. This does 1d6-3 damage to each tire on a randomly determined side of the vehicle. On an odd result, the cinderblock hits the suspension and does 1d6 collision damage for every 10 mph of the vehicle's current speed. For vehicles with off-road suspensions, roll a die. On an even result, the block passes under the vehicle without causing damage; on an odd result, the block causes damage as normal.

Weapon Load Points

Weapon	Load	Cost
Automatic weapons:		
Bushmaster	6	
HI Blazer	1	
HI Damnation	2	
HI SAW	2	
HK-MP20	1	
HK-MP20A	1	
IW-40	2	
M2HB	3	
M-120	3	
M-200 MPSW	3	
NA Assault Rifle	2	
NA Commando	1	
NA M-42	2	
NA SAW	2	
NA XM-21	2	
Police Hellfire	1	
SA Assault Rifle	2	
SA Commando	1	
SA M-40 "Ripper"	2	
SA M-50	2	
SA SAW	2	
SA XM-60	3	
Thompson SMG	1	
Tokarev Machine Pistol	1	
Dropped weapons:		
Grenade Dropper	2	
Junk Dropper	2	
Block dropper	4	
Explosive weapons		
Armco GL	2	
Grenade Launcher	2	
M-95 LGAT	4	
Rocket Launcher	3	

Block Dropper



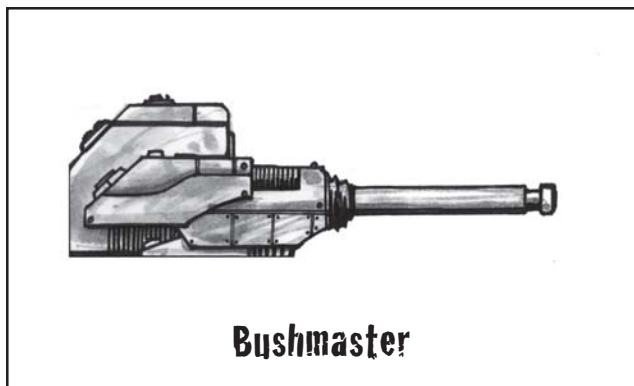


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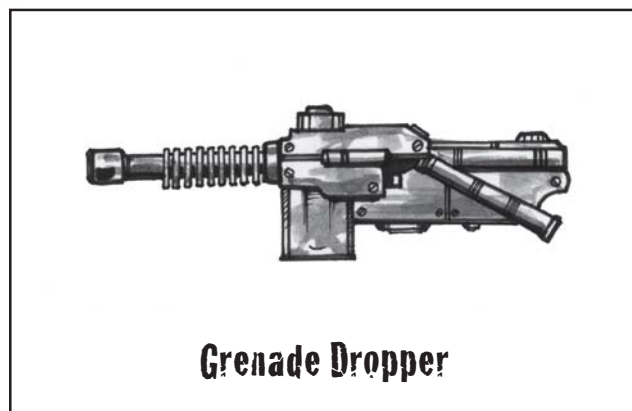
Bushmaster

The Bushmaster is a 25mm autocannon. It was used on a number of US armored personnel carriers in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Many of these older APCs were in use by the National Guard during the Last War, and their burned-out hulks can be found on numerous battlefields across the Wasted West.

The guns salvaged from many of these wrecks have become popular with road gangers looking for a weapon with a big punch. The Bushmaster can fire two types of ammo: AP (standard) and HEDP (explosive).



Bushmaster

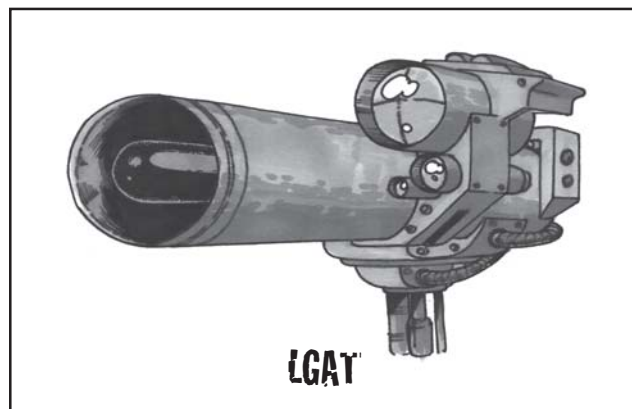


Grenade Dropper

M-95 LGAT

This was one of the Northern Alliance's standard antitank weapons. It was often mounted on the roofs of Hum-Vees for mobility.

The LGAT (Laser-Guided Anti-Tank) launcher fires a laser-guided missile with a powerful shaped-charge warhead. It normally requires three actions to fire. The first action requires the operator to illuminate the target with the weapon's laser rangefinder. This requires a *shootin': laser roll*. Once the target is hit, it takes an action for the warhead's seeker to acquire the laser spot. On the third action, the weapon fires.



LGAT

Grenade Dropper

This simple device is a metal sleeve filled with grenades. Each time the weapon is activated, it drops a grenade on the road behind the vehicle carrying it.

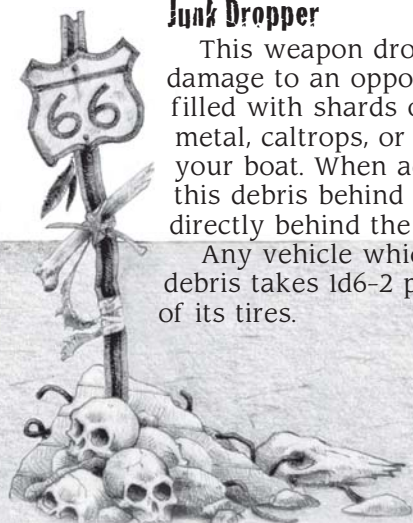
A dropped grenade tends to bounce around when it hits the ground. Roll 1d6. On 1-2, the grenade rolls left; on 3-4, it stays put; on a 5-6, it rolls right. If the grenade rolls, move it 1d6-3 inches in the indicated direction. Place a counter at this location.

The grenade explodes at the end of the movement phase in which it was dropped.

Junk Dropper

This weapon drops stuff likely to cause damage to an opponent's tires. It can be filled with shards of glass, jagged pieces of metal, caltrops, or whatever else floats your boat. When activated, it drops some of this debris behind it. Place a counter directly behind the dropping vehicle.

Any vehicle which drives through the debris takes 1d6-2 points of damage to each of its tires.



Step 4: Accessorize

This is where you put the finishing touches on your waster's cool new vehicle—and we're not talking fuzzy dice and "Baby on Board" signs here. Each of these accessories can make your hero's life easier—or safer, or more deadly—in some way.

Fixin' Up Your Ride



Vehicle Weapons

Weapon	Ammo	Shots	Speed	ROF	Range	Damage	Cost
Block Dropper	Cinderblock	6	1	1	Dropped	Special	\$150
Bushmaster	25mm AP	30	1	2	50	5d12 (AP 4)	\$3000
	25 mm HEDP	30	1	2	50	4d12 (AP 2), 3d8 Burst	5
Grenade Dropper	Grenades	6	1	1	Dropped	By grenade	\$200
Junk Dropper	Junk	6	1	1	Dropped	1d6-2 (tires only)	\$100
M-95 LGAT	LGAT missile	1	3	1	100	6d20, AP 5	\$5000

Ammo

Type	Cost
Cinderblock	Free
25mm AP	\$10
25mm HEDP	\$20
Junk	Free
LGAT Missile	\$500

Air Dam

Cost: \$200

Load Points: 2

Installation:

TN: 7

Time: 2 hours

Raise: 20 minutes

An air dam is a funnel-shaped accessory installed underneath a vehicle. Its shape accelerates the air passing underneath the vehicle, which creates an area of low pressure that actually sucks the vehicle downward and helps it stick to the pavement. There has to be sufficient air moving through the dam to create a noticeable effect. An air dam increases a vehicle's Handling by +1 at speeds above 40 mph.

These are not available for oversized vehicles.

Fighting Position

Cost: \$100/person

Load Points: 4 LP x number of people

Installation:

TN: 7

Time: 2 hours per person

Raise: 20 minutes

This accessory is only available for buses and trailers. It's basically a sandbagged gun emplacement on the roof of the vehicle. Each position can hold up to six people.

A fighting position provides those inside it with waist-high cover with an Armor value of 5 all around. One pintle-mounted weapon can be

added to a fighting position (at the standard cost for the weapon and mount) for every two people the position can hold.

For an extra \$20 a person, a position can be surrounded with outward-facing spikes with razorwire strung between them. Anyone attempting to enter the position through the razorwire must make an Onerous (7) *Nimbleness* roll to avoid taking 2d8 damage to a random location.

Fire Extinguisher

Cost: \$200

Load Points: 3

Installation:

TN: 7

Time: 2 hours

Raise: 20 minutes

This is an extinguisher system for your vehicle's engine compartment. In the event of an engine fire, the extinguisher can be activated in a single action. Roll 1d10 against the vehicle's speed in mph divided by 10. If the die roll is higher, the fire has been extinguished.

Recharging the system costs \$30 and requires a Fair (5) *tinkerin'* roll.

Gun Camera

Cost: \$500

Load Points: 2

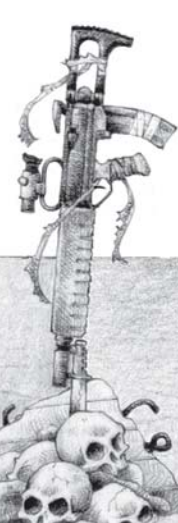
Installation:

TN: 9

Time: 3 hours

Raise: 30 minutes

This system attaches a small video camera to one weapon on the vehicle. The camera moves with the weapon and displays its view on a small monitor on the dashboard. This gives the operator a better idea of where the weapon is aimed and halves the remote weapon penalty. The gun camera counts against the mounting area's Load Limit.



Fixin' Up Your Ride



Gun Cover

Cost: \$10/Armor level x weapon's LP

Load Points: LP of weapon, plus +1 per Armor level

Installation:

TN: 5

Time: 1 hour

Raise: 10 minutes

External weapons are vulnerable to damage, especially in collisions. A gun cover is an armored box around a single weapon, the AV of which is applied to any damage taken by the weapon. It counts against the area's load limit.

Gun Shield

Cost: \$10/Armor level

Load Points: 1 LP/Armor level

Installation:

TN: 5

Time: 1 hour

Raise: 10 minutes

This adds an armored shield to the front of any pintle-mounted weapon, protecting the gunner to his front. The gunner can see through a small slit in the shield. Called shots to this slit are made with a -8 modifier.

Heavy-Duty Shocks

Cost: \$20/each

Load Points: 0

Installation:

TN: 5

Time: 2 hour

Raise: 20 minutes

Heavy-duty shocks decrease the risk of damage while driving off-road. Cars with standard or racing suspensions equipped with these shocks don't have to check for damage off-road unless making maneuvers with TN modifiers of +5 or greater. Heavy-duty shocks can't be added to vehicles with off-road suspensions, as they're already included.

HUD

Cost: \$2,000

Load Points: 1

Installation:

TN: 9

Time: 4 hours

Raise: 20 minutes

Heads-up-displays (HUDs), which project data onto the inside of a car's windshield, had become a common option before the Last War. With a few modifications to the system's software, it's possible to tie weapon

systems into a vehicle's HUD. In addition to displaying things like speed, fuel remaining, and route maps, a HUD can also show targeting cues for the weapons it is hooked to. The computer controlling the system needs to know where the guns are facing, so this system only works with fixed-mount or servo-controlled weapons.

Weapons tied into the HUD are not affected by the remote weapon penalty and actually gain +2 to hit. The negation and bonus only apply against targets visible through the front windshield. The vehicle must have an intact windshield for the HUD to display properly.

Ram Plate

Cost: \$100

Load Points: 4

Installation:

TN: 5

Time: 1 hour

Raise: 5 minutes

This is a steel plate welded to the vehicle's front, often covered with heavy spikes. In a front-end collision, a rig with a ram plate takes one fewer die of damage, and it adds one die to the damage of the vehicle or object it strikes.

Sidecar

Cost: \$500

Load Points: 4

Installation:

TN: 7

Time: 2 hours

Raise: 10 minutes

A sidecar adds another passenger position to a motorcycle. It can accept a fixed- or pintle-mounted weapon of up to 2 Load Points in size. Adding a sidecar drops the bike's Handling by -1.

Spoiler

Cost: \$150

Load Points: 1 LP x Size modifier

Installation:

TN: 5

Time: 1 hours

Raise: 10 minutes

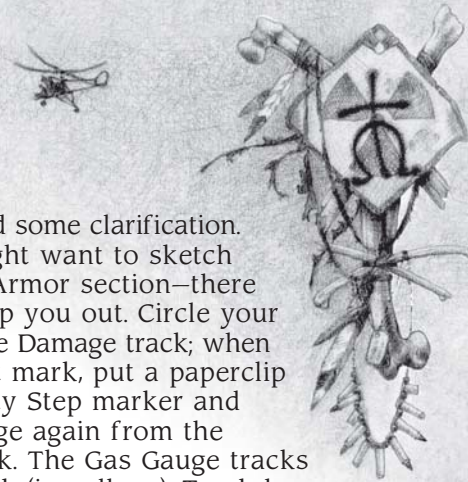
Spoilers deflect air passing over the vehicle upwards, which pushes the car down to improve traction. A spoiler increases a vehicle's handling by +1 at speeds above 40 mph.

Wire Guide

Cost: \$20

Load Points: 1

Fixin' Up Your Ride



Installation:

TN: 5

Time: 1 hour

Raise: 5 minutes

Motorcycle jockies are vulnerable to wire traps and other head-level hazards. This addition consists of a simple metal rod welded to the front the bike, angled up to about head level. It deflects wires (or tree branches and other such dangers) over the rider's head and body.

Step 5: Final Totals

Once you've strapped everything you want (or can afford) onto your hero's ride, it's time to add it all up. You need to figure out the vehicle's final Acceleration rating, MPG, Handling, and AVs.

Total the Load

The first step is to add up all the Load Points you've added to the vehicle.

If you're below your rig's Load Limit, you're fine—there's no effect on performance. If you're over, though, determine how many multiples of the Load Limit you've hit, then check the Load Limits Table to see how your rig is affected. No vehicle can exceed seven times its load limit.

Apply the Results

Apply the modifiers due to the vehicle's load and any accessories you've added to it to the basic stats listed for a stock-model vehicle.

It's possible that a heavily loaded vehicle may end up with an Acceleration rating of 0 or less. If this happens, your only option is to lighten the load or soup up the engine to handle the weight. The rig isn't going anywhere otherwise.

The Vehicle Record Sheet

Record the vehicle's modified stats, cost, weapons info, and special equipment on a copy of the vehicle record sheet (at the end of this book). The sheet is mostly self-explanatory, but a

few items might need some clarification.

For starters, you might want to sketch your vehicle in the Armor section—there are guidelines to help you out. Circle your Durability Step on the Damage track; when damage reaches that mark, put a paperclip on the first Durability Step marker and start counting damage again from the beginning of its track. The Gas Gauge tracks fuel in your rig's tank (in gallons). Track how much you've got in it with a paperclip. For the Speedometer, check out the rules in Chapter 3.

Repair Time

So things didn't go quite as well as expected? Your ride is shot so full of holes that it whistles "Yankee Doodle" as you drive along? Time to roll it back to the shop.

Piecing your vehicle back together requires a *tinkerin'* roll, some time, and spare parts—see the Repairs Table for the details. The parts cost is the rough value of spare parts needed. If specific items have been damaged (the engine exploded, for instance), the Marshal may insist your hero replace that particular component rather than paying for generic parts.

A successful roll repairs the vehicle in the listed time. A failed roll requires the mechanic to start over from scratch. If the mechanic goes bust, the vehicle is irreparably damaged and is only good for spare parts.

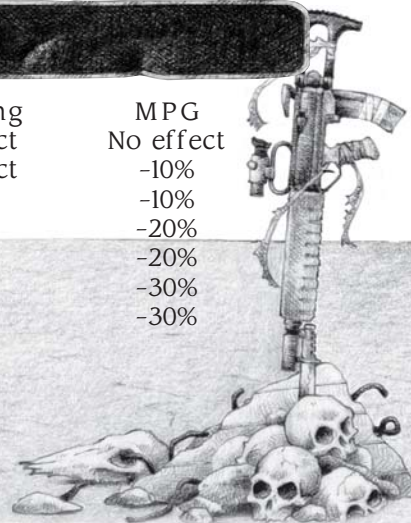
Repairs

Durability Steps	Lost	TN	Time	Cost of Parts
1		5	4 hrs	5% of vehicle value
2		7	6 hrs	10% of vehicle value
3		9	12 hrs	20% of vehicle value
4		9	24 hrs	40% of vehicle value
5		11	48 hrs	60% of vehicle value

Load Limits

Total Load	Top Speed	Acceleration	Handling	MPG
Less than Load Limit	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect
Up to 2x Load Limit	-5 mph	No effect	No effect	-10%
Up to 3x Load Limit	-10 mph	-5 mph	-2	-10%
Up to 4x Load Limit	-15 mph	-5 mph	-2	-20%
Up to 5x Load Limit	-20 mph	-10 mph	-4	-20%
Up to 6x Load Limit	-25 mph	-10 mph	-4	-30%
Up to 7x Load Limit	-30 mph	-15 mph	-6	-30%

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Fixin' Up Your Ride

Jason Builds a Ride

Jason is designing a vehicle for his new road warrior hero. He only has six character points left to spend on the *belongin's* Edge, so he knows he must keep the cost below \$6,000.

After looking over the different models, Jason decides on an inexpensive car that he can customize cheaply: the sedan. The basic-model sedan costs him \$3,000.

Jason wants a car that can move, so he upgrades the sedan's V-4 to a V-6. This adds no Load Points, but it costs him \$700: \$1,000 for the V-6, minus a \$300 trade-in on the V-4. He also adds a turbocharger for \$300 and 1 Load Point.

Next, Jason buys some armor. Lots of armor can be expensive, and it quickly weighs the car down, so he goes light and only buys an extra level of Armor for the front, right, left, and rear sides of the car. This costs \$100 (\$50 x Armor 1 x Size modifier of 2) and 4 Load Points (2 Load Points x Armor 1 x Size 2) per side, for a total of \$400 and 16 Load Points.

Jason also armors the windows, wheels, and gas tank to AV 2. This costs him \$120 and 8 Load Points for the windows (\$30 x Armor 2 x Size 2 and 2 Load Points x Armor 2 x Size 2), and \$80 and 8 Load Points for the wheel covers (\$10 x Armor 2 x 4 wheels and 1 Load Point x Armor 2 x 4 wheels). The gas tank armor costs \$20 (\$10 x Armor 2) and 2 load points (1 Load Point x Armor 2).

Jason has a look at the tire options and decides to stick with standard tires. He then moves on to weaponry. He wants a lot of bang for his buck, and he notices that assault rifles cost much less than machine-guns (though they also do less damage). He buys four SA assault rifles for \$800 (Jason's waster better build a reputation fast if he wants to keep these loaded) and 8 Load Points. He puts two of these in fixed mounts on the hood, and one on each of the front fenders. Each fixed mount costs \$10 (\$5 x 2 Load Points) and 2 Load Points (equal to the weapon's Load Points), for a total of \$40 and 8 more Load Points. Jason decides to link

the four rifles to fire together, and he buys an extra fire control for each. This costs another \$120 and 4 Load Points.

Now it's time to add things up and see how this vehicle performs. Total cash outlay for the car is \$5580—easily within his \$6000 budget. Jason decides to spend the rest of the \$6000 on ammo for the car's guns.

Jason next has a look at his Load Points. He's put 7 Load Points on the hood, and 4 on the right and left front fenders. That's at or under the maximum for those locations, so he's okay there.

His Load Points for all added equipment and weapons (including those mounted on the hood and fenders) total 55. This is more than triple but less than four times the sedan's load limit of 16. Jason consults the Load Limit Table and sees that he's got a -15 mph penalty to top speed, a -5 mph penalty to his Acceleration rating, a -2 penalty to Handling, and a -20% penalty to MPG.

The larger engine increases Acceleration by 5 mph, top speed by 20 mph, and imposes an additional 10% penalty to MPG. The turbocharger gives a 5 mph Acceleration bonus (but only at speeds above 40 mph), increases top speed by 20 mph, and imposes yet another 10% hit to mileage.

Putting all of this together, the final vehicle has a top speed of 115 mph (90 base, +20 for the engine upgrade, +20 for the turbocharger, -15 for load), an Acceleration rating of 10 mph (10 base, +5 for the engine upgrade, -5 for load) that increases to 15 mph at speeds above 40 mph, a Handling of -2 (0 base, -2 for load), and gets 21 miles to the gallon (35 base, -40% (14)). The car has an AV of 2 (1 base, +1 level of Armor) on the front, right, left, and rear, but it's only AV 1 on the roof and underside.

Jason makes himself a photocopy of the Vehicle Record Sheet and enters all this information in the spaces provided. His hot rod is ready to roll, and he's all set to head out and terrorize the road gangers and abominations that roam the roads of the Wasted West!

The Marshal's Handbook



King o' the Road



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Chapter Five: King o' the Road



Okay, now that we've given those player types the slip, it's time to talk turkey. C.W.'s account to Librarian Holmquist wasn't entirely accurate. There were some exaggerations, a few lies, and here and there he was just flat out wrong. You need the truth, Marshal, so here goes.

The Wasted West

Actually, before we review C.W.'s story, there is one thing we need to emphasize. In *Road Warriors*, *The Wasted West*, and other *Hell on Earth* books, the narrators have talked about the things they've seen all over the continent. There's a monster over here, some people over there, a marauding gang of psychos up there, and so on. When you read it all in one sitting, it's easy to be left with the impression that the Wasted West is just chock full of people and that it's only a matter of time before everything is restored to the way it was earlier.

That's definitely not the case. Most of the world is a barren wasteland. Most survivor groups consist of a handful of people who are just barely scraping by and who are afraid to go to sleep at night because they may wake up in something's gizzard. The majority of the

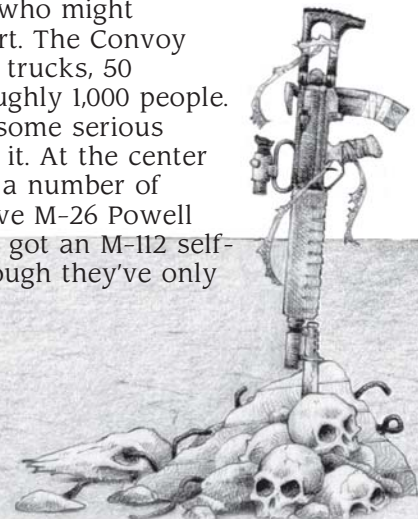
settlements have no idea what's going on 10 miles away, much less what's happening in the next state. For every little enclave the Convoy's scouts have found, there are five more that may never be discovered before they are swallowed by some unnameable evil.

