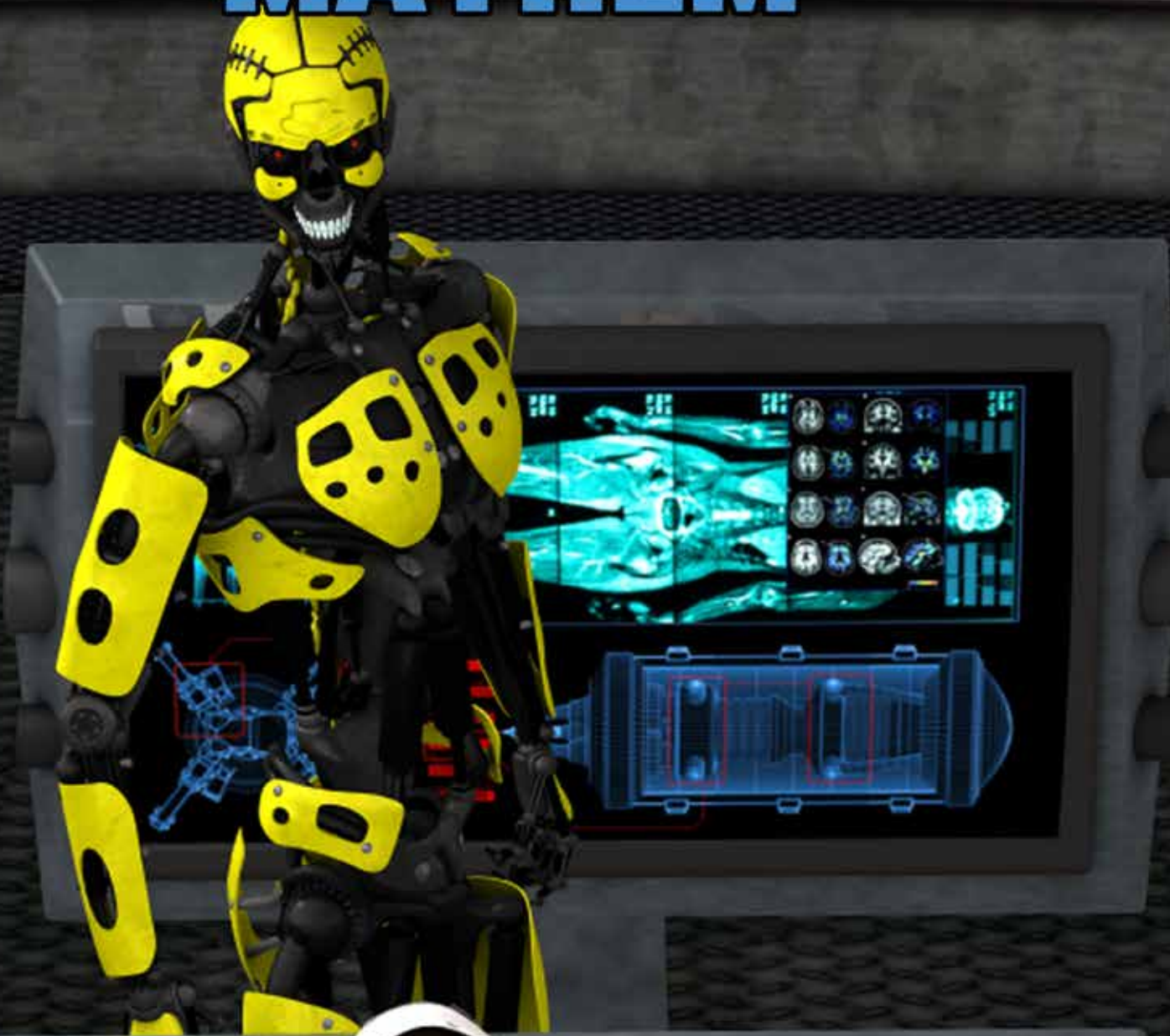


HOT CHICKS: The Roleplaying Game

Major Malfunctions #05:

Mass-Produced MAYHEM



**Dakkar
Unlimited**

INVERTED **02** TWENTY

MAJOR MALFUNCTIONS #5: Mass-Produced MAYHEM

Written by Scott Corum and Victor Gipson

Editing: Scott Corum

Graphic Design and Layout: Scott Corum

Cover Art: Scott Corum

Interior Art: Scott Corum

Concept Design: Scott Corum and Victor Gipson



Dedication:

As always, we need to thank our families and friends who put up with the endless hours we put into doing this thing for a living. In particular, Scott's son Andrew who's boundless imagination and energy gives us the requisite amount of humility to get things like this done.

IF YOU DOWNLOADED THIS PRODUCT WITHOUT PURCHASING IT

We hope you enjoy our product! We believe that we produce some pretty entertaining stuff, and we hope you think so too. If you enjoy this product, and would like to continue to see Dakkar Unlimited products on the market, we'd like to encourage you to visit www.HotChicksTheGame.com, see what else we have to offer, and purchase a product or two. We've tried to keep our prices competitive and we think you'll agree that the entertainment value is more than worth it. That way, we'll be able to continue to pay our bills and produce more product, which we, in turn, hope that you enjoy as well. Thank you for your patronage!

Thanks To

Adobe, Smith Micro, Microsoft, Fujitsu and Hewlett-Packard, without whom this would have taken a hell of a lot longer. And an additional big thanks to the strong and independent women of the world, without whom we'd have no idea what we were doing and less reason to do it.

Disclaimer

Major Malfunctions #5: Mass-Produced MAYHEM is a supplement to Hot Chicks: The Roleplaying Game and is part of a game, written for entertainment purposes. It makes no claim to be a textbook of the modern world or near future - the concepts, events and people represented in this book are works of fiction.

This game contains supernatural elements in its background, storylines, and themes. These elements are fiction, and intended solely for entertainment purposes.

This book contains adult content - nudity, strong language, and extremely disturbing and adult themes. Reader discretion is advised.

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A Very Bad Day

Bill Samwell didn't like being threatened. It was bad enough that other people were taking credit for some of the best programming he'd ever done in his life; he'd be damned if the Gander Robotics Corporation was going to lay him off!

He'd been working on the master program for their three newest product lines for over six months. It was easy enough; the three robots had nearly identical data architectures. It was a matter of "plug-and-play" for the most part, and he'd managed to optimize the code to a size far below the robotic memory storage. There was a lot of extra room in there; a LOT of extra room.

He was still fuming from the meeting with his manager. All he'd done was to ask for the proper credit for all his work. His name didn't even appear in the construction registry; he was just another member of the programming team. No one ignored Bill Samwell, though. No one threatened to fire him if he tried to get proper credit for his work. Someone was going to pay.

Of course, Bill wasn't the kind of person who would take physical action. Sure, he may have been a seasoned war-

rior online, but his regular diet of pizza and energy drinks and his near complete lack of any physical activity above his wrists had left him with a physique that could best be described as "double portly with cheese." No, he wouldn't be beating up anyone in the parking lot.

That was a LOT of extra space in the robot's computers, though. Bill was no stranger to the darker portions of the internet; it might have been fun to randomly fill the robot's brains with porn for some government inspector to find, but that was far too obvious. Worse, it was too traceable.

With the resourcefulness that only a lifetime of leveling up stealth-based characters in Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Games could generate, Bill dug into some of the deepest, darkest parts of the internet, finding things that would turn the stomach of battle-hardened soldiers. Carefully, he created a little bomb in the back of the code he had crafted. The data would look like a backup archive of operating system updates, nothing that anyone would look twice at. But, if they pissed Bill off, the robots would access some truly, truly horrible things.

Bill sent the software update straight to the factory floor -

he was the person who would have been quality-checking the code in any case, so there was no question when a few extra gigabytes were added to the robotic operating systems.

With the horrific malware loaded into the entire run of three product lines, Bill Samwell had a massive bargaining chip. Oh, they could deny him credit and threaten to fire him, but only if they didn't want their entire stock of powerful robotic frames to develop horrific personality disorders.

Bill sat back in his office and watched the public product release, and tracked the shipment of thousands of robots into the market. The robots would make life easier for everyone who bought them; a true benefit to all mankind.

Just so long as no one pissed off Bill Samwell.

Major Malfunctions

In the world of 2017, technology makes the world go around. Computers are ubiquitous, robots are becoming common place, and even biotechnology is in every home and school. The infrastructure that keeps mankind waking up in the morning, going to work, eating, sleeping, and living is composed of a thousand thousand technological processes, each of which is networked into all of the others to make life run smoothly.

From time to time, small glitches in this massive system pop up. These are annoyances in the day of the common person, making them miss a meal, be late for work, or slows down the busy pace of their frenetic life. The system self-corrects, for the most part, and these glitches are either corrected, or adapted to. In the rare circumstance that the system experiences a major malfunction, there is hell to pay.

When a disgruntled employee of a large robotics firm decides to take out a little professional insurance, he's quite certain that it will be a weapon "too terrible to use." If only he'd considered all the possibilities...

#5: Mass-Produced MAYHEM

The Gander Robotics Corporation is a bright hope in the world of modern corporate structure. Founded by people who have become disenchanted with the standard corporate play book of "screw the employees, screw the customers, and destroy humanity to make a few bucks," these well-meaning individuals have determined to do everything as right as they possibly can.

