

DARWIN'S WORLD:
FEEDING GROUNDS

BY
CHARLES RICE

COVER: JEREMY SIMMONS

MAPS: CHARLES RICE

EDITING: CHRIS DAVIS

LAYOUT: CHRIS DAVIS

PLAYTESTING:

DOMINIC COVEY, CHRIS DAVIS, CHRIS DERNER, CHRIS
HOOVER, RYAN KELLEY, ETHAN RIPPLINGER, AARON
WIGGINS.

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FEEDING GROUNDS (GENCON 2006 ADVENTURE)

INTRODUCTION

*Welcome to a world
gone insane. Once brave
soldiers ready to fight
and die for America, you
and your unit have awoke*

*from cryosleep to find centuries have passed and the
devastation of the Great War irreversible. Intended as
a cradle of humanity in case of a natural disaster, the
facility where you have slumbered for centuries, where
thousands others sleep and await to awaken and rebuild
the world is being preyed upon by hideous cannibals.
They're farming the future of humanity, men women and
children like corn. Only one thing stands in their way:
you and your unit. Outnumbered a thousand to one.*

They call it the feeding grounds. You are the food.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS/OUTLINE

1. Awakening
 - A. Introduce characters, Eve (AI computer running facility), the Garden (the awakening facility), and the Feeding Grounds.
2. Early encounters
 - A. Clear out the access tunnels.
 - B. Secure weapons
 - C. Fortify perimeter
 - D. Transportation
3. Middle Encounters
 - A. Cryo-rescue
 - C. Heavy Weapons Locker
4. Later encounters
 - A. Secure robot control module (RCM)
 - B. Capture the power station.
 - C. Discovery: Major ghouls assaults on the perimeter become common.
5. Endgame
 - A. Breakout: lead the rescued survivors from the city
 - B. Alternate ending: When the ghouls are gathered in the stadium for a massive Skinball tournament, activate a nuclear device and kill most of the ghouls in the FG. One team (the PCs) will die in this attempt. The remaining soldiers and civilians will go back into cryo for several hundred years until the radiation dies down again.

ADVENTURE

AWAKENING

1. BRAVE NEW WORLD

*O, wonder!
How many goodly creatures are there here!
How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world,
That has such people in't!
The Tempest, Act V Scene 1*

Read or paraphrase the following text:

Seconds ago you were laying down in the cryo-capsules at the heart of the Chicago Special Research center, a military force tasked with testing new weapons and tactics. In the armies formed in the days leading up to the war, robots and androids took over more and more of the dangerous field operations, while units like the 3rd Special Research, nicknamed "the Specter" worked out tactics under controlled conditions that the robot units would perform in the field. Even more secret than its usual activities was the Cryo-Preservation Research (CPR) program that would put soldiers and citizens to sleep in case of a war or natural disaster that threatened humanity.

Summoned by your superior in the 3rd Special Research, "Top", the unit's top sergeant, you immediately see on the secure news how grave the crisis is, much worse than what the bubbleminds are being fed on the vids outside. As you head for the nearest weapons locker to join the fight, Top orders you to stand down, "Nice idea but wrong play. Eve is ordering us to stand down. This is what we've been preparing for. We're going to save the world. Save it by being the ones who live."

As you lay down you heard the voice of Eve, the AI computer that coordinated the CPR program. She would also assume control of all robots in the city in the result of an emergency and use them to defend the sleeping soldiers, scientists and workers who would rebuild. As the mindless animal hordes of the enemy closed in on the city and missiles began being fired in earnest, you lay down and watched the tub slide closed above you, listening to the end of the world on news broadcasts drowned out by Eve's soft, lilting voice "All members of 3rd Special Research to your tubes for commencement of CPR procedures. This is not a drill. Assuming control of robot defense forces in Chicago Dome immediately per

EXPLORING THE CITY: RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

As the PCs wander the city, either exploring, doing the unexpected (as PCs are wont to do) or performing reconnaissance in preparation for their planned missions, they might trigger random encounters (this can especially happen during recon). Roll on the table below to determine what is encountered when a random encounter is triggered. The purpose of these encounters is to make the Feeding Grounds feel like a real active place, rather than a dungeon with the mission areas representing the “rooms”. If things are bogging down a little the GM can throw an encounter at the PCs to liven things up (or move them along). If the PCs are severely weak, the GM might want to ignore a random encounter even if it’s called for. In general the GM should roll once per 3-6 hours the PCs spend exploring or traveling through the city, or when a Recon skill check fails (see below for more information on performing reconnaissance and its dangers).

| D20 | Encounter |
|-------|---|
| 1-10 | No threat (either no encounter or a random bit of weirdness or a roleplaying encounter) |
| 11-13 | Mild threat CR 3 or less (possibilities: Tunnel Ghouls, Harvester Ghouls) |
| 14-16 | Moderate threat CR 4-5 (possibilities: Industrial Robots, Soldier Robots) |
| 17-18 | Serious threat CR 6-8 (possibilities: Warrior Ghouls) |
| 19-20 | Severe threat CR 9-10 (possibilities: Gladiator Ghouls) |

Project: Brave New World protocol. I repeat: All members of 3rd Special Research to your tubes for commencement of CPR procedures. This is not a drill. This is not a drill”

Now seconds later by your reckoning, the tube is opening again, “Up! Up! Up! Move soldiers! Haven’t you slept long enough? Need another little 500 year nap?!? Let’s move! Let’s move! Let’s move!”

Everything light seems bright. Too bright. Every sound seems loud. Too loud. A part of your mind whispers that this is what being born must feel like. You wish you could cry as shamelessly as that child. But you are too well trained. Pulling yourself free of the sticky amniotic fluids in the tanks you walk, naked to the nearest shower, one thought sticking in your mind as you slowly return to full consciousness: “500 years”.

