

CYBERPUNK

THE ROLEPLAYING GAME OF THE DARK FUTURE



2.0.2.0
THE SECOND EDITION
VERSION 2.01

**R. TALSORIAN
GAMES
INC.**

Contains corrections and clarifications to CYBERPUNK 2.0.2.0., Version 2.0, including bound-in version of SCREAMSHEETS adventures and new artwork. For a free CP 2.0.2.0. update to bring your Version 1.0 online with the new data in this version, as well as a free DATA SCREEN correction overlay, just send an SASE to R. Talsorian Games, Inc. P.O. Box 7356, Dept H, Berkeley, CA. 94707.

CYBERPUNK



THE SECOND EDITION

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To Lisa.
What a long, strange trip it's been!

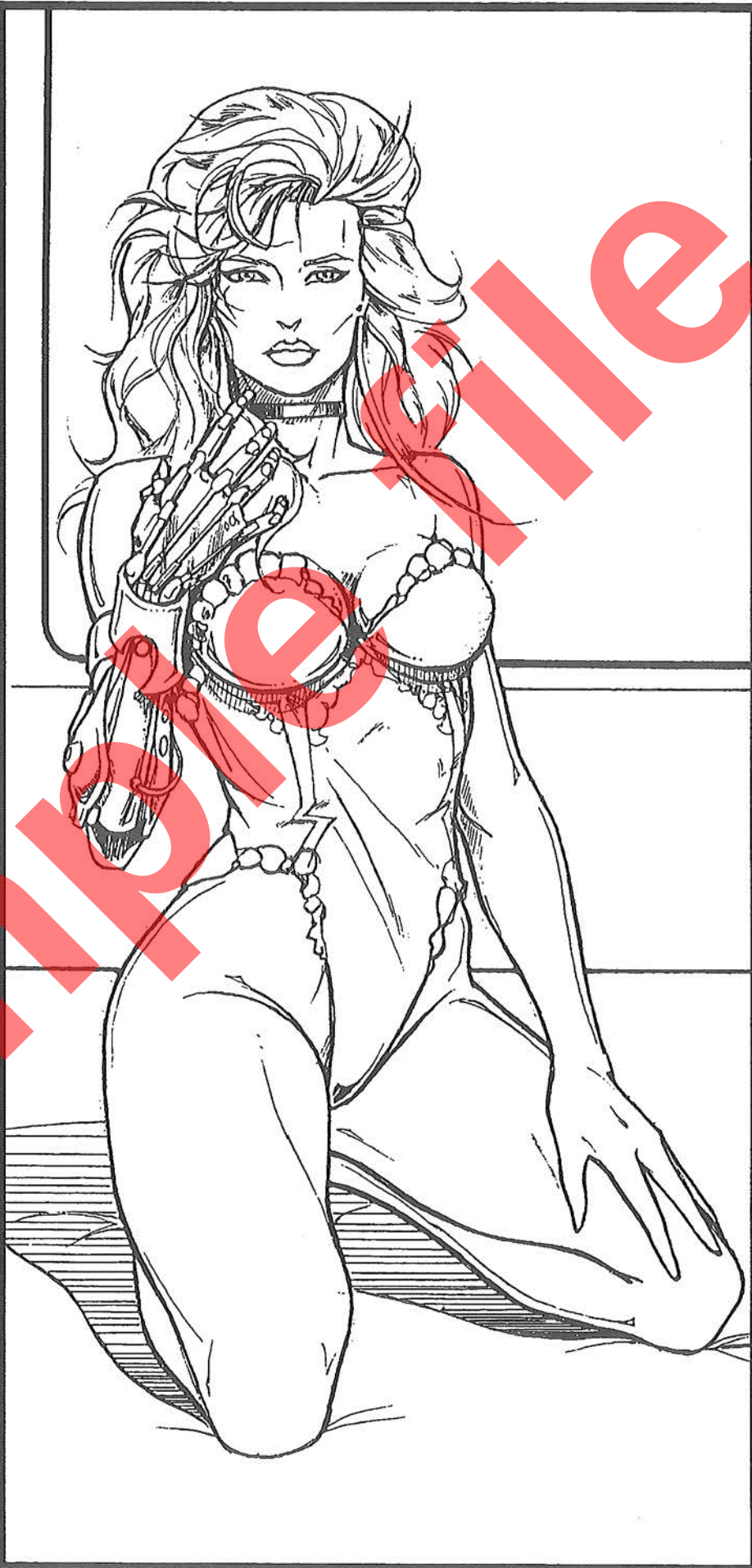
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**ROLES
CHARACTERS
LIFEPATH
TASK & SKILLS
WEAPONS
ARMOR
GEAR
CYBERWEAR
COMBAT
MEDICAL
NETRUNNING**

**VIEW
FROM
THE
EDGE**



As a Cyberpunk, you grab technology by the throat and hang on. You've got interface plugs in your wrists, weapons in your arms, lasers in your eyes. biochip programs in your brain. You become the car you drive, the gun you shoot...With cyborged fingers you pick computer locks; with enhanced senses, you see into the Future.

SECTION

1 SOUL & THE NEW MACHINE

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.