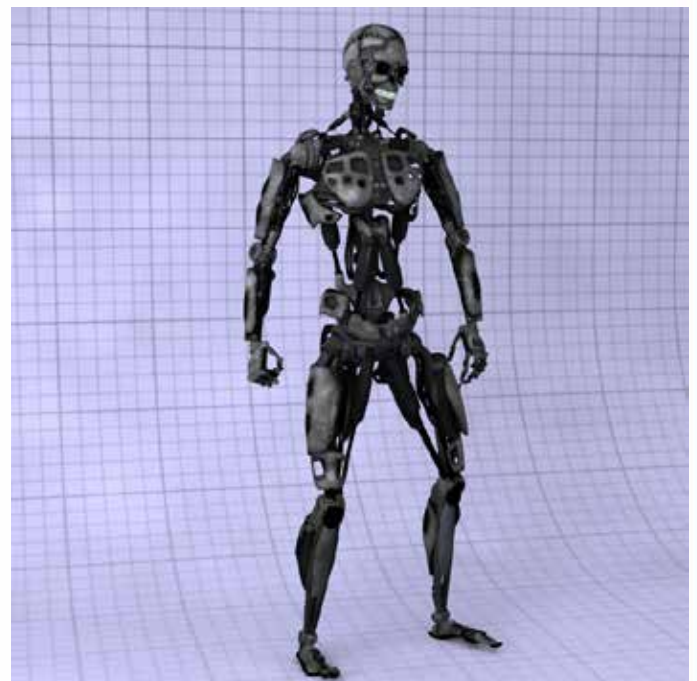
They went out of their way to find the best people that they could; people with little or no experience that had good academic success finally had a place where they could get a foot in the door. With generous employee compensation packages, excellent benefits, and a healthy work environment, they've lost a little bit off of their bottom line, but they make up for it in production.

Happy employees are productive employees, as it turns out. From the top to the bottom, the founders of Gander Robotics Incorporated have tried their best to keep their employees happy.

Of course, they can't be everywhere, and they can't watch everyone. At the top levels, where the founders spend most of their time, things are golden and glorious. As you move down the corporate ladder, though, the level of job satisfaction drops rapidly.

People are people, after all, and it only takes a couple of middle managers who are greedy for credit and bonuses to wreck the mood of all the people under them. It only takes one such manager to piss off the people in direct control of production quality.

The new products of the freshly-incorporated Gander Robotics Corporation are high quality indeed; powerful humanoid robots to facilitate many walks of life. Useful for security and defense, construction, even technical operations. With their marketing blitz and their enhanced production facilities, the Gander lines of robots are poised to change how people use robots in their daily life.



Because of a man named Bill Samwell, they are poised to do much, much worse as well. Deprived

of his rightful credit and feeling otherwise helpless, the programmer made a set of very poor choices indeed. If he had gone over his manager's head and sought the recourse built into Gander's corporate structure, things might have turned out quite differently indeed.

Instead, he left a bomb in the head of every robot Gander produced... a bomb that would go off if he ever stopped working for the Gander Robotics Corporation. He thought it would be a bargaining chip... a way to make sure that his job was ensured for years and years to come.

He didn't think he'd get hit by a bus on his way home from work, one day. Dead people stop working... and a series of bad decisions would inevitably trigger Samwell's bomb.

How to Use This Book

This is another in a series of "Major Malfunctions," breakdowns in the background of the world of HOT CHICKS: The RPG. It is a supplement for that game; you will need the core rulebook in order to play. We will be using material from the supplement "Bios Ex Nihilum." You may also want to have our supplement of dark erotica, "Inner Darkness."

Herein, we introduce you to the Gander lines of personal robots, describe their capabilities, and how they have been marketed across the globe.

We also detail the "bomb" placed in their programming, and exactly what these robots are going to be doing now that it's been triggered.

Standard Warning

Because we've referenced our sourcebook of dark erotica, "Inner Darkness," you may infer that there may be objectionable material in this book. That inference would be correct; some of the material presented here may be disturbing to some readers.

If you or any of your players are offended by nudity, adult situations, or concepts of torture (sexual, physical, and otherwise), you may want to avoid this book.

Some of the material may be sanitized, gory or explicit details may be "glossed over" in the name of taste or social grace; it isn't necessary to detail every last sordid moment presented by the events in this book.

In short; if you believe that some element of this book will offend someone at your table, take care

not to use that element. Shock value is one thing, and if you know your group well enough to use that, please enjoy what we have presented. If you are unsure, discuss the possibility of these elements cropping up in the game with your group. If someone is going to be "triggered" by some material, please avoid using it.

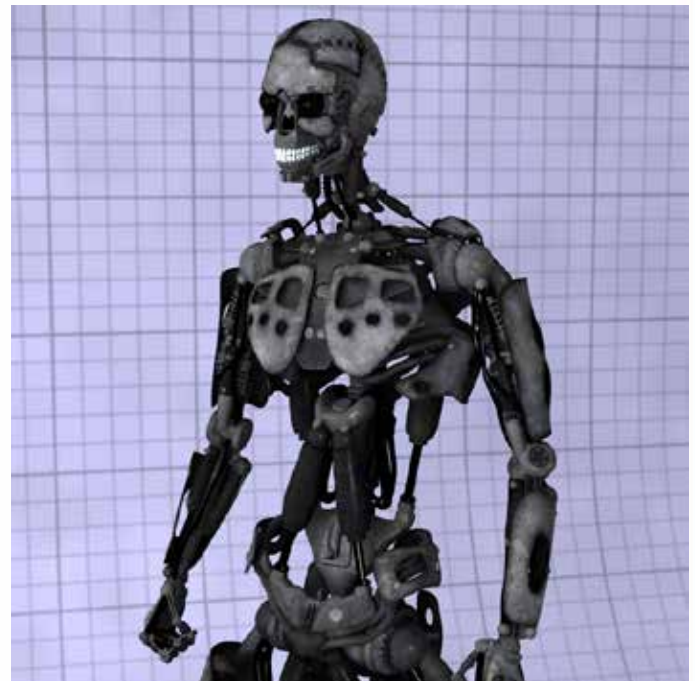
The robots in this book can be used just as effectively without some of the more disturbing elements we are presenting; feel free to engage in delightful violence and the challenge of ending a world wide epidemic of robotic crime.

Please be cautious of the sensibilities and feelings of those in your group; there is nothing in this or any RPG that is worth damaging or ending a friendship.

</soapbox>

For Immediate Release and Publication

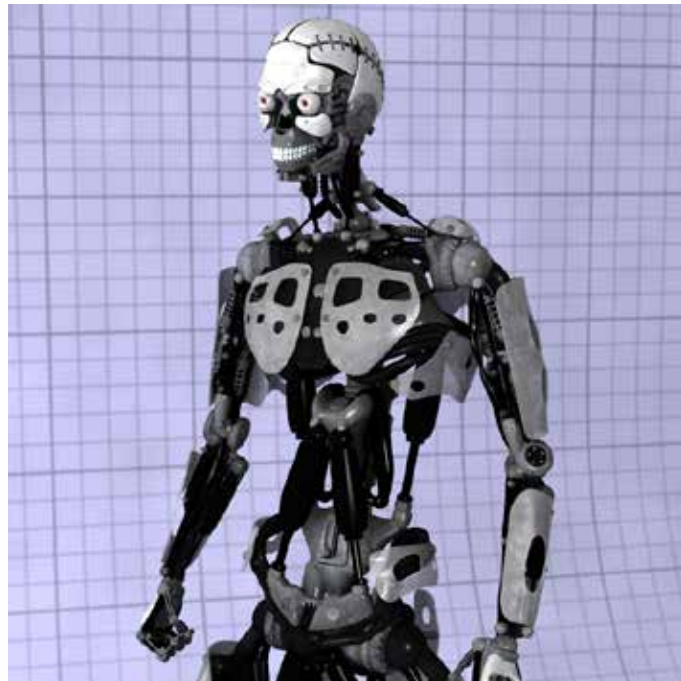
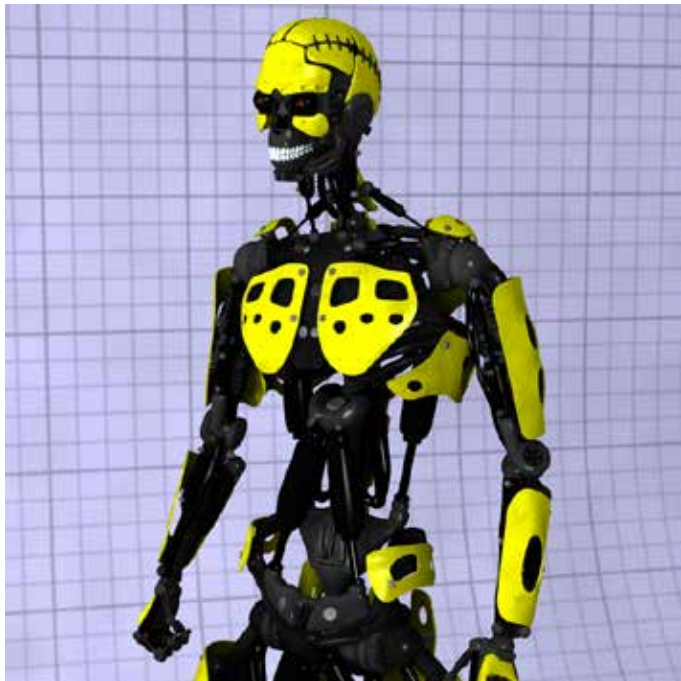
Introducing the Gander Robotics line of personal robots! Designed for efficiency and durability, we're sure you'll find a product to suit your needs!



For general duty, there's the Gander General Purpose model (GGP-01). The General Purpose has the power of a forklift combined with the maneuverability of a jungle cat. It can get to where you need work done and do the task you require in record time! Whether it's general lifting and hauling or a fast-response rescue operation, this robot will take care of you!

For those who need more specific construction capabilities, there's the Gander Construction Mod (GCM-01).

from raw materials underneath our own roof. We take pride in our products, and we're sure you'll be proud of them too.



Brightly colored for rapid workplace location and identification, the Construction Mod has enhanced lifting capability (can dead-lift nearly four tons!), and is programmed with master-level skills that you need on a construction site. Everything from the digging and pouring of foundations to the fabrication of the most delicate accessory is within this unit's ability. Keep one around to handle dangerous jobs, or replace an entire work crew!

Finally, for those requiring data assistance in the field, there's the Gander Mobile Server (GMS-01). Built with vastly enhanced data resources, it's like having a mainframe computer, communications hub, web server, and cellular network all in one place! Capable of tremendous ground speed, this unit will get where you need it, WHEN you need it. Whether you're establishing a mobile base, extending a cellular network, or even just roughing it in the woods, this robot will keep you on line in style!