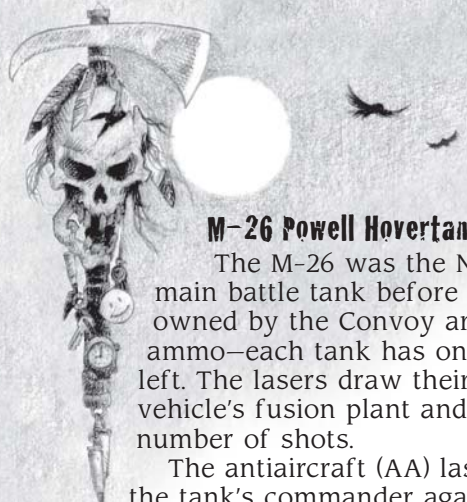
The Convoy

The Convoy is a decent bunch of folks, just like C.W. reported. Some of the Convoy members are in it because it beats farming or scrounging for a living, but the majority brave the highway because they really want to help out the survivors they deliver to.

C.W. exaggerated his numbers a bit, though, because he didn't know who might eventually read the report. The Convoy actually has closer to 80 trucks, 50 support vehicles, and roughly 1,000 people.

The group does have some serious firepower when it needs it. At the center of the main caravan are a number of flatbed trucks hauling five M-26 Powell hovertanks. They've also got an M-112 self-propelled howitzer (although they've only got 10 shells left for it).





King o' the Road

M-26 Powell Hovertank

The M-26 was the Northern Alliance's main battle tank before the war. Those owned by the Convoy are short on main gun ammo—each tank has only about five rounds left. The lasers draw their power from the vehicle's fusion plant and have an unlimited number of shots.

The antiaircraft (AA) laser can be used by the tank's commander against ground targets or put in an automated air defense mode. In this mode, the tank's computer automatically tracks and fires at all flying targets identified as hostile as though it has a 3d8 *shootin'* Aptitude. The tank's commander can spend an Action Card as a vamoose action to allow the AA laser to engage incoming antitank missiles.

M-26 Powell Hovertank

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas	Tank	MPG
\$1,000,000	3	Fusion	n/a	n/a	n/a
Suspen.	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.	
Hover	0	80	200	5 mph	
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size Load	Limit	
100/10	See below	-2	+4	100	
Armor: Bottom 8, front 16, rear 12, left side 12, right side 12, turret 12.					
Weapon	Mount	Location	Arc		
125mm cannon	Fixed	Turret	360°		
10mm AA laser	Ring	Turret	360°		
10mm AP laser	Articulated	Bow	Front 90°		
10mm AP laser	Fixed	Turret	360°		

M-112 Self-Propelled Gun

The M-112 was one of the Southern Alliance's first hover artillery units. It gave southern commanders incredibly quick "shoot and scoot" capabilities.

The vehicle is equipped with a sophisticated counter-battery radar which can project the trajectory of an artillery shell back to its

source. This allows the unit to fire on detected enemy artillery units without the need for a forward observer.

The AA laser is simply a ring-mounted gun; it does not have the sophisticated anti-air/antimissile capability of the M-26's AA laser.

M-112 Self-propelled Gun

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas	Tank	MPG
\$1,500,000	3	Fusion	n/a	n/a	n/a
Suspen.	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.	
Hover	0	90	225	10 mph	
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size Load	Limit	
80/16	see below	-1	+5	90	
Armor: Bottom 6, front 8, rear 8, left side 8, right side 8, turret 8.					
Weapon	Mount	Location	Arc		
155mm cannon	Fixed	Turret	360°		
10mm AA laser	Ring	Turret	360°		
10mm AP laser	Articulated	Bow	Front 90°		

The List

C.W. didn't mention the master list Goose Mattox keeps of all the survivor settlements the Convoy's scouts have located over the years. The scouts always report to Mattox personally, so no one knows exactly what's on that list other than him. Many of the group's delivery drivers know a portion of the list due to the routes they drive, but none of them know more than a small fraction. Many of the places on the list are unfriendly or actually hostile, so the Convoy avoids them.

The list is kept locked in a safe to which only Mattox knows the combination. The safe is kept in an armored car that always rides near the center of the Convoy's formation. Mattox is determined to keep the list secure. He well knows that, if it fell into the wrong hands, it could be a powerful tool for a would-be conqueror.

Military Vehicle Weapons

Weapon	Ammo	Shots	Speed	ROF	Range	Damage	Cost
10mm Laser	n/a	Unlimited	1	3	100	3d12, AP 2	\$12,000
125mm cannon (M-26)	125mm	1	3	1	250	6d20, AP 8	n/a
155mm cannon (M-112)	155mm	1	3	1	500	8d20, burst radius 10	n/a
105mm howitzer	105mm	1	3	1	250	5d20, burst radius 10	\$250,000

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King o' the Road

The Spy

Mattox has no idea exactly how close those wrong hands are. One of the Convoy's senior delivery drivers, Jesse "Corndog" Hambro, is secretly working for the Combine. He joined the group shortly before the Battle of Burnt Tires.

The Combine attack at that battle was intended to cause enough confusion for Hambro to hijack the armored car and turn it over to Throckmorton. The Convoy fought back better than anticipated though, and the plan failed.

Hambro's cover held, and he remained with the Convoy. Ever since the battle, he has been gathering information about the group's contacts and passing it on to the Combine via a small shortwave set he keeps stashed in his truck. The intelligence he has passed on has been valuable enough that Throckmorton has decided to leave him in place. This has been one of the major reasons the Combine has not staged another major attack against the group.

Hambro has been slowly working his way into Mattox's good graces and is just waiting for another chance to snatch or copy the list.

The Split

Unknown to most of the Convoy's members, Mattox and his lieutenants have been discussing splitting the Convoy up. Although the group can manufacture its own fuel and, to some extent, its own spare parts, keeping that many people fed has become an ever-increasing problem—and the Convoy continues to grow.

During the group's early years, it was still possible to scrounge food from the ruins, and the Convoy had a large stockpile of canned goods that some of the members' trucks had been hauling before the end of the Last War. That stockpile has nearly run out, and after 13 years, scrounging large quantities of food in the ruins is nearly impossible. The group supplements its food through hunting, but this doesn't provide nearly enough to feed everyone.

This has led to the Convoy becoming more dependent on the towns it trades with for food. Mattox wants to avoid this for a number of reasons, the two biggest being that if a town suddenly vanishes or changes allegiances it could leave the truckers hungry, and many towns don't have that large a food surplus. Feeding the Convoy puts a tremendous strain on a town's resources every time it passes by.

The plan being discussed by the Convoy leaders would split the group in half the next



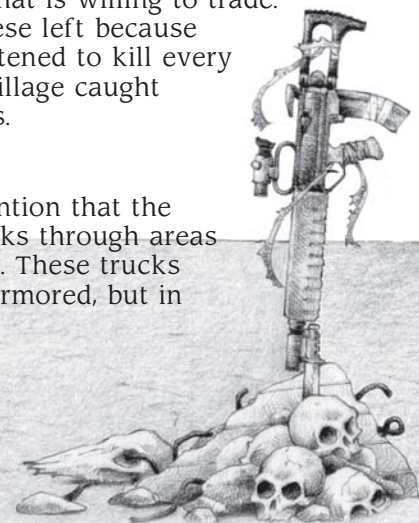
time it reaches Junkyard. One half would continue on the normal route and the other half would head back the way the Convoy had just come and run the route in reverse. Mattox and his lieutenants are not sure they are going to go ahead with this plan, though, because they fear splitting their forces might encourage the Combine or some of the larger road gangs to attack the weakened halves.

The Combine

The Convoy's public stance is that it no longer delivers into Combine territory. Secretly, the group's most experienced drivers, C.W. included, still make clandestine runs to any settlement in that area that is willing to trade. There aren't many of these left because Throckmorton has threatened to kill every fifth inhabitant of any village caught trading with the truckers.

Q-Trucks

C.W. also failed to mention that the Convoy also runs Q-trucks through areas with heavy gang activity. These trucks look lightly armed and armored, but in



King o' the Road



reality they are rolling fortresses. The idea is to lure gangs into attacking an easy target and then blowing the snot out of them. The name, by the way, comes from the Q-ships of World War I: the Allies disguised warships as freighters to trick German U-boats into surfacing.

The Scouts

The Convoy's scouts are the portion of the group the posse is most likely to encounter. These intrepid souls roam the rural highways and other roads less traveled in search of undiscovered survivor settlements. Scouts often operate away from the Convoy for long periods of time—sometimes more than a year—so they need to be resourceful and self-reliant.

Profile

Corporeal: D:3d8, N:3d8 (drivers 3d10), S:3d6, Q:4d6, V:3d6

Dodge 3d8 (2d10), drivin': car, rig 3d8 (5d10), fightin': brawlin' 4d8 (3d10), quick draw 4d8, shootin': pistol, rifle, crossbow, machine-gun 4d8, speed load 2d8

Mental: C:4d6, K:2d6, M:2d6, Sm:3d8, Sp:2d6
Guts 3d6, overawe 3d6, scrutinize 4d6, search 4d6, survival 4d8, tinkerin' 5d8

Edges: Keen, eagle eyes

Hindrances: Big britches

Pace: 8

Wind: n/a

Gear: Kevlar vest, SA assault rifle with 2 mags of ammo, large knife, crossbow, and 20 bolts.

Scout Trucks

Driving a truck into unknown territory is a risky deal, so scout trucks are built to outrun what they can't fight, and kill what they can't outrun. It doesn't always work out that way on the highway, but all scout crews believe they can outfight or outdrive anything on the road.

The numbers listed in parentheses are with the trailer attached.

Scout Cab-Over Tractor

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas Tank	MPG
\$22,165	3	V-8	50 gallons	16

Suspen.	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.
Standard	10/std.	105 (100)	265 (250)	15 (10)

Durability	Armor	Handling	Size	Load Limit
60/12	see below	-1 (-3)	+4	80

Armor: Bottom 2, front 4, rear 3, left side 4, right side 4, roof 2.

Special Equipment: Hinged window panels (AV 2), wheel covers (AV 2), gun cover (M-120) (AV 3).

Weapon	Mount	Location	Arc
M-120	Ring	Roof	360°

Scout Box Trailer

Cost	Passengers	Suspension	Wheels
\$8,930	6	Standard	8/standard

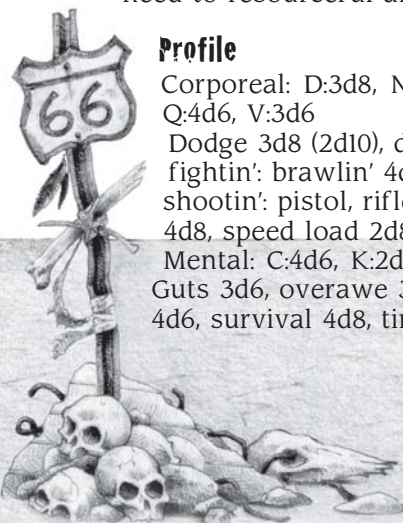
Durability	Armor	Size
80/16	See below	+6

Armor: Bottom 1, front 1, rear 3, left side 3, right side 3, roof 1.

Special Equipment: 6 person fighting position with razorwire, 3 gunshields for NA SAWs (AV 2).

Weapon	Mount	Location	Arc
NA SAW	Pintle	Roof	Right 180°
NA SAW	Pintle	Roof	Left 180°
NA SAW	Pintle	Roof	Rear 180°
Grenade dropper	Fixed	Rear	Fixed rear
Block dropper	Fixed	Rear	Fixed rear

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The Great Basin

The Rattlers

C.W.'s right on the money about rattler attacks being a lot more frequent than they used to be. There are a couple of reasons for that.

Rattler Whaling

The first is the obvious one: there are a lot more rattlers around these days. Before the Last War, the rattler hunters operating out of Salt Lake City and other places had put a serious dent in the rattler population.

The rattlers didn't stand much chance against armored crawlers equipped with a land-based version of sonar that could locate them far beneath the ground and blast them with burrowing torpedoes. Rattlers that came up to the surface to fight back were hit with the crawlers' big guns and by rocket-armed helicopters. Now that organized hunting has stopped, the rattler population has bounced back with a vengeance.

Rattler Repellers

The other reason is that the highways running through these areas were equipped with rattler repellers. This technology was developed by Hellstromme Industries and sold to both the US and CSA governments, which secretly installed it in areas at risk.

The repellers are massive wave generators buried hundreds of feet beneath the ground. They generate powerful low-frequency sound waves that travel through the earth. These waves are extremely painful to the rattlers, which normally avoid the areas around the generators. The power plants powering the repellers were destroyed during the war or have since gone offline, leaving the highways open to rattler attacks.

Lunch!

Rattlers can detect the vibrations of vehicles from a long way off. A heavily loaded rig might be audible to one of these beasts from five miles away or more. If it seems like the vehicle is moving toward it, a rattler often lays in wait just beside the road, hoping to catch a quick snack.

Whenever your posse travels through an area likely to have rattlers, it needs to be on the lookout. You can decide if a rattler takes an

interest in the heroes yourself, or draw a card for the heroes for every 20 miles they travel through the area (or every 10 miles if they are driving a big rig or other heavy vehicle). If a Joker comes up, they've been added to the menu.

The Speed Demons

The Speed Demons are the creation of Devan Blackwood, a junker with a particularly malevolent bent.

Blackwood has taken over the Desert Motorworks plant in Battle Mountain, Nevada. He's been able to get a portion of one of the assembly lines working again, and the factory now manufactures cars of his own design.

Before the war, Blackwood was a systems engineer who specialized in interface design. Since he began adding some occult additions to his designs, his work has taken him in some entirely new directions.

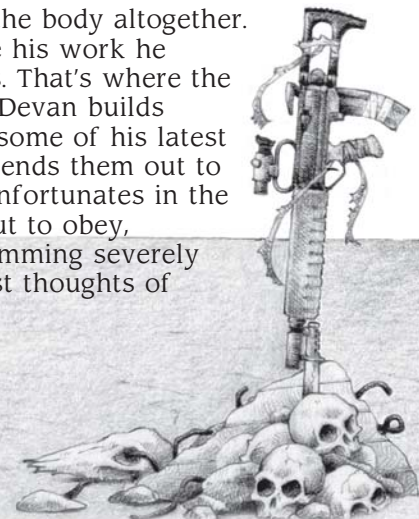
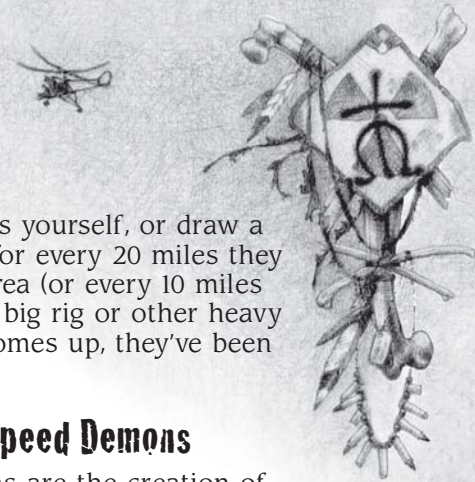
The Mental Integrator

His latest toy is a control system he calls the Mental Integrator. Anyone unfortunate enough to be strapped into a device equipped with one of these systems actually has his soul merged with the device. This allows the person to control the machine as if it were an extension of his body, greatly enhancing precision control and reducing control lag.

The downside of the system is that the merging process cannot be reversed—at least not without killing the person. The strain of timesharing its soul with a machine is too much for the average body, and it begins to slowly waste away once the integration has taken place. Most people hooked into one of these systems survive less than three months.

As far as Blackwood is concerned, the need to maintain the body as a host for the soul is a flaw in an otherwise perfect device. He is working to build a system that achieves a perfect integration of soul and machine and eliminates the need for the body altogether.

Of course, to continue his work he needs fresh test subjects. That's where the Speed Demons come in. Devan builds souped-up cars, merges some of his latest victims with them, and sends them out to gather more. The poor unfortunates in the cars have little choice but to obey, because the cars' programming severely punishes even the merest thoughts of disobedience.



King o' the Road

The Desert Motorworks

The factory Blackwood uses for his "research" appears uninhabited. Weeds grow unchecked, and the storage yard near the loading dock is filled with stacks of rusting car parts. This is all part of his plan—many of his early subjects were road warriors he captured after they stopped at the plant to scrounge for spare parts.

The mad junker has repaired the plant's external security cameras, and he keeps a close eye on anyone who comes near the place. If the intruders appear too powerful to handle, he is content to let them rummage around outside and proceed on their way. If they look weak or try to enter the plant, he dispatches his "guards" to deal with them.

Devan Blackwood

A small cog in a big company before the war, Devan was an unimaginative low-level engineer who always dreamed of developing some new breakthrough technology that would make him rich and allow him to give the orders for a change. The forces of the Reckoning have given him that chance.

Devan has an extreme phobia of dogs, and he sends his guards to kill any that wander near the plant.

Profile

Corporeal: D:3d6, N:3d6, S:2d6, Q:3d4, V:2d8
Dodge 3d6, drivin': car 4d6, fightin': brawlin' 4d6, shootin': junkgun 5d6

Mental: C:2d8, K:4d12, M:2d6, Sm:4d10, Sp:2d8

Academia: occult 6d12, guts 4d8, medicine: general 3d12, science: occult engineering 6d12
scroungin' 5d8, scrutinize 3d8, search 4d8, survival 2d8, tinkerin' 6d10

Edges: Arcane background: junker

Hindrances: Loco: scared of dogs, mean as a rattler

Pace: 6

Wind: 16

Powers: AI (this is fully covered in *The Junkman Cometh*), Damage, Trait

Gear: Junkgun, g-ray collector, and 10 pounds of ghost rock.

DMW Guards

Devan's security force was built from some old bipedal cargo loaders he found in the factory. He has welded some armor plates around the operator's position to give some added protection to the poor sod strapped inside.

Each of the loaders has a junkgun strapped to it. When fighting inside the factory or in the storage yard out back, there is plenty of metallic junk lying around for these weapons to suck up as ammo.

Profile

Corporeal: D:3d8, N:2d6, S:2d8, Q:3d6, V:3d6
Dodge 2d6, drivin': cargo loader 3d6, fightin': brawlin' 4d6, shootin': junkgun 4d8

Mental: C: 3d8, K:2d6, M:2d8, Sm:2d4, Sp:2d6
Search 4d8, trackin' 2d8

Pace: 6

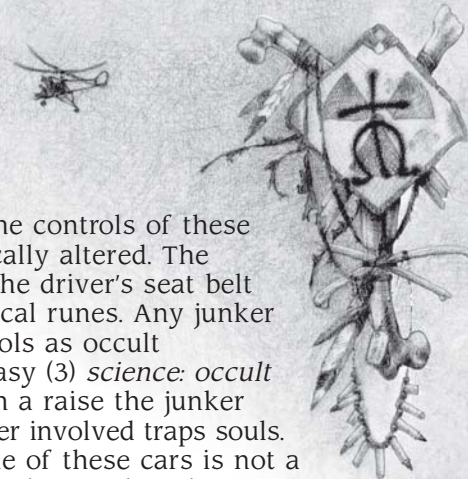
Wind: n/a

Gear: A cargo loader (Armor 3, Strength 3d12+2) and a junkgun.

Speed Demons

These are the latest sad sacks to be strapped into Blackwood's cars. Psychic slaves, these victims can get out of their cars for short periods of time but can never stray more than 100 yards away without the car calling them back. They can control their cars while outside of them, but they cannot perform any other actions while doing this.

King o' the Road



A Speed Demon can speak and interact normally with others, but he never speaks of what has happened to him (his car might get angry). Any attempts to rummage around in his mind cause his car to terminate him on the spot. Anyone psychically connected to him when this happens must make a Hard (9) *Spirit* roll or take 3d6 damage to the noggin.

There are currently eight Speed Demons. Blackwood rarely sends more than six out at a time.

Profile

Corporeal: D:3d8, N:3d8, S:3d6, Q:4d6, V:3d6
Dodge 3d8, drivin': car 5d8, fightin': brawlin' 4d8,
quick draw 4d8, shootin': pistol, machine-gun
4d8, speed load 2d8

Mental: C:4d6, K:2d6, M:2d6, Sm:2d4, Sp:2d6
Search 4d6

Edges: Thick-skinned

Hindrances: Loyal (Blackwood) 3

Pace: 8

Wind: NA

Gear: Ruger .357 Magnum automatic with 12 rounds of ammo.

The Demons' Rides

All of the Speed Demons' cars have factory fresh paint jobs.

While in the car, a gang member's *Quickness* increases to 4d12+4 and he receives a +4 bonus to all *drivin'* rolls. If the driver is disabled, the car's AI can drive itself with a *drivin'* Aptitude of 4d6 and a *Quickness* of 3d8.

Speed Demon Muscle Car

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas	Tank	MPG
\$8,725	4	V-8	12 gallons		15
Suspen.	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.	
Racing	4/std.	165	415	20 (25)	
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size	Load	Limit
30/6	See below	0 (+2)	+2		15
Armor: Bottom 1, front 3, rear 3, left side 2, right side 2, top 1.					
Special Equipment: Supercharger, turbocharger, wheel covers (AV 2), window panels (AV 2), air dam, spoiler, Mental Integrator.					
Weapon	Mount	Location	Arc		
SA SAW	Fixed	Hood	Fixed Forward		
M2HB	Fixed	Roof	Fixed Forward		

It's obvious that the controls of these cars have been radically altered. The steering wheel and the driver's seat belt are covered in mystical runes. Any junker recognizes the controls as occult engineering on an Easy (3) *science: occult engineering* roll; with a raise the junker can tell that the power involved traps souls.

Trying to drive one of these cars is not a good idea. Any hero who touches the steering wheel while wearing the seatbelt must make an Incredible (11) *Spirit* roll each round or merge with the vehicle. Once this happens, disobeying (or thinking about disobeying) the car, which is completely loyal to Blackwood, results in agonizing pain and 2d6 Wind.

The numbers listed in parentheses in the profile represent stats for the car when travelling above 40 mph.

The Great Maze

The Highway Patrol

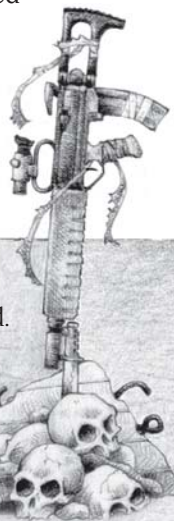
The Highway Patrol progressed in making the roads of central and northern California safer to drive on, but they still fight an uphill battle. Many of the gangs in the area have suffered at their hands and are looking for some payback. Captured patrol members can look forward to long and painful deaths. A few have begun carrying poison capsules for that very reason.

