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interface

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CYBERPUNK UPDATE #2

FEATURES...

New Cyberware

All New Bioware

and

***List with notes on some of the
Bay Area's toughest gangs***

LOOK INSIDE FOR:

- ◆ *Nictating Membranes*
- ◆ *Moddies & Daddies*
- ◆ *Mnemonic Matrix*

Interface

CYBERPUNK UPDATE # 2

by

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and

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Welcome to the second issue of the re-named *CYBERPUNK INTERFACE*, a monthly update and expansion to the R.Talsorian game *CYBERPUNK*. Last issue had an expanded time line for a Cyberpunk game set in the year 2020. In this issue the feature will be new Cyberware and the all new BLOWWARE! Also featured will be a small list with notes on some of the Bay Area's toughest gangs. So get ready, get out those interface cables, jack in...

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Honey Pilar Copyright 1988 © George Alec Effinger



GRAPPLEFIST:

The GRAPPLEFIST is an option for those with cyberarms. What it does is place in the shoulder 50 meters of a tightly woven tungsten alloy cable about the width of 2-3 mm. This cord is connected to the base of the hand at the wrist which is held on with a powerful magnet. The hand can be jettisoned by means of compressed air and a negative magnetic "boost," trailing the cord behind. When jettisoned it may be used to grab or punch or entangle by swinging it extended. The fist as a weapon is generally inaccurate with a -1 to hit. If fired as a fist to strike someone it will do 1d6+3 killing. The tungsten cord has a structural point rating of 10, but ranged weapons have a -25 to hit (basically 1d10+25 defence roll). The cord will hold twice the lift of the character using it (this includes the weight of the user). One could use it to grab someone/something at range and reel them/it toward the character. The user of this option doesn't have to fire the total 50 meters, s/he may stop it at any length by mental command. The GRAPPLEFIST however takes up too much room in the arm and therefore cannot have weapons or any other options in the arm besides Kevlar coating. Only options or weapons in the hand like rippers, slice n' dice, bigknucks, stinger, or the multi-use hand. One cannot have things like a hammerhand or a buzzsaw though.

\$850 Eurodollars HC=2d6

\$300 for replacement cable

BIGRIPP:

The bigripp option places an 18 inch blade in the forearm which flashes from a nearly invisible seam in the wrist either above or below at the buyer's option. This blade of carboglaz is available in any assortment of colors, gunmetal blue being popular. This blade will do 1d6+3 killing in combat.

\$750 Eurodollars HC=3d6+3

\$650 if bought as an option for a Cyberarm

STINGER:

This rare experimental cybertech is generally Blackmarket but that is most likely due to its "newness." It is basically a needle an inch long which extends from beneath the fingernail of the pointer finger. This needle is connected by a thin flexible tube to a cartridge in the palm. With a mental command specially made muscles encircling the cartridge contract, causing it to expel its contents through the needle. The cartridge will hold about 3 drams of fluid but a larger 5 or 6 dram cartridge can be bought if you can find the fixer who'll know where to get one. Those with cyberarms who have them can even get pint or half pint cartridges which are housed in the arm. This item is most often bought by junkies.

\$500 Eurodollars HC=3D6

APTR CHIP: AMBIDEXTERITY:

This simple chip allows one to use both hands effectively without hindrance. In combat this won't allow two attacks in the same phase of combat but the user may alternate between weapons.

\$200 Eurodollars

ENDORPHINE BOOSTER:

This booster package boosts and enhances the body's natural endorphines, the painkillers of the body. This places the character in an almost constant attitude of restlessness and near hyperactivity. The character tires rarely and feels little or no pain from most things. In combat the endorphines produced multiply dramatically. This gives the user a +2 to his/her consciousness save and a +1 death save. In combat if you have a VS body type and roll a 2 or lower from a kill result the character will still be conscious for one more round before truly dying. For those with a S body type the save is a 1.

\$500 HC=2d6

PHYSIOLOGICAL BOOSTER:

This booster package involves the implantation of a series of specialized synthetic organs placed at various points in the body. These organs boost calcium production for stronger bones, Adrenal excretions are boosted and enhanced, and synthetic steroids are pumped continually through the body. This Booster package basically raises the body of the user by +2, effecting not only the lift, throw, and carry stats but the damage bonus in hand to hand, the consciousness save, the effect of damage taken, the death save, and wound recovery.

\$700 HC=2d6

TOUCHY FEELY:

This cybernetic enhancement started out as an aid for the blind before the invention of cyberoptics but is still used by some today, even if they're not blind. The TOUCHY FEELY is an ultra-fine mesh of tactile enhancers and neural boosters linked to the nerves in the hand and fingers which lies below the skin. These tactile enhancers increase a hundredfold the feelings and sensations which come through the hands. This would allow the user to read ink off a page, they could also be able to detect miniscule cracks, creases and seams in walls, doors, any objects. This would allow someone to detect physical flaws in objects. One could feel minute temperature changes, vibrations too low to feel without such aid, and potential weak points in objects. By checking the resistance in objects one could gage the relative thickness. Basically this enhancement gives its user +2 awareness concerning these things and techies find this enhancement useful as it also impairs a +1 on all fix-it and analysis rolls. This option can only be used on a "meat" limb and contains an internal "switch" so one can turn on and off these sensations.