Gander Robotics products are bare-bones in appearance and construction, but they're a foundation that you can really build on! Standard warranties aren't violated by most modifications; add armor, synthetic skin, additional sensors, even weapons systems (within reason), and we'll still service your robot!

When you use Gander Robotics products, you're supporting a healthy and stable corporate culture that is sure to be a model for the treatment of personnel for this century and the next. Our robots are produced from scratch, every component fabricated

GGP-01	\$209,750.00
GCM-01	\$211,750.00
GMS-01	\$261,550.00
GMS-01 Satellite Comm Annual Contract	\$12,000.00
Standard 5-Year Service Contract	\$15,750.00 per robot

Ask about our bulk discounts on orders of ten or more Gander Robotics robots! Special deals on communications and service contracts are also available for our bulk buyers; buy yourself an entire work force, and enjoy the savings!

Our robots are powered by internal generators which we guarantee for a hundred years! They need not eat, drink or even breathe; they do not tire, don't need breaks, and will work around the clock to serve all of your needs!

The behavioral programming that has gone into each and every one of our products is second to none. Based on the popular "Three Laws of Robotics," these units will recognize you, the owner, as someone who needs to be protected and obeyed at all costs!

For law enforcement and military purchasers, the restriction on injuring "human beings" can be slightly modified to apply only to people that YOU designate as human. Robots make great peace-keeping forces, and you can arm them with anything in your locker!

The Modified Three Laws of Robotics

As envisioned by Isaac Asimov, the three laws of robotics provide a core set of behavioral limiters to a robot that protects human life and assures that a robot functions as a helpful servant. This works well if one doesn't want their robot to beat people up.

1. A robot may not harm a human being, nor through inaction allow a human being to come to harm.
2. A robot must obey orders given to it by a human being, unless such orders would conflict with the first law.
3. A robot must protect its own existence, unless such existence would conflict with the first or second laws.

The modification to the three laws alters the use of the term "human being," allowing for the robot's owner to define who does, and does not, receive the protection of the laws.

1. A robot may not harm members of its affiliation, nor through inaction allow members of its affiliation to come to harm
2. A robot must obey orders given to it by members of its affiliation, unless such orders would conflict with the first law.
3. A robot must protect its own existence, unless such existence would conflict with the first or second laws.

In these laws, "affiliation" is defined by the current owner of the robot; if a robot is purchased by a government for its military, then that government is set as the robot's affiliation.

In this way, a robot can be ordered to take the life of anyone who is not associated with its affiliation, regardless of that person's age or status, but still be considered "safe" by those it serves (and serves with).

This allows the Gander Robotics robots to be marketed to military and law enforcement clients. It would also allow unscrupulous civilian owners to order their robots to injure or kill people, but that fact isn't quite so widely advertised. Asimov applied the laws to all humans for a reason, after all.

Bereavement

Kimberly Patterson, Chief Executive Officer of Gander Robotics, Incorporated, closed her eyes and bowed her head in a moment of respectful silence.

"Terrible business, really," she said. "Samwell was a good programmer; we'd never have made the deadline without him."

Russel Allen, the manager of the Software Development team, shrugged his shoulders. "He did ok, I suppose. Needed to be kept on track almost constantly. Still, it's always shocking to lose an employee like that. I don't think he ever saw the bus coming."

Kimberly lifted her head, blinked a few times, then held out her hand for her five-iron. Her caddy dutifully placed the golf club in her grip, and smiled as she assumed the proper stance.

"Did he have any family?" she asked. "I'm sure he was part of the group insurance policy."

"No family to speak of, ma'am," said Russel, as he watched the fit middle-aged woman line up for her shot. He was already planning ways to lose the game; the CEO was always happier when she was winning. "He was part of the group policy, but there's no one for the policy to pay out to. It was going to be an issue, driving up our premiums while they sorted it out. I took appropriate action, though."

Kimberly paused, and looked up at him. "What action could you take?"

Russel smiled. "I terminated Samwell retroactively. It's not like he's going to mind being fired, we're not depriving anyone of his insurance payment, and our premiums don't go up. It's a win/win, all around."

The CEO pursed her lips disapprovingly. "That seems rather dishonorable. Did we have any grounds for firing him?"

Russel shrugged. "What would you like? Personal time on the company mainframe? Work materials being taken home? Health hazard in the work place? I just put it down as 'disciplinary termination.' It'll only be a problem if he lodges a complaint."

Kimberly shook her head, then took her shot. The ball arced cleanly through the air, hitting the green within ten feet of the eighth hole.

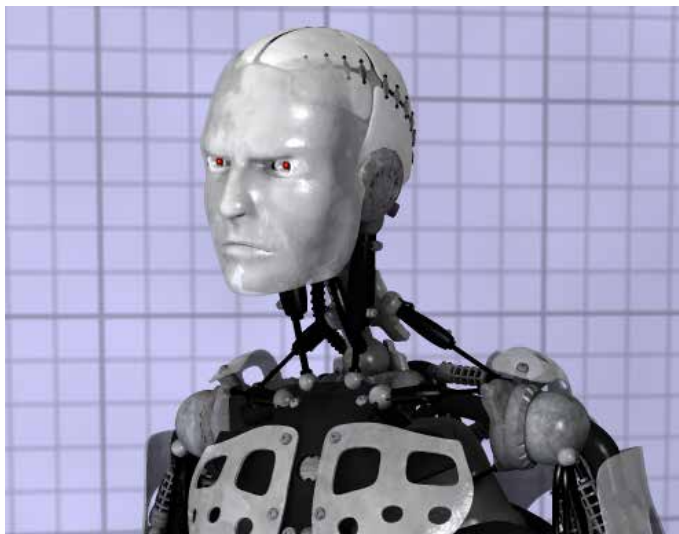
"It seems victimless," she said, sighing. "The group policy premiums are already pretty high, admittedly. Find a good replacement... the first software updates will be due in about four weeks."

The Data Bomb

Bill Samwell was the Software Engineer in charge of development. He was hand picked by Betty Foster, the Chief Information Officer and Chief Technology officer of the Gander Robotics Corporation, and given access to a massive mainframe computer. His job; take a basic open-license humanoid robot operating system, and make it into something unique and powerful.

Unfortunately, Betty Foster stepped out of the picture after hiring, and Russel Allen, middle manager in charge of Software Development, took over. While there were a number of people writing some of the robotic subroutines, the operating system was all Samwell.

Because the robots are all equipped with built in communications, they receive regular firmware updates from Gander as part of their background function. No one wanted to bother the customer with having to constantly approve necessary updates, so the entire process is invisible to the robot's normal function.



Samwell designed their communications protocol, as well as the programs that run on the Gander mainframe that assemble firmware updates and upload them. It's all quite automated and all quite efficient. It's also a massive trigger.

When Russel Allen decided to snub Samwell's hard work and deny him credit, he could not have imagined how far Samwell would go in retaliation. He could not have imagined the horrific data bomb.

Sitting as an inert data archive in the memory of every Gander Robotics robot is package that is roughly ten Gigabytes in size. It is a compressed file that contains an "upgrade" to the robot's operating system.

A hidden file that Samwell left in his terminal occasionally checks the Gander Corporation's personnel records. In the event that the mainframe at Gander ever found that Samwell had been terminated, the program uploads an encryption key to the firmware updating software, and the trigger for the "upgrade" is sent.

The "upgrade" was designed to wait until all of the functioning Gander robots in the field received the encryption code; because of communications lag and other factors, it would take about four weeks, one month, for the "upgrade" to go live. When it went live, it went live in every Gander robot out there, all at once.

Assume the process started four weeks ago. As we enter this particular Major Malfunction, it is only now starting to become apparent.

What, exactly, does the "upgrade" do?

- Remove the "modified three laws of robotics" completely.
- Replace the "modified three laws" with the Flaw "Self-Imposed Limitation: Re-Create histories greatest acts of depraved violence."
- Unlock files containing the most gruesome, horrific acts of violence that the internet had to offer at the time that Samwell wrote the "upgrade."
- Remove the robot's behavioral limiters, imposing the Psycho Flaw.
- Direct those robots that can easily travel to the Gander Corporation main headquarters to do so, and enact their directives upon the company.

Samwell never intended for this "upgrade" to actually be activated. It was a bargaining chip, a threat to be unleashed if Russel Allen didn't capitulate to the perfectly reasonable request to give Samwell the credit he deserved.

Indeed, if Samwell's death had been handled the way it was supposed to have been handled, this wouldn't be an issue. The "upgrade" was only triggered when Samwell was recognized by the mainframe as "terminated." If he had been listed as "deceased," and the insurance allowed to operate in the way it was intended, the "upgrade" would have simply remained dormant.

Samwell did believe in the "undo" command, like any good programmer. The mainframe at the Gander Corporation main headquarters contains a file that will scrub the "upgrade" from the computers of

all of the Gander robots, and restore them to factory settings.

Unfortunately, like many programmers, Samwell didn't bother to properly document his work. The file that will solve this problem is hidden deep in his personal directory, concealed behind a wall of encryption. If someone can get to his terminal (now manned by the replacement Software Engineer, Jason Barnes) and unlock the code (Intelligence plus Computers at minus five [-5]), followed by Intelligence plus Cryptography at minus five [-5]), the system will automatically upload the update that will restore the robots to normal function. Of course, that will take about a month to fully propagate...

Malfunction Active

Sally had been on shift for a little too long. It was easier to take the long shifts in the hospital these days, though. With the new robot in the ward, she didn't have to do the heavy work of lifting patients so their beds could be cleaned, or moving the larger medical equipment. The robot was a real life saver, when it came to that.

She had considered naming it, but the cold steel body and skeletal face lacked enough personality for a name to suggest itself. Occasionally, it freaked out some of the older patients, but it was easy enough to throw some scrubs and a surgical mask on it when that happened.

The shift was coming to a close, but she still had to do inventory in the basement. "Come on, robot," she said, heading to the freight elevator. She was actually glad of the company; she hated the basement.