Holy Bat Guano!

The Highway Patrol's headquarters is hidden away in a cavern high up in the Amador range. It's only accessible by a small, dirt fire road.

The road leading to the cave has been heavily camouflaged. The fire road entrance has been blocked by a concrete planter on wheels, painted to match the road and filled with large bushes that hang down over it. Too heavy for a single person to move, it's normally winched out of the way each time a Patrol car uses the road.

The entrance to the road is guarded 24 hours a day by a five-man team hidden in well-camouflaged firing positions. At least two members of the team are always armed with some sort of heavy anti-vehicle weapon like a rocket launcher. Each time a vehicle uses the entrance, some of the guards come out and wipe away any tracks or other traces left behind.



King o' the Road

Needless to say, the guards don't cotton to anyone nosing around in this area.

The Cave

The cave's entrance is well-guarded and camouflaged. Another five-man team lurks in the bushes outside.

The cave itself has one main chamber that houses all of the Highway Patrol's vehicles and its workshop. A number of smaller side rooms have been enlarged for use as sleeping quarters, storage rooms, and recreational areas.

The 20-yard tunnel leading into the main chamber has been rigged with explosives and can be collapsed in an emergency; a bulldozer inside can dig the Patrol out after the danger has passed. A few of the chimneys leading up from the side chambers have been rigged with ladders for use in an escape or as a means to sortie out and attack anyone trying to dig his way in.

Spence "Chief" Mercer

There's a lot more to the Chief than meets the eye—literally.

Spence has no idea what his real name is. Back in Kansas, he was known only as the Ghost Rider, and the town of Near Wichita had a \$300 bounty on his head. For five years after the end of the war, he roared across the High Plains with a band of savage cutthroats called the Highwaymen, looting and pillaging everything in his path.

That was until he was captured outside of Topeka. He cursed them and threatened the do-gooders with all sorts of hideous tortures, until the group's junker set him straight.

You see, Spence is a cyborg—a Hellstromme Industries model 95A with optional infiltration and driving packages, to be precise. He's also Harrowed (all cyborgs are, as the upcoming *Cyborgs* book explains in more detail). For details on Harrowed, see *The Book o' the Dead*. Spence was built to be the driver and bodyguard of some bigwig Northern Alliance general, so he was given some special systems that allowed him to pass as a living, breathing human. His cheeks are nice and rosy, he doesn't smell like last week's garbage, and he has a pulse for anyone who cares to check.

Spence was damaged in the attack that killed his general. One of the things that took a hit was the system that kept his manitou locked up. Freed from its electronic cage, the manitou went on a rampage—until that do-gooding junker repaired Spence, sending him off to sin no more.

Spence has come to California to try to atone for the horrible things he knows he has done. He can sometimes sense his manitou raging in the back of his head, and he fears that it may someday get loose again. He deals with these fears by going out on long solo patrols in which he can take on insane odds without risking any of his fellow patrol members. So far the death he longs for—and is prohibited by the remnants of his programming from inflicting on himself—has eluded him.

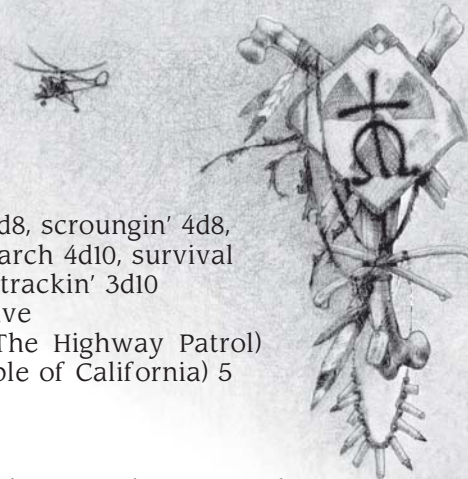
Profile

Corporeal: D:4d12, N:3d10, S:4d12+2, Q:4d10, V:4d10
Dodge 4d10, drivin': motorcycle, car 6d10, fightin':
brawlin', knife 5d10, quick draw 5d10, shootin':
automatics, pistol, rifle 6d12, sneak 4d10, speed
load 4d10, throwin': balanced, unbalanced 4d12
Mental: C:2d10, K:3d8, M:2d8, Sm:2d8, Sp:2d10
Guts 4d10, leadership 4d8, medicine: general 4d8,
overawe 4d8, scroungin' 5d8, scrutinize 4d10,
search 5d10, survival 4d8, tinkerin' 5d8,
trackin' 4d10

Edges: Armor 2 (internal), law dog, "the stare"
Hindrances: Death wish, grim servant o' Death

Marshal: 96

King o' the Road



Size: 6
Pace: 10
Wind: 20
Gear: .44 Magnum automatic and 30 rounds of ammo, NA assault rifle with 50 rounds, large knife, infantry battle suit, and a leather jacket.

The Gray Ghost

Spence upgraded this mean machine with the help of the junker who set him back on the straight and narrow. It began life as a sports car. The numbers in parentheses apply at speeds over 40 mph.

The Gray Ghost

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas	Tank	MPG
\$10,430	2	V-8	20 gallons		17

Suspen.	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.
Racing	4/racing	185	465	15 (20)

Durability	Armor	Handling	Size Load	Limit
25/5	See below	+1 (+3)	+2	12

Armor: Bottom 1, front 3, rear 3, left side 2, right side 2, top 1.

Special Equipment: Turbocharger, wheel covers (AV 2), air dam, spoiler, nitrous oxide, targeting computer.

Weapon	Mount	Location	Arc
SA SAW	Articulated	Hood	Front 90°

Highway Patrol Member

The Highway Patrol has roughly 50 members. There are usually never more than 10 or so on patrol at any one time, although if it's necessary to deal with a big problem, the group can put up to 20 vehicles on the road. Members who aren't on patrol are resting or healing up at headquarters and sharing in the guard rotation.

All of the Highway Patrol members are dedicated to eliminating the gangs in California. Each one has suffered at the hands of the gangs at some point in his or her past, and not one of them is going to shed a tear over a dead ganger. Pleas for mercy fall on deaf ears.

Profile

Corporeal: D:3d8, N:3d8, S:4d6, Q:3d8, V:2d6
Dodge 4d8, drivin': motorcycle, car 5d8, fightin': brawlin' 4d8, quick draw 2d8, shootin': automatics, pistol, rifle 5d8, sneak 2d8, speed load 2d8, throwin': balanced, unbalanced 2d8
Mental: C:2d10, K:2d6, M:2d8, Sm:2d8, Sp:2d8

Guts 3d8, overawe 4d8, scroungin' 4d8, scrutinize 3d10, search 4d10, survival 3d8, tinkerin' 4d8, trackin' 3d10

Edges: Law dog, brave

Hindrances: Loyal (The Highway Patrol) 3, Obligation (people of California) 5

Size: 6

Pace: 8

Wind: 14

Gear: NA Officer's sidearm and NA Assault rifle, 2 magazines for each, Kevlar vest

Patrol Car

Since the group almost always fights at a disadvantage in terms of numbers, the Highway Patrol's vehicles are built for hit-and-run tactics. They have long legs and nearly as much firepower facing the rear as the front—sometimes more. The stats for the vehicle below are based on a sedan.

Patrol Car

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas	Tank	MPG
\$9,800	5	V-8	12 gallons		17

Suspen.	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.
Standard	4/std.	135	340	20

Durability	Armor	Handling	Size Load	Limit
30/6	See below	-2	+2	16

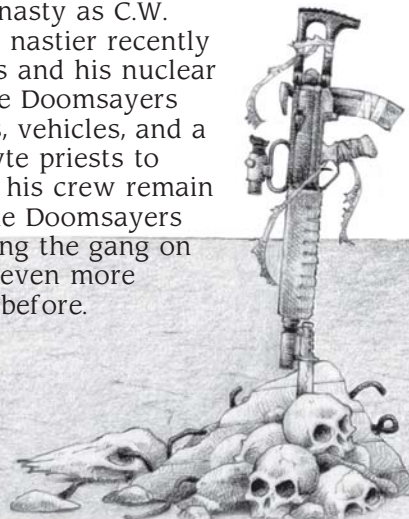
Armor: Bottom 1, front 3, rear 3, left side 3, right side 3, top 1.

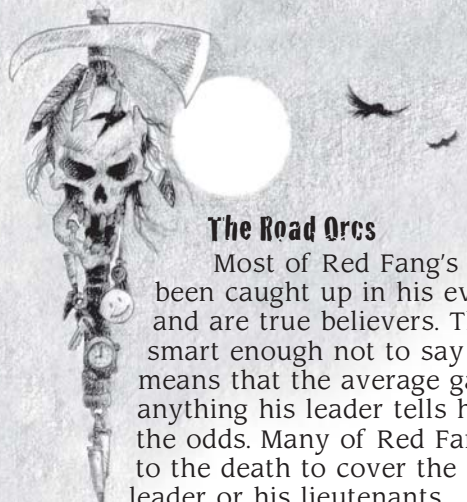
Special Equipment: Supercharger, gas tank armor (AV 3), wheel covers (AV 2), nitrous oxide.

Weapon	Mount	Location	Arc
SA SAW	Fixed	Right fender	Fixed front
SA SAW	Fixed	Left fender	Fixed front
Junk dropper	Fixed	Rear	Fixed rear
Grenade dropper	Fixed	Rear	Fixed rear

The Road Orcs

The Road Orcs are as nasty as C.W. described. They've gotten nastier recently due to support from Silas and his nuclear wackos in Las Vegas. The Doomsayers have sent some weapons, vehicles, and a small contingent of acolyte priests to make sure Red Fang and his crew remain true believers. The newbie Doomsayers have started accompanying the gang on raids, giving the gangers even more firepower than they had before.





King o' the Road

The Road Orcs

Most of Red Fang's gang members have been caught up in his evolutionary crusade and are true believers. Those who aren't are smart enough not to say so out loud. This means that the average gang member attacks anything his leader tells him to, regardless of the odds. Many of Red Fang's men have fought to the death to cover the escape of their leader or his lieutenants.

The majority of the gang drives stock vehicles and relies on personal weapons to deal with the enemy. One favorite tactic is to drive a pickup truck filled to bursting with men next to an enemy vehicle and try to board.

Profile

Corporeal: D:3d8, N:3d8, S:4d6, Q:3d8, V:2d6
 Dodge 4d8, drivin': motorcycle, car 5d8, fightin': brawlin' 4d8, quick draw 2d8, shootin': automatics, pistol, rifle 5d8, sneak 2d8, speed load 2d8, throwin': balanced, unbalanced 2d8
 Mental: C:3d6, K:2d6, M:2d4, Sm:2d6, Sp:2d6
 Scroungin' 3d6, search 4d6, survival 3d6, tinkerin' 4d6, trackin' 3d6
 Edges: Thick-skinned
 Hindrances: Loyal (Red Fang) 3
 Pace: 8
 Wind: 14
 Gear: Assorted pistols, rifles, shotguns, and crossbows with 10 rounds of ammo each, a large knife, and a boiled leather shirt and pants set.

Red Fang

No one knows what Red Fang's real name is, and none of his gang members are asking—he disemboweled the last person who inquired. Regardless of what you call him, he's quite the brute. He stands six-foot-six and weighs in at over 300 pounds, all of it rock-hard muscle.

Red Fang's motto is "That which doesn't kill me makes me stronger." No one has been able to kill him yet, although many have tried.

His enormous canines allow him to bite people for *Strength*+1d6 damage.

Profile

Corporeal: D:3d8, N:3d6, S:4d12+4, Q:3d8, V:3d12
 Dodge 4d8, drivin': motorcycle, car 6d8, fightin': brawlin', knife, sword 6d6, quick draw 4d8, shootin': automatics, pistol, rifle 6d8, sneak 2d8, speed load 3d8, throwin': balanced, unbalanced 4d8



Mental: C:3d8, K:2d6, M:3d10, Sm:2d8, Sp:2d8
 Guts 5d8, leadership 5d8, overawe 6d10, scroungin' 4d8, scrutinize 3d8, search 4d8, survival 3d8, tinkerin' 5d8, trackin' 4d8
 Edges: Brawny, thick-skinned, "the voice"
 Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, mean as a rattler, vengeful
 Gear: A battle-ax (STR+2d8), a 12 gauge pump shotgun with 10 buckshot and 10 slug rounds, a large knife, and a flak jacket (AV 2).

Red Fang's Ride

Not one for subtlety, Red Fang drives a blood-red Chevy Suburban jacked up on an enormous off-road suspension. In keeping with his bigger-is-better philosophy, most of the interior is taken up with the recoil mechanism for a 105mm howitzer that sticks out of the center of the armored windshield. Obviously, this gun requires a second person in the vehicle to reload it, though Red Fang can fire from the driver's seat. The recoil from this weapon rocks the vehicle badly. Each time it's fired, he must make a *drivin'* roll with a +3 TN modifier. The Suburban began its existence as a sport-utility vehicle, which is pretty much how Red Fang thinks of it now. Your mileage may vary.

Red Fang's Suburban

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas	Tank	MPG
\$259,825	5	V-8	30 gallons	18	
Suspen.	Wheels	Top Speed	Pace	Accel.	
Off-road	4/std.	110	275	10	
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size	Load	Limit
35/7	See below	-4	+3	20	
Armor: Bottom 1, front 3, rear 3, left side 3, right side 3, top 1.					
Special Equipment: Supercharger, window panels (AV 3).					
Weapon	Mount	Location	Arc		
105mm	Fixed	Hood	Fixed front		
M2HB	Ring	Roof	360°		

The Great Northwest

The Earthers

The Earthers aren't quite as wacko as C.W. makes them out to be. They are led by an Old Ways Indian shaman named Cries Without

King o' the Road

Tears. In his conversations with the spirit world, Cries Without Tears has learned of the destruction being caused by the use of spook juice. He has made it his goal to put an end to this spiritual pollution by stopping that use.

Cries Without Tears actually spoke with members of both the Ronin and the Wrecking Crew and asked them to stop using spook juice. It was only after both gangs refused that he led his group on the warpath against them.

Most of the Earthers are Tlingit Indians. A few are non-Indians who were taken in by the group after the world went to Hell. All are loyal to Cries Without Tears and his cause. A good portion of the Indians and some of the non-Indians are followers of the Old Ways. The rest still use modern equipment but respect the beliefs of the others. This gives the group a potent combination of modern firepower and spirit magic to use against its enemies.

Cries Without Tears

Cries Without Tears is actually a Paiute shaman. He traveled to the Northwest to try to convert his materialistic brethren in the area to the Old Ways. He had some limited success, and many of the Earthers are his early converts.

You will need the *Ghost Dancers* book to make the most of Cries Without Tears' abilities.

Profile

Corporeal: D:3d8, N:3d8, S:4d6, Q:3d8, V:2d6
Dodge 4d8, fightin': brawlin', spear 4d8, horse ridin' 4d8, shootin': bow 5d8, sneak 2d8, throwin': balanced

Mental: C:2d8, K:2d10, M:2d8, Sm:2d8, Sp:2d12
Faith 4d12, guts 3d12, overawe 4d8, scroungin' 4d8, scrutinize 3d8, search 4d8, survival 3d8, trackin' 3d8

Edges: Arcane background: shaman, guardian spirit: eagle 4

Hindrances: Old Ways vow 3

Pace: 8

Wind: 18

Special Abilities:

Rituals & Favors: Dance 4d8, paint 3d8, pledge 5d8, all visionseeking favors, confusion, and invisibility

Gear: A horse, a medicine bundle, a spear, and a bow with 15 arrows.

Typical Earther

Since many Earthers have been converted to the Old Ways by Cries Without Tears, they can even the score against the road gangs a bit with some spiritual magic of their own.



Profile

Corporeal: D:3d6, N:3d8, S:4d6, Q:3d8, V:2d6
Dodge 4d8, fightin': brawlin', tomahawk 4d8, horse ridin' 3d8, shootin': bow 4d6, sneak 2d8, throwin': balanced 2d6

Mental: C:3d6, K:2d6, M:2d4, Sm:2d6, Sp:2d8
Faith 3d8, guts 3d8, scroungin' 3d6, search 4d6, survival 5d6, trackin' 3d6

Edges: Guardian spirit: wolf 1

Hindrances: Old Ways vow 3

Pace: 8

Wind: 14

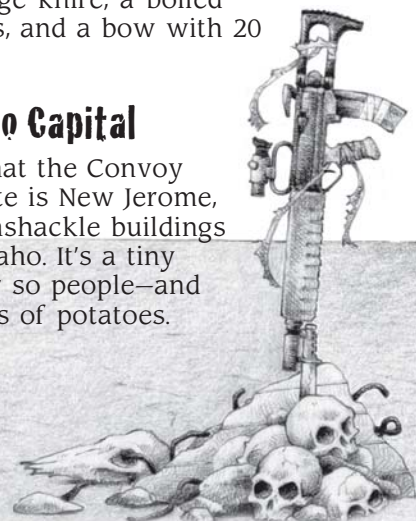
Special Abilities:

Rituals & Favors: Paint 3d6, pledge 4d6, guiding wind, spirit warrior

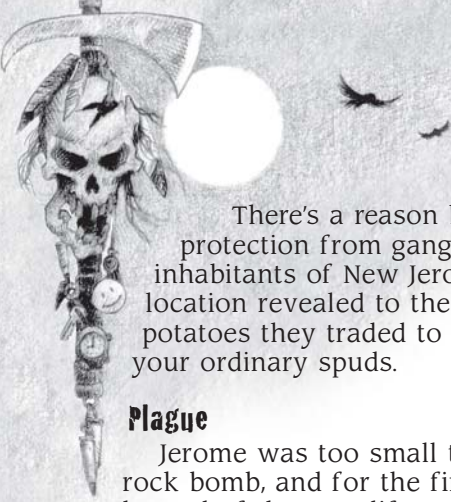
Gear: A tomahawk, a large knife, a boiled leather shirt and pants, and a bow with 20 arrows.

The Potato Capital

The new settlement that the Convoy has just added to its route is New Jerome, a small collection of ramshackle buildings at the edge of Jerome, Idaho. It's a tiny community of only 20 or so people—and thousands and thousands of potatoes.



King o' the Road



There's a reason beyond mere protection from gang attacks that the inhabitants of New Jerome don't want their location revealed to the outside world. The potatoes they traded to the Convoy are not your ordinary spuds.

Plague

Jerome was too small to hit with a ghost-rock bomb, and for the first few weeks after the end of the war, life continued as normal. Then the first wave of refugees fleeing the destruction further south arrived. The small town was nearly overwhelmed.

The refugees brought disease with them, and a wave of cholera and dysentery swept through the town and the tent city set up in the fields around it. Thousands died, the bodies left unburied by the overwhelmed survivors. This, of course, only sparked another wave of illness, and this time everyone died.

But some "got better." Due to the nature of the tragedy which killed them, these newly created Harrowed and walkin' dead were firmly under Pestilence's control. They set about cleaning up. All of the disease victims were buried in an enormous, unmarked mass grave.

Then they started growing potatoes. An unusual activity for the undead, but they had a plan. Most of the spuds were grown on the farms around Jerome just as they had been for years. But a special batch of the tubers was planted in the dark, rich soil over the mass grave.

Plague Spuds

These potatoes have become supernaturally infected with dysentery and cholera. That means that no matter how much you bake or boil them, if you eat them you're going to get sick. They are completely indistinguishable from ordinary potatoes—unless you routinely screen samples of your spuds under a microscope before eating them.

Anyone who eats one of these potatoes must make an Hard (9) *Vigor* roll to avoid getting sick. Anyone who becomes sick automatically takes a wound to the guts, gets a high fever, and experiences severe diarrhea and vomiting.

The victim must make another Hard (9) *Vigor* roll each day to avoid suffering another wound to the guts. If the patient gets a raise on this roll, she not only doesn't suffer another wound, but one disease-caused wound is removed. The disease continues until the victim dies or she is free of any disease-inflicted wounds. Chips cannot be spent to negate any of the wounds caused by this disease.

These supernatural bugs are extremely contagious. Anyone touching something that's been in contact with a victim must make an Onerous (7) *Vigor* roll to avoid infection. Anyone in constant contact with victims—a doctor for instance—must make a Hard (9) roll to avoid the sickness. Taking precautions such as masks and gloves add a +2 bonus to these rolls.

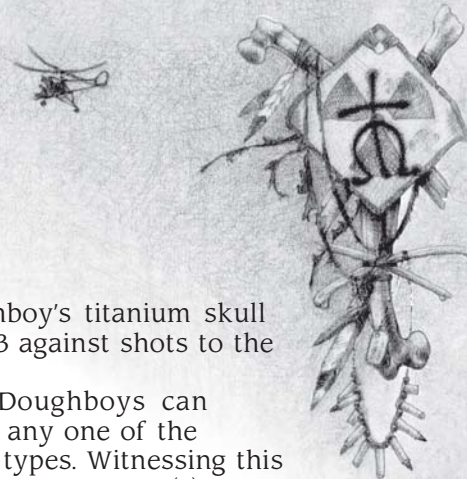
The inhabitants of New Jerome mix these special spuds in with the ordinary potatoes they trade to passing travelers. Getting one is purely random. If a hero gets a hold of some of these potatoes or eats at a place that is supplied by the Convoy, pull a card from the deck for each potato he eats. If a Joker comes up, that particular spud is bad.

Plague Zombies

Those who die from this disease return from the dead 1d6 nights later as plague zombies. These nasty critters are identical to normal walkin' dead with the exception that anyone wounded by one in hand-to-hand combat must make an Incredible (11) *Vigor* roll to avoid being infected as described above.



King o' the Road



The Followers

The Followers are another example of science run amok. These oddities are the creations of none other than Black River Industries.

The Doughboys, as they're called by the Black River staff, were one of the first major new organisms created at the BRI genetic research facility in the Cascade Mountains.

The Doughboys were designed as all-purpose attack animals with the reasoning power of human beings. Each is a large, fleshy mass with a titanium alloy skeleton and armored brain case. They're grown in large vats; in a process that takes about three weeks, the inorganic components are placed in the vat, and the organic material is grown in and around them.

Doughboys have a strange mix of human and wolf DNA. This gives them brains capable of reasoning at about the level of an 8-year-old kid, along with the hunting instincts of a grown wolf. These instincts are further honed by extensive training and conditioning.

The gang is simply a test bed for these new creatures. They are trained to drive and fight and then are let loose on the highway. Their natural hunting instincts take over from there.

The gang hangs out in an underground parking garage in Lind, which is restocked with ammo and fuel once a week by a BRI supply truck. Four lab technicians also live in the garage. They monitor the Doughboys and deal with injuries and damaged vehicles.

Doughboys

These creatures can change shape by disassembling their skeletons and rearranging them within their malleable flesh. The three most common configurations are a humanoid, a wolflike quadruped and a blob.