\$500 Euro HC=1d6+3

VIDEO RECORD/PLAYBACK: option for Cyboptic:

This is a micro-video recorder assembly which is housed in the cavity behind the eye. It uses a specially designed digital analog chip or DAC which can record up to thirty minutes of imagery seen by the user. When played back the image will appear to hover three feet in front of his/her head. This picture will be in color and will take up 60% of the user's field of vision. It can be paused, re-wound, fast-forwarded, played slow, anything you can conceivably do with a VCR; you can do with the image. This wasn't meant to serve wholly on its own however. With the use of interface cables and plugs one can extract the video image and make a hard copy or play directly into a television. This option does not have sound capability but with the MicroRecorder option for Cyberaudio the image will have sound as well.

\$350 Euro HC=2

AUDIO ENHANCEMENT: option for Cyberaudio:

This is basically a boosted audio receiver system. Sounds come clearer, more defined, and the user is much more sensitive to sounds lower or higher than human perception. The user can hear sounds too low or too high (such as ultrasonic sound) for human hearing by switching to the proper frequency mode and blotting out all other noise to prevent overload. All together this option gives its user a +2 to Awareness rolls based on hearing.

\$300 Euro HC=1

MNEMONIC MATRIX:

This is a complex process which involves organic and hard circuitry, mini-microprocessors, and microscopic computer chips, all held together in a vast web of internal circuits. This network is centered in the brain but fans out, following the major nerve trunks throughout the body. This type of cyberware (or BIO-ware), cannot be detected by the usual sort of hardware detecting. It leaves no external traces, besides the usual interface plugs, and is too small and organically modified to be detected on a metal detector. What this Matrix does is store vast amounts of information. This information is usually transferred into the Mnemonic Matrix through interface cables and plugs or by using a key phrase to place the Mnem-Head (the slang for Mnemonic Matrix users) into a trance. In this state the Mnem-Head is open for the incoming data, usually transferred verbally.

When the key phrase is spoken again, the Mnem-Head will fall into the trance (sometimes called the "Idiot-savant Mode") and recite the information in its entirety, a process which may take hours depending on the amount of information. The advantage in using the trance-method, is in the difficulty of unlawful extraction of the information. If the key phrase is hidden well enough, extraction is near impossible. Where with the use of

interface cables the Mnem-Head could be "convinced" to release the info. Mnem-Heads do not have direct access to the information stored in their Matrices. Where interface plugs are used, the Mega-Head (another name for Mnemonic Matrix users, referring to the mega-bytes of storage) honors the contractor's right to privacy and will not willfully access the information out of curiosity. And since the transferral of information usually involves just hooking up to a machine and sitting while the info passes without note into the matrix, the Mega-Head wouldn't see the info anyway.

Where the trance-method is concerned, once the key phrase is spoken, the Mnem-Head blanks-out and loses all recognition of the passage of time: one minute he's sitting, talking to his new contractor and the next its nighttime and four hours have passed. The information stored in the Matrix needn't be all on the same subject. The info can be constantly updated by the Mnem-Head's employer. But once the Mega-Head decides to "empty-out" his "mind," all of the stored data comes out. It is not selective. That is why Mnem-Heads usually never sell to more than one customer at a time so as not to confuse or give out data meant for someone else.

The usual range for information storage is one to four hundred Mega-Bytes. Once "full" it can't carry more information until the resident data is dropped, either killing it by jacking-in, transferring the data and crashing it, or finding out the key-phrase and have it spoken aloud, the data will just spill forth; or saving it on disc or tape. One important fact: THE MNEMONIC MATRIX IS DELICATE. The bulk of the Mem-Net lies in the brain and any wound to the head could damage the Mem-Net and the information stored. Just consider that any head wound of Critical or Mortal (flesh wounds and serious wounds don't effect the Matrix and a Dead result puts the Mega-Head beyond caring) require a roll of 7 or less for CR. and 6 or less for M. If the roll is made the Matrix is unharmed. Failing the roll by one or two points results in "holes" in the stored data; failing by three points results in total loss of or serious damage of the stored data and the Matrix requiring repair. Fail a roll by four points and the Mnemonic Matrix needs replacement and the stored data is irrevocably lost. Fortunately safeguards placed in the Matrix will keep the user's brain and synapses from "going down with the boat." Although mild to severe psychosis follows the Mem-Net's loss depending on how long the Matrix has been in place.

NOTE: The Mnemonic Matrix (or also called the Memory Network or Mem-Net) is primarily a means of gaining employment, not generally for personal use. Many corporations hire Mnem-Heads as a covert means to transfer vital information where Computer Net lines or simple parcel post is too risky. Simply assign a few jacked-up Solo's to serve as bodyguards, or make the Mnem-Head a hard-wired killer himself; most freelance Mnem-Heads already are. Many Mnem-Heads freelance, serving as information safes, holding the information until its needed again. Ofttimes techies of various means use Mega-Heads as living computers to store all of their information; it can't be tapped by a NetRunner and a computer can't run out of a burning building or dodge a hand grenade. It takes no skill to be a

Mnem-Head, one doesn't gain a reputation by storing the info, the prestige comes from having the juice to keep it from falling into the wrong hands.

\$8000 EuroDollars HC=2d6+3

considered rare cybertech, but not BlackWare.