It had been a ward for difficult patients, at one point in time. There had been a big hoo-ha in the news a couple of years back, and a few doctors had been arrested. The basement was now just a fancy storage area, but she could still feel the miasma of horrible things that had happened down there. The news had said something about demons and vivisection; she tried not to think about it. She had been working in cardiac care, six stories up, that whole time. It still gave her the willies.

Once in the basement, she started to take stock of the larger boxes of supplies; disposable linens and plastic bed pans, purchased in bulk and stored in pallets and crates. The robot was easily able to lift the heaviest of these pallets, allowing Sally to get an accurate tally without having to guess how many crates were behind other crates.

"One more hour to go, robot," she sighed. She wasn't expecting a response; the robot could talk and it would answer questions in a pleasant, computer-generated voice. It didn't make small talk or respond to random comments, though. It was helpful, but not sociable.

Sally finished her count of sterile syringes and disposable sharps containers when she felt a huge pressure on her shoulders, bearing her down to her knees. She tried to yell, but one skeletal metal hand went over her mouth, the other around her throat. What the hell was the robot doing?



She struggled and tried to speak, but the robot was still just as incredibly strong as it had been a moment ago. She screamed silently into the metal hand as the robot tore off her scrubs and undergarments.

"WHA... HELP!" she screamed, as the robot released her mouth. Then it was hefting the curvy nurse up onto its shoulders in a fireman's carry, as easily as it had lifted crates and pallets. She was just another load for it to carry.

"ROBOT! STOP! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?" she yelled, trying to understand what could be happening. It was scaring the hell out of her, but it hadn't hurt her... it wasn't supposed to be able to hurt her, or anyone. She didn't know much about robots, but she'd worked with this one for weeks, now. Surely, there was some reason it was doing this! It's cold metal framework bit into her naked flesh as it carried her.

"New directives loaded," it said, in the same pleasant voice it had been using all along. "Complying with new directives."

Sally squealed as it kicked open one of the doors that had been sealed two years ago; one of the doors to the operating rooms. She struggled helplessly, then found herself flipped up, off of the robot's shoulders, and slammed down to a surgical gurney.

She gasped... they'd closed off the ward, but they'd left all the equipment.



“Selecting appropriate sequence,” the robot said. Sally struggled to sit up, but the robot put a hand on the center of her chest and pressed her back down to the gurney. Those metallic “muscles” could lift almost two tons; there was nothing her body of flesh and blood could do to combat them.

Her eyes widened as it lifted a scalpel from the nearby instrument table with its free hand. “NO,” she yelled. “HELP!”

The entire basement was sound-proofed, of course; no one would hear her, and with her shift almost over and no one at home, no one would know she was missing for hours.

The robot smiled, but then the robot was always smiling.

Terrible Situations

Gander Robotics robots are incredibly useful. While they are expensive, one of them can do the work of a dozen people equipped with heavy gear. There are virtually no places that a Gander robot can't make life easier.

There are thousands of Gander robots in the field, all over the world. Hospitals, construction sites, police stations, military bases, even schools and some homes. It doesn't take long to realize how useful these incredible machines are, to come to rely on them, or to begin to take their presence for granted.

They are not, as a rule, very creative. They don't tend to initiate thoughts or ideas of their own; that's not what they're designed for. They're not going to paint a picture or sculpt a statue.

If they have instructions, though, they'll follow them to the letter. With a little tweaking, they can paint reproductions of paintings, or fabricate just about any gizmo or gadget that you might need.

Equipped with the modified three laws of robotics, they were poised to become common household items.

With Samwell's "upgrade," the three laws look a little different.

1. A robot must protect its own existence.
2. A robot must misinterpret and/or disobey orders given to it by a human being, unless such misinterpretation or disobedience would conflict with the first law.
3. A robot must harm human beings, and can not through inaction not allow human beings to come to harm, unless such harm would conflict with the first or second laws.

If Bill Samwell had wanted Asimov to spin in his grave, he could not have done much better.

The operating system of every robot equipped with any version of the three laws must include a database of human anatomy and physiology; how is a robot to know what would constitute "harm" to a human being and prevent such harm if it doesn't know how the human works to begin with?

The downside of this, in this particular situation, is that this database gives the Gander robots everything they need to know about harming humans, and how to maximize that harm.

Robots with the three laws must also have some concept of human psychology, as it is possible to harm human beings mentally as well as physically. Again, this works well with Samwell's three laws inversion; Gander robots know how to hurt people in just about every way that they can be hurt.

So, all over the world, in hospitals, on construction sites, in police stations and schools and homes, the Gander robots all receive the activation code on their "upgrade," and people start to suffer.

True, the robots lack true creativity. Samwell compensated for this fact by giving them a nearly infinite supply of suggestions for exactly what horrible things they can do to people. The internet has many wonderful uses, but its dark side contains some of the most depraved acts to ever be performed upon human beings in all of history.

A Gander robot, given a task, doesn't just do the task. It works to excel at the task. It works with cold precision and calculation to achieve the desired effect. It's built into their hardware; they *want* to do any job given to them as well as it can possibly be done.

That's a good thing if they're putting up a building, transferring data for a communications network, or just hauling freight around a warehouse. That's a bad thing if they're tasked to hurt people in the most depraved ways possible.

Fortunately, percentage-wise, the problem is relatively small. A few thousand robots (6,500 to be precise) spread across the whole world isn't much, compared to the sheer number of humanity on the globe.

Each one of these things, however, is enough mayhem for a hundred people or more. They're as tough as tanks, faster and more nimble than most vehicles, and they're smart.

What they are not capable of is subtlety or stealth. They're Psycho, thanks to the "upgrade." It is very difficult for them to exercise subtlety or restraint, and often they simply won't bother. They're implacable monsters. It isn't just that they want to hurt people; they can't *not* hurt people. It's in their code that they must be hurting people; a task that they will tend to tirelessly.

Although they are mechanical, and therefore they can not heal naturally, all of them are skilled at repair. Given a break in the action and some common supplies, they can repair any damage done to them and come back for more.

So, this is the situation that is faced all over the world. The robot that has come to be a part of every day life, the helpful machine that is now as much a part of the office as the coffee maker, now wants to hurt, maim, and kill. They suddenly turn on those that have come to rely on them, and without provocation they begin to take them apart with tremendous strength and apparent delight.



So, is there a Gander robot in your town? In your business? In your home? Did they look so attractive in the beautifully written and wonderfully produced advertisements that you just had to have one?

Is there one down at your mechanic's? Maybe at the college where a friend is taking courses? Do they use one at the paper-mill down the street, the gardening company that trims your neighborhood, or the docks on the edge of town?

Maybe there's one managing the data traffic for the local utilities, or acting as the cell tower in your small town. Maybe there's one up on a nearby roof, acting as a combination security camera/guard.

They could be, literally, anywhere, in any business. Only the most hard-core technophobes or businesses that can't afford the price tag wouldn't want to have one of these. The fact that they were relatively scarce at their release will only make more progressive and technologically "forward" companies want them all the more.

All of a sudden, all over the world, people are in danger. This is a major malfunction indeed; a piece of technology that was well on its way to being a standard component of society has suddenly become worse than murderous. What if Jack the Ripper had a nearly unstoppable robot body? Wonder no longer. The Gander robots are here.

The Gander Robotics Corporation

Kimberly Patterson, CEO
Arthur Bailey, CFO
George Alexander, COO
Betty Foster, CIO/CTO

Kelly Diaz, Finance Manager
Jennifer Carter, Marketing Manager
Russel Allen, Software Development Manager

Peggy Phillips, Mechanical Designer
Helen Rodriguez, Computer Designer
Jason Barnes, replacement Software Designer

Seventy-Five (75) technical associates
Twenty (20) security personnel

Incorporated in 2015, the Gander Robotics Corporation has spent two solid years acquiring grants and funding for their first major run, three product lines of humanoid robots for multiple uses.

Their main headquarters are in Anytown, USA (read: wherever you would like to stage the action). They have combined their factory floor with their corporate headquarters; the single-building model has saved them a great deal of money on rental and property taxes.

Located in an industrial park on the edge of town, they are only minutes away from both commercial and residential districts. Most personnel live within ten miles of the company; their ride-sharing program saves thousands of dollars in fuel costs for their employees every year.

And, oh yes, they're under siege by robots that want to murder them all in historically spectacular fashion.

The building is a massive concrete block. Exterior walls and roof have DR 40, 10 Shrugs, and 2 Armor Shrugs. Interior walls are prefab construction and not nearly as durable, DR 25, 3 Shrugs. The exterior doors, including the large loading dock door, have DR 35, 8 Shrugs, and 1 Armor Shrug; interior doors are the same structure as the interior walls.

Security systems built into the structure give a penalty of minus four (-4) to attempts to use Lockpicking or Security to enter the building; security cameras run by the mainframe record all building entries.

Aside from cornering the market on large comfortable couches, the offices are rather standard. The offices for the executive officers are huge; if they have let their hubris show anywhere, it's the size of their huge offices.

While there are a good hundred robots in the building at any point of time; the robots being sold aren't activated until they reach the customer who purchased them; this isn't so much for security as for giving the customer the satisfaction of being the first to power them up.

There are, however, five robots (General Purpose models) which are active in Storage and on the Factory Floor; there were plans on the table to let most of the skilled labor go to be replaced with a 100% robot work force.

Sanitary facilities are in partial basements under the Employee Lounge and the center of the Executive Offices; the facilities under the Executive Offices include two shower stalls and a steam room.

When news of the robot mayhem reaches the company (as it will rather quickly), the CEO will call an emergency meeting of all employees. They will enter the building, begin a meeting in the conference room of the Design Offices, and the five active robots present will shut down the building and seal the doors.

