Welcome to the Dark Future.
Enter the World of
CYBERPUNK v3

SECURITY CAM 5245 8/06/3X

Section 1: Welcome to the Dark Future

U Thought Things Were Bad in UR Neighborhood?

Soul & The New Machine

The View From the Edge

"I'm not a man /or a machine.
I'm just something in between.
I"m all love / a dynamo
So push the button and let me go."

Lovin' Every Minute of It
1984 Zomba Enterprises Inc. (ASCAP)

So you wanna be a Cyberpunk? Or maybe just look like one?

Before you shrug off your bivvy bag and jump in, there's a few things we need to tell you. First of all, the name. **Cyberpunk** comes from two words. *Cyber*—from the term cybernetic, or a fusion of flesh and machine technology. *Punk*—from an early 1980's rock music style that epitomized violence, rebellion and social action in a nihilistic way. The term was popularized in the Pre-Collapse days

by a group of writers who specialized in writing science fiction with this kind of techno-melange. Their works featured a streamlined blend of rock, pop, sex, drugs and the highest, hippest technology—usually grafted onto your body somewhere. The archetypical Cyberpunk heroes of the 80's ranged from technobarbarians roaming a Postholocaust world, to cyberchipped jet setters with designer bodies.

Of course, from our enlightened viewpoint here in the Dark Future, this all looks pretty dated. After all, you probably accessed this article from your personal Agent, swilling down gigabytes of data like a Riptide goldfish on steroids. Or maybe you used a Kojiru Alpha interface with a direct link from your artificial cyber bodyshell. If you're squatting in a Desnai parkology, you're used to remote wiring

into the appliances to make coffee; "studding" into your ridearmor to haul down to the corner Vendit. But understand—in 1987, this was all considered pretty visionary stuff. No one had interface fields. You couldn't dial Luna on your phone. Designer drugs were illegal. You could walk down most city streets without an armor jacket. There wasn't even a DataPool. Or even a Net.

Now we know better. History books can tell you in detail about the Crash of 1994, when the Euro-Combines established the World Stock Exchange and the economies of the United States and Old Sov Russia collapsed. Or the bad old days of the last Corp War, when the Megacorps went mano-a-mano with the Cyberpunks to end in an apocalyptic stalemate.

Back then, everything was run by the **Megacorps** , which were pretty much governments in themselves— at least, there weren't many governments that tried to stop them. There was still a world-wide Internet, with digital commerce and trade happening at the speed of light. There were giant computer brains that ran industries and charted the course of civilizations. You could go anywhere on one passport—one worldism at its best. The economies of most nations were tied to each other, and the Euro was pretty much the world currency. There was plenty of cheap, synthetic food to eat. Huge international media-nets made sure that every apartment, cube and streetcorner had direct cable access to TV, radio and sensory feed, so there was always some mindnumbing crap on the tube to keep you entertained. Sweet.

Okay, sure there was a bad side too. Sixteen people to an apartment, sharing ration chips every week to buy food, with eight thousand apartments per city block. Sure, it wasn't the best life, what with the boostergangs roaming the mallplexes and the major-league crime problems, but it beat being on the Street. And at least you knew where things were at. The Man and his corporate renta-cops were keeping you down, corruption was rampant, the U.S. Government was a third world banana republic that kept getting bogged down in wars overseas, and the entire planetary ecosystem was going to hell in a global warming handbasket. But it all made sense, neh?

Now we've got total anarchy. No federal government, unless you count those rump enders back in the Boswash corridor and their armies for hire. Between the mess of the Fourth Corporate War and the DataKrash wiping out the Net, even the mighty Megacorps have been blown back to square one. Every damn

It's about You
>Recorder on.

It's about Culture. Six civilizations in constant, uneasy balance, not a stones' throw from each other, each as different as the ancient Romans on their seven hills were from the Incas of the MesoAmerican Plateau. They are joined by a common point of origin; an incident that occurred a decade or more ago—and here I'm talking about the infamous destruction of the Arasaka Towers in 2022. Everybody knows about the Towers. Not that many know what really happened there—and why it became the defining moment of a culture war that continues to this day. I do. But I was there.