Cyberpunk characters 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. Cyberpunk characters are 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 character is a rebel

"Always take it to the Edge. It's the Cyberpunk way."

—Johnny Silverhand

with a cause. As a Cyberpunk role-player, 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 the 2000's, you need to master three concepts:

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 pitch off your sleepmat 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 archetypal 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 2020, this all looks pretty dated. After all, you probably accessed this article from your personal database 'comp. You used a Kiyoshiru 1300A interface cable with a direct link from your wristplugs. You're used to hardwiring into the appliances to make coffee, "studding" into the Benz to drive down to the corner store. But understand—in 1987, this was all considered pretty visionary stuff. No one had plugs. You couldn't dial Luna on the cellular. Designer drugs were illegal. You could walk down most city streets without an armor jacket. There wasn't 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.

In those days, both were ranked as superpowers, instead of a couple of overarmed second-raters waving nuclear weapons around under the watchful eye of the EuroSpace Defense Agency. As long as the Tycho massdrivers are ready to throw rocks at Moscow and Washington, we'll probably avoid having the nuclear war everyone's been expecting since 1944. After all, rocks are cheap.

Now, of course, everything's more or

less run by the Corporations, which are pretty much governments in themselves. You can go anywhere on one passport—one worldism at its best. The currencies of most nations are stabilized to each other, and the Eurodollar is a world currency. Hardly anyone complains anymore about Corporate Lifetime Contracts or the abolition of unions. It's the price of living in a stable, safe society, right?

After all, you *could* be living in the Projects. Sixteen people to an apartment, sharing ration chips every week to buy food, with eight thousand apartments per city block? Sure, it isn't the best life, what with the booster-gangs roaming the Malls and the major-league crime problems, but it beats actually being on the Street. At least the mega-arcologies have cops (okay, rented Corporate cops, but it's easier than fronting the euro for your own personal Solol). Besides, the media-nets make sure that every apartment has direct cable access to TV, radio and sensory feed, so there's always something to do on a Saturday night.

Where were we? Oh yeah—you want to be a *Cyberpunk*.

Here's more background for you to think over. When the grand old Masters of the Movement first started writing the cyberpunk genre, they assumed that most of the things they wrote about would either never happen or would happen in the far future. No one knew that the West Germans were already developing "organic" circuitry in the late 1980's, or that the United States Air Force was developing mentally controlled weapons systems. Synthetic myomar muscle fibres were just starting to be used to control prosthetics, and very few people could project ahead into the 1990's when organic chipped arms and legs would be possible. There were a few primitive experiments with bioengineering—things like Frostban™ and a few new types of corn—nothing like the bio-engineered animals that we'll use to terraform the Martian colonies.

It took about fifteen years for the newtech to catch up with the vision. First, the military started using cyber-technology to create "perfect soldiers" and pilots. Some of the spin-off led to prosthetic limbs, eyes and other body parts. Organic circuitry led to direct hookups between men and computers. Combined with advanced telecommunications technology and satellite downlinks, the basis for the now planetwide Net, was established. As each new technological advancement slammed into place, a sort of cultural technoshock set in.

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.

ROLES: The Core of CYBERPUNK Role-playing

The world of *Cyberpunk* is a combination of savage, sophisticated, modern and retro-grade. Fashion-model beautiful Techies rub shoulders with battle armored road warriors, all of them making the scene in the hottest dance clubs, sleaziest bars and meanest streets

this side of the Postholocaust. Each character in this world is playing a **Role**—a face that person projects to the outside world as the real thing. There are 9 Roles in *Cyberpunk*: **Rockerboys**, **Solos**, **Netrunners**, **Corporates**, **Techies**, **Cops**, **Fixers**, **Medias**, and **Nomads**. As a *Cyberpunk* player, you must select one role for your character.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Special Abilities are skills usable only by specific character Roles; for example, **Rockerboys** have the Special Ability of **Charismatic Leadership**, which represents the vast amount of power they have over their legions of fans. When using a Special Ability, you will add its value to the specific stat as if it were a skill.

Rockerboy Special Ability: Charismatic Leadership. This skill allows the Rocker to sway crowds equal to his ability level squared, times 200.

Solo Special Ability: Combat Sense. Added to all *Initiative* and *Awareness* checks, this makes the Solo the fastest reacting person in a situation.

Netrunner Special Ability: Interface. This Skill reflects the Netrunner's ability to manipulate Interface programs, and is the skill used when operating *Menu* functions such as *Locate Remote*, *Run Software*, *Control Remote*, *LDL Link*, *Load*, *Create* and *Delete*. Other players can enter the Net, but can't use the Menu.

Techie Special Ability: Jury Rig. This general repair skill allows the Techie to temporarily repair or alter anything for 1D6 turns per level of skill.

Medtech Special Ability: Medical Tech. This is the skill used to perform major surgery and medical repairs.

Media Special Ability: Credibility. The ability to have people believe what you are saying while in your on-air persona.

THE RULES:
"1) Style Over Substance.
2) Attitude is Everything.
3) Always take it to the Edge.
4) Break the Rules."
—Ripperjack