MODDIES & DADDIES:

MODDIES are Modular Personality Chips; chips which when used part upon their user the personality of the chip's design. If one got the popular Marilyn Monroe moddie they would act and react as Marilyn Monroe (or as well as the programmer's depiction of Marilyn Monroe). The user's own personality meanwhile is placed underneath, watching and aware but more like the subconscious. You know who you really are if you think about it and by law all legit moddies have an "awareness" feature so the user knows that they aren't who they think they are. This may sound self defeating but it isn't. The fun goes in relaxing "yourself" and allowing all of your reactions to be modified by the Moddie. Also you don't have the voice of your Moddie automatically, you'll most likely try an impression of your Moddie's voice: it is obvious that a man wearing the Marilyn Monroe Moddie may dress and act like the late actress but if he can't do the voice it will most likely lead to laughter, a woman on the other hand. . .

Moddie's also affect the user's self-perception. A man using the Marilyn Monroe Moddie will see in his eyes that he has breasts, he can actually feel them but the underlying personality of the user will say, "you don't have breasts really, you're a man, and this is a Moddie's perception." And therefore most Moddie users wear the clothes and get-up of their Moddie's personality, if that means going drag then they're going drag. But then again if one used the Moddie of a man who was a foot taller and twice his weight, the effect would seem obvious. The user would suddenly find himself stumbling to the floor as the newly perceived "weight" is instantly added on. For this reason it takes usually an hour or two to get accustomed to the new self-perception. But: if the personality of the Moddie has a body which is similar to the user then the time it takes to get accustomed could be no more than a few minutes.

Moddies are used often by Poser Gang initiates to see how they "wear" it. Many people who become regular Moddie users put these on in the morning like clothing, feeling "naked" without it. Moddies however weren't meant for long time continuous use. After a couple of days of constant use the user's Super Ego will start forcing itself upon the program. Slowly the user's personality will come to the fore, not willing to cater to some secondary, pre-fabricated personality. After the third day the user will be merely performing a poor mimicry of the Moddie. After that the user cannot use Moddies or any other kind of MRAM or EPTR chipware as the user's personality goes into overdrive for a period of three days to a week. The user will act as he always had but his personality will be increased by fifty to a hundred percent. Naturally, this will create negative side effects. For instance: if the user is a drinker, he will consume often twice (or try to

consume twice) of what he usually drank; or if the user likes Chromatic Rock he will go from one who would buy the discs and listen to them on his home CD player to one who sits next to the speaker blasting it as loud as it will go, he won't hum the songs in his head or under his breath he'll sing them out loud, regardless of whether he has a singing voice or not; and if he was an annoying jerk before just wait 'till you see him now. I wouldn't recommend going out with him to the local clubs because I wouldn't want to be near the Boosters he's going to tell to, "Shove it! Ya posers!" So it is recommended on the package that one not wear the Moddie for more than 32 hours continuously. If you do press to the max limit it is recommended that one not use it again for a minimum of 18 hours. The safest policy is to put it on only when you go out. It was meant as a social tool, it's of no use to you being Elton John while you're sitting at home watching the Games Network, drinking Ki-rin Smash.

As with almost all cyberware there are Black Market Moddies. Moddies designed by renegade Techies with personalities abhorrent or dangerous: imagine a Jack the Ripper Moddie, a Richard Ramirez Moddie, a Vlad the Impaler Moddie; or special purpose Moddie's which impart not a whole personality but a specific trait, like a Moddie of a person on fire, the Moddie would only contain the chilling fear of a man being burned alive and the white-hot agony of the flame. These specific trait Moddie's unfortunately enough can be stacked to include up to four traits. Imagine a Moddie of a man being buried alive, a caged starved animal, and a man being tortured. Most often such Moddies are used as a means of torture, why bother with the setup of a Chinese Water Torture when you can have a Moddie of it. Depending on the traits used they can often lead to coma and death. No one has bothered to market single trait moddies with good feelings: an orgasm Moddie, a "satisfied meal" Moddie. Most likely its because feeling these experiences on your own is half the fun.

Now, DADDIES are a slang for MRAM and EPTR chips. Usually though, Daddies refer to MRAM or EPTR chips which come along with the Moddie to enhance the Moddie's personality with the application of natural (well, chip-born) skill. Imagine having the Honey Pilar (the world's most famous porn queen) Moddie without having some of her know how. So most likely it would come with several Daddies like Specific Knowledge (sex) at +3 and perhaps Seduction +2.

Daddies are like MRAM and EPTR chips in that they do not add to the skill of already possessed. If one bought the James Bond Moddie it might come with Pistol +2 but if you already have Pistol +6 then it will not help. This doesn't mean the user will fail to act accordingly. Someone with the James Bond Moddie who already has Pistol at +6 will still act like James Bond in combat, using a Walther PPK most likely. The user will use the skill s/he already had but in a way consistent with the Moddie's personality. Other skills which the user has originally s/he may still use even though they are not consistent with the Moddie. Imagine Honey Pilar mowing down opponents with an Fn-Fal because her user is ex-military and has rifle +4.

A basic guideline for the ratings of Daddies: use the ones already listed in the book, they will seldom go over the listed levels. Sometimes one will have to make a new Daddie to fit in with a major trait of the Moddie. There is no Streetwise +2 in the list but imagine the Sonny Crockett Moddie without it. (in addition to his new Wardrobe & Style +3 Daddie).