It's about History. It's been somewhere between ten and twenty years since it all went down on that fateful day. God knows, I've tried keeping track, but it's been a busy time. Two wars, at least, several economic collapses, a Carbon Plague, a DataKrash, a massive earthquake, worldwide global flooding. Stuff adds up. And I'm not getting any younger. Meaner, yeah, but not younger. The world changed in an instant. Morgan Blackhand, Adam Smasher—two godlike icons of the Age we now call the Early Cyberpunk, clashing in mortal combat like comic book heroes in the skies over Night City. Metal vs Meat, hurtling to deadly collision and final nuclear devastation. This is the history we bequeath to you now; the legends upon which you now bedrock your future.

Cyberpunk Essence

Cyberpunks are survivors in a tough, grim world, faced with life and death choices. How they make these choices will have a lot to do with whether they end up as vicious animals roaming a ruined world, or retain something of their basic humanity.

REC ●

Cyberpunks are also the heroes of a bad situation, working to make it better (or at least survivable) whenever they can. Whether it takes committing crimes, defying authority or even outright revolution, the quintessential Cyberpunk is a rebel with a cause. As a *Cyberpunk* roleplayer, it's up to you to find that cause and go to the wall with it.

This is the essence of *Cyberpunk*—playing your character with the proper disaffected, cynical-yet-idealistic style. Whether you're a biker with leathered skin and metal claws, or a debutante in satin sporting the latest in designer cyberoptics, you're going to need a certain panache—a certain flair, in portraying yourself. To achieve the essence of 203X, you need to master three concepts:

1) Style over Substance
It doesn't matter how well you do something, as long as you look good doing it. If you're going to blow it, make sure you look like you planned it that way. Normally, clothes and looks don't matter in an adventure—in this world, having a leather armor jacket and mirrorshades is a serious consideration.

2) Attitude is Everything
It's truth. Think dangerous; be dangerous. Think weak; be weak. Remember, everyone in the 2000's is carrying lots of lethal hardware and high-tech enhancements. They won't be impressed by your new H&K smartgun unless you swagger into the club looking like you know how to use it—and are just itching for an excuse.

Never walk into a room when you can stride in. Never look at someone unless you can make it your best "killer" look. Use your best "I'm bad and you aren't." smile. Don't sit around the flat or cube waiting for the next job. Get on out and hit the clubs and hangouts. Make sure you're where the party starts.

3) Live on the Edge
The Edge is that nebulous zone where risk takers and highriders go. On the Edge, you'll risk your cash, your rep, even your life on something as vague as a principle or a big score. As a Cyberpunk, you want to be the action, start the rebellion, light the fire. Join great causes and fight for big issues. Never drive slow when you can drive fast. Throw yourself up against danger and take it head on. Never play it too safe. Stay committed to the Edge.

GETTING PUNKED

The best Cyberpunk games are a combination of doomed romance, fast action, glittering parties, mean streets and quixotic quests to do the right thing against all odds. It's a little like Casablanca with cyberware...

—maximum mike

Remember: The world of *Cyberpunk* is a violent, dangerous place, filled with people who'd love to rip your arm off and eat it. The traditional concepts of good and evil are replaced by the values of expedience—you do what you have to do to survive. If you can do some good along the way, great.

But don't count on it.

POWER ON

SECURITY CAM 65172 4/10/3X   REC ●

Hell Bent For 203X

Once upon a time, there was a Dark Future. A Cyberpunk future.

The **Megacorps** ruled the world then, established in a nearly bloodless coup that had overturned many of the world's governments and established a ruthless, bottom-line oligarchy. Through violence, treachery, stealth and a subtle rewriting of history, these vast international companies were the most powerful entities of the new millennium. They ruled almost absolutely, through economic power, teams of assassin enforcers, and, when required, private armies numbering in the millions.

Packed like sardines into the largest urban regions on earth, humanity combined the highest level of technology ever achieved with the deepest, grinding poverty. Beyond

A TIMELINE FOR THE DARK FUTURE 1990-203X

1990 Start of first Central American Conflict. U.S. engages in interventionist actions in Panama, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador. Military forces are sent to secure the Canal Zone from an ex-U.S. puppet dictator.

West, East Germany reunited. Warsaw pact breaks up into separate nations.

Breakup of Soviet mega-state. From this point, the USSR begins a new era of reapproachment with Western Europe; by the 2000's, the Soviets are the Eurotheatre's most powerful allies.

Soviet president Gorbachev appoints party successor, Andrei Gorborev.

Fall of South Africa. For the next 4 years, there is little or no communication, although terrible atrocities and genocidal wars are rumored.