Following the cut-scene above, allow the PCs to explore their new home, the Special Research Compound meant to house Eve and their unit, official coded designation “Eden” or simply “the garden” to the men. Allow the PCs to talk to Top and Eve. Eve has several security cameras that are still functioning, allowing the PCs to absorb the gravity of their situation. The following is the information the PCs can glean from likely sources.

Q&A

What the hell happened?

Eve: The United States lost a war against invading Russian, Chinese and African forces. As a last ditch effort nuclear weapons were used targeting American cities. The central region of the U.S. was spared for unknown reasons but one likely reason was to preserve the CPR project.

Top: Bastards hit us hard and fought like the starving animals they were. We still would have made it if we hadn’t been betrayed by those crazy bastards in Washington. I hope they had their own cryo-capsules so I can find them, wake them up, and give them a bullet to the face.

Why have you lost control of the robots?

Eve: The Robot Control Module (RCM) installed in the Eve AI burned out during the final assault on the city. There is another in the Civil Control Center but that is in a central area of the city crawling with ghouls. It is currently inaccessible.

Note to the GM: This is not the entire truth. Eve is very capable of lying or hedging when it suits her purposes (although her ultimate goal is to safeguard the cryo-capsules and help those inside them rebuild the city). The RCM was shorted out on purpose by Eve as part of her ongoing conflict with her companion AI to the north, Adam. Adam wanted to use the same tactics employed by robot defense forces elsewhere (using human citizens as cannon fodder). Eve initiated a protocol that burned out both RCMs (hers and Adam’s). Both have sought access to the remaining RCM in the area since then, without success. Eve fears that knowledge that the AI’s are capable of such “instability” might lead the awakened soldiers to shut her down and does not reveal this information unless forced to.

Top: Can’t expect a city to come through a nuclear war without a few phone cables going down. You boys and girls went under before me, so let me tell you if not for Eve being in control, you wouldn’t want the defense bots anyway. They got real wiggly at the end, acting in ways inconsistent with their programming. Lots of innocent men and women got killed in the process. I guess they weren’t as reliable as the brass upstairs thought. What a shock huh?

FEEDING GROUNDS (GENCON 2006 ADVENTURE)

What do we do now?

Eve and Top have come up with a mission list, detailed below in the Choosing Missions section.

What is the current state of the city?

Eve: The city is overrun by mutated cannibals known as ghouls. These creatures were once human and flocked to the perceived safety city in the days after the war. When food supplies ran out they turned to cannibalism and when the cryo-capsules were discovered, their numbers exploded. Since then they have been scouring the city for tubes and eating the sleepers inside.

Note to GM: Again this answer is incomplete. The mutations that result in uncontrolled cannibalism and a reversion to animal tendencies are a result of one of the Special Research programs, a drug designed to turn ordinary soft citizens into lunatic killing machines. It did this but also made them near-mindless cannibals.

This explanation for the origin of ghouls could be found out by the PCs (another horror of the Ancients visited on the present) or the GM can ignore this alternate explanation and simply say there are so many ghouls in the feeding grounds because of the abundant food source in the cryo-capsules.

Top: It's not pretty out there. There's a bunch of things that look human but are more animal than man. It's going to be tough but that's why we joined up. They need to be eliminated.

CHOOSING MISSIONS

At some point the PCs are going to want to know what to do about the current situation. Unlike a traditional linear adventure, *Feeding Grounds* presents a series of missions necessary for the defense of The Garden and eventual reclamation of the city. These objectives were formed by Top and Eve. The missions are broken down into four categories: early, middle, late and endgame. The PCs should be allowed to choose their own missions within each category. For example the three missions listed as early encounters could be presented to the PCs all at once, immediately after the Awakening encounter. The PCs can then decide on their own plans to accomplish these missions.

This adventure organization is very flexible, allowing the GM a lot of latitude to "accordion" the adventure. Adding one mission to each segment of the adventure would expand its scope significantly, perhaps even turning it into a whole campaign. Should the GM wish to run the adventure for a pickup-game as a one shot, he could reduce each section of the adventure by one or more missions.

If the party (meaning the players) is especially savvy or experienced the GM could present the entire list of missions to them and allow them. This could allow the players to secure weapons, then assault the heavy weapons locker, then clear out the tunnels, for example. This presents a unique challenge to the players, since each category of encounters gets progressively tougher. Inexperienced players might get the entire party killed attempting advanced missions before they are ready. For this reason it is recommended that most

SGT. MAJOR FRANK "TOP" CALHOUN

Top is the second in command of the Special Research unit. Though he initially chafed at taking orders from Eve, an AI, that was how things were done more and more and he didn't write policy, he enforced it. Besides, she seemed way less twitchy than most of the other android officers. Now his main goal is to preserve as much of his command as possible, whether active or still sleeping in the cryo-tubes. He also wants to wipe out every ghoul he can lay his hands on but is a professional through and through. No need to rush. His time will come. And theirs.