The doughboys in the road gang normally take humanoid form. They cannot talk because they have no true mouth (only a small food hole for sucking in nutrients). They are intelligent enough to perform simple tasks like reloading their vehicle's weapons or refilling the gas tank.

At first glance, a doughboy's hairless, fleshy body could be mistaken for that of a person who was once badly burned.

Profile

Corporeal: D:2d8, N:2d8, Q:3d8, S:4d10, V:4d8
Dodge 3d8, drivin': car 4d8, fightin': brawling 4d8,
shootin': automatics 3d8, sneak 4d10
Mental: C:3d8, K:2d4, M:3d4, Sm:3d6, Sp:2d8
Search 4d8

Size: 6

Terror: 5

Special Abilities:

Armor: The doughboy's titanium skull gives it Armor 3 against shots to the head.

Transformation: Doughboys can change form to any one of the following body types. Witnessing this change requires an Onerous (7) *guts* check. Some of the doughboys have figured out how to mix and match their skeletons in strange combinations of these forms.

Biped: The creature can perform any action a normal human can. It has a Pace of 8.

Quadruped: The doughboy can perform any task a large wolf could. It has a Pace of 12 and sharp titanium claws that allow it to attack for *Strength*+2d8 damage.

Blob: The creature can form pseudopods for grasping objects. It has a Pace of 8 and can squeeze through 6" openings.

Doughmobiles

Because the Doughboys like to run the roads for long periods of time, their cars have been fitted with oversized gas tanks that allow them to cruise for days at a time without returning to their den. If one of these tanks should explode, it does triple the normal damage. These tanks are heavily armored.

Doughmobiles

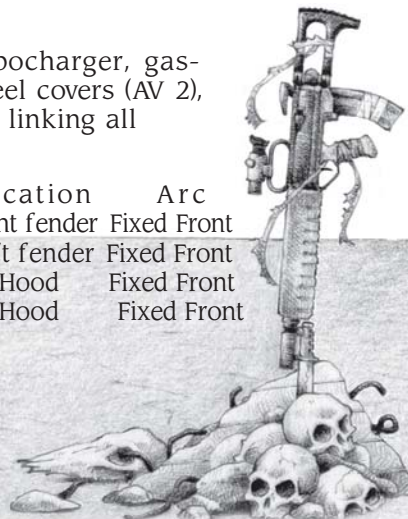
Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas Tank	MPG
\$6,460	5	V-6	60 gallons	25
Suspen. Standard	Wheels 4/std.	Top Speed 120	Pace 300	Accel. 10 (15)
Durability 30/6	Armor See below	Handling -2	Size +2	Load Limit 16

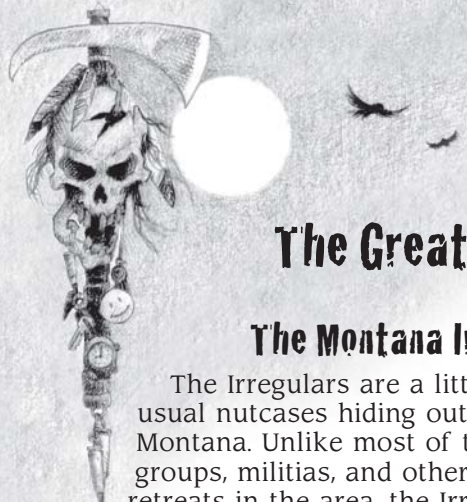
Armor: Bottom 1, front 2, rear 2, left side 2, right side 2, top 1.

Special Equipment: Turbocharger, gas-tank armor (AV 2), wheel covers (AV 2), extra weapon controls linking all assault rifles.

Weapon	Mount	Location	Arc
NA assault rifle	Fixed	Right fender	Fixed Front
NA assault rifle	Fixed	Left fender	Fixed Front
NA assault rifle	Fixed	Hood	Fixed Front
NA assault rifle	Fixed	Hood	Fixed Front

Marshal: 101





King o' the Road

The Great Plains

The Montana Irregulars

The Irregulars are a little different from the usual nutcases hiding out in the mountains of Montana. Unlike most of the survivalist groups, militias, and other fringe groups with retreats in the area, the Irregulars actually have some valid reasons for distrusting the US government. As the old saying goes, "Just because you're paranoid, doesn't mean that there isn't someone after you."

Conspiracy Theory

The Irregulars are the remnants of a much larger group that flourished during the 2060s and '70s, a hodgepodge of those who dealt with the occult: mad scientists, hucksters, shamans, and even a few Harrowed. They ran an underground newspaper that warned that the worst part of the Reckoning was yet to come and that the government's claims that everything was under control was a bunch of whitewash.

The group had quite a bit of clout because among its members was Milton Hardin, a self-made billionaire. Hardin's influence was able to ward off much of the government's interference with the group's activities until 2079. In September of that year, a few of the group's more radical members got their hands on some incontrovertible evidence of the government's role in covering up a number of supernatural occurrences. They made plans to take the whole thing public.

The government fell on them harder than a Mojave rattler. Anyone who had seen or heard about the evidence was whisked away to a secret compound where government sykers rummaged around in their brains and removed anything they didn't like. Most of the abductees didn't even remember their dogs' names when they were finally released.

Fort Hardin

The government raid prompted Hardin to begin the construction of an enormous fortified retreat in Montana. He sank millions into building the place. Everything in the compound was state-of-the-art, and incredible quantities of food, weapons, and ammunition were laid up in its monstrous underground storage rooms.

Many of the group's members took up residence there as soon as it was finished. The rest continued their normal lives and waited. Hardin spread his cash around to make sure he would have advance warning of any government moves against them.

Hardin's bribes paid off in an unexpected way. One of his informants warned him that the war might go nuclear almost a week before it happened. This gave him time to gather most of the group's members to their remote hideaway.

Double-Cross

The bombs fell just like Hardin's informant predicted. The one thing the informant neglected to tell him, however, was that it had been leaked to the Confederates that Fort Hardin was a US missile command center. When the bombs started dropping, the retreat was one of the first places that got hit. Hardin and most of his followers were killed.

A portion of the group in an outlying security bunker survived. Once the radiation had died down some, they came out and relocated away from the swirling cloud that hovered over the place. These survivors became the Montana Irregulars.

Since the group emerged from the bunker, its one creed has been "Trust no one." This has served to keep them alive, but it hasn't won them any friends.

Salvage Rights

The Irregulars have managed to salvage some equipment from the wreckage of their base. Besides weapons, one of the most important things they have pulled from the ruins is a large portion of the group's records. These records contain a wealth of information on the supernatural events leading up to Judgment Day and particulars on many creatures of the Reckoning. The data the Irregulars have on such things is much more comprehensive than the records in the Great Library. The problem is that the Irregulars won't share that knowledge.

Typical Irregular

The phrase "typical irregular" is an oxymoron in more ways than one. The group contains many people with "special" (supernatural) abilities. There are more than a few hucksters and shamans in the group, and over the years a few junkers and sykers have managed to win their trust and join up. There are roughly 50 Irregulars.



King o' the Road

The Irregulars patrol the area around their new bunker. They usually don't initiate contact, preferring to watch interlopers from the shadows to see what they are up to.

Profile

Corporeal: D:3d6, N:2d6, S:2d6, Q:3d8, V:3d8
Dodge 2d8, drivin': motorcycle, car 3d6, fightin':
brawlin' 4d6, shootin': automatics, pistol, rifle,
shotgun 4d6, sneak 5d6, speed load 2d6,
throwin': balanced, unbalanced 2d6
Mental: C:3d6, K:2d6, M:2d4, Sm:2d6, Sp:2d6
Scroungin' 3d6, search 4d6, survival 3d6, tinkerin'
4d6, trackin' 3d6
Hindrances: Loco (paranoid), loyal (Irregulars) 3
Pace: 6
Wind: 14
Gear: Assorted firearms (each large patrol also
has a machine-gun), 2 magazines per weapon,
Kevlar vests and helmets, and survival knives.

The Road Ragers

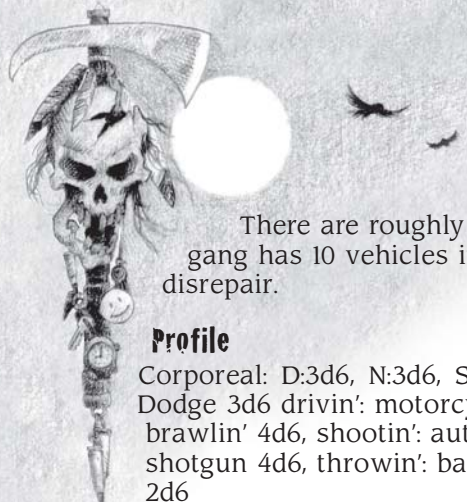
These bozos are a typical road gang that happens to have an endless supply of the combat drugs rage and slo-mo (see *The Wasted West*). One of their members was a chemist for

the company that made these drugs for the military, and he's actually got enough gray matter left to whip up a new batch whenever they run out.

The gang has a high turnover rate because it constantly loses members to accidental overdoses, drug-related accidents, and the fact that they mix their combat drugs with alcohol and other substances that were less than legal before the war. They gain new members from the people they capture out on the road. They drug them up to get them hooked—by the time they're brought into the gang, most prisoners barely know what planet they are on, much less remember how they got there.

The gang drives mostly stock vehicles in sorry states of repair and use personal hand weapons in combat. Most of them couldn't find their butts with both hands, so anything more sophisticated than that is out of their league. They do manage to capture the occasional better-than-average vehicle through sheer numbers and blind stupidity, so if you want them to be more of a challenge for your posse, you can give them a custom car or two with some preexisting battle damage.





King o' the Road

There are roughly 30 Road Ragers. The gang has 10 vehicles in various states of disrepair.

Profile

Corporeal: D:3d6, N:3d6, S:4d6, Q:3d6, V:2d6
Dodge 3d6 drivin': motorcycle, car 3d6, fightin': brawlin' 4d6, shootin': automatics, pistol, rifle, shotgun 4d6, throwin': balanced, unbalanced 2d6
Mental: C:2d6, K:2d6, M:2d6, Sm:2d4, Sp:2d6
Scroungin' 3d6, search 4d6, survival 3d6, tinkerin' 3d6
Edges: Thick-skinned
Hindrances: Hankerin' (rage, slo-mo) 3
Pace: 6
Wind: 12
Gear: Assorted pistols, rifles and shotguns, 10 rounds of appropriate ammo, some crossbows (with about 20 shots), large knives, and some Kevlar vests.

The Mississippi Delta

Mardi Gras

The craziness is catching. The party that started in the ruins of New Orleans with a handful of crazies has become a self-perpetuating festival of carnal pleasures. The party atmosphere has taken on a life of its own.

Each night a hero spends partying in Mardi Gras, he must make a Fair (5) *Spirit* roll. Each successive night spent here increases the TN of this roll by +2. If the hero fails the roll, he has succumbed to the party spirit and has no desire to leave. Any attempts to make someone who has fallen under the place's spell leave are resisted with force and are likely to attract the attention of other partygoers who come to their new friend's aid.

If a person who has "joined the party" can be removed from the place, he comes to his senses in 1d6 days.

The Party's Over

The only way to stop the madness is to end the party. There are two ways to do this. The first is to take away the revelers—remove them all physically (an action that will be resisted by approximately 300 people)—or kill them (again, not an easy or popular choice). The second way is through a successful exorcism. This can only be done

by an actual priest or minister. (Check out *Fire & Brimstone* for the details.) The collective consciousness of the party resists with a 4d12+4 *Spirit*, and the partygoers do their best to tear the exorcist into tiny little pieces

The Night Runners

The Night Runners are a long way from home. They are originally from Long Branch, NJ, but they just moved west across the Mississippi recently.

C.W.'s a little off the mark here. They don't have night-vision equipment, and they're not mutants. They're vampires. For reasons unknown, they slipped across the Mississippi right under the noses of the River Watch (a conjured fog helped) and have been dining on the inhabitants of southern Louisiana for almost nine months now.

Born to Run

This group of bloodsuckers simply calls itself the "Jersey Seven," even though there are only six of them (there were originally seven, but one was accidentally staked by a tree branch in a car accident). They are all tragically hip, dressing in torn jeans, leather jackets, and lots of chains.

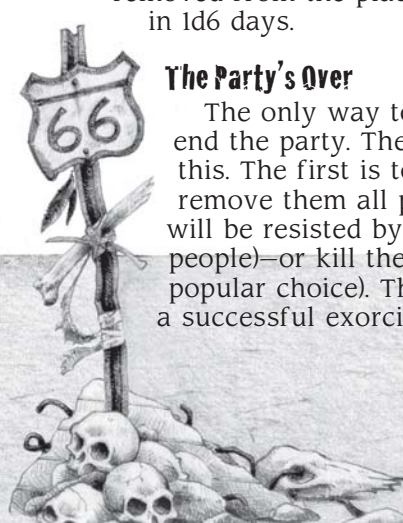
They were part of a gang in New Jersey before they became children of the night, and they're all total gearheads. They love their rides almost as much as they love "popping the top" of a small child for a midnight snack. All of their cars have been tweaked out, and they are constantly on the lookout for new goodies they can add to their metallic steeds.

Sunroofs Optional

All of the cars have one thing in common. Their windows have been covered in heavy armor (more than heavy enough, now, to stop your average tree branch) with small vision slits. Those are covered with metal awnings and fitted with thick welder's glass, preventing any direct sunlight from entering the car. This setup allows the Seven to travel safely by day when the need arises.

Terror on the Highway

The Seven are currently enjoying themselves by terrorizing the inhabitants of Thibidax and a few other small survivor groups in the area. They actually hope to attract some do-gooding types to the locals' rescue so they can get some decent competition and possibly find a worthy replacement for their fallen friend.



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While they're waiting, the Seven are careful to cover their tracks and leave no clues as to their true nature. Every one of their victims is carefully dismembered and hand-fed to the local gators to make sure they don't rise as nosferatu. They don't want one of these ratlike sub-vampires giving away the show. Food's scarce enough around these parts, and they don't need any competition for it.

Talent Scouts

These vampires are extremely powerful, and you should consider carefully before having your posse tangle with them. An encounter with a just one member of the group can be lethal—dangerous enough to kill an unprepared posse.

Should one of your heroes make a good showing against one of the Seven in a road battle, she might be selected for recruitment into the group. Whether or not this happens is entirely up to you. If it does, this unfortunate soul may actually encounter the group outside of their cars—they need to take their victim alive in order to “turn” him.

One last note: The Seven are lead by a raven-haired vixen by the name of Gabrielle Santucchi. It was her love, Tony Giovanni, that was killed in the unfortunate tree incident, and she wants a replacement that fills all of his roles. Male heroes with long black hair, brown eyes, and a bodybuilders physique are prime candidates.

The Jersey Seven

All of the group appear to be in their late teens or early 20s (although most are closer to 100 years old). It's obvious to anyone who speaks with them that they are not from the area—they all have heavy Jersey accents.

Profile

Corporeal: D:4d12+2, N:4d12+2, Q:4d12+4, S:4d12+4, V:4d12+4

Dodge 5d12, drivin': car 6d12+2, climbin' 7d12+2, fightin': brawling 5d12+2, shootin': automatics, pistol, rifle 6d12+2, sneak 7d12+2

Mental: C:4d12, K:3d8, M:4d12+2, Sm:4d6, Sp:3d10
Overawe 4d12+2, scroungin' 5d6, scrutinize 3d12, search 5d12, tinkerin' 6d6, trackin' 5d12

Pace: 14

Size: 6

Terror: 9 (when revealing its true nature)

Special Abilities:

Damage: Claws: (STR+1d6). A hit with a raise in hand-to-hand combat lets a vampire bite its victim for (STR+1d4) brawling damage.



Fog: Only Gabrielle has this power, which takes an action to activate and about five minutes to see any results. It creates a thick fog over an area about two miles in diameter. Gabrielle and anyone she chooses can see normally in it, but visibility for everyone else drops to about five yards, and all ranged attacks suffer a -4 penalty. The fog normally lasts an hour.

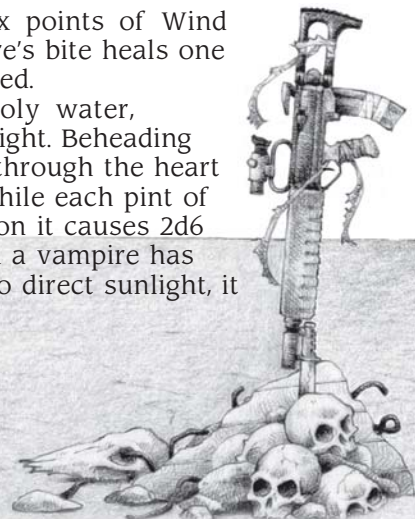
Undead: focus: heart

Infection: Anyone slain by the bite of a vampire rises from the grave in 1d6 nights as a nosferatu.

Speed: Vampires are incredibly fast. They can move up to four times their Pace on *each* of their actions.

Regeneration: Each six points of Wind drained by a vampire's bite heals one wound it has suffered.

Weaknesses: Wood, holy water, beheading, and sunlight. Beheading or a wooden stake through the heart kills the vampire, while each pint of holy water thrown on it causes 2d6 damage. Each round a vampire has any flesh exposed to direct sunlight, it takes 3d6 damage.



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vampire must obey its creator's commands. If the posse poses a true danger to the group, the Seven may create some to use as cannon fodder against the heroes.

Profile

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:3d10, Q:4d12, S:3d12+2, V:2d10
Dodge 2d10, climbin' 4d10, fightin': brawlin' 4d10,
sneak 5d10

Mental: C:2d8, K:1d4, M:1d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:1d4

Overawe 4d8

Pace: 10

Size: 6

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Damage: Claws: (STR+1d4). If a nosferatu hits with a raise in hand-to-hand combat, it can bite its victim. The creature's fangs do *Strength* brawling damage.

Undead: focus: heart

Weaknesses: Wood, holy water, beheading, and sunlight. Beheading or a wooden stake through the heart kills the nosferatu, while each pint of holy water thrown on it causes 2d6 damage. Each round a nosferatu has any flesh exposed to direct sunlight, it takes 3d6 damage.

Vamp-Mobiles

All of the Seven drive customized sports cars. The one listed here is that driven by Gabrielle.

Gabrielle's Vampmobile

Cost	Pass.	Engine	Gas	Tank	MPG
\$7,265	2	V-8	20 gallons		20
Suspen.	Wheels	Top	Speed	Pace	Accel.
Racing	4/racing	190	475	20	
Durability	Armor	Handling	Size	Load	Limit
25/5	See below	+1	+2	12	

Armor: Bottom 1, front 2, rear 2, left side 2, right side 2, top 1.

Special Equipment: Supercharger, window panels (AV 2), wheel covers (AV 2).

Weapon	Mount	Location	Arc
M2HB	Fixed	Roof	Fixed Front

Nosferatu

Nosferatu are a lower form of vampire. A nosferatu created through the bite of a true

The Wild Southwest

The stories about both the creeping crud and the gas eaters are true. What most people don't realize is that they are the same creature in different forms.

The Creeping Crud

This is a small, shapeless creature that resembles a puddle of crude oil. It often hides in actual puddles of oil, so spotting one can be extremely difficult—in any fuel town, where puddles of oil and other residue are common, it requires a Hard (9) *Cognition* roll.

These devious little beasts like to wait until their victims' backs are turned and then slither up behind them. Not that seeing them coming helps much.

The wee beastie climbs up its victim's body and wraps itself around the victim's face. This requires a Fair (5) *fightin': brawlin'* roll. There isn't much the victim can do to stop the thing, because it flows like oil around anything that might block it. A helmet with a faceplate slows it down for an action, but unless the helmet is part of a sealed armor suit, the crud can quickly slither inside.

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Once the crud has covered its victim's face, it slowly smothers the poor sod while trying to force its way in through his nose and mouth. Each round, the victim takes 1d6 Wind. On each of the creature's actions, roll a contest of *Strength*. If the creature wins by a raise, it has pried the victim's mouth open and slithered down into his lungs. Once this happens, the victim loses 2d6 Wind per round until dead.

Profile

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:3d4, Q:3d8, S:3d8, V:2d10
Dodge 2d4, climbin' 4d4, fightin': brawlin' 4d4,
sneak 4d4

Mental: C:2d8, K:1d4, M:1d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:1d4

Pace: 4

Size: 3

Terror: 5

Special Abilities:

Immunity: Physical damage

Weakness: Fire. Fire-based attacks do double damage to the creature.

Gas Eaters

Gas eaters are the reanimated corpses of those who have been killed by creeping crud. Once its victim dies, the crud goes about rebuilding its new home to suit its uses. This takes about 1d6 days. At the end of this period, the victim gets up and starts his new life as a petroleum-based life-form.

The creeping crud inside the zombie requires petroleum products for food. Crude oil is sufficient, but it prefers goodies like high-octane gasoline. The gas eater uses its long, siphon-like tongue to drain every gas tank it can find.

The crud alters its host's organs into a mini-refinery. Any crude oil taken in by the creature is refined into high-grade gasoline. This stuff flows through the body's veins. In a pinch, the gas eater can use it as a weapon. The creature can use its tongue as a mini-flamethrower, throwing a stream of flame up to 20 feet.

Profile

Corporeal: D:2d6, N:2d8, Q:2d10, S:3d8, V:2d8
Dodge 2d8, climbin' 1d8, fightin': brawlin' 3d8,
shootin': any, flame 2d6, sneak 3d8

Mental: C:2d10, K:1d6, M:1d6, Sm:1d6, Sp:1d4

Overawe 5d6

Pace: 8

Size: 6

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Damage: Bite (STR).



Fire-Breathing: The creature can fire a jet of flaming gasoline six yards. This requires a normal *shootin'* roll to hit. The Range Increment for this jet is 2 yards. It does 3d12 damage to a single hit location.

Undead.

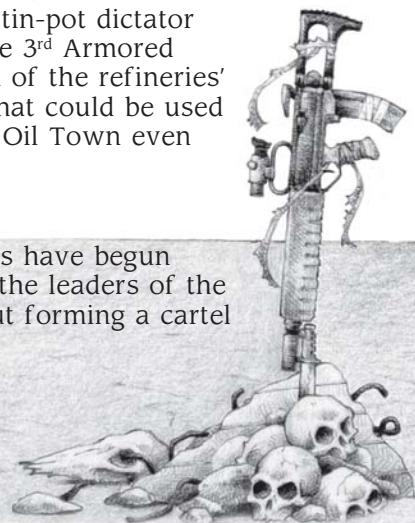
Weakness: Fire. Fire-based attacks do double damage to the creature. If the creature is killed by fire, it explodes, doing 3d20 damage with a Burst Radius of 5.