A package deal Moddie and Daddie set will come with the Moddie and about four suitable Daddies. The cost will run about \$300 to \$400 for the average Moddie plus the cost of the Daddies which will be about 20-25% below cost. Rare Moddies will run to about \$600 (like the Phil Donahue Moddie) or even \$800 (like the Bobcat Goldthwait Moddie with the Specific Knowledge - comedy +3 Daddie). One can even have a custom Moddie made for anywhere from \$500 to even as high as \$2000 if it involves a lot of research. One can even have a Moddie of ones self done. Imagine giving a Moddie and Daddie set to a friend based on yourself, now you can see what kind of schmuck you really are. Moddies of this type run anywhere from \$500 to \$650. Black Market Moddies and Daddies run about twice the price for legal Moddies.

DANGER!!!

Using two Moddies at once is very, very dangerous! It can cause mental breakdown, insanity, and even a bio-electrical Cerebral Flare which causes death by fusing the cerebral cortex and burning out the central nervous system.

For this reason, Moddies are noticeably thicker (sometimes two or three times) than MRAM or EPTR Daddies and the chip in the plastic disc is noticeably larger. Where MRAM and EPTR chips and Daddies are in red plastic, Moddies are blue or sometimes hot pink.



Next we are going to look at the new development of BIOWARE, or WETWARE. Bioware constitutes any enhancement which involves changing or modifying or enhancing the abilities of the "meat" parts. For example, one could have a stomach which can break down most matter without harm so ingested poisons and the like would have little or no effect. Or an enhanced liver which would make the user very hard to get drunk or drugged or poisoned. Bioware is still new and relatively hard to get but is not illegal, most of it isn't.

The types of enhancements are hard to list because of the fact that the changes can be limitless. Most of them are to cure a particular problem and ailment. Some are military enhancements. Many are merely cosmetic. But here are a few examples.

NICTATING MEMBRANES:

Cats and frogs and many other animals have thin membranes which extend up or downward in front of the eye. These membranes are meant to clean the eye or to protect it from injury. They won't stop a bullet but they will impart 80% protection from any eye irritants, such as sand and tear gas or mace. They are clear enough to see through and in appearance give the user a glossy eyed look. They can come in any color if desired. Also for an extra hundred Eurobucks, a specially made photosensitive membrane can be installed, effectively mimicing the Anti-Dazzle CyberOptic option.

\$300 Euro HC=1

THICKSKIN:

This is an highly experimental and rare Bioware. Through the use of drug treatments the cells which heal and produce the skin are boosted and enhanced. The skin is now thicker and tougher. Skin is healed and replaced at a greater rate. Thickskin is bought in increments of 3 SP armor. The first 3 points appear normal unless felt, feeling like a callus. After the first 3 points the change becomes obvious. Per additional increment the user will loose one point of APP and one point of MA. After the second the user will loose one point of REF. Basically it goes as follows.

3 sp: no change. Skin feels tough but retains original softness (if applicable).

6 sp: -1 APP. Skin feels rough like a callus

9 sp: -1 MA -2 APP. Skin looks and feels thick. The user's eyes are sunk in thick cheeks and a large brow. Fingers are large.

12 sp: -2 MA -3 APP -1 REF. Skin color is now yellowed and sick looking as the skin is now piling up. At this point the user cannot wear the clothing he used to wear, having to switch to a larger size.

15 sp: -3 MA -4 APP -2 REF +1 BOD. At this point the change is hideously obvious. The drug treatment us usually enhanced now with a SuperSteroid to keep the user from collapsing under his own

weight but usually increases his strength beyond that.

18 sp: -4 MA -5 APP -3 REF +2 BOD This is the limit. Beyond that the user is a horrible monstrosity which lumbers along under the eighty to a hundred pounds of added weight. At this level the user has gained about forty to sixty pounds in skin alone. Many Ripperdocs specializing in Bioware go beyond this.

The rate at which new skin is made is almost like true regeneration. Thickskin at all levels imparts a +1 to wound recovery and shifts the damage type down to a lesser one. Mortal Wounds recover in time like a Critical Wound. A Critical Wound recovers in time as a Serious Wound et cetera. Flesh Wounds recover in 3 days.

\$300 Euro per increment HC=1d6/2 per increment

THE VanDamien PROCEDURE:

Not much is known about the process involved in the construction and installation of the organic silicon and micro-circuitry into various parts of the brain. The procedure is very risky and is generally considered very much Blackmarket Bio-tech due to the danger to those involved and the unpredictability of the process. What is involved is the implantation of micro-processor chips of organic silicon and synthetic neuron fiber which strings together various implanted microscopic computer chipware and processors. These additions augment the functions already in place in the brain so it is considered to be more akin to WetWare than to CyberWare. The VanDamien Procedure basically allows the user to have almost complete conscious control over his body and brain's functions and perceptions.

This level of control has mostly to do with ignoring the way the brain perceives the body. One could make themselves ignore the feeling of hunger but he would still starve to death. One could ignore pain from a wound but a severed artery will still lead to death by loss of blood.

The benefits are still quite obvious though. The user can ignore the feelings of hunger, thirst, fatigue, pain, even pleasure if needed. The user could repress any sexual urgings or any pangs of addiction for an indefinite time. The user would not need to sleep and could ignore the feeling to expel bodily waste.

Another utility of this operation is the ability to faze out any distractions so as to be able to concentrate on any single task. Background noise, that fly buzzing in front of your face, the excruciating twinge of the urinal calling. By simply cutting those sensations out the user could allow into his perception those sensations pertinent to the task at hand.