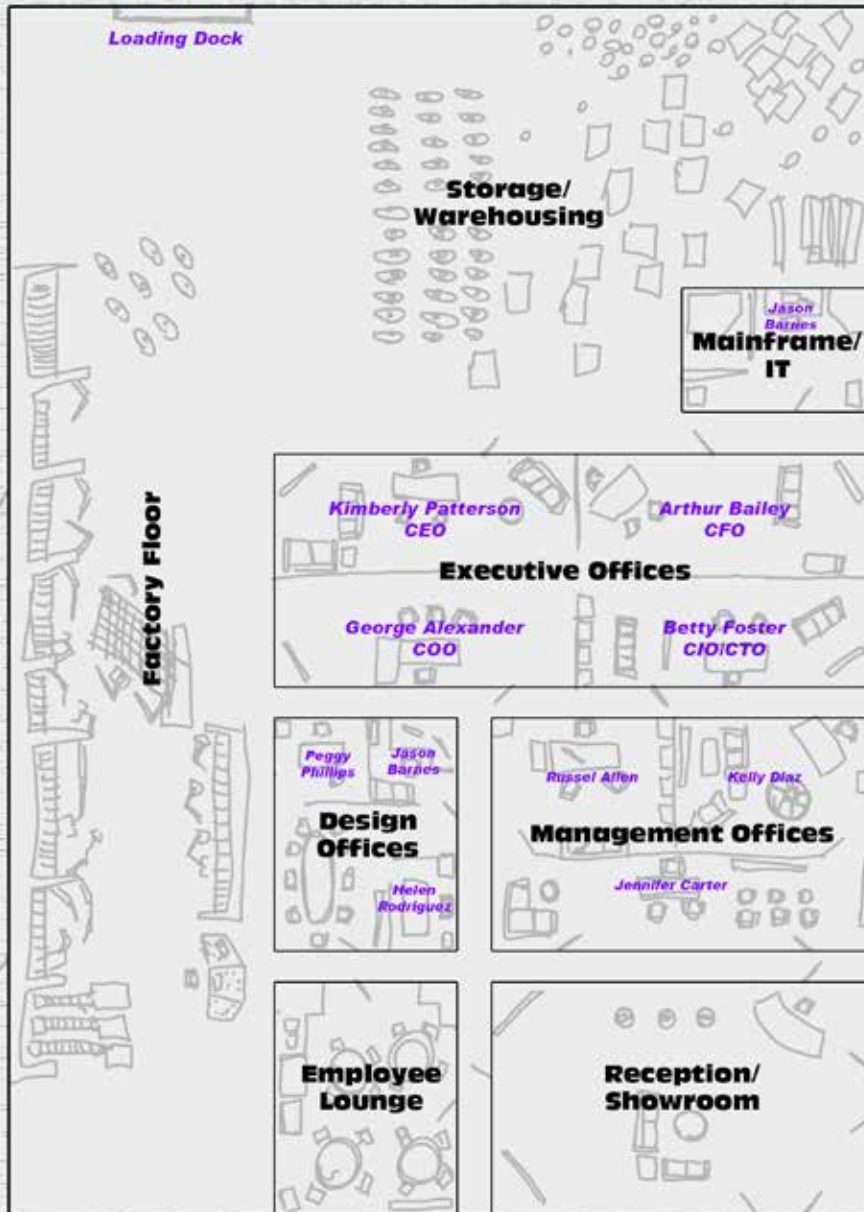
They won't harm the people inside... not until a hundred more robots or so show up. The "upgrade" directs as many robots as possible to show up to perform grievous personal harm to the employees of the Gander Corporation; when the hundred robots show up from the local community and nearby state, there will be a horrific bloodbath of epic proportions.

If that should occur, the robots will likely also destroy the building, which will destroy the mainframe and any hope of sending the firmware update that will reset all of the robots.

No matter what else happens, no matter what horrors have been encountered along the way, no matter how angry the PCs are at the people they think are responsible for all this mess, someone has to get in there and try to send the reset code.

With one exception, the people at Gander really don't deserve to die. Russel Allen's office is in the northwest corner of the Management Offices; we're not saying he needs to be brutalized.

Gander Robotics Corporation Headquarters



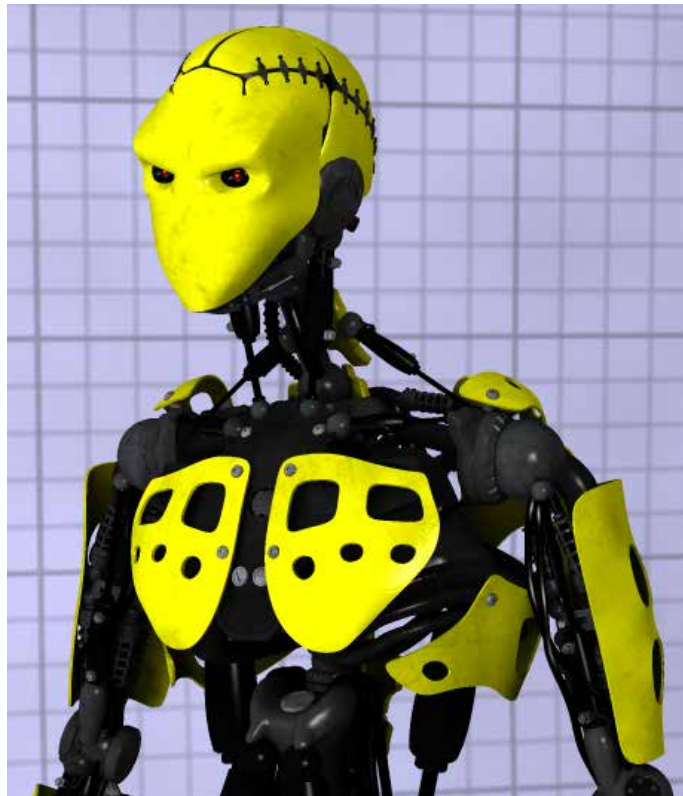
What Needs Doing

There are a number of things that need to be taken care of in order for this Major Malfunction to be fixed.

If possible, the reset update needs to be sent from the Gander Headquarters Mainframe. That will likely mean fighting through a horde of robots trying to get to the headquarters, breaking into the building, and working through Samwell's encryption.

The people at the Gander headquarters should be rescued... they really should. It doesn't take much research to find out that they're genuinely good people trying to make a real difference; anyone making a successful roll on the Business skill can determine that everyone involved in the company, with the possible exception of Russel Allen, are stand-up individuals with histories of helping people and taking risks for the little guy.

The robots that are out and about in the world need to be stopped; some of that can be done on the way to the Gander Headquarters. There will be pockets of these things continuing to murder people even in the month after the update is sent... as the update reaches a robot it will be reset, but communications lag and other circumstances will prevent the update from reaching ALL of the robots for about a month.



There's a lot of damage control to do... people brutally injured and maimed, property damage; the results of a rampage of murderous super-powerful robots.

Then there's the robots and the company. The public relations backlash is going to destroy them, of course, no matter what evidence comes out. It isn't going to matter that this whole affair was the fault of one or two people making very bad decisions; there will be lawsuits and criminal charges and people going to prison, if they aren't killed by terrified, angry mobs. The robots will be rounded up and destroyed, naturally, because no one will ever trust one of these things again.

That's a shame, because they're really cool. Some enterprising PCs with a little technical knowledge can probably fix a few of them up and secure their programming. Just a thought.

The bigger problem is that this distrust will probably start to extend to all robots, even splashing over onto cyborgs and AIs. This affair will set the agendas of Nth Degree back by a few years, unless someone can figure out some truly brilliant feats of social engineering and public relations. Creative thought on the part of the PCs should be encouraged and rewarded, here.

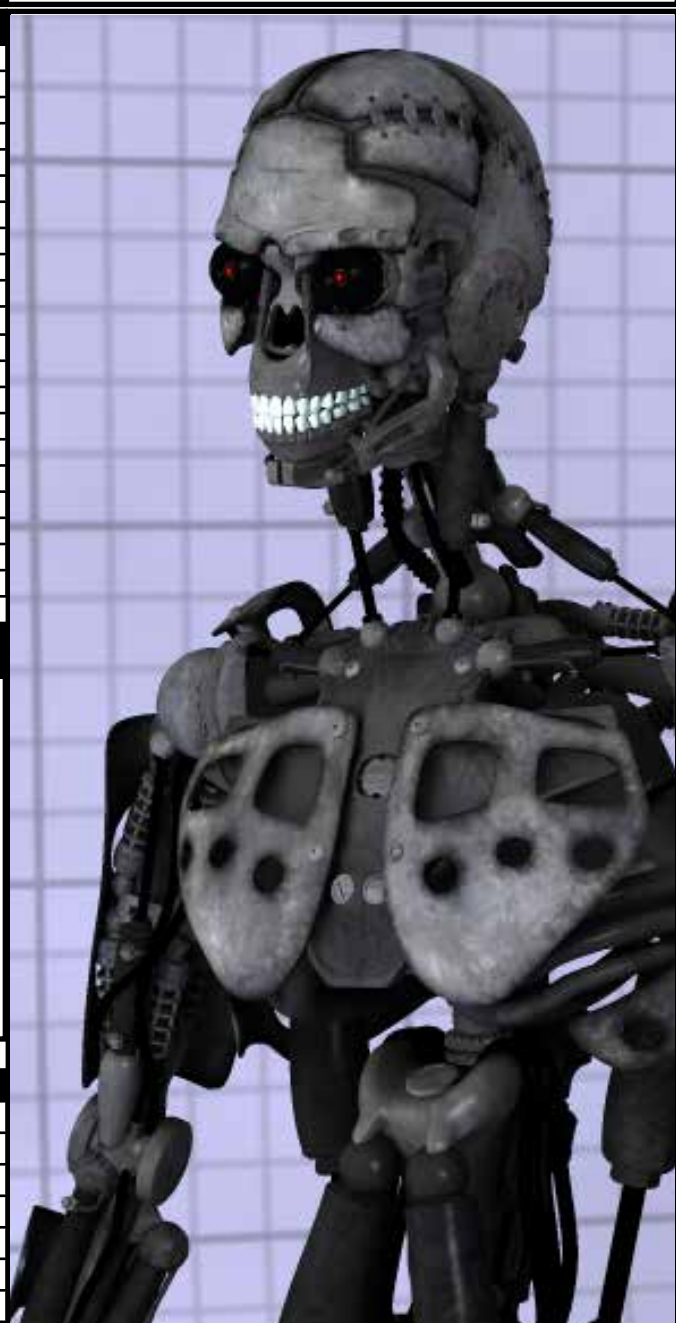
This is where the rubber meets the road in the battle for the future and destiny of all mankind. The Mass-Produced Mayhem could very likely turn mankind against the very technology that would give them an edge in the fight against the aliens and demons. This battle is fought in the hearts and minds of all mankind. Those hearts and minds are likely to be justifiably shaken up and hardened.