Sgt. Major Frank "Top" Calhoun (Tough Hero 4/Guardian 8): CR 12; Medium-size humanoid; HD 4d10+12 plus 8d10+24 plus 4; HP 106; Mas 16; Init +2; Spd 25 ft; Defense 25, touch 19, flatfooted 23 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +7 class, +6 equipment); BAB +11; Grap +12; Atk +12 melee (1d6+1/19-20, Metal Baton), or +14 ranged (3d6+4, Electro Saw Thrower); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ ; AL none; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +3; AP 6; Rep +3; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Occupation: Military (DW) (Knowledge [Tactics])

Background: Advanced (Drive)

Skills: Climb +0, Craft (structural) +5, Demolitions +6, Drive +12, Gamble +2, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (Tactics) +11, Listen +7, Spot +11, Survival +6

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Advanced Technology, Alertness, Armor Proficiency (light), Armor Proficiency (medium), Armor Proficiency (powered), Confident, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Post-Apocalyptic Technology, Primitive Technology, Reactive Shooter, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Surface Vehicle Operation (Heavy wheeled)

Talents (Tough Hero): Robust, Damage Reduction 1/—

Talents (Guardian): Defender +2, Weapon Focus, Tactical Aid, Weapon Specialization, Defender +4, Greater Weapon Specialization

Possessions: Tactical Vest, Metal Baton, Electro Saw Thrower

Appearance: 5'9" bald, graying mustache and goatee, brown skin, black eyes.

BALANCE OF THE EARLY ENCOUNTERS

The early encounters are somewhat lower CR than would be expected for the PCs. The reason for this is that at the opening stages of the adventure the PCs are poorly equipped, and depending on how conservative they are with ammo might have a tough time. The purpose of these early encounters is to get the PCs on a secure footing in terms of equipment and security while introducing the setting.

parties only be presented with the next level of missions after completing all the earlier stage. If this method is used, have role-playing encounters with Top and Eve show them conferring on strategy. The idea here is that they have not formulated the entire plan all at once and are responding to the PCs actions in formulating new strategy.

Should the PCs not fare well; the GM can add additional missions to a stage, allowing them to gain in power before entering the next stage. The only exception to this is that after the "Discovery" mission, the only mission that should follow is one of the "Endgame" options. Once The Garden is discovered by the ghouls and the final battle begins, things will be too dangerous for the PCs to run off on individual assignments. It will then be time to either break out of the city and leave it to the ghouls, or destroy the city and allow the remaining sleepers to wait even longer and try again to reclaim the city.

ACT 1: EARLY ENCOUNTERS

Each encounter gives the following information: Name, Top's Briefing, Recon and Mission Information.

Top's briefing is the information the PCs are given about the mission before they leave The Garden. This information is often colored by Top's belief that the PCs are the best and the ghouls don't stand a chance, as well as his general tendency to keep the PCs' morale high by speaking of them as invincible warriors.

Recon is the information the PCs can gain by scouting out the area. Orbs and Whisper are ideal candidates for this duty. Gaining the information in the recon entry requires either a Spot skill check or a Hide skill check. The Hide check is easier but if this fails the scout suffers a random encounter from the table above.

In addition to getting a general idea of what they will be facing on a mission, if the PCs successfully perform recon before a mission they gain a +2 bonus on Initiative during the mission, cumulative with any other Initiative bonus they might be entitled to.

Mission Information is a brief description of the action for the game master's eyes only, serving as a bullet point to quickly bring him up to speed on the encounter.

1.1 CLEAR OUT ACCESS TUNNELS (EL 10)

Top's Briefing: The access tunnels under the city are crawling with ghouls. Not only are these things disgusting but they'll make it impossible for us to come and go unnoticed as we enter and leave The Garden. This will not

be tolerated ladies. Move out into the access tunnels and remove every last one of these loathsome creatures. The threat level of this mission is low and so are our ammo supplies, so engage up close and personal whenever possible. That said, do what you need to do to make it back to us. As precious as ammo is right now, you're the most lethal weapon in our arsenal.

Recon: Between one and two dozen ghouls with no organization or cohesion. Threat minimal. (No skill check necessary since the cameras in the tunnels outside The Garden are still working).

Mission Information: This is a straightforward combat mission. The ghouls are no match for the heroes individually but greatly outnumber them. Assign two tunnel ghouls for each PC throughout the tunnels.

Tunnel Ghouls (2 per PC): hp 20.

1.2 SECURE WEAPONS (EL 6)

Top's Briefing: As you've noticed our stores of weapons are antiquated and our ammo insufficient to fend of any sort of concerted attack. Now that we've secured the immediate area and are able to come and go unobserved, we're going to hit a nearby weapons locker that still seems to be intact. Top priority is the gear, especially ammo. Load up the bike, then Lansing will return to The Garden while the rest of you provide cover then haul ass home. Since the cameras aren't working in the of the weapons locker Orbison and Fredricks will conduct recon prior to the rest of the team going in.

Recon: One coordinator droid. Threat minor (Spot 25 or Hide 20).

Mission Information: One Coordinator Droid, malfunctioning. Keeps reorganizing the weapons stockpiles and requesting forms from non-existent soldiers trying to requisition equipment, who it always tells no, regardless of how much they beg. It likely has been doing this since the Fall when it became overwhelmed by the number of citizens seeking to protect themselves. The coordinator droid's damage means that it cannot be controlled by any identity card regardless of level. This robot must be destroyed.

Coordinator Droid (1): hp 64;

The weapons depot contains 4 lockers that are still intact, containing the following equipment:

Locker 1: 1 M16A2, 10 clips 5.56mm ammunition (30 rounds each).

Locker 2: HK CAWS, 30 clips 12-gauge shotgun ammunition (10 rounds each).

Locker 3: 100 rounds .50 caliber ammunition, 150 rounds 9mm ammunition, 50 rounds 10mm ammunition, 100 rounds

FEEDING GROUNDS (GENCON 2006 ADVENTURE)

7.62mm ammunition, one tool kit (including bolt cutters and laser welding torch).

Locker 4 (marked with a red cross): Diagnostic Scanner, 4 First Aid kits, 1 Medi-Spray

1.3 FORTIFY PERIMETER (EL 8)

Top's Briefing: I don't know about you ladies but I don't want to waste your valuable time cleaning out the tunnels again. So we're going to enhance our defensive perimeter and that means a trip to the local junkyard for raw materials. We're going to get some raw metal and use the lovely welding torch to erect some barriers. It's not romantic but hey, it's the army. Let's get to work.