Oil Town

Things are getting interesting in Oil Town. Two of the town council members, Moses Hawley and Lanette Devine, are tired of taking orders from "that tin-pot dictator Meadows." They think the 3rd Armored consumes way too much of the refineries' production—production that could be used to make themselves and Oil Town even more prosperous.

Tangled Web

These two conspirators have begun secret negotiations with the leaders of the largest OPEC towns about forming a cartel



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that controls 90% of the oil production in North America. The OPEC leaders are interested, but they are moving cautiously. A number of them believe this is a trick to get them to lower their guard and allow Oil Town's military an easy shot at them.

The biggest obstacle in Hawley and Devine's way is Colonel Meadows. Meadows wants nothing to do with the OPEC leaders just out of principle. At some point, every one of them was (and some still are) a leader of a road gang—the same road gangs that the 3rd Armored has been fighting for 13 years. The leader of Fort Towson, Spanner Jordan, was Johnny Tyler's second-in-command during the Fuzzy Dice Massacre, and he continued the attack on Oil Town even after it was hopelessly lost and his jefe had been blown to bits. If Meadows does anything with OPEC, it will be to crush it and clean out some of the riffraff for good.

Hawley and Devine would like to see Meadows taken out of the picture. They are waiting for a firm commitment from the OPEC leaders before they take any definite steps in that direction however. The pair have located a suitable replacement for the colonel, Captain Curtis Mathews, the CO of one of the regiment's

tank companies. Mathews has made it clear he's willing to share power with them as long as he gets his fair share of the pie.

OPEC

In the meantime OPEC, has not been sitting idly by. Most of the leaders are in agreement that it's only a matter of time before Meadows loses his patience with them and sends the 3rd Armored out to crack some skulls. Since most of the fuel towns in OPEC are hard-pressed just to defend themselves and their convoys, there is little they could do to stop such a move.

Big Brother

But they know someone who can. The OPEC leaders have also been negotiating with the Combine. They are desperately trying to work out some sort of deal to exchange free gasoline and lubricants for the Combine sending troops in to kick Oil Town's butt. The sticking point in the negotiations is over the amount of autonomy the OPEC towns would retain under nominal Combine rule. The group has begun sending small shipments of fuel to Denver voluntarily in hopes of gaining some goodwill.

The recent behind-the-scenes offer by the Oil Town council members took the OPEC leaders by surprise. They are stringing the Oil Town conspirators along, hoping to gain some leverage with Throckmorton.

Gulf Fires

The fishermen from New Galveston missed a few things while they were checking out the oil rigs. If they had gone in for a closer look, they might have noticed that many of the rigs had turbine engines fired by the burning oil pipes, and that armored cables led down from these engines into the water.

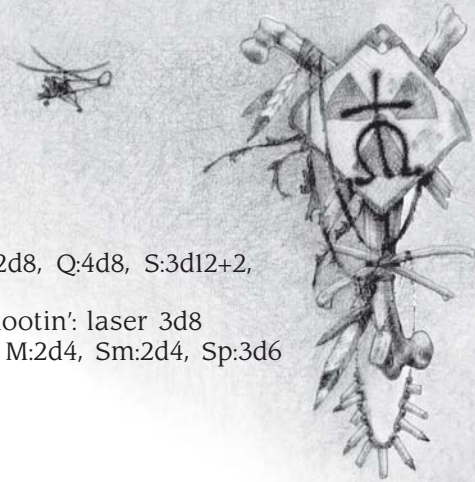
These cables all converge on an undamaged deep-sea rig far out into the gulf. This place is the home of Anton Vorlicky, a junker who once worked for British Petroleum and is now quite mad. The generators he has placed on the burning wells provide him with the power he needs to complete the gizmo he is working on—a device that can wipe out what little life is left along the entire Gulf Coast.

Doomsday

Vorlicky is building a device that combines a plasma bomb with a deep-core drill. When it's completed, he plans to drill down deep into the



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Earth's crust below the rig and set off the device. Although he doesn't think he's out to destroy the world, the massive explosion and the earthquake and tidal wave it triggers will devastate the entire Gulf Coast.

Vorlicky's device is a few years short of completion, and as he slips a little further into his delusional world each week, the odds of him successfully finishing it are dropping.

Voices From the Sea

Vorlicky was part of a small team onboard the oil rig when Judgment Day came, there to decommission the rig and mark equipment for the salvage team that was to follow them. Once the bombs fell, there was no one left on shore who knew the group was out there.

After a few weeks passed, three of the men decided to make for shore in the rig's motor launch, knowing it would probably run out of fuel before they reached the mainland. Vorlicky refused to go, preferring to wait alone for rescue rather than face death on the high seas.

Vorlicky's buddies never reached shore, and no one came for him. He built traps and nets from the equipment on the rig and lived on fish. As time went on, he began to hear voices from the sea. These voices told him of the wonders of an ancient race and how they were trapped far beneath the earth. They needed someone to free them from their millennia of imprisonment. That's when he began building his device.

Vorlicky built a sail for the remaining launch and traveled to nearby rigs, where he ignited them after welding the primitive engines in place. Since then, he has been slowly but surely building his device.

Keep Out

The voices from the sea (actually a manitou who's having lots of fun with Vorlicky) warned him that people might come to stop him, so Vorlicky protected the rig by building small plasma turrets and setting one at each corner. The turrets have a Range Increment of 20, a ROF of 1, and do 4d8 damage with a Burst Radius of 3. Each one has a battery with enough energy for 20 shots.

Vorlicky also put some of his aquatic neighbors to work for him. He captured a few sharks and made some modifications to them. He has four of these creatures which he can control with a small remote unit. They spend most of their time patrolling the area within a two-mile radius of the rig.

Vorlicky's Pet Sharks

Corporeal: D:3d8, N:2d8, Q:4d8, S:3d12+2, V:3d10

Fightin': jaws 5d8, shootin': laser 3d8

Mental: C:2d6, K:1d4, M:2d4, Sm:2d4, Sp:3d6

Pace: 8

Size: 10

Terror: 5

Special Abilities:

Armor: 1

Damage: Jaws (STR+1d8) and a laser (Range Increment 20, ROF 1, Speed 1, Damage 3d8, Shots 10). Vorlicky has attached a small laser the top of each shark's skull. The gun is only visible when the shark attacks.

Anton Vorlicky

Corporeal: D:3d6, N:3d6, S:2d6, Q:3d4, V:2d8

Dodge 3d6, drivin': boat 4d6, fightin': brawlin' 2d6, shootin': shotgun 4d6

Mental: C:2d8, K:4d12, M:2d6, Sm:4d10, Sp:2d8

Academia: occult 6d12, guts 4d8, science: occult engineering 6d12 scroungin' 5d8, scrutinize 3d8, search 4d8, survival 4d8, tinkerin' 6d10

Edges: Arcane background: junker

Hindrances: Loco

Pace: 6

Wind: 16

Powers: Damage, sensor, trait

Gear: A g-ray collector, 100 pounds of ghost rock (in the rig's generator hut), and a 12-gauge shotgun with 19 rounds of ammo.

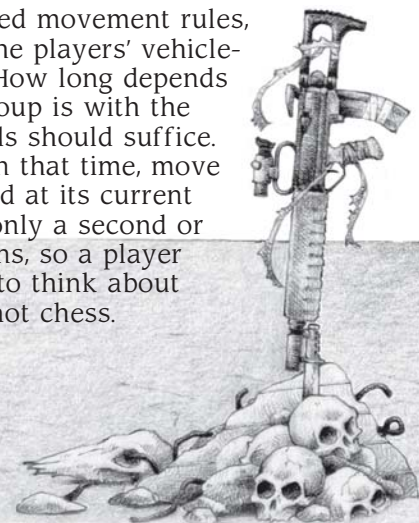
Running Road Combats

Here are a few quick tips for running road battles:

Divide your bad guys into groups by vehicle type. Use a single sheet to keep track of each whole group, with different-colored paper clips to mark the speeds of individual vehicles.

Vehicles have five damage steps, just like characters. Use poker chips to keep track of damage, just as described in *Hell on Earth*.

When using the detailed movement rules, impose a time limit on the players' vehicle-maneuvering decisions. How long depends on how familiar your group is with the rules, but 10 or 15 seconds should suffice. If a player can't decide in that time, move the vehicle straight ahead at its current speed. Characters have only a second or so to make such decisions, so a player shouldn't have all night to think about them—it's road combat, not chess.



Hell Riders





Chapter Six:

Hell Riders



Everyone's heard the phrase "curiosity killed the cat." Well, in this case, curiosity didn't kill the cat in question—but he sure wishes it had.

This adventure is set in northern California. The posse is going to need to travel quickly, so it's a good idea that the group have at least one vehicle that can hold all of the heroes.

The Story So Far

The events leading to this twisted tale began in the autumn of 2093. Hammer Ferguson and his gang the Hell Riders were on the move. A Law Dog had put a little backbone into the residents of the settlement they regularly "taxed," and the people had fought back, giving the gang a bloody nose. Rather than get in a war with the upstarts, Hammer and his boys simply decided it was time to move on to greener pastures.

The Farm

One day, while cruising the highways in search of new people to victimize, the gang saw an approaching storm. Not wanting to get caught out in black rain, the bikers began looking for

shelter, but they were miles from nowhere on a back country road. They eventually spotted a small farm just off the road and headed for that.

The farm was abandoned. The gang pulled their rides inside the barn and settled down to wait out the storm. Hammer didn't feel like waiting in the barn listening to the rest of the gang tell the same tired stories again, so before the storm began, he and a few others went over to check out the farmhouse and see if anything of value remained.

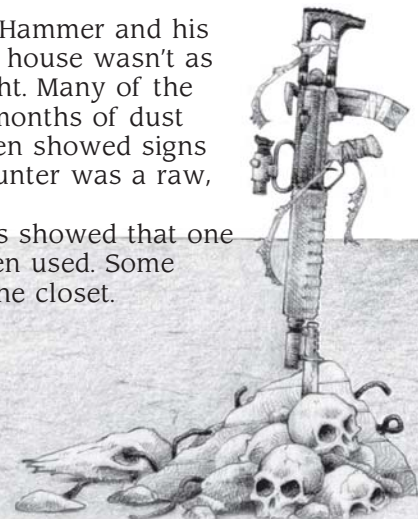
The Storm Breaks

The bikers hadn't been in the house long when the storm began. It was black rain, as they had suspected, so they were stuck in the house until the storm let up.

It didn't take long for Hammer and his goons to realize that the house wasn't as deserted as they'd thought. Many of the rooms were filled with months of dust and decay, but the kitchen showed signs of recent use. On the counter was a raw, bloody deer haunch.

A quick check upstairs showed that one of the bedrooms had been used. Some men's clothing hung in the closet.

Marshal: ïïï



Hell Riders



The Basement

The only place the gang hadn't looked was the basement, so Hammer opened the door and started on down. Before he got halfway down the steps, the biker could hear low chanting in a language he didn't recognize.

Hammer continued forward to check out the source of the noise and was greeted with a macabre sight. A man knelt at the edge of a large pentagram. Candles burned at each of the symbol's points. At the center of the pentagram was a large mason jar.

The man was naked from the waist up, his torso covered in bizarre symbols painted in blood. He was chanting in a low voice, and he periodically dipped a small stick in a bowl of blood beside him. After each dip, he would raise the stick and flick blood out over the pentagram in rhythm with his voice.

Before he even realized what he was doing, Hammer raised his sawed-off double-barrel shotgun and emptied both chambers into the back of the man's head. The man collapsed in a heap and Hammer moved to investigate the mason jar at the center of the pentagram.

Derrick Holmes, Demon Hunter

Unknown to Hammer, he had just killed Derrick Holmes, an illustrious demon hunter. Holmes was born in 1842. He grew up to become a preacher and fought against the creatures of the Reckoning. He died in September of 1877 and came back from the dead a month later. A stubborn and highly spiritual man, Holmes had little trouble beating his manitou into submission and had very few problems with "lost time."

Holmes continued his crusade against the forces of darkness. He used his holy powers to cast out spirits which had taken over human hosts, and became something of an expert on the subject. As his knowledge grew, he began seeking out these spirits and trying to trap or destroy them.

Over the centuries, Holmes had repeated clashes with a particular demon of some power, a creature called Atheron. This beast was so powerful, in fact, that a single human host was insufficient. He required three living hosts to fully manifest himself in the physical world. The preacher finally defeated Atheron in 2028 and bound his spirit with powerful magic.

Unfortunately, the rituals used to bind this dark spirit had to be renewed every 66 years. Holmes was in the process of renewing them when Hammer decorated the walls with his brains.

Atheron Returns

Hammer couldn't resist finding out what was floating in the dark, murky liquid inside the mason jar, so he ripped it open. Inside the jar were three human hearts—the hearts of Atheron's last three human hosts.

Opening the jar broke the last remnants of the spell which had kept the demon imprisoned for decades, and he came roaring out, looking for a new host. When the other members of the gang reached the basement to see what the shooting was all about, they found Hammer crouched in the middle of the pentagram chowing down on the jar's gruesome contents. Atheron had found a new home, and Hammer had a new way of life.

The New Apostles

Hammer/Atheron told his gang that he had been given extraordinary new powers and that he would use them to bring the gang power, riches, and women. The few who thought their leader had lost his last marbles and were openly

Hell Riders

skeptical of his claims were used as subjects on which he demonstrated these new powers. The rest of the gang quickly fell in line.

Atheron's first order of business was to lead the Hell Riders back to Burney and deal with the Law Dog who had caused them problems. The do-gooder's skinned carcass was hung from the town's flagpole, and the townspeople were made the gang's slaves.

Today

Atheron has spent the last year consolidating his power and indoctrinating the members of the Hell Riders into a cult which worships him. The gang has grown from 15 bikers into a small army of almost 100.

Scouting patrols of Hell Riders scour the area surrounding Burney, looking for new recruits and slaves. Anyone they find who might serve in either capacity is brought back to Atheron's "temple," where the demon decides the person's fate.

The Eyes of Atheron

Atheron refers to his human hosts as his "Eyes," because they allow him look out upon the land of the living. At the moment, he has only one eye—Hammer—but he is looking to remedy this soon. The rituals he needs to possess additional bodies can only be performed on a night with a new moon on which the alignment of Mars and Jupiter are conducive. These conditions occur only once every 18 months, and the first time they will happen since his return is three nights after this adventure begins.

In preparation for this festive night, the gang has been particularly busy, searching far and wide to round up people to participate in the ceremony. They won't have to do much—just scream a little and die.

The Anointed

Although Atheron has not been able to claim any new hosts for himself, he has summoned some lesser spirits bound to his service and has installed them in two of the gang's leaders. He calls these individuals his "Anointed." They ensure the gang carries out his instructions to the letter and perform any delicate tasks that need that special touch only a manitou can provide. If he gets the chance (probably not within the scope of this adventure), there's one more spirit he can call upon to create a third Anointed.

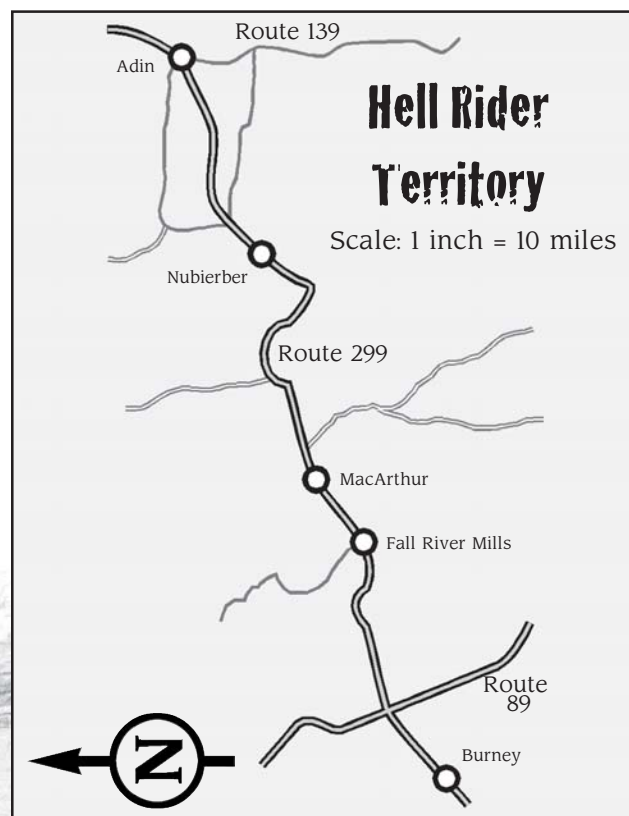
The Setup

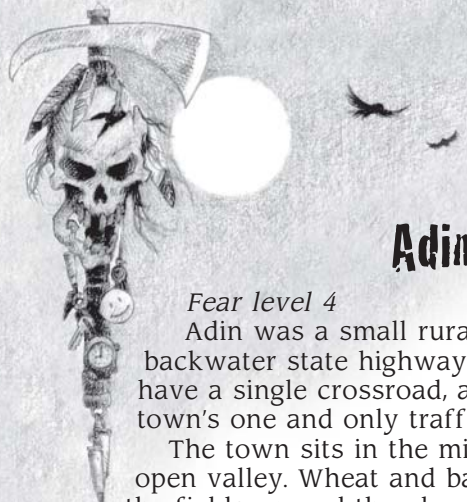
There really isn't any setup for this adventure. The heroes aren't hired by anyone, they just simply get caught up in the middle of events and have to deal with them. The first two chapters of the adventure can be worked into nearly any existing campaign. Although the adventure is written to take place in California, there's no reason why you can't change the names of the towns to fit the area your posse is in.

If your posse has been adventuring in the same area for a while, you might want to foreshadow these events some by having the heroes hear stories about some weird, cult-like biker gang.

Chapter One: The Blind Man

This encounter kicks off the adventure. It's set in the small abandoned town of Adin, California, where the heroes stop perhaps to do a little scrounging. As we mentioned above, you can transplant it to nearly any convenient setting so long as your posse pauses in the town.





Hell Riders

Adin

Fear level 4

Adin was a small rural town on a backwater state highway, just large enough to have a single crossroad, at which sits the town's one and only traffic light.

The town sits in the middle of a rolling, open valley. Wheat and barley grow wild in the fields around the place, and some of these plants have even begun to spring up in untended patches of grass in the town itself.

The people of Adin have long since died or moved away. All but a few of the buildings in downtown Adin were once businesses; most of the inhabitants of this agricultural town lived outside of the town proper on their farms. The buildings are mostly intact, but very few windows have survived.

This encounter assumes that the posse has stopped in Adin for some reason. Maybe the heroes just need shelter for the night, or there's a storm brewing on the horizon, or the group is in the mood to scrounge for loot.

Here's a quick rundown of the buildings in Adin and what the posse might find in them if the heroes poke around. Route 299 sees little traffic, so the place hasn't been picked over as thoroughly as many such towns are. Don't go overboard with what you allow the posse to find here, but don't worry too much about all the loot. Little of it has any immediate value, and the heroes aren't going to be paid for the Hell they are about to go through.

Adin Hardware

This place burned to the ground years ago, victim of one of the first gangs to come through town. Anyone stubborn enough to dig through the charred timbers can actually find some items of use. Digging through the rubble takes about an hour. An Onerous (7) *scroungin'* roll turns up one of the following (in addition to the charred bones of Bob Adin and his family) for

each success: a box of 50 large nails (\$5), a 20-foot length of heavy chain (\$2), a pair of boltcutters (\$15), and a socket wrench set (\$50).

Corner Drug

This was the only drug store for almost 20 miles. All drugs that might be used in anything resembling a recreational manner, along with most of the first-aid supplies, were looted long ago. The gangers who tore the place up weren't overly thorough,

though, so it's still possible to find a few useful items. An Onerous (7) *scroungin'* roll turns up one of the following for each success: a bottle of sunblock 15 (\$10), a bottle of 50 aspirin tablets (\$15), a knee brace (\$25), a case (12 tubes) of acne cream (\$1 a tube), a roll of gauze bandages (\$20), and a tube of topical disinfectant (20 applications, +2 to *Vigor* rolls to resist infection from minor cuts and burns, \$50).

Early Grocery

The interior of this building has a smell of musty decay. What little food remains has been reduced to dried-up, multicolored puffballs of bacteria and mold. This place was cleaned out systematically by the town's residents right after the war, so there is nothing edible left.

On the loading dock in the back is a functional fork lift. It has an electric motor, though its battery is long dead. The lift could be worth up to \$500 in a town that has electricity, or it can be cannibalized for parts. A Fair (5) *scroungin'* roll provides a junker with 1d8 electronic and 1d10 mechanical components.

Gilchrist Residence

This is a two-story Victorian-style house. A portion of the roof and the upper floor have collapsed, and the rest of house is not in much better shape.

The house's storm cellar is home to Caleb, Marly, and Red-Eye. See Survivors, opposite.

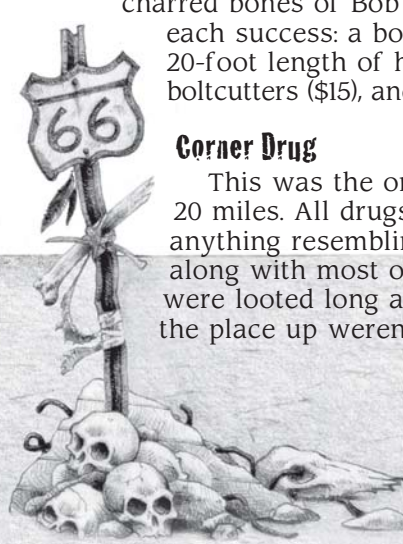
Go-Go Mart

This small convenience store has two gas pumps out front, but the tanks have long since been emptied. The interior of the building is a shambles; most of the shelves have been pulled over, and the floor is covered with old magazines (all of the adult titles are missing). An Onerous (7) *scroungin'* roll turns up one of the following for each success: a one-gallon jug of wiper fluid (\$5), two one-quart bottles of 10W40 motor oil (\$50 each), a four-roll pack of toilet paper (\$25), and a small bottle of lighter fluid (\$10).