1991 Eurospace agency launches Hermes spaceplane

Gorborev regime purges last of old hardliners CHOOH2 developed by Biotechnica

First arcology built on ruins of Jersey City. 16 "arcos" begin construction over the next 5 years, until the collapse of 1997, leaving the huge structures half completed, filled with squatters and homeless.

Artificial muscle fibers developed at Stanford Research Center.

1992 The Treaty of 1992 establishes the European Economic Community. Zones of control and protective tariffs regulate the activities of member nations, France, Britain, United Germany, Italy. A common currency unit (the eurodollar) is established, based on average value in gold of all currencies combined. Trapped in paranoid isolationism, the U.S.. declines to enter.

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) develops and spreads several designer plagues worldwide, targeting coca and opium plants.

Governments of Chile, Ecuador collapse.

A savage drug war breaks out between Eurocorp-backed dealers and DEA all over the Americas.

First use of high energy laser lift arrays in USSR. Simple massdriver established in Canary Islands by eight member Eurospace Agency.

1993 First TRC biologic interface chips developed in Munich, United Germany.

AV-4 aerodyne assault vehicle developed to deal with increasing riots in U.S. urban zones.

Columbian druglords detonate small tactical nuclear device in New York. 15,000 killed.

1994 World Stock Market Crash of '94. U.S. economy teeters, then collapses.

1995 Kilimanjaro massdriver begins construction, under joint agreement between ESA and Pan-African Alliance.

1996 The Collapse of the United States. Weakened by losses in the World Stock Crash, overwhelmed by unemployment, homelessness and corruption, many city governments collapse or go bankrupt. The U.S. Government, snarled in a staggering deficit and the machinations of the Gang of Four, is totally ineffective.

Nomad Riots. By now, 1 in 4 Americans are homeless. hundreds of thousands riot for living space throughout the u.s., Nomad packs spring up on the west coast and spread rapidly through the nation.

First appearance of boostergangs.

SECURITY CAM 1422 8/20/3X

> "Some goboys think Companions are like...you know... pets or some-thing. Frack that, man. That's like calling your partner a pet. You and your Companions are a combat team, and you better never, ever forget it."
>
> —Lani Iwase
> City Fighter

Lani Iwase, City Fighter

Stats	INT	REF	TECH	DEX	COOL	WILL	STR	CON	MOVE	BODY
Stat Value	7	6	3	6	7	8	4	5	5	6
DERIVED STATS	LUCK	HUM	REC	END	RUN	SPR	SWIM	LEAP	HITS	STUN
Stat Value	6	80	4	10	10	15	5	5	12	30

KEYSKILLS	LVL	KEYPERKS/TALENTS	LVL
Melee (katana)	7	Combat Sense	4
Kung Fu (karate)	6	Beautiful	4

LIFEPATH Beautiful enough to be an Idol, Lani has chosen instead to become a City Fighter to defend her home.

OUTFIT Enzyme Bonding, Raptile, Plesiodragon, Hopper, Armored Bodysuit, Agent, Triphibian

RFG

http://www.talsorian.com/laniblog

Riptide

Ocean Nomads & Masters of Genetics

There was a time when your people were a part of the land. That was many years ago, when the great <u>Kanto Floating Cities</u> were still moored to Tokyo. But the War changed all that, casting the Cities adrift and forcing you to become a separate people. Tossed by storms, harried by pirates, protected by only a few brave defenders, you learned how to fight back, survive, and eventually prosper. Now the "Lost Cities" are nations in themselves. Webs of steel and cryptoplan plastic mesh with abandoned ships, floating platforms and the original Kanto structures to make each City a unique environment tailored to its thousands of inhabitants.

But steel and cryptoplan aren't what really holds Rip together. What really holds Rip together are the <u>bioforms</u>. In 203X, you've been dubbed the "beast-masters"—the Altcult that bends the laws of genetics to its whim. Bioengineered creatures process elements from the sea to supply your autofactories. Gene tailored meat-beasts, fish herders and vegetation mats provide all the food you need. Mutated sea monsters defend your territories from pirates and aggressive corporations. Personal servant creatures and bio-morphed protectors work in tandem with humans in a symbiotic fusion that rivals anything mere cybernetics can achieve.