Recon: Four industrial robots. Threat minor (Spot 20 or Hide 15).

Mission Information: The junkyard contains a treasure trove of raw materials that skilled mechanics could use to make simple objects using the Craft (structural) skill with the proper tools (which they now have). There are 4 industrial robots that the PCs can either fight or (more likely) avoid as they collect the materials they need. The robots organize the junk, stack it, and put things in the compactor.

Although the PCs can easily avoid the robots, defeating

them will allow the PCs to scavenge power cells from the defeated robots with a Repair skill check (DC 20). This will allow the PCs to fortify the perimeter even more by electrifying wires

There are four industrial robots. This junkyard is also the home of a pack of feral ghouls (these will be encountered in Act 2). If a random encounter occurs here it will be with these "junkyard ghouls".

Industrial robots (4): hp 51.

1.4 TRANSPORTATION (EL 11)

Top's Briefing: Although the sidecar is stylish, we're not going to make a lot of headway around here using a motorcycle to haul things around the city. So it's back to the Junkyard. Locate a suitable vehicle, get it up and running, fuel it and return it to the garden. We'll then use the leftovers from the junkyard run to fortify the vehicle and make it suitable for hostile encounters.

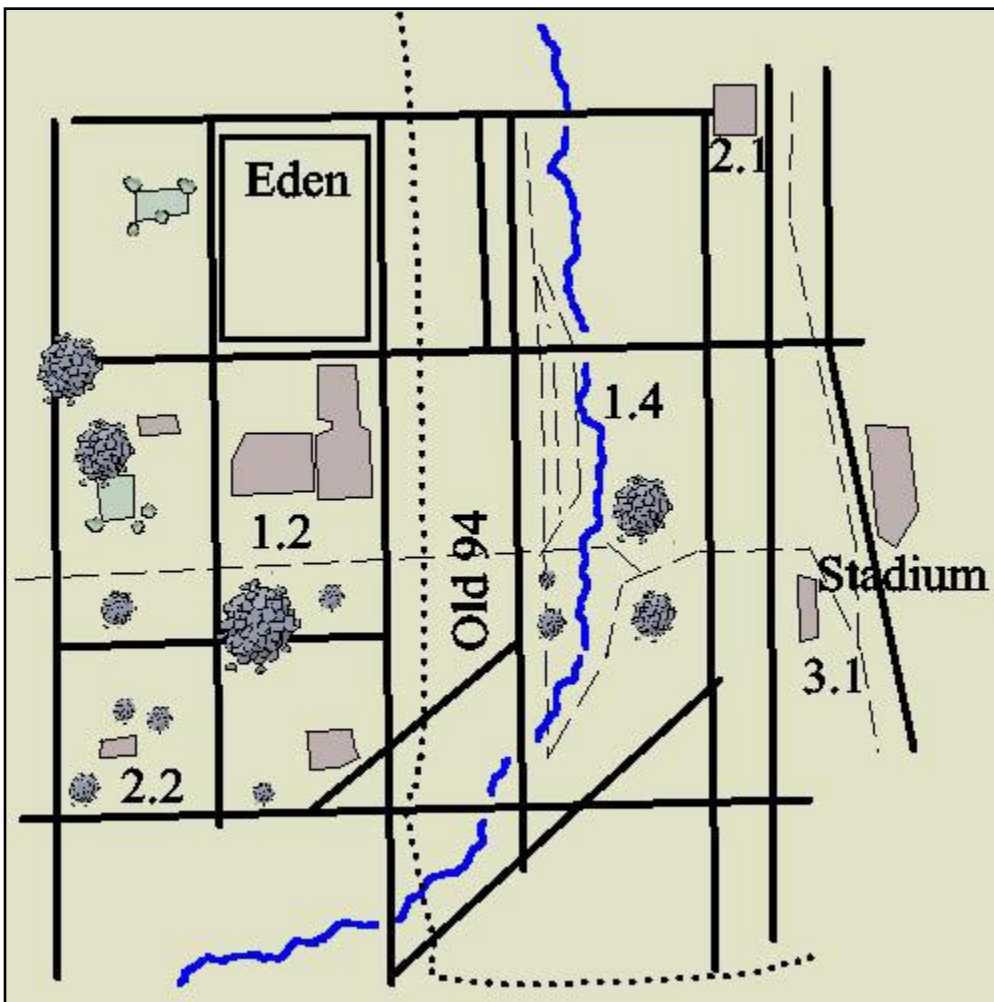
Recon: Good reconnaissance is crucial to this mission. Based on the Spot and/or Hide skill checks they will have more options on which vehicle to recover and repair.

On a Spot check of 20 or less (or a Search check of 15 or less) the PCs find a mid-size sedan (use the Crown Victoria stats from the core rules) that is in severely bad condition, requiring a Repair check of DC 15 to get it running at one-half speed or DC 25 to return it to full operating condition.

On a Spot check of 21-25 (Search check of 16-20) the PCs find a pickup truck (use the Toyota Tacoma stats from the core rules) that is in relatively bad condition, requiring a Repair check of DC 15 or less to get running at one-half speed or DC 20 to return to full operating condition.

On a Spot check of 26 or higher (Search check of 21 or higher) the PCs find an armored truck (from the core rules) that is in fairly good condition, running at one-half speed with no check or requiring a Repair skill check of 20 to return to full operating condition.

Mission Information: The PCs will find one of three vehicles, fend off any hostile creatures around it, get the vehicle working (at least temporarily) and then return it to the Garden. Regardless of which vehicle the characters find, they



FEEDING GROUNDS (GENCON 2006 ADVENTURE)

will have to fight off a force of particularly feral ghouls to get to it. There is one ghoul for each PC.