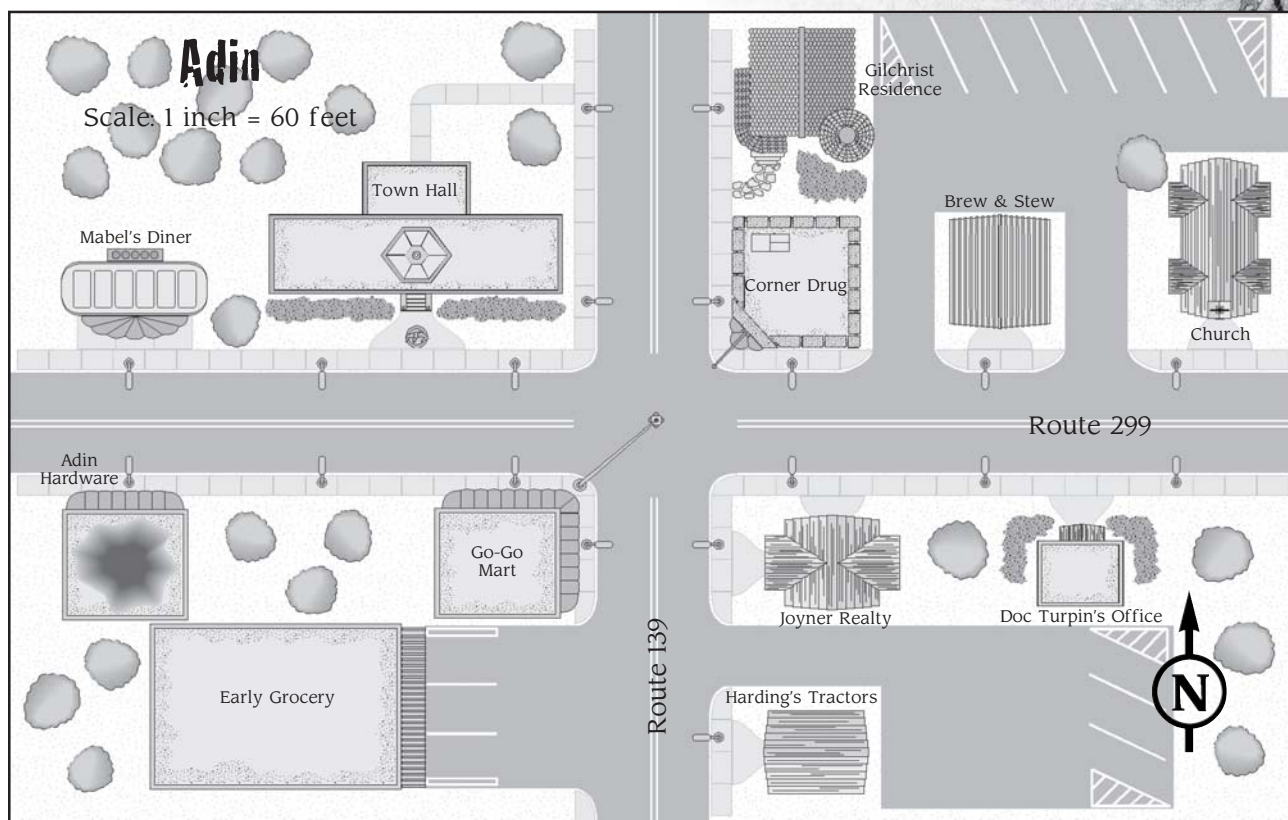
Adin Methodist Church

There is little of obvious interest here unless the heroes are looking for choir robes (there are 10) or hymnals (40 scattered about the floor).

If the posse looks closer, an Incredible (11) *scroungin'* roll discovers some loose floorboards under the communion table. Prying these up reveals two silver candlesticks worth \$50 each, and a silver communion set worth \$100.



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Doctor Turpin's Office

The good doctor's medicine cabinets have been looted. A supply closet in the back holds 200 tongue depressors, a box of latex gloves (10 pairs), and a stethoscope.

Harding's Tractors

This was once a profitable tractor dealership. There is a rusted combine in the back. Its engine has been stripped of usable parts, but a determined junker can salvage 1d4 mechanical and 1d6 structural components with a Hard (9) *scroungin'* roll.

Other Buildings

Mabel's Diner, Joyner Realty, the Brew & Stew, and the town hall are all typical small-town structures containing nothing of worth.

Survivors

The town is not completely empty. Three people live in the storm cellar of the Gilchrist house: Caleb and Marly King, and Red-Eye.

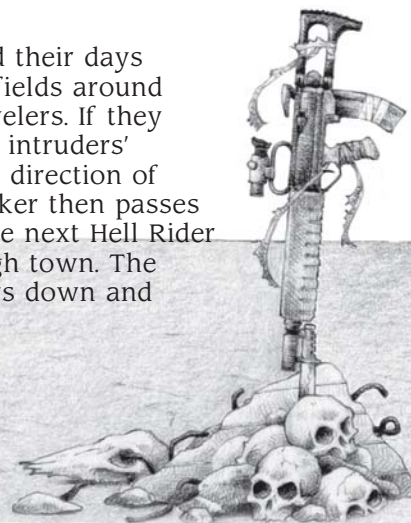
Caleb and Marly are Red-Eye's prisoners and occasional accomplices. The pair lived here for a

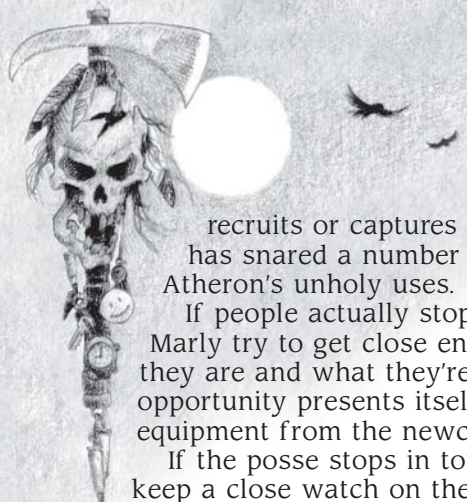
while with their parents until a Hell Rider foraging party came through town and discovered their hiding place. Their parents were carted off to Burney to work as slaves in Atheron's temple.

Red-Eye remained behind with the Caleb and Marly to snare more unwary travelers for Atheron's service. He has told the two youths that their parents' lives depend on their cooperation. If they displease him, he only has to say a word and their parents become part of the next sacrifice at the temple. In truth, he has no idea if the pair's parents are alive or dead, but he doesn't care as long as he can use them to keep his "helpers" in line.

Operation Lookout

Caleb and Marly spend their days watching the roads and fields around Adin for any sign of travelers. If they spot any, they report the intruders' numbers, equipment, and direction of travel to Red-Eye. The biker then passes this information on to the next Hell Rider patrol that passes through town. The patrol tracks the travelers down and





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recruits or captures them. This system has snared a number of people for Atheron's unholy uses.

If people actually stop in town, Caleb and Marly try to get close enough to find out who they are and what they're up to. If an opportunity presents itself, they try to steal equipment from the newcomers.

If the posse stops in town, the two spies keep a close watch on the heroes and attempt to steal some of their equipment there's a chance. If the posse simply passes through, the heroes' presence is reported to the slave convoy which passes through Adin later that day.

The Survivors' Story

If Caleb and Marly are caught by the posse, they resort to Plan B. They tell the heroes a sob story about how they live here all alone with their blind grandfather in the cellar beneath the Gilchrist house. If the heroes seem like decent types, they invite them to come share a meal with them and their grandfather. If the posse gets rough with them, they bargain for their freedom and "accidentally" let it slip that they have a small fortune hidden away in the cellar.

Both of these stories are just ruses to get their captors over to the cellar where Red-Eye can take care of them.

The two kids are terrified of Red-Eye because they have seen what he his arcane powers are capable of, and because he regularly beats them black and blue for the slightest disobedience. They also fear for their parents' lives. For these reasons, they don't ask for help from the posse, no matter how decent or powerful the heroes appear to be. Their fears also motivate them to be utterly convincing while telling their story, giving them a +4 bonus to resist any *scrutinize* rolls.

The Cellar

Red-Eye and the kids have a cozy little terror-nest setup in the cellar. There's a king-size bed in one corner that Red-Eye sleeps in. In the opposite corner is a ratty old mattress shared by Caleb and Marly. In the corner closest to the door is a stack of firewood, a few jugs of water, and a wood stove which vents out of one of the cellar windows.

Caleb King

Caleb is a 10-year-old boy with blond hair and blue eyes. He wears a dirty T-shirt and a pair of ragged jeans.

Caleb would like to run away, but he fears for his parents, and he won't leave without his sister because he knows that Red-Eye would take his anger out on her. He hates Red-Eye and dreams of seeing him dead.

If the heroes figure out the situation and offer to help the kids, Caleb accepts and tells them what he knows.

Profile

Corporeal: D:3d8, N:3d8, S:3d6, Q:2d8, V:3d6
Dodge 3d8, fightin': brawlin' 3d8, sneak 5d8
Mental: C:3d8, K:2d6, M:2d6, Sm:3d8, Sp:2d8
Guts 3d6, search 4d6, survival 4d8

Edges: Keen

Hindrances: Kid

Size: 5

Pace: 8

Wind: 14

Gear: Binoculars and a small knife.

Marly King

Marly is 17 years old, an attractive blonde with blue eyes just like her brother. She borders on scrawny due to Red-Eye's mistreatment. Her black bustier and a tight leather miniskirt are not practical clothes for climbing around in ruins, but Red-Eye picked out her wardrobe.

Marly suspects that her parents are dead, but she won't leave Red-Eye because she doesn't know for sure. She's tried several times to convince Caleb to run away. She's not likely to believe that the heroes are a real solution, though, and will hesitate to cooperate with them (though she won't give them away to Red-Eye).

Red-Eye allows her to carry an assault rifle to hunt deer and small game for their stew pot. Before he gave it to her, he shot himself with it and allowed her to watch as the wound closed back up in a matter of seconds. For that reason (among others) she's so cowed to turn it on him.

Profile

Corporeal: D:3d6, N:3d8, S:3d4, Q:4d6, V:2d8
Dodge 3d8, fightin': brawlin' 3d8, shootin': rifle
2d8, sneak 4d8

Mental: C:4d6, K:2d6, M:2d8, Sm:3d8, Sp:2d6
Guts 3d6, persuasion 2d8, search 4d6, survival
4d8

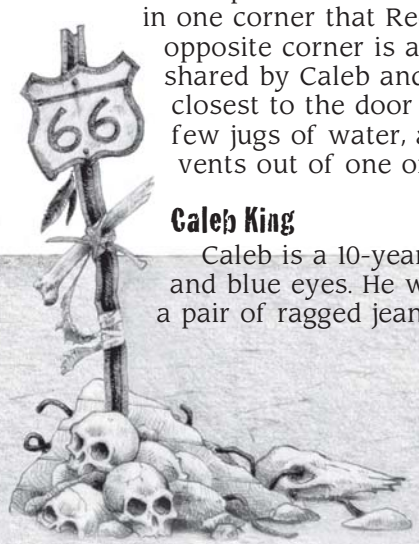
Hindrances: Scrawny

Size: 5

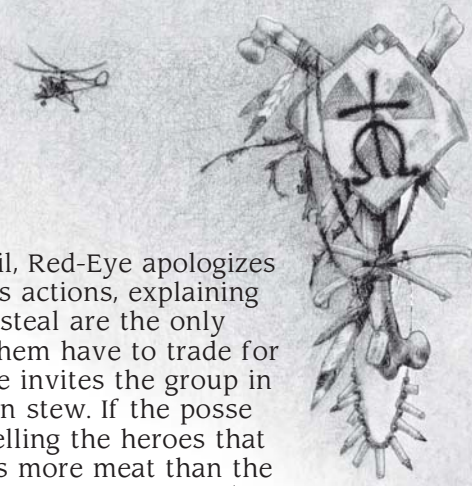
Pace: 8

Wind: 14

Gear: Binoculars and an NA assault rifle with 5 rounds of ammo.



Hell Riders



Red-Eye

Red-Eye is one of Atheron's anointed. He is the host for a spirit by the name of Manithor, one of three demons bound to Atheron's service.

Red-Eye is a weather-beaten man in his late 50s. He has wrinkled, leathery skin that looks as if he spent much of his life outdoors. He wears jeans, heavy biker boots, and a seedy T-shirt.

When the three have "visitors," Red-Eye poses as the kids' blind grandfather. He wears a bandanna over his eyes to hide his bright, blood-red eyeballs. He also carries a cane as part of his disguise.

The evil spirit inhabiting Red-Eyes' body loves to torment Caleb and Marly and deals out brutal punishments at the least sign of disobedience. He doesn't do so while in his "kindly grandpa" act, but observant characters might see some reticence in the children when with him.

Profile

Corporeal: D:3d8, N:3d8, S:4d12, Q:3d8, V:2d10
Dodge 3d8, drivin': car, motorcycle 4d8, fightin':
brawlin', knife 4d8, quick draw 4d8, shootin':
pistol, rifle, machine-gun 4d8, speed load 2d8,
sleight o' hand 4d8, throwin': bolts o' doom
3d8

Mental: C:2d8, K:2d8, M:2d10, Sm:3d8, Sp:3d10
Academia: occult 5d8, overawe 4d10, performin'
3d10, scrutinize 4d8, search 4d8, survival 4d8,
tinkerin' 5d8

Hindrances: Big britches, mean as a rattler,
bloodthirsty

Pace: 8

Size: 6

Terror: 7 (Only if he reveals his true nature.)

Special Abilities:

Armor: 2

Bolts o' Doom: Red-Eye can hurl inky black spheres from his hands. (Shots 1, Speed 1, ROF 1, Range 5, Damage 3d6.) These spheres are spiritual energy that bypass all armor. Red-Eye can choose to do normal or brawling damage when he attacks.

Regeneration: By spending an action and making a Fair (5) *Vigor* roll, Red-Eye can regenerate his host body. Each success he gets on the roll removes a wound.

Gear: A cane, a .44 revolver with 10 rounds of hollow-point ammo, and a large knife.

Meeting Red-Eye

If Caleb or Marly lure the posse over to the cellar, the heroes meet Red-Eye. The possessed biker acts the part of a doddering, blind old man.

Dinner is Served

If the posse is civil, Red-Eye apologizes for Caleb and Marly's actions, explaining that the things they steal are the only things the three of them have to trade for food and clothing. He invites the group in for a meal of venison stew. If the posse refuses, he insists, telling the heroes that their little family has more meat than the three of them can eat before it spoils (there is in fact a large haunch of recently-butchered venison sitting on the small counter by the stove).

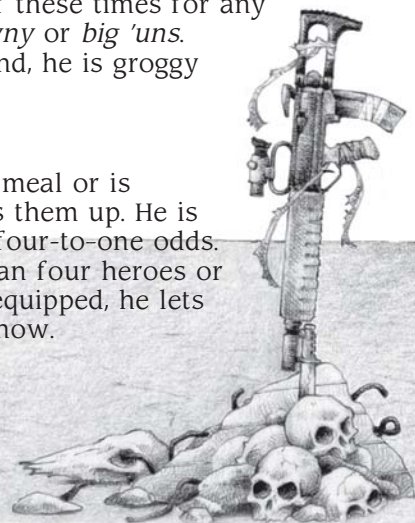
Red-Eye prepares the meal himself while making small talk with the heroes. He laces the food heavily with a powerful sedative to which he is immune. Anyone who eats more than a mouthful of the stew is affected by the drug about a minute later. The first effect of the drug is to make anyone taking it groggy; this imposes a -2 penalty on all rolls. The second effect is to put the hero to sleep. Resisting this requires the affected hero to make an Incredible (11) *Vigor* roll every round for 12 rounds. A successful roll means the hero fights the effects of the drug for that round. A failed roll means the hero takes the difference in wind. Once the hero reaches 0 Wind, he passes out and can stop rolling. If a hero manages to stay conscious for the full 12 rounds, he has resisted the drug's effect and can stop rolling. He's still groggy and disoriented, however, for the next hour.

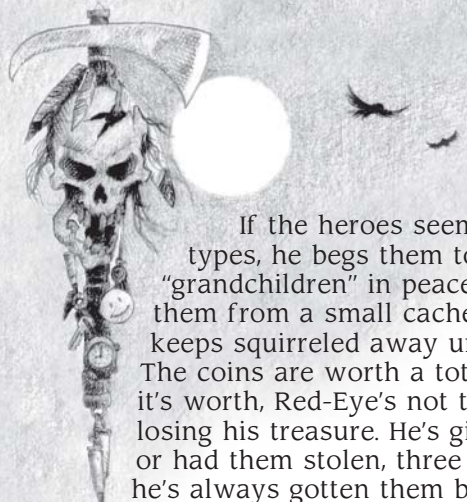
Once the heroes begin nodding off, Red-Eye takes out any of those who seem like they might be fighting the drug or haven't eaten any stew. Provided he is successful, he forces a few extra pills down the throats of anyone who might be able to cause trouble while tied up, like sykers or Doomsayers. After taking care of this, he trusses the heroes up and waits for the Hell Rider patrol to show up.

Anyone who has been drugged is out for the next four hours. Those who have been given extra pills are out for an additional four hours. Cut an hour off of these times for any characters who are *brawny* or *big 'uns*. Once a hero comes around, he is groggy for another hour.

The Treasure

If the group refuses a meal or is belligerent, Red-Eye sizes them up. He is willing to take on up to four-to-one odds. If the posse has more than four heroes or seems particularly well-equipped, he lets them call the shots—for now.





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If the heroes seem like the greedy types, he begs them to leave him and his “grandchildren” in peace. He offers to pay them from a small cache of gold coins he keeps squirreled away under his mattress. The coins are worth a total of \$300. For what it's worth, Red-Eye's not too worried about losing his treasure. He's given the coins away, or had them stolen, three times before, and he's always gotten them back. Some of those who stole the coins are now part of the gang—anyone who would steal from a blind man and his grandkids is prime Hell Rider material.

Once the heroes move on, Red-Eye reports their numbers and direction of travel to the next patrol to come through town.

Rescuing Caleb and Marly

If the heroes defeat Red-Eye, Caleb and Marly tell them their story and apologize many times over for aiding in the Red-Eye's deception them. They beg the posse to go to Burney and rescue their parents, or at least find out if they're still alive. If Red-Eye hasn't revealed his hidden treasure, the pair offer the gold coins to the heroes as payment.



Slavers

Four hours after the posse arrives in Adin, a large Hell Rider patrol rolls into town. This group has been out rounding up slaves and sacrificial victims for Atheron's shindig later in the week and has gotten a pretty big haul.

All told, there are 12 Hell Riders in the patrol. Two ride in a pickup. The rest ride motorcycles, two of which have sidecars.

All of the gang members wear jackets emblazoned with Atheron's symbol: a triangle with a large eye in the center. Smaller eyes project from each of the triangle's corners. Have any heroes with the *academia: occult* Aptitude roll against an Incredible (II) TN when they first see the symbol. A successful roll identifies it as the arcane symbol of a demon. A raise recalls that the demon in question was supposedly big during the Middle Ages and has been associated with human sacrifice. Two raises identifies the spirit as Atheron. Three or more raises recalls that the three small eyes in the symbol represent the three hosts the manitou needs to fully manifest itself in the physical world.

The bed of the pickup is filled by a large cage which holds three prisoners: two men and a woman. One of the men has a serious wound on his right leg that has been crudely bandaged.

Come Out, Come Out, Wherever You Are!

The patrol knows that Red-Eye and the kids live here, but they don't immediately head for his hideaway in case he's “entertaining” guests. They stop in the center of town and dismount to take a break. Some of the gang members wander off to relieve themselves in the ruins, but they never move completely out of sight of the main intersection.

If Red-Eye doesn't put in an appearance after 10 minutes, the leader, Skullz Kaufman, gets a group of six Riders together to check out the cellar. The group doesn't knock. They simply rip the cellar door open and yell for everyone inside to drop their weapons.

If the heroes are in the cellar, they have exactly 10 seconds to comply before the gangsters turn the room into a shooting gallery. If Red-Eye hasn't revealed his ugly side yet, he cowers in a corner, from which he attacks the heroes from behind if the shooting starts. Caleb and Marly crawl underneath their mattress.

The gang wants to capture the heroes alive, so they go for called shots to the arms and legs at first, and Red-Eye throws stunning bolts instead of lethal ones. This changes if a gang

Hell Riders

member dies. His buddies are then out for blood and go for killing shots.

Skullz Kaufman

Skullz is an enormous, muscular brute who enjoys killing people with his bare hands. His nickname comes from his habit of taking his victims' head as a trophy. There are currently six heads in his saddlebags, two of which were taken earlier in the day.

Profile

Corporeal: D:3d8, N:3d8, S:4d12, Q:2d6, V:2d10
Dodge 3d8, drivin': motorcycle 4d8, fightin':
brawlin', ax 5d8, shootin': pistol 4d8
Mental: C:3d6, K:2d6, M:3d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:3d6
Overawe 4d8, scrutinize 3d6, search 4d6, survival
2d6, tinkerin' 4d6
Edges: Brawny
Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, loco (collects heads),
mean as a rattler
Size: 7
Pace: 8
Wind: 16
Gear: .44 magnum automatic with 13 rounds of
hollow-point ammo, a battle-ax (STR+2d8), and
a leather jacket (AV -1).

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These gangers are some hard core bad guys. Anyone who has been in the gang for a while has seen some pretty gruesome sights in Atheron's temple, and those who might have been the least bit squeamish have been weeded out long ago. None of these bikers think twice about any form of brutality.

Profile

Corporeal: D:3d6, N:3d8, S:2d8, Q:2d6, V:3d6
Dodge 3d8, drivin': motorcycle 4d8, fightin':
brawlin', knife 5d8, shootin': pistol 4d8
Mental: C:3d6, K:2d6, M:3d6, Sm:1d6, Sp:2d6
Overawe 3d6, search 4d6, survival 2d6, tinkerin' 4d6
Hindrances: Bloodthirsty
Size: 6
Pace: 8
Wind: 12
Gear: Leather jackets (AV -1), large knives, and
an assortment of pistols, shotguns, and
crossbows with 5 to 12 rounds per weapon.

Gang Vehicles

The gang has a standard full-sized pickup truck and eight motorcycles—all street bikes. Two of the motorcycles have sidecars; these

have the same stats as the other bikes with the exception that their Handling is reduced to +2.

The Cage

If the posse loses the fight with the patrol or is successfully drugged or beaten senseless by Red-Eye, the heroes are thrown in the cage in the back of the pickup. It's a three-hour drive to the gang's headquarters in Burney. Unless the posse is able to escape, the heroes are taken to Atheron's temple and locked up with the other prisoners. See Chapter Four: Going to the Temple for details.

Cellmates

If the heroes come to before they get to the temple, they have a little time to get to know their cellmates. The prisoners are traders who were traveling together. They introduce themselves as Vivian and Phil Scarpeti and Leo Hodges (Phil is the wounded one). The Hell Riders caught them on the outskirts of Lookout and torched their wagon.