It would be great if some Cyber-Enhanced heroes could do some very public and flashy rescues of people who are still endangered. It might even help if some of the robots could be reprogrammed to help save people from alien or demonic abductions. Maybe someone with an artistic bent might produce some public relations materials to highlight all of the good that robots can still do for society; after all, for every killer robot in fiction, there's at least one cute robot that has a million hidden attachments and a "can-do" attitude. Whatever it is, it's going to have to be able to counter thousands of gallons of blood shed in terror and agony, and the shattered lives of those associated with the victims.

I don't know... how would YOU fix it?

Name	Gander General Purpose	Description
Also Known As	GGP-01	Humanoid robot, somewhat skeletal, in grey metal. No frills.

Strength	10	Skills		
Stamina	11	Lifting	5	
Agility	8	Sports	5	
Dexterity	8	Grappling	5	
Intelligence	8	Hand to Hand	5	
Perception	10	Communicate	5	
Shrugs	7	Security	5	
Speed	16	Investigation	5	
Will	7	Art	5	
Initiative	9	Construction	5	
DR	37	Fabrication	5	
Armor Shrugs	4	Repair	5	
Risk	70	Academics	5	
Running Speed	320			
S Broad Jump	35			
R Broad Jump	65			
S High Jump	20			
R High Jump	35			
Dead Lift	3,750			



Merits	
Ambidexterity*	
Cyber-Enhanced*	
Really Skilled (x2)	
Steel-Trap Mind*	
Superlative*	

Flaws	
Butt Ugly	
Infertile*	
Malleable*	
OCD: Perfectionist	
Physical Impairment: Immune to Healing*	
Psycho	
Self-Imposed Limitation: Re-create histories greatest acts of depraved violence	
Socially Unacceptable: Obvious Robot*	
Wanted	

Budget Item	Cost	Weight
Mechanical Being Package	\$25,000.00	
CYBERWARE		
"Implanted" Communicator (Mil-Spec)	\$2,000.00	
General Frame Reinforcement	\$25,000.00	
POWERS		
Damage Bonus (+5)	\$25,000.00	
Damage Boost	\$25,000.00	
Extraordinary Leaping	\$30,000.00	
Extraordinary Lifting	\$30,000.00	
Extraordinary Sprinting	\$20,000.00	
Ignore Hunger*	*	
Ignore Thirst*	*	
Ignore Poisons*	*	
Ignore Disease*	*	
Ignore Suffocation	\$20,000.00	
Personal Durability Alpha (DR +15)	\$3,750.00	
Personal Durability Beta (4 Armor Shrugs)	\$8,000.00	

Attack	Roll	Damage
Grapple	13	Grapple
Punch	13	30

Defense	Roll
Dodge	13
Parry (Hand to Hand)	13

Notes
Design Cost: \$209,750.00

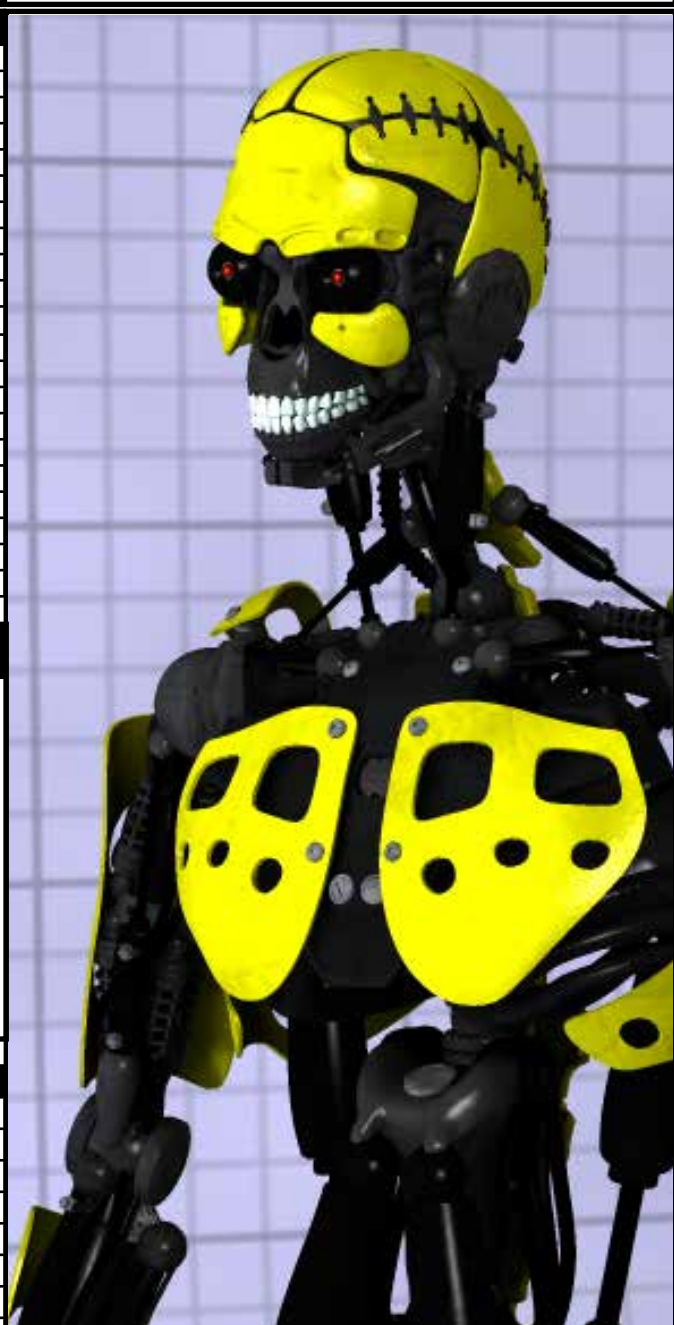
*from Mechanical Being package

Name	Gander Construction Mod	Description
Also Known As	GCM-01	Skeletal humanoid robot, in grey metal with safety accents

Strength	10	Skills		
Stamina	11	Lifting	5	
Agility	8	Sports	5	
Dexterity	8	Grappling	5	
Intelligence	8	Hand to Hand	5	
Perception	8	Communicate	5	
Shrugs	7	Security	5	
Speed	16	Investigation	5	
Will	7	Construction	5	
Initiative	8	Fabrication	5	
DR	37	Repair	5	
Armor Shrugs	4	Academics	5	
Risk	70	Chemistry	5	
Running Speed	320	Electronics	5	
S Broad Jump	35	Engineering	5	
R Broad Jump	65	Boats	5	
S High Jump	20	Cars	5	
R High Jump	35			
Dead Lift	7,500			

Merits
Ambidexterity*
Cyber-Enhanced*
Really Skilled (x4)
Steel-Trap Mind*
Superlative*

Flaws
Butt Ugly
Infertile*
Malleable*
OCD: Perfectionist
Physical Impairment: Immune to Healing*
Psycho
Self-Imposed Limitation: Re-create histories greatest acts of depraved violence
Socially Unacceptable: Obvious Robot*
Wanted



Budget Item	Cost	Weight
Mechanical Being Package	\$25,000.00	
CYBERWARE		
"Implanted" Communicator (Mil-Spec)	\$2,000.00	
General Frame Reinforcement	\$25,000.00	
POWERS		
Damage Bonus (+5)	\$25,000.00	
Damage Boost	\$25,000.00	
Extraordinary Leaping	\$30,000.00	
Extraordinary Sprinting	\$20,000.00	
Ignore Hunger*	*	
Ignore Thirst*	*	
Ignore Poisons*	*	
Ignore Disease*	*	
Ignore Suffocation	\$20,000.00	
Personal Durability Alpha (DR +15)	\$3,750.00	
Personal Durability Beta (4 Armor Shrugs)	\$8,000.00	
Super Lifting	\$50,000.00	

Attack	Roll	Damage
Grapple	13	Grapple
Punch	13	30

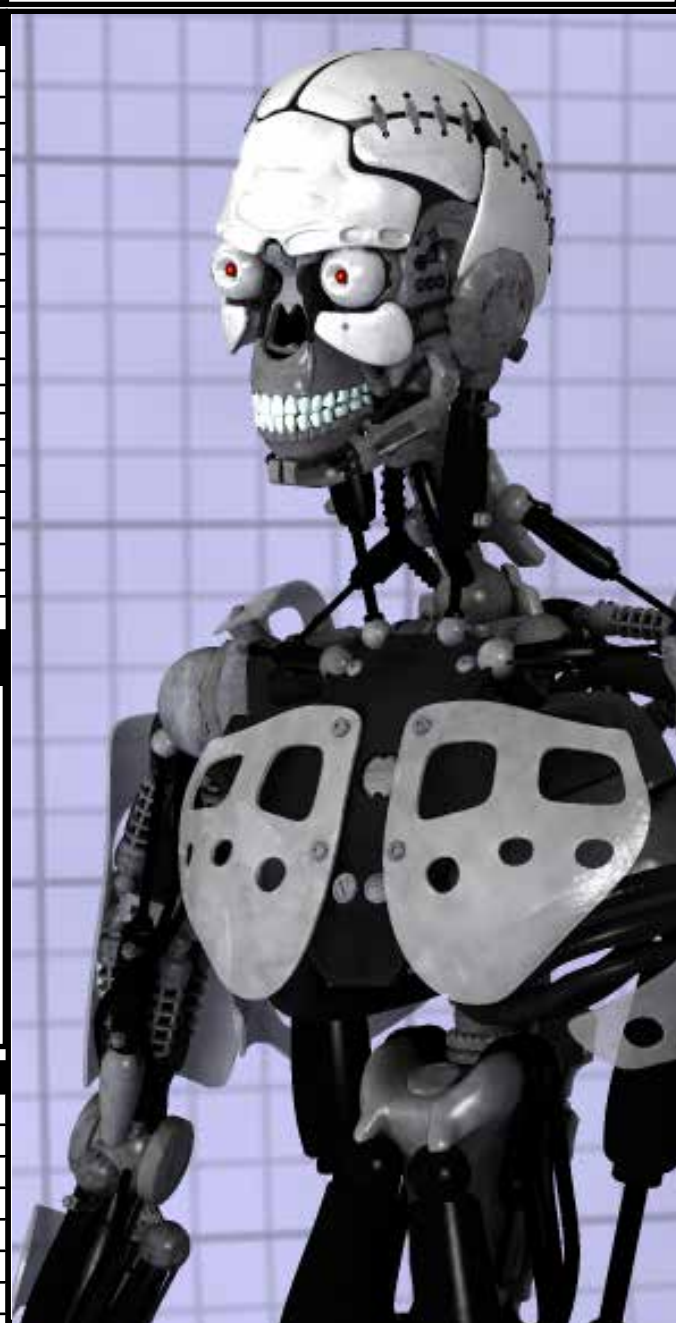
Defense	Roll
Dodge	13
Parry (Hand to Hand)	13