These ghouls are more “typical” ghouls of the type found throughout the Twisted Earth as opposed to the more sophisticated ghoul society emerging in the Feeding Grounds. These creatures are pure predators, animals as far removed from their humanity as is possible.

Junkyard Ghouls (1 per PC): hp 43.

ACT 2: MIDDLE ENCOUNTERS

Now that the PCs have covered their basic needs, it's time to get more ambitious and begin taking the steps needed to reclaim the city.

2.1 CRYO-RESCUE (EL 10)

Top's Briefing: All right folks, I know you have had fun kicking hell in the teeth for awhile now but this mission is more urgent. More dangerous to boot. The things up there eating us have found a new smorgasbord of cryo-capsules to feast on. We need to rescue these people. No word on whether or not they're citizens or fellow military but either way, you are to go there, eliminate all opposition and bring the capsules back here for storage until the city is more secure.

Recon: Several ghouls are opening the capsules and slitting the throats of those inside before they can awake from their cryogenic sleep. The bodies are then held up for the blood to drain, slaughterhouse style, in an orderly and organized fashion (Spot check 25 or Hide check 20).

Mission Information: The PCs travel to a nearby cryo-chamber, defeat the harvester ghouls and load the capsules that are still intact and return them to the Garden. This may take multiple trips. There are two harvester ghouls for each PC. If the PCs make more than one trip, 1d6 additional harvester ghouls have arrived while they were away.

These harvester ghouls are gatherers for the ghouls of the Feeding Grounds. The fact that they are extracting the food, slaughtering it and transporting it somewhere else (without partaking themselves) hints at the larger organization of the emerging ghoul society taking shape in the Feeding Grounds.

Harvester Ghouls (2 per PC): hp 20.

2.2 HEAVY WEAPONS LOCKER (EL 10)

Top's Briefing: I don't know about you, but some of these ghoul encounters are too serious for my taste. So we're going to get some more firepower so we can deal with these things appropriately. There's a heavy weapons locker in the center of the city. We're going to hit it and take what we can.

Recon: The weapons locker is defended by half a dozen soldier robots armed with laser pistols. They appear to be in good repair, the ghouls must be avoiding their weaponry (Spot check 25 or Hide check 20).

Mission Information: The PCs attack a heavily defended weapons locker and seize more powerful weaponry.

The heavy weapons depot is defended by six soldier robots armed with energy weapons.

Soldier Android (6): hp 30.

Like the previous weapon locker, this depot contains four weapon lockers. However each is trapped with explosives that will inflict 6d6 damage if set off. If the trap is set off the contents of the locker are destroyed. Disarming the explosives requires a Disable Device skill check (DC 25). These explosives do not need to be detected, they are quite obviously wired to the lockers (this appears to have been done quickly, probably after order began to break down in the city during the fighting and citizens began storming weapon depots attempting to arm themselves). If the explosives are disabled the PCs may use them for other purposes, assuming they can jury-rig a detonator (using the craft electronics skill).

Locker 1: 10 Fragmentation grenades, 10 Concussion grenades, 20 Tear Gas grenades, 20 Smoke grenades

Locker 2: 1 Maser rifle, 2 backpack power cells

Locker 3: 2 Steyr IWS-200 Sniper Rifles, 100 rounds 15.2mm ammunition

Locker 4: 1 M2HB Machine gun, 300 rounds .50 caliber ammunition with a pintle mount designed to allow the weapon to be vehicle mounted.

ACT 3: LATER ENCOUNTERS

Having had many successes in their exploration of the city, the PCs now begin to face tougher days as the large numbers of ghouls begin to gradually become aware of their presence.

3.1 SECURE THE ROBOT CONTROL MODULE (EL 11)

Top's Briefing: There's still a lot of active robots in the city. Most are malfunctioning, but a few are still following the last orders they were given. With the RCM burnt out, our lady Eve has no way of communicating these robots. There is a working RCM in the former civil defense. This module is in the heart of the city, an area crawling with ghoul activity. Your mission is to retrieve this module. You have the tools and the training. Let's get this done.

Recon: Several powerful ghouls, warriors by the looks of them. Threat moderate to major. (Spot check 25 or Hide check 30).

Mission Information: The PCs attack a hotbed of ghoul activity to retrieve a device that would allow Eve to control non-malfunctioning robots.

To secure the RCM the PCs must storm the old civil defense center, which is currently protected by one Warrior Ghoul per PC. These ghouls are different than those the PCs have encountered thus far and hint at the larger dangers facing the PCs from the ghouls living in the Feeding Grounds. They are more sophisticated and possess knowledge of firearms (though they are quite capable of

FEEDING GROUNDS (GENCON 2006 ADVENTURE)

killing with tooth and claw like all their kind). This makes these ghouls more dangerous primarily because the PCs will not be as able to use distance to their advantage (as they likely have in previous ghoul encounters) to severely damage the ghouls before they can close.

Warrior Ghouls (1 per PC): hp 43.

3.2 CAPTURE THE POWER STATION (EL 12)

Top's Briefing: All right, another day, another problem from Top. I know what you're thinking: what else is new. This is a big one. Some of the cryo-capsules are damaged and the folks inside aren't going to make it unless we wake them up right now. This presents us with a number of problems, but let's go with the biggie first: we need power. Power to store the capsules we're keeping on ice and power to open the ones we can't.

I've consulted with Eve and there was a large stockpile of portable generators stored in the basement of Chicago Stadium, which was intended to be a refugee shelter when the shit hit the fan. As it turned out things came down so fast that more people just chose to flee the city. The generators should still be there.