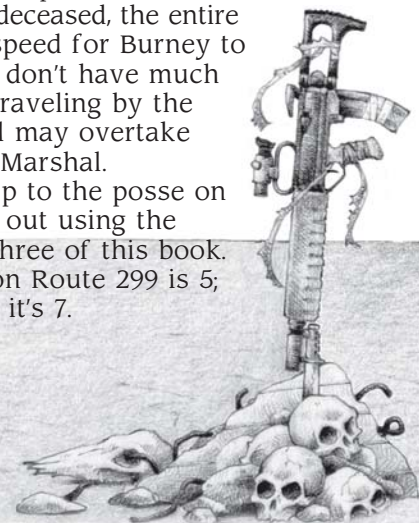
The traders don't know much about the Hell Riders, but they can tell the posse that they have heard the word "sacrifice" come up in the gangers' conversations a number of times. From what they've heard, it sounds like this sacrifice is going to take place the following night.

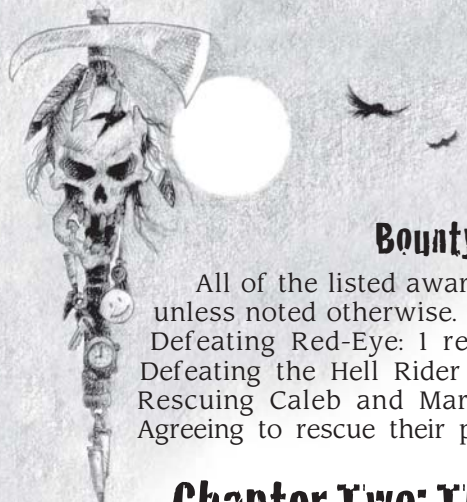
The Chase

If the posse has already moved on when the patrol arrives, the gang members take a quick look around. If Red-Eye is still breathing, he reports the heroes' activities to Skullz. The patrol leader leaves the pickup truck behind with Red-Eye, and he and his boys hightail it after the posse. If the heroes did not leave by the main highway, Skullz sends a rider that way to warn the tollbooth garrison in Wheeler (see Chapter Two: The Tollbooth for details) to be on the lookout for the group.

If the Anointed one is deceased, the entire patrol heads out at top speed for Burney to report this. If the heroes don't have much of a head start and are traveling by the main highway, the patrol may overtake them at your discretion, Marshal.

If the patrol catches up to the posse on the road, fight the battle out using the chase rules in Chapter Three of this book. The TN for *drivin'* rolls on Route 299 is 5; for any of the dirt roads it's 7.





Hell Riders

Bounty

All of the listed awards are per player unless noted otherwise.
Defeating Red-Eye: 1 red chip.
Defeating the Hell Rider patrol: 1 white chip.
Rescuing Caleb and Marly: 1 red chip.
Agreeing to rescue their parents: 1 white chip.

Chapter Two: The Tollbooth

Regardless of which combination of roads the heroes follow in heading for Burney, they eventually have to pass through Fall River Mills, yet another deserted town along Route 299. For this reason, the Hell Riders have set up a roadblock and "tollbooth" here. They use it to secure the road, snare any travelers their patrols missed, and keep undesirables (like do-gooding heroes) away from their temple.

If the heroes get any bright ideas about traveling 200 miles out of their way and entering Burney from the opposite side, have them run into a similar roadblock on the highway approaching from that direction.

The Road Block

The gang has blocked off Route 299 where it passes through Wheeler. The roadblock consists of a few sections of concrete divider and an old cement truck that has been parked across the road. All of the side streets within two blocks of the roadblock have also been closed off with concrete dividers.

The Garrison

In the early days of Atheron's temple, the roadblock was manned by more than 20 Hell Riders. Since then, the gang's growth and the success of the biker's patrols have made it too dangerous to approach within 20 miles of Burney. Locals know to stay away, and the only people who pass through the roadblock these days are travelers who are very lost or very suicidal.

The roadblock is now manned by only five members of the gang. Unless they have been warned by a member of Skullz's patrol to be on the lookout for the posse, all five of them are in the abandoned Rolling Rock bar, drinking grain alcohol meant for their bikes and playing a contentious game of poker.

The bikers can see the roadblock and about 100 yards of the road leading to it

through the plate glass window at the front of the bar. The Hell Riders come out of the bar to challenge anyone who approaches it. If the posse spots the roadblock and tries to run, the gangers run to their motorcycles parked in back of the bar and give chase.

Tax Assessment

If the heroes actually stop at the roadblock and talk with the bikers, they are approached by the group's leader, Frankie Devane, a small, weasely guy with dark hair that looks like it's been slicked back with axle grease.

Frankie explains to the heroes that they are driving on the Hell Riders' road and must pay a toll for that privilege. He makes a big show of looking over the posse's equipment and vehicles. If the heroes ask what he's doing, he says, "Assessing your tax."

After taking a few minutes to examine things, Frankie proclaims, "Sorry, but it looks you fall in the 100% tax bracket." At this point his cronies' guns are leveled at the heroes. Unless they can come up with an impressive way to bluff their way through, the heroes are going to have to shoot their way out of this situation.

The Ambush

If the bikers have been alerted by a messenger from Skullz, they are waiting in ambush positions when the heroes arrive. Two are in the door of the Rolling Rock, sheltering behind a table turned on its side, and two at the windows of the bakery across the street. Frankie waits behind one of the concrete dividers in the road. He challenges the posse as described above if they actually stop at the roadblock.

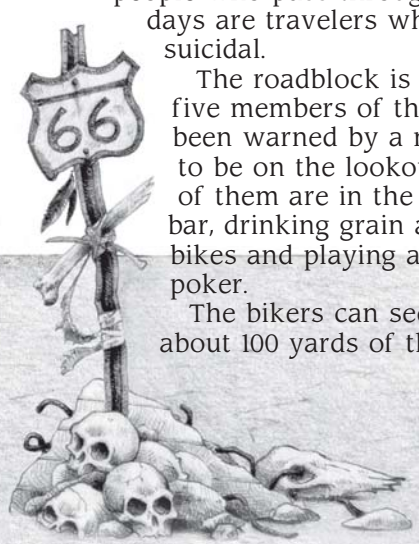
If the heroes try to turn and run, the hidden bikers open fire on them. Their first few shots are at the tires of the heroes' vehicles. If the posse escapes the ambush area, the Hell Riders go for their bikes and give chase.

Gatecrashers

If the posse has a large vehicle or some sort of heavy weapon, the heroes might try to just blast their way through the roadblock. The concrete dividers have an AV of 6 and a Size modifier of +4 in a collision.

Frankie Devane

Frankie is one of the original Hell Riders. He achieved his status in the gang by being a conniving, back stabbing weasel. Atheron knows



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he can depend on Frankie to give him the dirt on the rest of the gang. He is universally hated by the other gang members, but no one dares lift a finger against him for fear of their leader's wrath. Frankie doesn't care. He enjoys being demon's pet.

Profile

Corporeal: D:3d6, N:2d6, S:2d6, Q:2d8, V:2d6
Dodge 3d6, drivin': motorcycle 4d6, fightin':
brawlin' 3d8, shootin': pistol 3d6
Mental: C:3d6, K:1d6, M:4d6, Sm:2d8, Sp:3d6
Overawe 2d6, scrutinize 3d6, search 4d6, survival
2d8, tinkerin' 3d8
Edges: Luck o' the Irish
Hindrances: Big mouth, squeaky
Size: 6
Pace: 6
Wind: 12
Gear: An SA officer's pistol with 7 rounds of
ammo, a Kevlar vest, and a diary.

Frankie's Goons

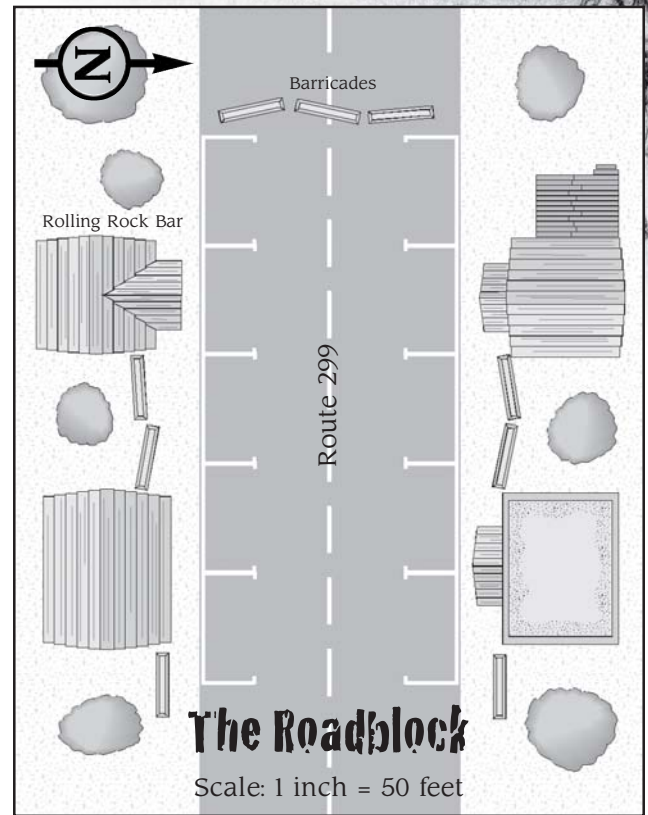
The four Hell Riders watching the roadblock with Frankie have the same stats as those in Chapter One. Two have Northern Alliance assault rifles with one full clip each. The other two carry crossbows and have 20 bolts each.

Giving up the Goods

If the heroes manage to take Frankie alive, he begs for his life and offers to tell them anything they want to know in exchange for his freedom. If the posse then releases him he heads for the edge of Hell Rider territory as fast as he can—he knows how Atheron treats turncoats!

Though Frankie will talk, he won't give away more than he has to. Make the heroes fish for the info Frankie has. The human weasel can tell the heroes the following:

The number of Hell Riders in Burney is roughly 40. The leader of the gang is Hammer Ferguson. He has supernatural powers, and has taken to calling himself Atheron. Two smaller gangs, the Rocket Jocks and the Road Plague, have joined the Hell Riders recently. These new additions to the gang have caused some friction. There is a power rivalry going on between Atheron's two lieutenants Gorazel and Manithor. Both of these lieutenants are Atheron's "Anointed," and have supernatural powers. The gang has been rounding up prisoners for Atheron's big ceremony two nights from now. The ceremony is to open a second "Eye."



The Farmhouse

Frankie was one of the gangers with Hammer when they explored the farmhouse. He can tell the heroes about how they found Hammer eating hearts and how he started manifesting supernatural abilities shortly after. If the posse asks, Frankie can give them directions to the place.

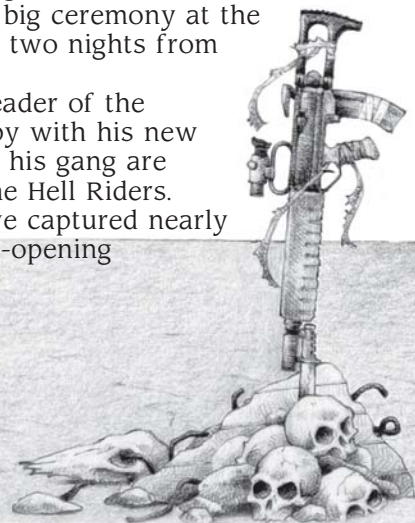
The Diary

Frankie carries a small personal organizer with him at all times. Whenever he gets any dirt on someone, he immediately writes it down in here. If the heroes look through this, a quick read reveals the following:

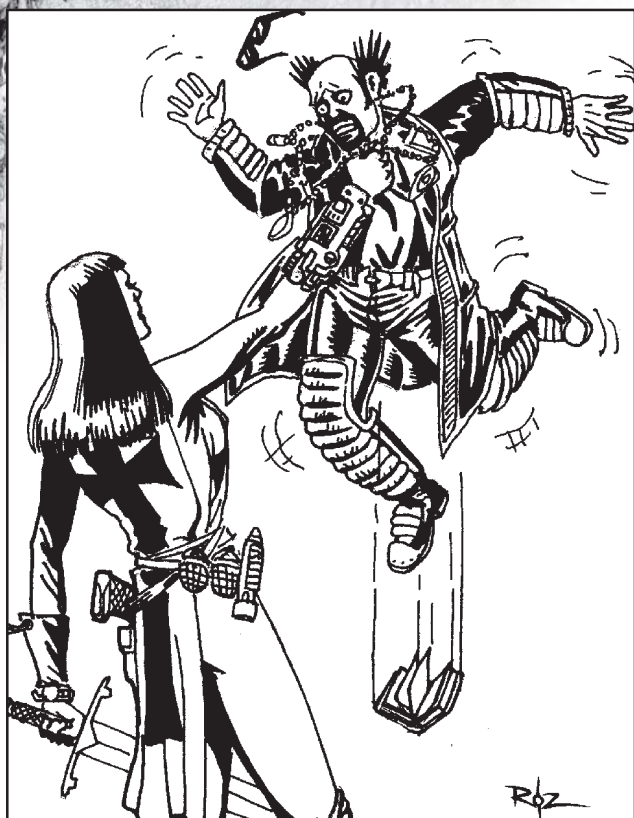
There is going to be a big ceremony at the Hell Rider's headquarters two nights from now.

"Easy" Reece, the ex-leader of the Rocket Jocks, is not happy with his new position. He and some of his gang are thinking about leaving the Hell Riders.

The recent patrols have captured nearly 30 prisoners for the "Eye-opening festivities."



Hell Riders



Bounty

Defeating the roadblock garrison: 1 red chip.
Getting Frankie to sing: 1 white chip.
Reading Frankie's diary: 1 white chip.

Chapter Three: The Farm

Fear level 4

This encounter only occurs if the posse decides to check into Frankie's account of Atheron's origins.

The farm consists of a house, a barn, and a grain silo. All of the buildings have fallen into disrepair, and the paint is peeling off in large, scabby chunks.

The Basement

The only place of interest at this location is the basement of the farmhouse. The Hell Riders took anything else of value with them when they left.

There are two entrances to the basement. One door leads down from the farmhouse's kitchen; the other is a set of double doors

set against the foundation. Both entrances were magically sealed by Atheron before he left the farm.

The Runes

Each door has a set of bizarre runes painted on it. The paint is a dark brown that appears as if it could be blood (which it is). Deciphering the meaning of the runes requires a Hard (9) *academia: occult* roll. A success reveals that the runes were written in an ancient form of Aramaic. One raise further indicates to the hero that the runes are definitely some sort of spell; a second raise tells her that there are actually two spells in place: a ward and some sort of binding spell.

The spells were placed there by Atheron just before the gang left the farm. Although the binding spell Holmes had placed on the demon had been broken when Hammer opened the jar, the protective spells the demon hunter had in place remained in effect and prevented the spirit from taking any direct action against Holmes (or ordering his lackeys to do so). The best the frustrated manitou could do was lock and ward the basement doors, imprisoning Holmes' soul within the cellar in revenge for Atheron's years of confinement.

Getting In

Entering the cellar by any means—even through a window or a hole cut in the floor—activates the warding spells. These spells create powerful electrical blasts that hit anyone within five yards of the doors for 4d8 damage.

Entering the cellar also breaks the binding spell placed on Holmes' soul, allowing it to go free. The second the heroes breach the cellar, the following happens:

A low groaning noise begins in the cellar. The leaves on the trees in the yard begin to rustle as if a strong wind were blowing, but the air is completely still. The groaning increases in volume until it blocks out all other sound, and then a blast of frigid cold comes out of the open cellar door. The cold seems to go right through you. You are momentarily numbed, but the sensation passes quickly. Complete silence follows, which it seems not even the birds and insects in the yard dare break.

Have the heroes make Onerous (7) guts checks.

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Holmes' Return

Once the heroes enter the cellar, they find things undisturbed from the fateful day the Hell Riders arrived.

Most of the cellar is filled with dusty furniture and rusted antiques. At the center of the room is a large pentagram. At each point of the symbol are candles which burned down to the floor and are now little more than hardened puddles of wax. Sprawled across the symbol is the decomposed—and mostly headless—corpse of Derrick Holmes. In the center of the pentagram is a shattered mason jar.

Holmes' soul makes one last attempt to stop his archenemy. As the posse searches, the groaning and the cold return again, and the heroes hear a tremendous pounding noise as if an enormous hand were beating on the floor above them. Dust and spiders rain down on the heroes from the ceiling, and a large item wrapped in oilcloth drops from its hiding place in the rafters.

The Journal

Unwrapping the oilcloth reveals a large, leatherbound book. This is the journal of Derrick Holmes. It's a big book with a lot of fascinating details, and reading it thoroughly takes a lot of time. Characters can skim the tome, however, to learn the following:

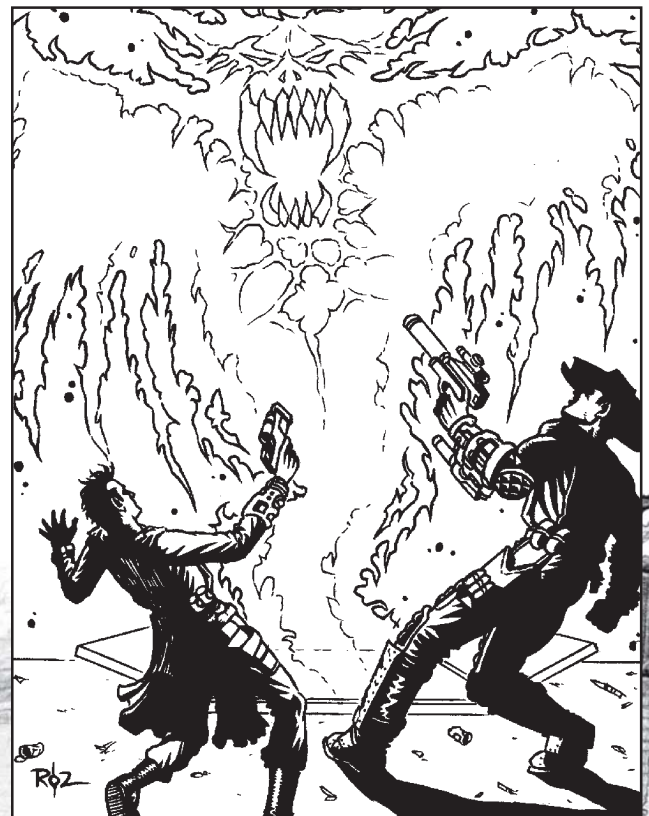
- The first entry in the book is dated May 12, 1875. At that time, Holmes was a preacher in Arizona.
- After an encounter with some walking dead, he set out on a crusade to rid the world of abominations. Over the past two centuries, he has fought and defeated many horrible creatures, but it seems that demon hunting was his specialty.
- In September of 1877, he encountered the Cult of Atheron. During his investigation of this group, he was killed. He returned from the dead as a Harrowed and with the help of others defeated the cult.
- The cult appeared again in 1920 and 1976. Each time, Holmes defeated the cultists, thinking they were gone for good.

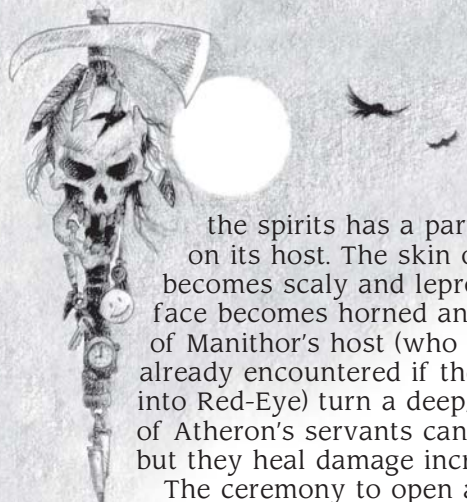
● The cult reappeared in 2028 and managed to summon all three Eyes of Atheron. After much hardship and the death of many friends, Holmes defeated the cult and the three Eyes. He discovered that the cult's success was also its undoing. Since Atheron had become fully manifested, he could now be bound. Holmes bound the spirit in the jar with the hearts of its hosts.

● The binding ritual must be renewed every 66 years. The last entry in the journal is dated six months previous and states that Holmes was about to perform the ceremony to bind the demon for another 66 years.

The journal also reveals some details on Atheron. His hosts are immune to nearly all forms of attack. The one exception is that any attack that targets the host's eyes damages the host normally.

Atheron has three lesser spirits bound to his service: Gorazel, Elzeroth, and Manithor. He can summon these spirits into host bodies. Each of





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the spirits has a particular mark it leaves on its host. The skin of Gorazel's host becomes scaly and leprous. Elzeroth's host's face becomes horned and goat like. The eyes of Manithor's host (who the posse has already encountered if the heroes have run into Red-Eye) turn a deep, blood red. The hosts of Atheron's servants can be killed normally, but they heal damage incredibly quickly.

The ceremony to open another Eye for Atheron can only be performed every 18 months on the night of the new moon. It requires the sacrifice of at least nine innocent victims. Any hero making a Fair (5) *Cognition* roll realizes that there is a new moon in two nights.

The Cross

If the heroes poke around in the cellar some more after finding the journal, an Incredible (11) *search* turns up a small, cloth-wrapped bundle in the rafters near the journal's hiding place. Inside is a large, golden cross.

Holmes carried this cross with him for nearly two centuries, and it has become a minor relic. Anyone of the Christian faith who carries this cross receives a +2 bonus on all *faith* and *guts* rolls.

Bounty

Recovering the journal: 1 white chip.
The hero who finds the cross: 1 white chip.

Chapter Four: Going to the Temple

This is where the heroes get to show what they're made of, but before they do they have to make some choices. Do they rescue just Caleb and Marly's parents or all of the sacrificial victims? Do they confront Atheron himself or just prevent him from opening a second Eye?

Getting There

Atheron's temple is located in a small car dealership right on Route 299. The Hell Riders don't maintain any particular security patrols in the vicinity of the temple, so once past the roadblock in Fall River Mills, the heroes should be able to proceed to within sight of the place unchallenged. In their newfound strength the gang members have become quite cocky;

they don't believe that anyone would be foolish enough to challenge them on their own home turf.

The Temple

Fear level 5

The temple was once Hinckle's Hellstromme, a small car dealership that sold the latest Hellstromme Industries autos to the local farmers. It's now been taken over by Atheron and the Hell Riders. At any given time, there are normally about 40 gang members lounging around or working in the temple. Let's take a quick tour of the place.

The Showroom

The main showroom has been converted into a makeshift temple. A large version of Atheron's symbol has been painted on the center of the floor. At the center of this symbol rests an altar made from pried-up sidewalk sections. On top of this sits an old cast-iron bathtub. Both the tub and the altar are stained with blood and bits of dried gore.

There are stairs at each end of the showroom. These go up to a small walkway that leads to the upstairs offices. Three metal gutters run from the walkway down to the tub at the center of the room. At the top of each gutter is a bloodstained desk.

Upstairs Offices

There are three offices upstairs.