There is one serious drawback to the afore mentioned abilities. If one were to repress the need to go to the bathroom, eat, drink, and fulfill any sexual desires, when the sensations were put back to normal they would be intense in the extreme based upon how long they were shut off. A few hours is the longest recommended. Also the user's memory is increased to be near photographic. This ability increases with use. As time passes the user learns to retain more. This is reflected in a specific skill which should

be listed in the skills column as **Eidetic Memory**. This skill will start at +2 and is an INT-based skill. The user merely makes a skill roll to see if s/he remembers the information needed with a difficulty based upon the complexity and amount of information s/he is trying to recall and on how "fresh" the memory is.

There is also a measure of bodily control which can be exerted by the user. Most common uses are for instance to relax and use almost 75% less oxygen than at one's most relaxed state. Also the user could slow his heartbeat to a point where it could not be perceived without mechanical aid. Slowing of breathing and heartrate of course constitute limiting of activity. Another use would be the ability to speed up adrenal excretions, heartrate and breathing putting one in a sort of "hyperactivity" mode, increasing one's reflexes in the process. A chief ability is that of placing oneself in a state of suspended animation. The length of this state is up to the user. The user merely slows his/her heartrate and breathing, lapsing into a posture which closely resembles death as also body temperature lowers.

In terms of game rules, the VanDamien Procedure gives the user a continuous +1 on REF and AWARENESS. REF could be raised by an additional +1 when using the afore mentioned "hyperactivity" mode, but continuous use can wear out the user. By repressing pain and fatigue in combat the user would not have to make any consciousness saves and could effectively fight forever. By shutting out all unwanted external and internal stimuli in order to concentrate the user would gain an additional +2 on any skill roll where concentration was a key. This would include such things as any technical fix-it roll, painting or drawing, writing, infiltration (picking a lock, but it would be best if you had a lookout to make all your Awareness rolls), or even spending a phase or three aiming at a target. The drawback to the focus concentration ability is an automatic -2 to all awareness rolls. The only exception is the ability to concentrate and focus in on one thing to hear or see that object better. This gives the user +2 to his/her awareness roll. But again -2 to all general awareness rolls, while doing this concerning everything else. S/he would be concentrating on the conversation nearby but may not hear the car coming toward him.

As stated this process is very dangerous in its conception and installation. It has led to many unforeseen side effects. Some have discovered the ability to stimulate the pleasure centers of the brain and spent their days lounging around stimulating these areas and dying of starvation or renal failure. The most common side effect though seems to be the most dangerous. The stimulation of the brain in the ways of the VanDamien Procedure bring out from the subconscious a sort of second consciousness: that of the user's unbridled desires and compulsions. These desires are normally repressed by internal blockers but the operation of the organic silicon and synthetic neurons in manipulating the brain and central nervous system weakens them. The user may find himself victim of some internal whim. For example, regardless how revulsed s/he is s/he may find they have and uncontrollable hunger for cat food, a hunger they will fulfill at whatever cost.

These compulsions come without warning in the beginning but after a while the user can predict minutes before s/he is going to have an "attack." This bringing to the fore the unconscious can also lead to a warping of one's personal reality. S/he might find themselves sitting in front of the television and suddenly not knowing what, who, or where they are. "Attacks" last on the average from 10 to 15 minutes and is a complication rarely mentioned by the ripperdoc to the patient. Almost all users experience this side effect within the first month of use and for the rest of their lives. The effect does not go away and the VanDamien Procedure cannot be removed or reversed without causing serious brain damage to the patient.

\$10,000+ Euro HC=4d6

*"I'm a nightmare walking
psychopath talking,
King of my jungle,
just a gangster stalking.
Living life like a firecracker,
quick is my fuse. . ."*

Ice-T "Colors"

later re-named "Booster" by
the ex-booster gang turned
rock band "Frontline"

The following section deals with the bay area's most notorious and toughest gangs. Who leads them, what are their credo's, their personalities, their hardware. Where are they located, how many of them are there; who are their enemies, their friends.

"... The police can't touch them. The people fear them. The mighty corporations cow-tow to them. They're unbeatable and they're here to stay. And they know it. They're a product of this society; and they are societies unto themselves. They follow their rules and will destroy all who threaten their world; a world built on blood and violence..."

Carter Wainwright, Network 54



The Givers of Pain:

type: Booster **#members:** 320+
leader: Noir **centered:** San Francisco, southside Combat Zone
H.Q.: The All Saints Cathedral, an abandoned church with extensive

catacombs.

motto: "Peace is the dream. Pain is the reality."

appearance: black leather and matte black cyberlimbs with gold nails, studs, et cetera. They usually go bald and adorn black eye make-up and skullstuds, either gold or silver. They favor rippers, bigripps, or slice n' dice. Sharkgrin specials a must.

Insignia: a clawed cyber hand leaving bloody tracks.