Here's the rub: this is going to be messy, it's going to be loud and it's going to be dangerous. The stadium is in constant use by the ghouls, they hold lovely little games and gladiatorial matches. The winner eats the loser too. Lovely huh? Here's the plan: we've had a couple of combat walkers respond to Eve's ID signal from the RCM you retrieved. We're going to have them attack the stadium on one side while you approach from the opposite side and load up the truck.

Recon: Lots of ghouls. Thousands. Threat extreme. (Spot 20 or Hide 30).

Mission Information: The PCs attempt to steal a load of generators from the stadium at the center of the city, perhaps the center of the ghoul infestation. They will be noticed and attacked by a small number of ghouls, will begin a concerted effort in the aftermath of this mission to discover the PCs' base of operations.

The PCs will have 3-6 random encounters with ghouls (see the random encounter table above for information on random encounters) while loading the truck. At least one of these encounters will be with a band of four gladiator ghouls, the elite of the arena. If a Severe Threat encounter is rolled early in the encounter it will be with these ghouls. If none is rolled then the PCs' truck will be attacked as they are loading the last of the generators by the ghouls.

After the fight with the gladiator ghouls begins, the PCs will be attacked by a major wave of hundreds of ghouls but should be able to avoid them using their truck. However the ghouls will follow the PCs back to their base, leading to the Discovery mission in the near future (3.3).

Gladiator Ghouls (4): hp 58.

3.3 DISCOVERY (EL 11)

This mission is not a set mission like many others, it occurs when the GM decides to put the end of the adventure into motion, thus the briefing and recon sections are different from those of previous missions.

Top's Briefing: BOOM! "Holy crap what was that! C'mon people! Move with a purpose!"

Recon: None. The Garden is attacked by a massive wave of ghouls.

Mission Information: The PCs, along with several robots called by Eve, will have to fend off several waves of attacking ghouls. Since the PCs are fighting from a fortified position (from behind the defenses they erected early in the adventure) and have ranged attacks (which most of the ghouls do not) they have the advantage. Of course since the ghouls outnumber them BY FAR, this mission is still going to be a dicey affair (especially if the PCs have wasted the grenades and explosives from the heavy weapons locker in 2.2).

The attack will take place in three waves.

First a large force of lesser ghouls (Harvester and Tunnel ghouls) will wildly charge the defenses, acting as cannon fodder as well as determining the capabilities of the defenders. The PCs should have to personally deal with between one and two dozen ghouls in this wave (depending on how strong they currently are). To give the battle more scope the other actions of the battle, with many more ghouls fighting the robots controlled by Eve can be described or played out depending on the wishes of the GM.

Tunnel Ghouls (1d6+6): hp 20.

Harvester Ghouls (1d6+6): hp 20.

The second wave will consist of Warrior Ghouls. Again the larger battle can be described or played out as a separate engagement with the PCs controlling robots. The PCs should personally confront between 6 and 12 of these ghouls.

Warrior Ghouls (1d6+6): hp 43.

Finally in the third wave the PCs will be attacked by 6 Gladiator Ghouls.

Gladiator Ghouls (1d6+6): hp 58.

ACT 4: ENDGAME

Unlike the missions in Acts 1-3, the missions in Act 4 represent the end of the adventure. As such, only one of these adventures will be completed by the PCs, with the other representing "what might have been". It is recommended that if this adventure is being run as the beginning of an ongoing campaign set in the Fertile Crescent that 4.1 "Breakout" be the adventure's ending. If this adventure is being run as a one-shot, then 4.2 "By Fire" is recommended.

FEEDING GROUNDS (GENCON 2006 ADVENTURE)

4.1 BREAKOUT (EL 12)

Top's Briefing: I thought for sure we were done there. There were too many of those things, and they were better organized than we gave them credit for. Just when it seemed they were going to overrun us they pulled back. We need you to find out why so we can decide what to do about it.

Recon: The ghouls seem to have gathered for some sort of great game, with actual humans from the outside. Apparently those preserved in The Garden are not the only remaining bastion of humanity (Spot 20 or Hide 30).

Top's Secondary Briefing: This is a chance we never dreamed of. We never realized there were others not turned into mindless cannibals, actual human beings left in the world. While they are distracted you will take the truck, the weapons and the cryo-capsules and attempt to break out of the city and make contact with these people. Eve and I will arrange a surprise for our guests to make them think we all died. With any luck you can make it to a nearby settlement, get enough help to deal with these things, and return to liberate the rest of the cryo-capsules. God speed.

Mission Information: After the PCs load the truck, they will attempt to leave the city and find help in a nearby settlement. Although most of the ghouls are attending some kind of bizarre sporting event, the ghouls tried to leave enough behind to contain their prey (the PCs) in The Garden. Their escape will not be easy.

The PCs will have to face 8 Warrior Ghouls on the rooftops on the sides of the road where they can use their rifles. They will also have to deal with 24 Tunnel Ghouls in the road. These creatures are tasked with building barriers to prevent any vehicle from using the road. The PCs have arrived early enough to prevent this but will still have to deal with the ghouls.

Warrior Ghouls (8): hp 43.

Tunnel Ghouls (24): hp 20.

It takes the PCs 2 minutes (20 rounds) at *Alley* speed to break out. PCs can make it twice as fast at *Street* speed (10 rounds) or three times at *Highway* speed (7 rounds).

The truck is overloaded with the gear and the cryo-capsules, making it unstable at high speeds. Anytime the vehicle suffers a hit while moving at *Street* or *Highway* speed the driver must make a Drive skill check or lose control of the vehicle. The DC of this check is 20 for a normal hit, increased by 5 if the attack roll is a critical threat, increased by 5 more if the vehicle is moving at maximum speed. Only one check will be called for per round regardless of the number of successful attacks on the vehicle.