Like the rest of your people, you have learned to ride the tiger, surf the open seas, master the riptides of change. Bioforms at your side, you're ready to take on the future and anyone who stands in your way had better watch out. The Lost Cities are no longer lost.

Welcome to Rip.

Background

The core Rip drift cities were constructed as vast floating spaces moored offshore in Tokyo Bay. Constructed primarily of cryptoplan plastics, they were used to absorb the overflow population of the heavily populated Kanto Plain, and were dubbed the "Kanto Floating Cities." During Arasaka Corp's abortive attempt to take over Japan, the Kanto Cities lay between the renegade corporation's stronghold and the Japan Self Defense Fleet. To save thousands of civilians, JSDF Adm. Masumaru Hattori had a portion of his fleet tow the Cities far out to sea where he hoped they would be safe.

As the battle for Japan raged, a vast typhoon arose and scattered the Kanto Floating Cities far into the Pacific. For several months, defended only by a four elderly JSDF destroyers and a light carrier, the Cities fought off pirates, starvation and the remnants of Arasaka's navy. By the time help finally arrived from Japan, they had banded together with other floating cities abandoned during the 4th Corporate War and established the independent Confederation of the Riptide, or Rip.

Turf

Drift Cities are not part of land cities; they are moored in the ocean adjacent to a city, connect-