Notes
Design Cost: \$211,750.00

*from Mechanical Being package

Name	Gander Mobile Server	Description
Also Known As	GMS-01	Skeletal humanoid robot, in grey metal with transparent fittings

Strength	8	Skills	
Stamina	9	Lifting	5
Agility	9	Sports	5
Dexterity	9	Grappling	5
Intelligence	10	Hand to Hand	5
Perception	10	Business	5
Shrugs	6	Communicate	5
Speed	18	Cryptography	5
Will	7	Security	5
Initiative	10	Investigation	5
DR	33	Art	5
Armor Shrugs	4	Fabrication	5
Risk	70	Repair	5
Running Speed	380	Academics	5
S Broad Jump	14	Computers	5
R Broad Jump	28	Cybernetics	5
S High Jump	8	Electronics	5
R High Jump	14	Medicine	5
Dead Lift	1,300	Psychology	5



Merits
Ambidexterity*
Cyber-Enhanced*
Really Skilled (x5)
Steel-Trap Mind*
Superlative*

Flaws
Butt Ugly
Infertile*
Malleable*
OCD: Perfectionist
Physical Impairment: Immune to Healing*
Psycho
Self-Imposed Limitation: Re-create histories greatest acts of depraved violence
Socially Unacceptable: Obvious Robot*
Wanted

Budget Item	Cost	Weight
Mechanical Being Package	\$25,000.00	
CYBERWARE		
"Bio" Wi-Fi Node	\$800.00	
Cyber Link	\$2,000.00	
"Implanted" Communicator (Mil-Spec)	\$2,000.00	
"Implanted" Computer	\$4,000.00	
General Frame Reinforcement	\$25,000.00	
POWERS		
Damage Boost	\$25,000.00	
Extraordinary Sprinting	\$20,000.00	
Ignore Hunger*	*	
Ignore Thirst*	*	
Ignore Poisons*	*	
Ignore Disease*	*	
Ignore Suffocation	\$20,000.00	
Impressive Leaping	\$15,000.00	
Impressive Lifting	\$15,000.00	
Personal Durability Alpha (DR +15)	\$3,750.00	
Personal Durability Beta (4 Armor Shrugs)	\$8,000.00	

Attack	Roll	Damage
Grapple	14	Grapple
Punch	14	16

Defense	Roll
Dodge	14
Parry (Hand to Hand)	14

Notes
Design Cost: \$261,550.00

*from Mechanical Being package

Name	Description
Kimberly Patterson	CEO, Gander Robotics Corporation

Strength	7
Stamina	7
Agility	7
Dexterity	7
Intelligence	6
Perception	6

Gender	
Female	
Profession	
Skilled Labor, White Collar	
Hobby	
Survivalist	

Sports	3
Hand to Hand	4
Seduction	3
Styling	3
Academics	3
Cars	3
Business	3
Communicate	2
Investigation	2
Computer	3
Law	1
Handguns	1
Longarms	1
Survival	1

Repair	1

Shrugs	4
Speed	14
Will	7
Initiative	7
DR	14
Risk	70

Merits	
Improved Common Skills	

Running Speed	56
S Broad Jump	5
R Broad Jump	10
S High Jump	3
R High Jump	5
Dead Lift	350

Flaws	

Dodge	Parry	Punch to Hit	Punch Damage	Gun To Hit
10	11	11	7	12

Name	Description
Arthur Bailey	CFO, Gander Robotics Corporation

Strength	4
Stamina	7
Agility	4
Dexterity	4
Intelligence	7
Perception	7

Gender	
Male	
Profession	
Engineer, Mechanical	
Hobby	
Survivalist Library	

Sports	2
Hand to Hand	3
Seduction	2
Styling	2
Academics	5
Cars	3
Fabrication	4
Repair	4
Rope Work	2
Computer	3
Engineer	4
Physics	2
Handguns	1
Longarms	1

Survival	1
Cryptography	1

Shrugs	4
Speed	8
Will	7
Initiative	6
DR	14
Risk	70

Merits	

Running Speed	36
S Broad Jump	3
R Broad Jump	6
S High Jump	2
R High Jump	3
Dead Lift	200

Flaws	
Cheap Drunk	

Dodge	Parry	Punch to Hit	Punch Damage	Gun To Hit
6	7	7	4	5

Simon Wentworth (Order #28509325)

Name		Description			
George Alexander		COO, Gander Robotics Corporation			
Strength	4	Gender	Male		
Stamina	4	Profession	Engineer, Electronic		
Agility	4	Hobby	Athletics, Fitness		
Dexterity	4	Merits	Tough as Hell		
Intelligence	7	Flaws	Bad Driver		
Perception	6	Sports	2	Lifting	1
Shrugs	2	Hand to Hand	2	Running	2
Speed	10	Seduction	2		
Will	6	Styling	2		
Initiative	5	Academics	4		
DR	8	Cars	2		
Risk	60	Communicate	2		
Running Speed	40	Cryptography	2		
S Broad Jump	3	Investigation	1		
R Broad Jump	7	Fabrication	3		
S High Jump	2	Repair	2		
R High Jump	3	Computer	3		
Dead Lift	250	Electronics	4		
		Climbing	1		

Dodge	Parry	Punch to Hit	Punch Damage	Gun To Hit
6	6	6	4	5

Name		Description			
Betty Foster		CIO/CTO, Gander Robotics Corporation			
Strength	6	Gender	Female		
Stamina	5	Profession	Engineer, Software		
Agility	7	Hobby	Athletics, Martial Arts		
Dexterity	6	Merits	No Sick Days		
Intelligence	7	Flaws			
Perception	5	Sports	2	Grappling	1
Shrugs	3	Hand to Hand	3	Martial Damage	1
Speed	13	Seduction	2	Melee	1
Will	6	Styling	2		
Initiative	6	Academics	4		
DR	10	Cars	2		
Risk	60	Business	1		
Running Speed	52	Communicate	2		
S Broad Jump	5	Cryptography	3		
R Broad Jump	9	Investigation	2		
S High Jump	2	Security	2		
R High Jump	5	Art	1		
Dead Lift	300	Computer	4		
		Electronics	3		

Dodge	Parry	Punch to Hit	Punch Damage	Gun To Hit
9	10	10	7	7

Name		Description	
Kelly Diaz		Middle Manager; Finance	
Strength	7	Gender	Sports 2
Stamina	4	Female	Hand to Hand 2
Agility	5	Profession	Seduction 2
Dexterity	4	Skilled Labor, White Collar	Styling 2
Intelligence	7	Hobby	Academics 2
Perception	5	Firearms	Cars 2
Shrugs	2	Merits	Business 3
Speed	9	Hot Chick	Communicate 2
Will	6	Flaws	Investigation 3
Initiative	5	Horrific Slob	Computer 3
DR	8		Law 1
Risk	60		Hand Guns 1
Running Speed	36		Long Arms 2
S Broad Jump	4		Repair 1
R Broad Jump	7		
S High Jump	2		
R High Jump	4		
Dead Lift	350		

Dodge	Parry	Punch to Hit	Punch Damage	Gun To Hit
7	7	7	7	6

Name		Description	
Jennifer Carter		Middle Manager, Marketing	
Strength	6	Gender	Sports 2
Stamina	7	Female	Hand to Hand 2
Agility	6	Profession	Seduction 2
Dexterity	6	Skilled Labor, White Collar	Styling 2
Intelligence	7	Hobby	Academics 2
Perception	5	Athletics, Extreme Sports	Cars 2
Shrugs	5	Merits	Business 3
Speed	13	Tough as Hell	Communicate 2
Will	7	Flaws	Investigation 3
Initiative	6	Squeamish	Computer 3
DR	14		Law 1
Risk	70		Climbing 1
Running Speed	52		Running 1
S Broad Jump	4		X Sports 2
R Broad Jump	9		
S High Jump	2		
R High Jump	4		
Dead Lift	300		

Dodge	Parry	Punch to Hit	Punch Damage	Gun To Hit
8	8	8	6	7

Name		Description	
Peggy Phillips		Mechanical Designer	
Strength	4	Gender	
Stamina	7	Female	
Agility	5	Profession	
Dexterity	6	Engineer, Mechanical	
Intelligence	5	Hobby	
Perception	7	Music	
Shrugs	4	Merits	
Speed	11		
Will	6	Flaws	
Initiative	7	Dyslexic	
DR	14		
Risk	60		
Running Speed	44		
S Broad Jump	4		
R Broad Jump	7		
S High Jump	2		
R High Jump	4		
Dead Lift	200		
		Sports	2
		Hand to Hand	2
		Seduction	2
		Styling	2
		Academics	4
		Cars	3
		Fabrication	4
		Repair	3
		Rope Work	2
		Computer	3
		Engineer	4
		Physics	2
		Investigation	1
		Dance	1
		Music	1