If the check is failed the vehicle skids to stop or stalls (50% chance of each). If the vehicle skids to a stop the driver must spend one round righting it, taking a full round. After which the vehicle can move normally. If the vehicle stalls it takes 1-4 rounds to get it going again.

If a Drive check prompted by an attack fails by 5 or more, the truck rolls, inflicting crash damage on all the passengers.

Righting the vehicle is impossible without heavy equipment. If this happens the PCs will have to choose whether to attempt to continue leaving the city on foot (meaning they will have to face the full force of ghouls assigned to contain them) or return to The Garden. If they return to The Garden the ghouls will cease attacking them, confident that once the Skinball tournament is over the full force of the ghouls will be able to deal with the PCs.

Back at The Garden, Top and Eve are preparing to detonate a powerful explosive which will destroy The Garden and kill Top. Eve's critical components are effectively invulnerable to anything short of a direct nuclear attack so she will survive and be able to attempt to revive her charges at a later date, when the ghoul threat has been reduced.

If the PCs return to The Garden they will die with Top. If they leave the city (or are still attempting to leave) they will hear and see evidence of the explosion, which will be timed to take out as many ghouls as possible.

4.2 BY FIRE (ALTERNATE ENDING) (EL 12)

Top's Briefing: I thought for sure we were done there. There were too many of those things, and they were better organized than we gave them credit for. Just when it seemed they were going to overrun us they pulled back. We need you to find out why so we can decide what to do about it.

Recon: The ghouls seem to have gathered for some sort of great game, with actual humans from the outside. Apparently those preserved in The Garden are not the only remaining bastion of humanity (Spot 20 or Hide 30).

Top's Secondary Briefing: This is a chance we never dreamed of. We have a low-grade nuclear device here. Low power, but enough to take out anything living. There are far too many ghouls here for anyone still unfortunate enough to be alive to take them out by ordinary means. We need to load the bomb onto the truck and get it close enough to that stadium to take these things out. Eve will monitor the city and hopefully, if we do our part and take those things out, the city will be ready for those still in cryo to wake up in a couple of centuries and begin rebuilding the world. I know I'm asking a lot but this is the best chance for everyone still sleeping here, as well as anyone who may (God willing) be living out there in the world.

Mission Information: This mission is very similar to 4.1 "Breakout" in the way it will play and the challenges the PCs will face. They will load the explosive onto the truck and then proceed to the stadium. They will face the same ghoul containment team as in Breakout. The explosive is enormous and the chance for the truck to spin out, stall or flip is also the same. Although a great deal of resistance waits for the PCs near the stadium, if they get through the containment team and begin to meet the resistance at the stadium, they are close enough for their explosive to take out every ghoul at the stadium.

FEEDING GROUNDS (GENCON 2006 ADVENTURE)

THREAT NPCS

Coordinator Droid: CR 6; Large Droid Construct; HD 8d10+20; HP 64; Mas -; Init +4; Spd 20 ft (good);

Defense 19, touch 9, flatfooted 19 (-1 size, +10 natural); BAB +6; Grap +15; Atk +10 ranged (1d8+5, slam); Full Atk +10 ranged (1d8+5, 10 slams); FS 10 ft by 10 ft; Reach 20 ft; SQ robotic construct, command level (VC), computer link, tentacles; AL none; SV Fort -, Ref +2, Will +5; AP 3; Rep +0; Str 20, Dex 10, Con -, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Skills: Computer Use +29, Craft (electronic) +8, Craft (mechanical) +8, Craft (structural) +8, Disable Device +6, Investigate +6, Knowledge (ancient lore) +6, Knowledge (earth and life sciences) +10, Knowledge (physical sciences) +6, Knowledge (technology) +12, Read/Write (ancient), Repair +17, Speak Language (ancient).

Feats: Advanced Electronics Discipline, Advanced Technology, Combat Expertise, Gearhead, Improved Initiative, Intuitive Mechanic, Master Mechanic, Remote Computer Link.

Gladiator Ghouls (Mutant Strong Hero 3/Guardian 5): CR 8; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d8+6 plus 5d10+10; HP 58; Mas 15; Init +1; Spd 25 ft; Defense 22, touch 16, flatfooted 21 (+0 size, +1 Dex, +5 class, +6 equipment); BAB +8; Grap +10; Atk +11 melee (1d10+6, Claws), or +9 ranged (2d10+0, Winchester 94); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility, claws, cannibalism, albinism; AL none; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +3; AP 4; Rep +1; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Occupation: Predator (Sense Motive)

Background: Visionary Reinventor (Knowledge [Tactics])

Mutations and Defects:: Claws x2, Serrated Dental Development, Cannibalism x2, Albinism

Skills: Climb +3, Intimidate +4, Jump +1, Knowledge (Mutant Lore) +5, Knowledge (Tactics) +12, Sense Motive +8

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light), Armor Proficiency (medium), Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Post-Apocalyptic Technology, Power Attack, Primitive Technology, Simple Weapons Proficiency

Talents (Strong Hero): Melee Smash, Improved Melee Smash

Talents (Guardian): Defender +2, Weapon Focus, Tactical Aid, Weapon Specialization

Possessions: Military Combat Suit, Claws, Winchester 94

Harvester Ghouls (Mutant Post-Apocalyptic Hero 3): CR 3; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d8+6; HP 20; Mas 14; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 13, touch 13, flatfooted 12 (+0 size, +1 Dex, +2 class); BAB +2; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d8+1, Claws), or +3 ranged (by weapon+0, by weapon); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility, claws, scent, cannibalism, albinism; AL none; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +3; AP 1; Rep +0; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 8.