Notes: The Givers of Pain are one of the most renown Booster gangs of the state, right under the **The Black** of Los Angeles. They are a large gang who also incorporates many other, smaller Booster gangs. Noir will generally ask one of his puppet Booster gangs to do the work he judges "too zero" for his bloodmates; The Givers of Pain. The Givers are like most of your run-of-the-mill Booster gang but they tend to torture their victims before killing them. They are consummate artists in the art of torture. So well is their reputation that they are often looked to for such talents by other gangs or even the occasional corporation. Their initiations tend to be bloody and constructed to give the most pain possible. The average initiate must endure about fifteen minutes of constant agony usually administered in some creative way. The Givers of pain are all masochists and most of them are sadomasochists. They abhor 'Dorphs because of their pain killing properties, favoring combat drugs like BlackLace and Hype. The usual favorite pastime of the average Giver is finding some drifter and torturing it to death.

enemies: Their primary enemy is the punk gang The Baskervilles led by Lady Maim. The Baskervilles and The Givers of Pain are the two most powerful gangs in the Bay Area and they butt heads occasionally. Many say its only a matter of time before an all out war starts between them. The San Francisco Police Department sees them as a major threat and are constantly trying to find legal (and some illegal) ways to reduce their number. Within the Givers of Pain, Maimman; Noir's second hand man, is rising in power and rumors say he is going to make his move any time soon.

friends & connections: The Givers of Pain have worked for many corporations in covert activities but maintain their strongest ties with the Federated Republik of Hileine and the Hileine based company **Metra-Corp.** Noir and the Givers of Pain associate (and control) three minor Bay Area Booster gangs: The Howlers, Blood & Chrome Brothers, and The Iron Souls. All of which follow the orders of Noir, but most of the time act on their own benefit.

The Baskervilles

type: chromer/punk **#members:** special

leader: Lady Maim **centered:** San Francisco, East Side

H.Q.: The Fluegelheim Theatre. A large abandoned theater which also serves as a nightclub for the city called "The Phantom's." A tattered movie screen constantly plays old horror movies, mostly old Lon Chaney films and on Saturday Mid-Nights "The Rocky Horror Picture Show."

motto: none, "motto's are for posers."

appearance: The Baskervilles incorporate the entire Punk spectrum. Black leather or ultrasuede, a lot of chains and spikes. multi colored hair, mohawks, many ear-rings, nose-rings, et cetera. Make-up, body-tone, anything punk or chromer. All are either punks or Chromers. As far as cyberware goes you are much less likely to find Black market ware on a Baskerville. They like reflex boosters and boost masters, chipware, bioware, and sensory boosters. Interface plugs and smart items (instruments, guns, vehicles, etc. . .).

insignia: a true Baskerville has an English flag (the Union Jack) somewhere in prominence, usually covering the back of whatever they're wearing. But it isn't a requirement, not all Baskervilles wear the Union Jack.

notes: In the late 90's and early 21'st century thousands of English emigrants fled to America, wishing to leave the social upheaval and anarchy behind. They took their families and belongings and settled in the already overflowing America. Many died in the wasting plague of 00', but where those thousands of Americans died the few remaining English settlers filled their abandoned homes. They came to live in the slums of New York, Boston, New Boston, Los Angeles, Houston (Kizamasu City) and San Francisco. Most settled in San Francisco and the surrounding areas because of the rumor of affordable housing of the failed Daily City Arcology.

The Baskervilles came from the children of these English men and women. It started as a fad, wearing English flags, listening to old Sex Pistols and other English punk bands, doffing English accents and slang (sometimes even getting specially made EPTR chips to give the user an English accent and an MRAM chip containing English slang terms.). The English movement became the standard for many punks and chromers. They started to gather in the same "hangouts," they started to adopt the gang mentality: committing petty crime together, harassing non-members, looking to figurative leaders, and getting the other already established gangs angry and nervous. Many Booster and Chromer Gangs would stage coordinated attacks against their hangouts. These ragtag chromers and punks were always defeated. They didn't see themselves as a gang so they didn't coordinate as one. Their number was getting cut low by these masterful raids and covert attacks. But in 2016 a lone woman and a small group of true English came together and called themselves the Baskervilles. This new gang went to all the old roosts and recruited anyone who volunteered.

The Baskervilles grew in number rapidly. They were tired of being the object of gang violence and jumped at the chance to return it. The

woman; Lady Maim, has since made the Baskervilles one of the largest gangs in the state. They number in the thousands. About a third of all Chromers and Punks in the Bay Area are Baskervilles. But their one major weakness is that unlike most other gangs they have almost no sort of initiation and therefore have no way to root out those too weak to survive gang existence. They rely on their number and their small force of tough combat-hardened members to pull them through any scrape they might have with another gang. Almost all Baskervilles play one sort of instrument or another, or are in a band. They are recreational drug users who's drug of choice tends to be Tri-Phets, Smash, Eightball, Flash, Slam, Sunnies, Happies, rarely BlueGlass and Hype. The Baskervilles is a gang made up like a military unit. A chain of command runs the multitude of members who then answer to Lady Maim and her inner circle of commanders.

enemies: The Major foe of the Baskervilles are The Givers of Pain. The Baskervilles upset the balance of power as they grew, replacing The Givers of Pain as the largest gang in the Bay Area. Booster gangs as a rule dislike The Baskervilles mostly out of respect for The Givers of Pain and Noir, and may turn to their side to fight against the Baskervilles.

friends & connections: The fact that the Baskervilles generally keep to themselves has benefitted them with anonymity from the police and other non-Booster gangs. The Baskervilles basically just want to rock n' roll and have a good time, and they'll bust the heads of anyone stupid enough to keep them from doing it. Many Chromer and Punk gangs associate with The Baskervilles because of a shared ethos. Those closest are the two gangs, The Dog Squad, and The Hatchet Gang.