8
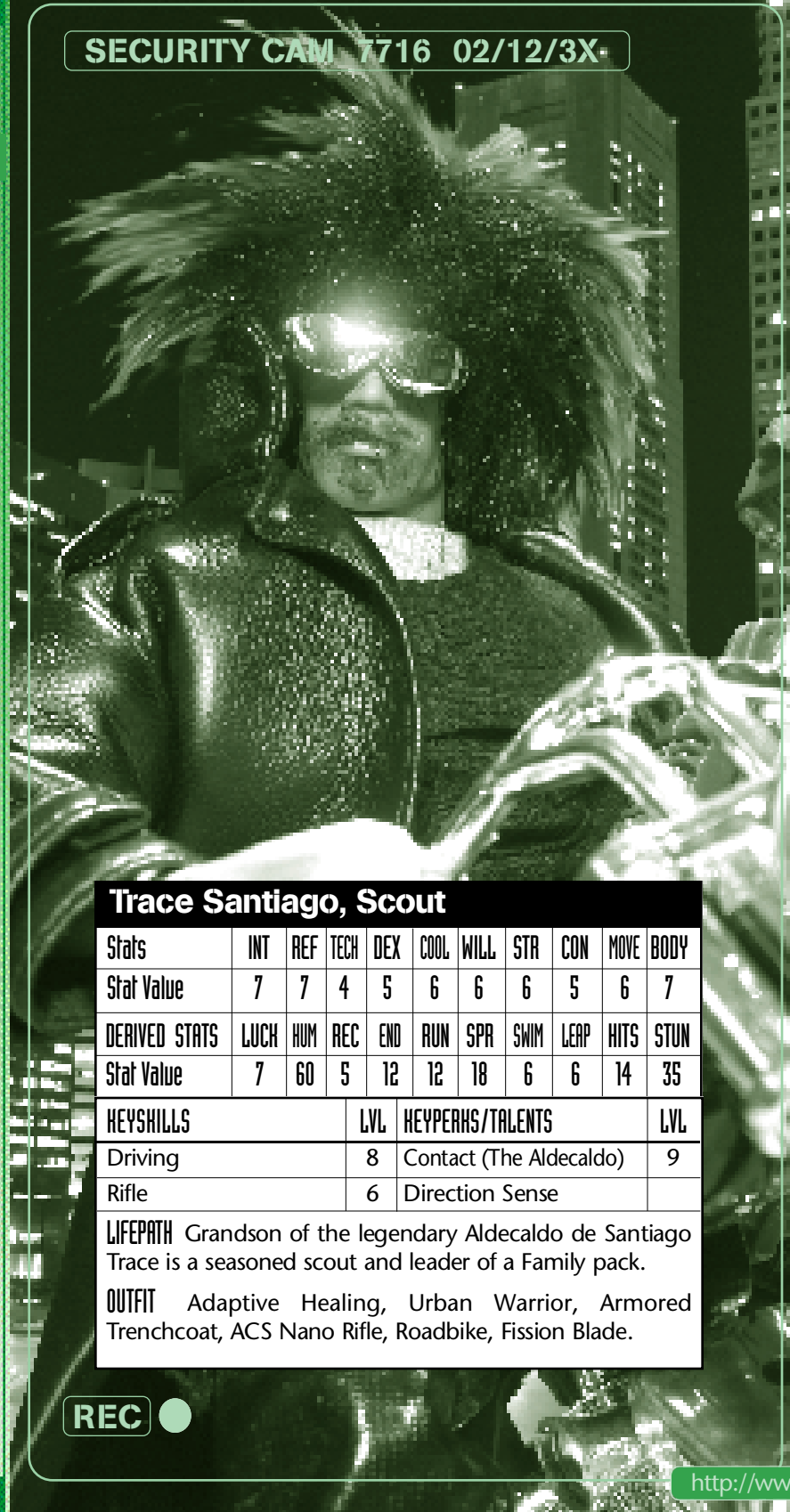
Trace Santiago, Scout

Stats	INT	REF	TECH	DEX	COOL	WILL	STR	CON	MOVE	BODY
Stat Value	7	7	4	5	6	6	6	5	6	7
DERIVED STATS	LUCK	HUM	REC	END	RUN	SPR	SWIM	LEAP	HITS	STUN
Stat Value	7	60	5	12	12	18	6	6	14	35

KEYSKILLS	LVL	KEYPERKS/TALENTS	LVL
Driving	8	Contact (The Aldecaldo)	9
Rifle	6	Direction Sense	

LIFEPATH Grandson of the legendary Aldecaldo de Santiago Trace is a seasoned scout and leader of a Family pack.

OUTFIT Adaptive Healing, Urban Warrior, Armored Trenchcoat, ACS Nano Rifle, Roadbike, Fission Blade.

REC ⬤

"Guns and Bikes, Bikes and Guns. That's how we hold the line out here. You come to my Road City, you screw with my Family, and I'll come lookin' for you, bike runnin' balls to the wall, and all guns blazing."

—Trace Santiago, G-Town Rollerboy Scout

http://www.talsorian.com/traceblog

Rolling State

The Nomads take to the Roads. Forever.

Wheels and speed. Speed and wheels. This is your world. The horizon is always moving; at 100mph, the dust hasn't got time to gather under you. You're the eyes and ears of your people, the Scout who finds the trade routes, arranges the passages, and spots danger when it's still a missile flight away.

Once, as Nomads, your people crammed into huge, ragtag fleets of cars, vans, buses and RV's, following the road as you sought out food, jobs and spare parts. You were despised by the rooted city dwellers, the *gaijo,* who doled out scraps and spat on you while you picked their crops, tended their junkyards. You were hounded by other nomadic outcasts; the *Raffen Shiv*; the bikegangs; feral beasts who looted your homes and killed your kinsmen. Mostly for fun.

But that was yesterday. Now you ride to scout and protect your Road City---the huge rolling complex that is both home and fortress to ten thousand like you. Whether it's B*ig Apple, El Lay* or *Little Seattle*, each Road City is a self contained urban zone on treads, supporting factories, trade-centers, defense bases and living modules as it rumbles ever onward. The Road City can amass enough firepower to obliterate a small county. Its web of aerodynes, battlecars and roadbikes range far beyond sight to destroy any remnants of the Raffen Shiv or dirtgrubber army that might cross your path. You're no longer victims. Now you're a force to be respected—and feared. Like a modern day cowboy, you ride to protect the wagon train. But you've got a gun, a bike and the attitude to back it up.

You're no longer "just a nomad." Now you're a Roller.

Background

The Rolling State Altculture developed out of the scattered Nomad packs of the early 2020's. After an abortive attempt to make a home in the ruins of abandoned Chicago, the seven Nomad "nations" were driven out of their new home by the fierce inter-corporate battles of the Fourth Corp War. Led by their charismatic leader, Santiago Aldecaldo, the Nomads decided to put what they had learned about megastructural engineering to good use, essentially looting Chicago and putting the rebuilt city on huge banks of caterpillar tracks. From this beginning developed a culture strong on technical competence, independent action, close familial ties and the need to be constantly on the move.