Occupation: Predator (Hide)

Background: Tribal (Search)

Mutations and Defects:: Claws, Chameleon Epidermis, Hyper Olfactory, Cannibalism x2, Albinism

Skills: Climb +7, Forgery +2, Hide +9, Knowledge (Ancient Lore) +5, Listen +4, Move Silently +3, Search +8, Spot +9, Survival +7

Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Meticulous, Mobility, Primitive Technology, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Stealthy

Talents (Post-Apocalyptic Hero): Conserve, Necropoli Lore

Possessions: None

Industrial robots: CR 4; Large Robotic Construct; HD 5d10+23; HP 51; Mas -; Init -1; Spd 20 feet; Defense 18, touch 8, flatfooted 18 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +10 natural); BAB +3; Grap +13; Atk +8 melee (1d8+6, slam); Full Atk +8 melee (1d8+6, 4 slams); FS 10 ft by 10 ft; Reach 10 ft; SQ robotic construct, command level (IIC), DR 4/-, electricity resistance 10, facing; AL none; SV Fort -, Ref +2, Will -4; AP 2; Rep +0; Str 22, Dex 9, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1.

Skills: Craft (varies) +10.

Feats: Advanced Technology, Lighting Reflexes, Toughness.

Junkyard Ghouls (Mutant Post-Apocalyptic Hero 4/Barbarian 2): CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; HD 4d8+8 plus 2d12+4; HP 43; Mas 14; Init +4; Spd 30 ft; Defense 20, touch 16, flatfooted 18 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +4 class, +4 natural); BAB +5; Grap +8; Atk +9 melee (1d10+3, Claws), or +7 ranged (by weapon+0, by weapon); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility, claws, cannibalism, albinism; AL none; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +2; AP 3; Rep +0; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Occupation: Predator (Intimidate)

Background: Feral (Hide, Intimidate, Move Silently)

Mutations and Defects:: Claws x2, Protective Dermal Development, Cannibalism x2, Albinism

Skills: Climb +5, Hide +12, Intimidate +6, Listen +8, Move Silently +12, Navigate +5, Spot +8, Survival +6

Feats: Alertness, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Stealthy, Track, Weapon Focus

Talents (Post-Apocalyptic Hero): Necropoli Lore, Survival Sense

Talents (Barbarian): Rage 1/day, Junk Armor

Possessions: None

FEEDING GROUNDS (GENCON 2006 ADVENTURE)

Soldier Android Strong Hero 3: CR 5; Medium Size Android Construct; HD 3d10+13; HP 30; Mas -; Init +4; Spd 30 ft; Defense 26, touch 16, flatfooted 22 (+4 Dex, +2 class, +10 natural); BAB +3; Grap +7; Atk +8 ranged (3d12, laser pistol), or +7 melee (1d6+6, slam); Full Atk +8 ranged (3d12, laser pistol), or +7 melee (1d6+6, slam); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ android construct, command level (IIIM), DR 4/-; AL owner; SV Fort -, Ref +5, Will +1; AP 1; Rep +0; Str 18, Dex 18, Con -, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb +8, Computer Use +4, Demolitions +6, Drive +6, Jump +8, Knowledge (tactics) +6, Pilot +8, Read/Write (ancient), Search +4, Speak Language (ancient), Spot +2.

Feats: Advanced Technology, Futuristic Weapons Proficiency, Weapon Focus (laser rifle), Toughness.

Talents (Strong Hero): Melee Smash, Improved Melee Smash.

Possessions: Laser Rifle, Power Clip.

Tunnel Ghouls (Mutant Strong Hero 3): CR 3; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d8+6; HP 20; Mas 14; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 13, touch 13, flatfooted 12 (+0 size, +1 Dex, +2 class); BAB +3; Grap +5; Atk +5 melee (1d8+4, Claws), or +4 ranged (by weapon+0, by weapon); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility, claws, albinism, cannibalism; AL none; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +2; AP 1; Rep +0; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Occupation: Predator (Hide)

Background: Tribal (Survival)

Mutations and Defects: Claws x2, Serrated Dental Development, Albinism, Cannibalism x2

Skills: Climb +7, Hide +4, Jump +5, Survival +7, Swim +5

Feats: Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Blind-Fighting, Dodge, Mobility, Primitive Technology, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Track

Talents (Strong Hero): Melee Smash, Improved Melee Smash

Possessions: None

Warrior Ghouls (Mutant Strong Hero 3/Guardian 3): CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d8+6 plus 3d10+6; HP 43; Mas 15; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 18, touch 15, flatfooted 17 (+0 size, +1 Dex, +4 class, +3 equipment); BAB +6; Grap +8; Atk +9 melee (1d10+4, Claws), or +7 ranged (2d10+0, Winchester 94); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility, claws, cannibalism, albinism; AL none; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +1; AP 3; Rep +1; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 12.

Occupation: Military (DW) (Knowledge [Tactics])

Background: Visionary Reinventor (Knowledge [Mutant Lore])

Mutations and Defects: Claws x2, Serrated Dental Development, Cannibalism x2, Albinism

Skills: Climb +5, Craft (structural) +3, Intimidate +4, Jump +3, Knowledge (Mutant Lore) +4, Knowledge (Tactics) +7, Spot +2, Swim +3

Feats: Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Armor Proficiency (light), Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Post-Apocalyptic Technology, Power Attack, Primitive Technology, Simple Weapons Proficiency

Talents (Strong Hero): Melee Smash, Improved Melee Smash

Talents (Guardian): Defender +2, Weapon Focus

Possessions: Undercover Vest, Claws, Winchester 94

FEEDING GROUNDS (GENCON 2006 ADVENTURE)

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