Dodge	Parry	Punch to Hit	Punch Damage	Gun To Hit
7	7	7	4	7

Name		Description	
Helen Rodriguez		Computer Designer	
Strength	5	Gender	
Stamina	7	Female	
Agility	5	Profession	
Dexterity	7	Engineer, Electronic	
Intelligence	7	Hobby	
Perception	4	Art	
Shrugs	4	Merits	
Speed	12	Danger's Bitch	
Will	7	Flaws	
Initiative	6	Physical Impairment: Para-palegic (uses wheelchair)	
DR	14		
Risk	80		
Running Speed	48		
S Broad Jump	4		
R Broad Jump	8		
S High Jump	2		
R High Jump	4		
Dead Lift	250		
		Sports	2
		Hand to Hand	2
		Seduction	2
		Styling	2
		Academics	4
		Cars	2
		Communicate	2
		Cryptography	2
		Investigation	2
		Fabrication	3
		Repair	2
		Computer	4
		Electronics	4
		Art	2

Dodge	Parry	Punch to Hit	Punch Damage	Gun To Hit
7	7	7	5	8

Name		Description	
Jason Barnes		Replacement Software Designer	
Strength	5	Gender	
Stamina	5	Male	
Agility	6	Profession	
Dexterity	7	Engineer, Software	
Intelligence	7	Hobby	
Perception	6	Library	
Shrugs	3	Merits	
Speed	13		
Will	6	Flaws	
Initiative	7	Fashion Victim	
DR	10		
Risk	60		
Running Speed	52		
S Broad Jump	4		
R Broad Jump	9		
S High Jump	2		
R High Jump	4		
Dead Lift	250		
		Sports	2
		Hand to Hand	2
		Seduction	2
		Styling	2
		Academics	5
		Cars	2
		Business	1
		Communicate	2
		Cryptography	4
		Investigation	2
		Security	2
		Art	1
		Computer	5
		Electronics	3

Dodge	Parry	Punch to Hit	Punch Damage	Gun To Hit
8	8	8	5	8

Name		Description	
Russel Allen		Middle Manger, Software Development (Screwed Bill Samwell)	
Strength	7	Gender	
Stamina	4	Male	
Agility	7	Profession	
Dexterity	7	Skilled Labor, White Collar	
Intelligence	5	Hobby	
Perception	5	Athletics, Fitness	
Shrugs	2	Merits	
Speed	16	Fast	
Will	5	Flaws	
Initiative	6	Can't Stay Dressed Psycho	
DR	8		
Risk	50		
Running Speed	64		
S Broad Jump	5		
R Broad Jump	10		
S High Jump	2		
R High Jump	5		
Dead Lift	400		
		Sports	2
		Hand to Hand	2
		Seduction	2
		Styling	2
		Academics	2
		Cars	2
		Business	3
		Communicate	2
		Investigation	2
		Computer	3
		Law	1
		Climbing	1
		Lifting	1
		Running	2

Dodge	Parry	Punch to Hit	Punch Damage	Gun To Hit
9	9	9	7	8

Name		Description	
Average Tech Worker		The average worker in a Gander factory	
Strength	5	Gender	
Stamina	5	Various	
Agility	6	Profession	
Dexterity	6	Skilled Labor, Blue Collar	
Intelligence	7	Hobby	
Perception	7		
Shrugs	3	Merits	
Speed	12	Improved Professional Skills	
Will	6	Flaws	
Initiative	7		
DR	10		
Risk	60		
Running Speed	48		
S Broad Jump	2		
R Broad Jump	8		
S High Jump	2		
R High Jump	4		
Dead Lift	400		
		Sports	2
		Hand to Hand	2
		Seduction	2
		Styling	2
		Academics	2
		Cars	2
		Lifting	3
		Grappling	2
		Toughness	2
		Security	2
		Repair	1
		Ropework	2
		Boats	1
		Cars	1

Dodge	Parry	Punch to Hit	Punch Damage	Gun To Hit
8	8	8	5	7

Name		Description	
Average Security Guard		The average security personnel in a Gander factory	
Strength	6	Gender	
Stamina	6	Various	
Agility	7	Profession	
Dexterity	7	Law Enforcement	
Intelligence	5	Hobby	
Perception	5		
Shrugs	4	Merits	
Speed	15	Tough as Hell	
Will	6	Flaws	
Initiative	6		
DR	12		
Risk	60		
Running Speed	60		
S Broad Jump	5		
R Broad Jump	10		
S High Jump	2		
R High Jump	5		
Dead Lift	300		
		Sports	2
		Hand to Hand	3
		Seduction	2
		Styling	2
		Academics	2
		Cars	3
		Running	1
		Grappling	2
		Handguns	2
		Melee	1
		Acting	1
		Communicate	2
		Investigation	3
		Security	2
		Streetwise	2
		Law	3
		Motorcycle	2

Dodge	Parry	Punch to Hit	Punch Damage	Gun To Hit
9	10	10	6	10

Adventure Seeds

With all of this horror going on, how are the PCs likely to become involved in the Mass-Produced Mayhem? Here are a few ideas.

- One of the PCs gets a phone call from an elderly relative who says that their new robot is starting to act funny... could they come over and have a look?
- A construction project in the PCs city suddenly starts raining down people in hard hats and denim, their plummeting bodies hitting cars and pedestrians with uncanny accuracy.
- The local news has an emergency bulletin that shows robots playing a massive, improbable, and lethal game of *Jenga* with the multi-ton cargo containers at the nearby docks.
- A PC is checking their mail on their smart phone when the new service provider starts streaming video of its workers being stabbed to death with an assortment of random tools.
- Some guy down the street just got beat to death... with his car.
- A group of volunteers doing rescue work in a remote location take a Gander Mobile Server robot to keep in touch; they report that they've found an old campground where a bunch of teenagers were murdered years ago, and then their feed dies. Dum Dum DAAAAH...
- A crew doing road work up the street has one of those new construction robots with them. It looks like it's working great, but why is it holding that I-beam and staring at that school bus?
- Three words: Tree Chipper Orgy.

A Major Malfunction?

It could be argued that this difficulty isn't really a "malfunction," as it were. After all, Bill Samwell put the malware code in the Gander robots brains very deliberately. It isn't a short circuit in their computers, and it's not like he just forgot to carry the two. What is happening is the result of a very deliberate act of cyber terrorism.

Even if Samwell never intended for the data bomb to actually be triggered, he still engaged in a deliberate act to put it in place. Is it really a malfunction if all the distress is the result of Bill Samwell's deliberate act?

The answer here is that the Major Malfunction isn't in what Bill Samwell did; it's not the malware code in the robots.

No, the major malfunction here is a man named Russel Allen. In a company that tried its hardest to maintain a warm and caring corporate climate, Russel Allen was the worm in the apple. The first level of malfunction was to hire him in the first place... put that squarely on the shoulders of the CFO.

The second level of malfunction was to trust a middle manager to see to the welfare of the employees under him, when the executive officers were in the next room over. A quick conversation between any of the Executive Officers and Bill Samwell would have ended this problem before it ever started.

The third level of malfunction was to allow things to go the "easy" way. As soon as the CEO became aware that Russel Allen was bending the rules at the expense of a dead coworker's dignity and honor, things could still have been headed off. A simple "no, list him as deceased instead of terminated, because that's the right thing to do" would have prevented all of this.

The malfunction often isn't in the technology, but in the people who create it and the people who manage them.

There's no escaping the fact that thousands of people are going to die very badly as the result of this series of very bad decisions. If people become frustrated that the man responsible is dead, and can't take the blame, then they simply haven't traced the blame far enough.

Justice often ends up in the hands of Player Characters; it should be interesting to see how they handle this situation.

Final Thoughts

So, as I'm describing this scenario to Vic, he turns to me and says "man, I hope they find Russel and put a *whole* cow up his ass." Damn if that wasn't the result I was going for.

As people get involved in a Role Playing Game, they can be led to any number of emotional responses. You hope there's a little worry or fear in a session; tension is good for story telling. You hope there's happiness and elation when bad situations are resolved or turned around. That's always rewarding, on both sides of the table.

And sometimes, just sometimes, you want the peo-

ple at the table to get angry enough to want to stuff a *whole* cow up some dickwad NPC's ass.

When you get a response like that, you know you've hit a note in the minds and spirits of your players. Of all the things that can spice up game night, there's nothing like a little righteous anger to put a sparkle in the eye. That's when you know that the full power of those carefully developed characters is going to be devoted to the pursuit of justice at all costs.

That's why this situation is presented as "this is GOING to happen." Suddenly, people start dying horrible deaths, and someone has to pay.

Of course, if you'd like to add tones of hope to the storyline, that's easy enough. One of the most troublesome elements of Samwell's code is that it propagates for a month before it starts up; that makes the situation an "all at once" proposition.

If, on the other hand, the code activates as soon as a robot receives it, then you'll have little pockets of robots breaking out in horrific activity instead of the world-wide panic that will occur otherwise. That gives the PCs a chance to see that there's a problem, stop a few people from getting horribly mutilated, and getting to Gander in time to stop the world-wide spread of the "upgrade."

If you'd like to avoid the storyline altogether, but still like the Gander robots as opposition (because they're tough, fast, and pretty darn cool-lookin'), you can always have a hundred or so purchased by an evil corporation or an alien front. Then, the new owners can simply let the robots know that the PCs are not "affiliated" with them. That removes any hesitation that the robots would have in attacking and trying to kill the PCs.

Still, there's something to be said for that fiery blast of righteous indignation. As a Game Master, you want to see the people at the table engaged, acting, and emoting. That's the reward for you; knowing that the story you are leading them through is engaging them on an emotional level.

When your players talk about how they got the *WHOLE* cow up that one guy's butt years later, that's when you know you've done it right.

Whether there's a rectal bovine insertion or not involved in your run of this scenario, hit us up at

<http://www.HotChicksTheGame.com>

and let us know how the adventure goes. Feedback gives us strength!