Turf

There are now roughly a dozen Road Cities supporting a total population of around 126,000 between them. Most are banded together in groups of three or four, connected through catwalks, ground mobile units and constant aerodyne bus service. Road Cities support themselves

NuCybe

CYBERTECH: EDGERUNNER

SECURITY CAM 2324-3/23/3X

REC ●

POWER ON

Want a cyberarm?. First, start by cutting off your arm at the bicep, sealing off the main arteries, trunk nerves and bleeding meat. Dope the whole stump with a potent cocktail of anti-rejection drugs so it won't rot, then join on a metal cap that splices directly to the naked femur to support a titanium alloy replacement. Hook the remaining nerves into the endcap with microsurgical precision, allowing you to move a lacing of plastic muscles, metal joints and light metal sheathing that gives your new appendage a semblance of a real arm. You still can't lift a car, but now you can crush a steel I-beam in one hand and pack an armory from fingertip to bicep on top. And while you're at it, watch out for the cyberpsychosis that develops when you take on the voluntary amputa-

tion of a major body part, and the two to three weeks it takes to heal from the surgery.

THAT was the way your father did it. But this is 203X. This ain't your dad's ripperdoc chopshop. We have much better ways to get you cybered up. This time we leave your meat arm just where it is. Instead, we cap the upper bicep with a metal band called a **bracer** , that rings the arm like a thick, flexible cuff. We tap into the main nerve trucks through several nearly microscopic conductance ports inside the bracer; no pain, barely any skin penetration—less than piercing your ears. You concentrate on activating your new cyberware, and the surface of the bracer explodes into a series of flexible, interlocking segments that seamlessly coat your meat arm in a metal sleeve. The bracers instantly lace monomolecular reinforcements and plastic pseudomuscles through their entire structure, giving your metal clad arm the rigidity of a 57 Chevy fender and the strength of a backhoe.

Various modules seamlessly join into the main bracers; normally disguised as everyday bracelets and rings, they automatically seek pre-set hardpoints and extrude weapons, sensors and even specialized fingercaps. You slap on a few extra "modds" you've stashed on the belt; the heavy smartgun, the mini-flamethrower, and you're ready to rock. Every couple of days, you power down the entire thing; it folds back into the bracers and rings; the modds drop off, and you catch up on your truck driver tan. The small metal button in the middle of the bracer holds a biological power cell good for a month—sure, not as long-lasting as the old atomic-decay batteries your dad wore, but there's no radiation cascade effects to screw up your genes.

You can slap a bracer on almost anything; arms, legs, shoulders, wrists; there's even removable ones to enhance your sexual prowess. You don't

Livemetal™

CYBERTECH: CEE-METAL

SECURITY CAM 81762 08/09/3X

REC ●

That's not the way you play fullborg in 203X. Now you've got Livemetal™—bodies constructed in complete pseudo-organic perfection. Unlike the clunky metal frames of 2020, your skeleton has carbon-filled bones wrapped in a titanium coating, and your advanced myomar muscles and pseudoflesh accurately replicate flesh with far greater strength and resiliency. You have organs that throb and beat, artificial blood that lubes your joints, skin that is warm to the touch, yet never ages. You even heal when you're hurt.

Your Livemetal™ body is carefully fitted to you for maximum psychological comfort. The new body no longer just replaces the meat body, but instead is designed to *augment* your original body's basic capabilities (in short, the new body's stats are based on the old one's). Between this careful matching of mind and body—and the supportive environment of a society where everyone is a full cyborg, the threat of cyberpsychosis has been reduced to as low as .01% of the population. A Livemetal™ cyborg is no longer a robot steered by a human brain— it's a living, albeit non-breathing person who just happens to be made of silicon-based materials instead of meat.

It used to be full body cyborgs were just that—cyborgs. They were amalgamations of cybernetic parts layered in and over the original meat body, which bled and aged as all flesh does. The metal parts were patches; street cybertech brought together in a semblance of unity. And since the result required the subject to cut off parts of his own living body, the ever-present danger of "cyberpsychosis" lurked just behind the eyes of every full body 'borg.

No wonder your ancestors called themselves "frankenstiens."

Cybertech Brief

In 203X, full body cyborgs are no longer scraps of cyberware tacked onto a meat body. Instead, they are fully integrated artificial persons, with only their organic brain and nervous system remaining intact. These Livemetal™ bodyshells are not only capable of mimicking human form, but are also designed to reflect the original body image of the wearer (thus reducing the threat of **cyberpsychosis** , a homicidal mental illness that occurs when a human alters his body with too much cyberware). The result is that stats listed below for each bodyshell are designed to be added/subtracted to the *original* stats for the character.