The Cenobites:

type: nihilist/poser **#members:** 50+

leader: Skullface **centered:** San Francisco, exact location unknown

H.Q.: exact location is still unknown. The Cenobites seem to appear where they are the least wanted at the time when they're the least expected. They appear from nowhere and leave apparently without a trace to follow.

motto: Most often heard is "we have much to show you" or "we'll tear your soul apart."

appearance: The Cenobites are a grisly and horrifying sight to see. Somehow they have managed to inflict serious injury upon themselves and survive, the wounds remaining always fresh and gruesome. They accentuate these wounds with various adornments which pull open or irritate these wounds. They dress in strange leather garb and have their skin PermaToned white or light blue. Their cybertech is almost always experimental black-market weaponry. They like rippers, slice n' dice, bigripps and buzzsaws. They most often carry bladed weapons and assassin gear. Any type of Cyberoptic is a must, always done in a solid gloss black. Their heads are always shaven.

insignia: none

notes: The Cenobites first appeared in the aftermath of the 00' plague, twenty years ago. Their numbers have never strayed from around forty during all of this time. Their purpose and goals seem ambiguous to all but the Cenobites themselves. They took their name from the hellish givers of eternal pain and pleasure created by the late Clive Barker who wrote horror fiction in the late 20th century. They are so weird that even Noir doesn't know what to do about them so he leaves them alone. The Cenobites annually go on a killing and robbery spree always starting on midnight where they try to get as much cash and victims as possible in a single 12 hour period. This spree is made as quiet as possible and usually the authorities don't know that it's started until the horribly mangled bodies start turning up by the dozens. The only outlet that has been noted for the money they make off with has been the purchase of Blackmarket cybertech and rare and expensive combat drugs like Black Lace and B-Zerk.

Cenobites are sometimes—though rarely—seen wandering the streets and hanging out in clubs, always in groups of three or four. They stay to themselves and retreat if provoked, but later the provoker is almost always found dead, hideously tortured then killed. It is rumored that the Cenobites are more adept at torture than the Givers of Pain, but Cenobites never, never sell out to anyone. Once a year the Cenobites initiate one person whom they choose through an ambiguous process of their devising. Over a period of a month the Cenobites silently confront the potential member. Wordlessly they make their presence known. They might show up in the initiate's apartment one night, and leave. They might confront the potential at a night club, three or four just staring at the mark through the crowd before they disperse and vanish. They will make their presence known about once or twice a week. After about a month that person will disappear, taken by the Cenobites to become "converted." If their attempts to take a new member are rebuffed by outside help they will practice their "retreat and regroup" maneuver, coming back within the next few days with more members to kill the "irritation." They will try non lethal means to take their chosen if s/he resists. The next time that person is seen s/he will be "converted." The only way to stop their attempts to take their chosen is to simply have a showdown with them until they give up or you are dead. This is not easy. They will follow a chosen all over the world if possible. If you evade the Cenobites or stop their attempts to take their chosen they will simply choose another.

enemies: No one messes with the Cenobites. No one has a reason to. They don't commit any regular crime sprees or encroach on the selling turf of any other gangs. But still no one likes the Cenobites. Almost everyone has some sort of vendetta against the Cenobites; a friend who was "converted," a relative killed in one of their sprees. But unless you have a lot of firepower to back yourself up it is not suggested that you tangle with them.

friends & connections: The Cenobites don't associate with anyone but other cenobites. What little communicating they do is through a single speaker sent from the throne of Skullface himself. They usually have

one single ripperdoc they have adopted to install all of their cyberware for them. The ripperdoc doesn't speak of his dealings with the Cenobites for if they were to find out. . .

Our Gang:

type: poser **#members:** 12+

leader: Spanky **centered:** San Francisco, North Side "Center City"

H.Q.: The Our Gang hangs out and lives in the Chelsea Hotel, a rat-hole they've strong-armed for free room and board.

motto: The Our Gang has no motto to speak of.

appearance: The Our Gang crowd is a poser gang of the old "Little Rascals" shows. They however all average six feet in height, about half that in width, and weigh about 200-250 lbs. each. They are BIG. They all look like their characters but picture the faces of Spanky, Butch, Alphalpha, and Buckwheat on musclemen bodies. They wear punk clothes and make-up. They all use chipware of some type and all favor large weapons and lots of them.

insignia: a dog's face in an orange circle. The dog has a patch covering one eye. This dog is referred to as "Spot."

notes: Our Gang first appeared after the big nostalgia boom of the late teens. They are one of a number of "Our Gang" and "Little Rascal" poser gangs but they are the biggest and the meanest of them all. They are very small in number because they only allow one type of each character in the gang. Until one of them is killed they won't allow in a new gang member. New members have to choose among any characters available. The initiation is simple and painful: the new member is beaten to a pulp by the strongest members, and this is after they've already chosen whether they want you or not. All of the members have had some military experience of one type or another and as a whole aren't the types to mess with. Rumors are that they get their weaponry from working with Militech, but don't let them hear you say that. They like loud music and can be seen often frequenting the more violent clubs.

enemies: No body likes the Our Gang. They're mean, ornery, violent, and tough. If you even look at one wrong they're likely to pound your face. The current Alphalpha just got his Phiz' Booster and Boostmaster and tends to do the strong-arm work when the others are too bored to smash heads. They don't have any gangs after them due to their small size and circle of operations, dealing drugs in the North Side and in the clubs.

friends and connections: Our Gang has no friends or connections.