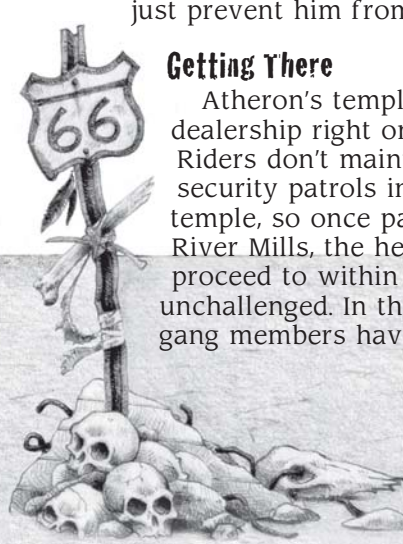
Atheron can normally be found in the center office. Here he receives reports from patrols, plots the gang's expansion, and amuses himself by tormenting the occasional prisoner or two.

Atheron's other Anointed (he hasn't had time to conjure up all three yet), Gorazel, uses the office next door. Gorazel handles most of the day-to-day administration of the gang's activities and is overseeing the construction of the new temple next door. She also has a few slaves available for use as toys in her office.

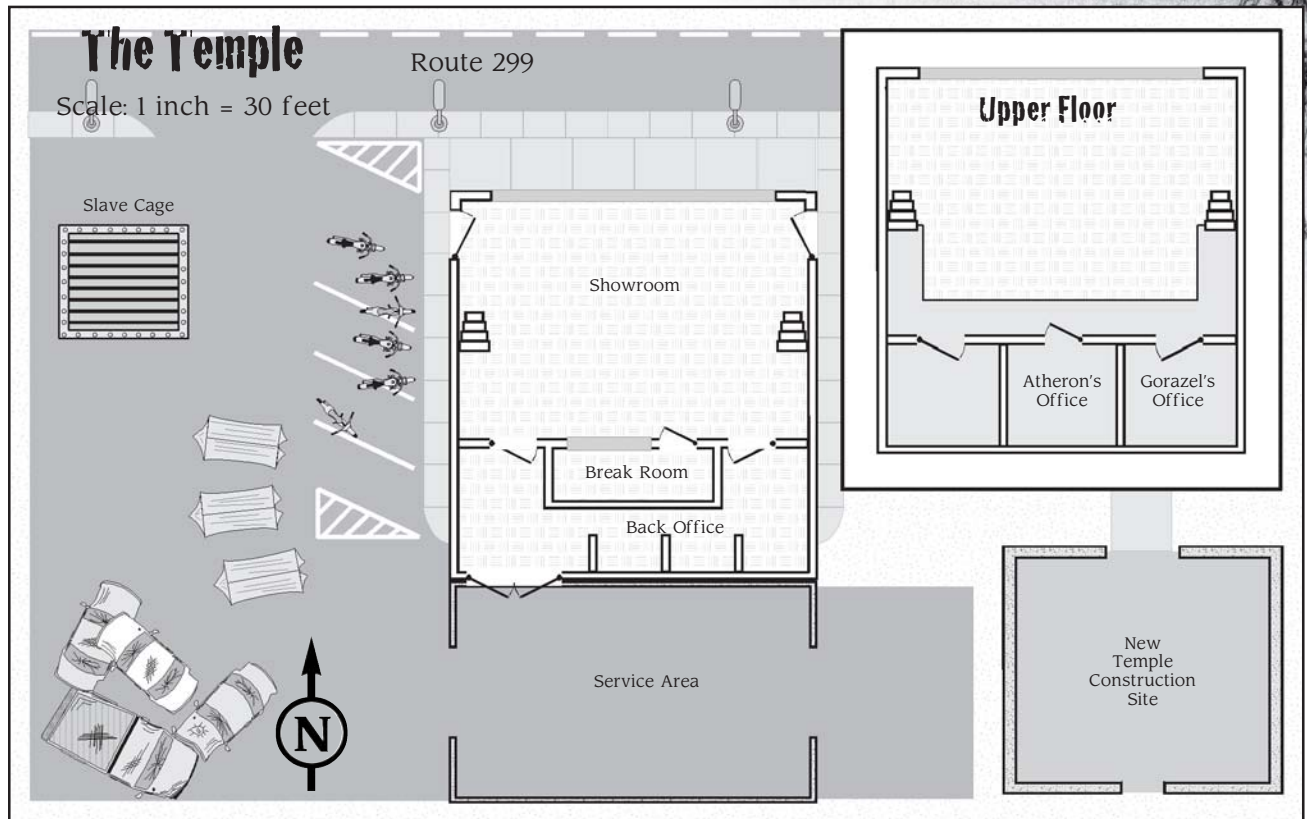
The third office is empty at the moment, but it will be used by Atheron's third lieutenant, Elzeroth, once the demon has the chance to summon him to the physical world. There is a hatch in the ceiling of the closet in this office that leads to the roof.

Atheron/Hammer

Atheron's first Eye is a large, muscular, bald man. Hammer's imposing presence helped him rule the gang through fear and intimidation.



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Now that his body is inhabited by a major denizen of the spirit world, his hold on power is absolute.

Atheron has demonstrated a capacity for violence and cruelty that has shocked even the most jaded of the Hell Riders. Those who disobey him meet with long, slow deaths, so when the demon says jump, the Hell Riders leave the ground.

Atheron plans to expand the gang until it is large enough to challenge the Road Orcs on an even footing. This is only his first step toward consolidating his power over all of California and the Great Maze.

Profile

Corporeal: D:3d8, N:3d8, S:4d12+4, Q:3d10, V:2d10
 Dodge 4d8, drivin': motorcycle 6d8, fightin':
 brawlin', sword 6d8, shootin': pistol 4d8
 Mental: C:3d10, K:4d12, M:4d12, Sm:3d10, Sp:4d12
 Academia: occult 7d12, guts 8d12, language:
 Aramaic 5d12, language: Assyrian 5d12,
 language: Babylonian 5d12, language: Egyptian
 4d12, language: English 4d12, overawe 6d12,
 scrutinize 5d10, search 6d10, trackin' 5d10
 Edges: Brawny, "the stare," "the voice"

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, mean as a rattler

Pace: 8

Size: 7

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Bolts o' Doom: Atheron can hurl inky black bolts from his hands. (Shots 1, Speed 1, ROF 1, Range 10, Damage 4d8.) These spheres are pure spiritual energy that bypass all physical armor. For each point of Wind Atheron spends on a shot, he can increase the damage by +1 die.

Damage: Claws (STR+1d8).

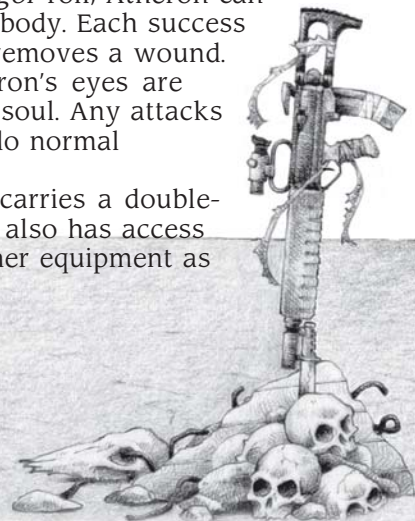
Immunity: All.

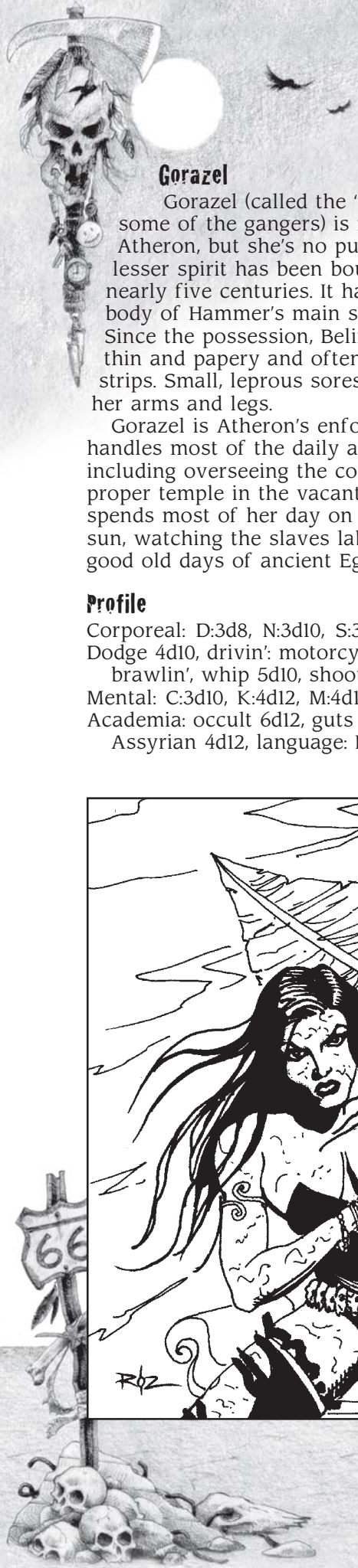
Regeneration: By spending an action and making a Fair (5) *Vigor* roll, Atheron can regenerate his host body. Each success he gets on the roll removes a wound.

Weakness: Eyes. Atheron's eyes are the windows to his soul. Any attacks which hit his eyes do normal damage.

Gear: Hammer normally carries a double-barrel shotgun, but he also has access to all of the gang's other equipment as needed.

Marshal: 125





Hell Riders

Gorazel

Gorazel (called the "Mistress of Pain" by some of the gangsters) is not as powerful as Atheron, but she's no pushover either. This lesser spirit has been bound to his service for nearly five centuries. It has taken over the body of Hammer's main squeeze, Belinda. Since the possession, Belinda's skin has grown thin and papery and often peels off in large strips. Small, leprous sores have appeared on her arms and legs.

Gorazel is Atheron's enforcer, and she handles most of the daily administrative duties, including overseeing the construction of a proper temple in the vacant lot next door. She spends most of her day on a palanquin in the sun, watching the slaves labor—just like in the good old days of ancient Egypt.

Profile

Corporeal: D:3d8, N:3d10, S:3d10, Q:3d12, V:2d8

Dodge 4d10, drivin': motorcycle 5d10, fightin':

brawlin', whip 5d10, shootin': pistol 4d8

Mental: C:3d10, K:4d12, M:4d10, Sm:3d12, Sp:4d10

Academia: occult 6d12, guts 6d10, language:

Assyrian 4d12, language: Babylonian 5d12,

language: Egyptian 4d12, language: English 4d12, overawe 5d10, science: engineering 5d12, scrutinize 5d10, search 4d10

Edges: Level-headed

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, mean as a rattler

Pace: 10

Size: 6

Terror: 9

Special Abilities:

Armor: 2

Pain Wrack: Anyone hit by Gorazel's whip must make contested roll of *Vigor* against her *Spirit*. If she wins the contest, the victim is wracked with excruciatingly painful spasms for 1d4 rounds. For a victim to perform an action while in pain requires a Hard (9) *Vigor* roll. Any actions performed while in the throes of this power suffer a -4 modifier.

Regeneration: By spending an action and making a Fair (5) *Vigor* roll, Gorazel can regenerate her host body. Each success she gets on the roll removes a wound.

Gear: Whip (STR+1d4)

Break Room

This room is a favored hangout for members of the gang. There are usually 10 to 12 gang members here drinking, or playing cards.

Back Room

This area was once divided up into cubicles for use by the sales staff. The dividers are still there, but the desks have been removed. This area is full of supplies and loot the gang has acquired. It's impossible to provide a complete list of what's here, but if the posse gets a chance to poke around in here, the heroes can easily find 3d20 rounds of any particular small-arms ammo. A Onerous (7) *scroungin'* roll finds 1d6 x \$50 of easily transportable loot.

Gorazel has posted a guard here with a shotgun. No one may take stuff from the pile without written or verbal consent from the epidermally challenged demon.

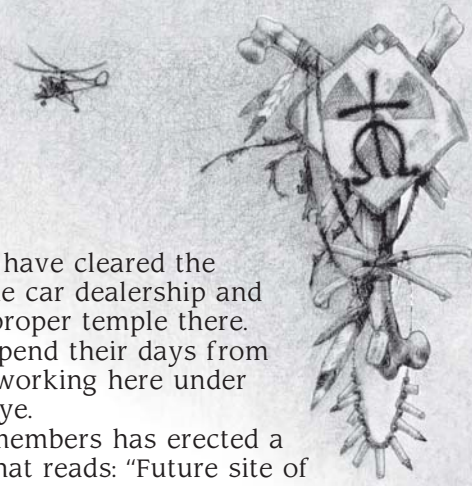
Service Area

The gang members use the dealership's garage to keep their rides in top shape. There are currently three gang vehicles—two bikes and a sports car—being worked on in here. There are usually about 10 gang members present.

The area is run by "Wratchet" Rodriguez (typical gang stats, but 6d6 *tinkerin'*). He is very territorial, and challenges anyone who tries to bring a vehicle into "his" garage.



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There is also a Convoy scout truck in here (see Chapter Four of this book for stats). It was captured less than a week ago by a Hell Rider patrol. It had broken down, and the gang surrounded it and forced the crew out by threatening to blow their fuel tanks.

Rodriguez is working on this vehicle personally. He has gotten it running again and is now working on personalizing it as Atheron's command vehicle. If the truck is not destroyed or stolen, it could give the gang the firepower it needs to crush most of its smaller rivals.

The gang has set up a small kitchen in the far corner of the garage. This is where Martha King, Caleb and Marly's mom, can be found during the day.

A couple of crude showers have also been set up in this area.

The Roof

There are four armed guards on the roof at all hours of the day. Each stands at one corner of the roof and is responsible for watching the corresponding quarter of the area around the dealership. These guards are armed with Southern Alliance assault rifles and have 40 rounds of ammo each.

Slave Cages

This is where the gang's slave-labor force is kept at night. Enormous cages (they used to hold circus elephants) hold about 30 prisoners at night. During the day, only the slaves too sick to work are found here.

Six of the prisoners are members of the Convoy. It's their truck in the garage, and they want it back. Their leader, Lewis Samuels, supports any plan that would break him and his crew out and steal the truck back. All of the scouts work in the vacant lot during the day.

Martha King is imprisoned here at night. Her husband Stewart died three weeks ago while working on the new temple.

There are always four armed guards here.

Parking Lot

One corner of the lot is filled with rusting hulks. These are dealership cars that have been stripped of all useful parts and then pushed out of the way. The rest of the lot is used for gang vehicles, and many of the newly recruited gangers live here in tents, campers, and flimsy shack-like structures. There are usually about 20 motorcycles and four or five muscle cars parked here.

Vacant Lot

The gang's slaves have cleared the vacant lot next to the car dealership and are now building a proper temple there. Most of the slaves spend their days from sunup to sundown, working here under Gorazel's watchful eye.

One of the gang members has erected a spray-painted sign that reads: "Future site of the Temple of Atheron. Please forgive our mess as we remodel."

Getting In

The heroes have a few options for getting inside the temple. They can go in guns blazing, but this will probably only result in a bunch of dead heroes. Smart characters might come up with a few alternatives.

Getting Captured

The heroes can get captured, either by accident or design. Captured heroes are stripped of all their gear and put to work on the new temple. If a hero is really lucky, she may be chosen to participate in the ceremony—an honor she won't survive.

Joining the Gang

The Hell Riders are always looking for new talent. If the heroes can prove their combat skills, they may be asked to join. Getting in requires passing an interview with Gorazel. She grills the heroes about their background, all the while scrutinizing them intensely.

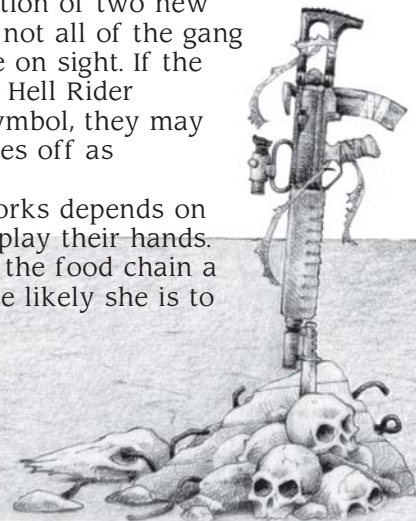
If they pass, the heroes become part of the group. They are teamed up with some trusted Hell Riders who show them the ropes and keep a close eye on them.

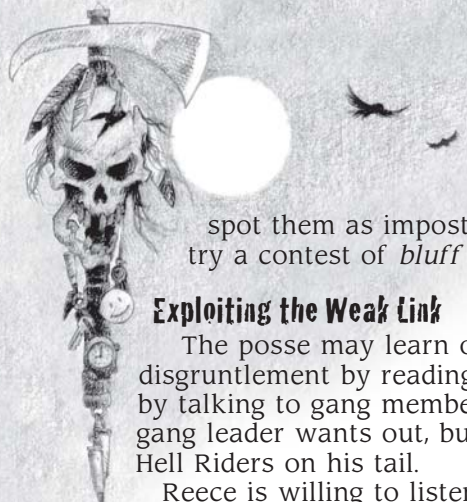
If the heroes fail, they are disarmed and turned into slaves. They automatically win a spot in the coming festivities.

Impersonating Gang Members

Due to the recent addition of two new gangs to the Hell Riders, not all of the gang members know everyone on sight. If the heroes show up wearing Hell Rider jackets with Atheron's symbol, they may be able to pass themselves off as members of the gang.

How long this trick works depends on how smartly the heroes play their hands. In general, the higher up the food chain a gang member is, the more likely she is to





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spot them as impostors. When in doubt, try a contest of *bluff* versus *Smarts*.

Exploiting the Weak Link

The posse may learn of Easy Reece's disgruntlement by reading Frankie's diary or by talking to gang members. The Rocket Jocks gang leader wants out, but he doesn't want the Hell Riders on his tail.

Reece is willing to listen to any proposal for leaving the temple, but he only agrees to help if he thinks it has a darn good chance of succeeding. If the heroes' plan calls for taking on the whole Hell Rider gang or Atheron himself, he's not interested. If the heroes' actions look likely to expose his role in any plan, Reece turns them in to the head office himself.

If Reece does help the posse, he brings six of his former gang members with him. These bikers have the same stats as the Hell Rider thugs. Reece and all of his gangers have their own bikes.

Easy Reece

Corporeal: D:3d6, N:3d8, S:2d8, Q:2d6, V:2d8
Dodge 2d8, drivin': motorcycle, car 4d8, fightin':
brawlin', knife 4d8, shootin': pistol, shotgun
4d6

Mental: C:3d6, K:2d6, M:3d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:3d6
Overawe 4d8, scroungin' 4d8, scrutinize 3d6,
search 4d6, survival 2d6, tinkerin' 4d6

Edges: Sand 5

Pace: 8

Wind: 14

Hindrances: Squeamish

Gear: A double-barrel scattergun with 4 rounds,
a large knife, and a leather jacket (AV -1)

An Eye-Opening Experience

The big ceremony is set for two days after the heroes first arrive in Adin. How it unfolds depends, of course, on what they've done so far and how they handle the situation.

The Fickle Finger of Fate

At midday on the day of the ceremony, Atheron comes out to look over the slaves working on the temple.

After checking things out for a few moments, he selects 10 slaves to participate in the ceremony that night. Nine slaves are to be sacrificed as part of the summoning, with the 10th slave slated to become Atheron's second Eye.

Atheron spends some time selecting this particular slave. He doesn't care if the new host is male or female—he's looking for someone young and talented because he'll gain the skills of his host. If the heroes are among the slaves, it's very likely he may choose one of them—especially a hero who put up a good fight before being captured.

Preparation

The selected slaves are taken back to the slave cages. At sunset, they are removed and brought to the showers in the garage and forced to clean up. After showering, the chosen ones are fed some rare herbs which cause them to fall into a deep sleep. They are awakened just before midnight and marched into the showroom for the ceremony. The "participants" are still groggy from the herbs and are at -2 to all actions.

The Ceremony

We'll spare you the gory details (and trust us, they *are* gory). The ceremony lasts two hours. At the end, nine slaves are dead and one is now host to a portion of Atheron's spirit. All the Hell Riders who are at the temple are required to witness the ceremony. Those who look squeamish may end up as part of the ceremony.

Both Atheron and Gorazel are present throughout the entire process. Red-Eye is there also if the posse hasn't dealt with him.

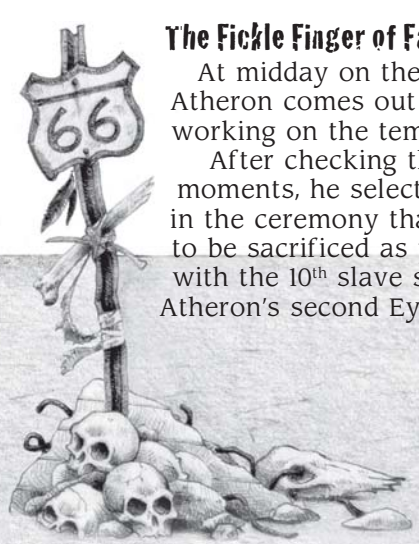
The Chase

At some point the heroes are going to have to rescue the prisoners and leave. Unless they have defeated Atheron, a portion of the gang chases after them.

The size of the pursuit depends on how big a threat the heroes pose. If the heroes are on their own with only one or two small vehicles, they are chased by eight bikers on motorcycles. If the posse has Reece and his Rocket Jocks along, add another four bikers on motorcycles. Finally, if the heroes have sprung the Convoy scouts or at least taken their truck, add two muscle cars with pintle-mounted .50 caliber machine-guns on the roof to the chase.

Bounty

Rescuing Marly and Caleb's mother: 1 red chip.
Defeating Atheron: 1 blue chip.
Defeating Gorazel: 1 red chip.
Rescuing the other prisoners: 1 white chip.



HELL ON EARTH™

Speedometer

Vehicle: _____

Owner: _____

Type: _____

**Acceleration
Rating**

Handling

Size: _____

Durability: _____

Pass.: _____

Load Limit: _____

Total Load: _____

Gas Tank: _____

Cost: _____

Make: _____

Model: _____

Year: _____

Color: _____

Engine

Type: _____

Upgrade _____

Load _____

**Top
Speed**

MPG

Suspension

Type: _____

Upgrade _____

Load _____

Armor 'n' Weapons

Top

AV: _____

Front

AV: _____

Windows

AV: _____

Tire type: _____

Durability: _____

Wheel AV: _____

Tire type: _____

Durability: _____

Wheel AV: _____

Left Side

AV: _____

Right Side

AV: _____

Tire type: _____

Durability: _____

Wheel AV: _____

Tire type: _____

Durability: _____

Wheel AV: _____

Bottom

AV: _____

Back

AV: _____

Gas Tank

AV: _____

Special Equipment

Upgrade/effects _____

Load _____

Weapon

Mount

Arc

Shots

Speed

RoF

Range

Damage

1

2

3

4

5

6

Gas Gauge

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

Damage

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

-1

-2

-3

-4

-5

Durability Steps

Road Warriors Counters