Blood & Chrome Brothers:

type: Booster **#members:** 80+

leader: Muzar Foss **centered:** Oakland, North Side Reformation District

H.Q.: The B & C Brothers (or BCB) live in the old ruined Martin Luther King Jr. Community College building near Berkeley.

motto: "Bllloooooooooodd!" usually screamed in battle.

appearance: The BCB's dress in all red ultrasuede or leather clothing with

chrome studs. They have super chromed cyberoptics with a glowing red pupil usually, and all of their cyberlimbs are superchromed. Their hair is always worn long or in dreadlocks, tied back with the sinew strap of their first kill. They like often to have rippers or stingers, their stingers which are filled with Drayno or some other virulent common chemical.

Insignia: a superchromed hand gripping a blood dripping heart.

notes: The Blood & Chrome Brothers are the number 1 gang in Oakland after wiping out the two aging Criptics and Bloods gangs, who in Los Angeles were wiped out by The Black. They represent everything one would expect in a Booster Gang. They once a month or so go "wilding" when resources get thin. The body count goes high that night on both sides. Most often though they go across the bay to hang with The Givers of Pain. Unlike many boosters, the B & C Brothers are musicians, some even have discs distributed by major labels. Their music is a unique blend of Chromer Metal, Rap, and Reggae. Those three music forms combined and apart are favorites of the B & C Brothers. It is sacred to them and all have skill in playing instruments and in music trivia. Anyone who criticizes with their music "is zeroed." The Blood & Chrome Brothers take their initiates to the Givers of Pain for the initiation rites. These rites are bloody and painful but not as near so as to the Givers of Pain own rites; they wouldn't waste their talent on non-members. All Blood & Chrome Brothers are addicted to some drug or another. Primarily its smash and Dorph but occasionally The Givers of Pain sell them some combat drugs like Hype or B-zerk. The BCB holds dealing rites in the Oakland / Berkeley area and are planning their move south into areas controlled by the corporate black dealers and crime syndicates. Muzar Foss sees his associations with Noir and The Givers as a necessity and plans for the day when he can feed Noir his balls on a platter. Noir isn't stupid and knows how Muzar feels. Muzar doesn't know he knows however. Poor Muzar.

enemies: The Baskervilles and any related gang are openly hostile toward members of the BCB's, associating them with The Givers of Pain. The Blood & Chrome Brothers' southward expansion has alerted the corp dealers and crime bosses as to their plans. They view the BCB's as a real threat which is to be dealt with accordingly. Though they haven't acted on this yet.

friends & connections: Like the Givers, The Blood & Chrome Brothers also have ties with the Federated Republik of Hileine, selling their drugs and weapons and taking their cut. The Berkeley and Northern Sector based Iron Souls is friendly with the BCB's and they have a turf treaty in act at the moment but Miss Ruzzie of the Iron Souls plans to break it in the future and take the BCB's by surprise.

The Dog Squad:

type: chromer **#members:** 30+

leader: Ephram Ziell **centered:** Marin/Larkspur area

motto: The Dog Squad has no motto.

H.Q.: This chromer gang originally started out as a small Nomad pack of motorcycle riding teen-age runaways, tired of life in the corporate suburbs or in the restricting Nomad packs. They live in abandoned warehouses or in Lady Gothic's club, serving as an impromptu night guard sometimes.

appearance: They look like very young biker types. Black leather and sun glasses, chains and studs. Their cyberware is as varied as the makes of their bikes, but rarely black market stuff. They like to wield high caliber, semi-automatic rifles like M-1's and Winchester's and high powered pistols. Many of their newer bikes are smart-vehicles.

insignia: a bulldog in biker's leathers carrying a shotgun.

notes: The Dog Squad just like to have fun, clean fun. They drink but look at drug-use with distaste. Drug-use is a quick way to be booted from the gang. The other gangs think this is rather "myron" of them but otherwise the Dog Squad is a "cool" gang and so this is tolerated. The Dog Squad is known for their skill in fighting and their tenacity in combat. They take care of their own and will effect any means to avenge the loss of one of theirs. Like many other gangs their rite of passage has to do with getting the tar beaten out of the initiate, but after that if anyone so much as touches a hair on his head the whole gang will respond in force.

enemies: Any gang associated with The Givers of Pain view the Dog Squad as a mark for hostility because of their association with the Baskervilles. Numerous Nomad packs dislike the Dog Squad because of the fact that they're not nomads anymore. This upsets them as leads to hostility.

friends & connections: As mentioned, The Dog Squad is a friend of the Baskervilles and Lady Maim. It is rumored that Ephram Ziell and Lady Maim were once lovers. The Dog Squad is very loyal to The Baskervilles and Lady Maim, and for the most part the loyalty is returned, even though many Baskervilles think the Dog Squad are squares. The Dog Squad also have dealings with the mysterious Crazyquilt Nomad pack.

AND FOR THE *NEXT ISSUE...*



Well, I think that about wraps it up for now. If I fill this issue with all of my ideas then what'll I have left to put in the next issue of INTERFACE. The next issue will feature new Gang listings and a section on the Bay Area's hottest bands. Also featured will be a spotlight on the mysterious Federated Republik of Hileine, plus an interview with the head of the Hileine Embassy in Kizamasu City, Texas: *Senator Oloss VanHorne*; plus much, much more.

see ya,
Puppethead

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