

EARTHAD.2



ROLEPLAYING AFTER THE CATACLYSM

“BUNKER 0472”

A SCENARIO FOR EARTHAD.2

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BURPS REUNICON

MMVII

Bunker 0472

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Introduction

Bunker 0472 is a scenario for EARTH AD.2. The scenario was written by Derek Mayne for use at BURPS REUNICON 2007. It represents a rather straightforward Dungeon Crawl but is designed to evoke some of the uncertainty and terror that we associate with classic science fiction, the use of the Air Ducts by the enemy and so on.

GM's Background

Bunker 0472 was a secret research laboratory, part of the Darwin Institute which carries out privately funded research in reversing mutations. Bunker 0472 were focussed upon a programme of work to find a "cure" for the Cannibalistic Plague. Working with a number of captured subjects from early infected through to full term Death Marchers.

The programme had managed to identify the genetic sequence which stopped the progress of the disease in some cases resulting in "Rejected Plague Carriers" and was pursuing investigations into how this might lead to either a vaccination for immunity or to a reversal of the effects.

A certain amount of success had been met with three particular subjects where a degree of higher brain activity and normalised bodily functions had been stimulated and restored to full term infected. This had been achieved by introducing a number of genetically enhanced mutagens.

The scientists in Bunker 0472 had unwittingly created a new strain of the disease, instead of effectively leading to animated corpses with no regenerative tissue and no higher brain functions, those subjects exposed to both the original cannibalistic plague and to the new mutagens were subject to hugely accelerated mutations resulting in a new and frighteningly ghoulish creature, the imaginatively labelled "Ghoul".

Full details of the ghouls can be found in the appropriate appendix.

At the outset of this adventure the location of the site and an access key card for bunker 0472 should have come into the possession of one of the player characters – if using the character backgrounds in the appendix to this scenario it is suggested that Hal should be in possession of the keycard.

How it all went down

It started in the laboratory; Andrew Fleming failed to secure the cage of one of the ghouls after tranquilising it to take tissue samples. When it awoke it slipped silently out and before anyone knew what was happening it had released the other cages, "a clear sign of thoughtful action and clear higher brain function", were the last things that Fleming ever thought. The three Ghouls once free immediately attacked the scientists and the freed Reject Carrier, the Death Marchers meanwhile pursued Tanya Mylar as she fled the lab. Tanya believed the Ghouls to be trapped in the lab and with the assistance of Allan Masters and Lisa Knapp managed to trap the Death Marchers in the cold store. However they did not reckon on the ghouls making use of the air ducts to move around the bunker and it was already too late for everyone. On his way to see what the commotion was facility head, Robert Michaels was lifted from above into the vents and quickly dispatched whilst simultaneously another Ghoul attacked Head of Security, Ray Blandy before he could even leave his desk. Miriam Leadbetter probably never even knew that there was anything wrong as she was

attacked in her shower, whilst her husband Neville, the last man alive - was hunted back to the plant room and killed. It was in the plant room, amongst the heat and noise of the machinery that the Ghouls have nested and bred. Now they wait for new prey and for the next hunt to begin.

Room Descriptions

The room descriptions below are broken down into the four color zones representing the levels of potential contamination as well as function. The rooms are not numbered in a particular sequence but are presented in logical groupings.

Red Zone

The Red zone is effectively the area of the bunker in direct contact with the outside world, there is no large scale air purification in place, it is however still a relatively safe place to be.

Entry Stairwell (1)

Entrance to the stairwell is protected by a key card entry system a challenging task to try and circumvent without an appropriate access card. The doors may be forced using brute strength again a challenging task.

Once open there are a set of metal stairs leading down to a corridor, illuminated only by very dull orange emergency lighting.

At one end of the corridor there is a large metal door with a locking wheel – it looks like an airtight door or bulkhead – with a small thick glass porthole above. The door also has a key card reader to release the locks, attempts to open without a key card should be challenging, and to force the door is impossible.

The stairwell extends to a junction just over midway down its length. At the end of the short junction is a metal door again with a key card reader.

Accommodation (2)

As you enter this room a slightly yellowed fluorescent light flickers into action with a low hum, evidence of old earth technology which may be unsettling for some characters.

The room itself is sparse containing only a metal bedstead on which lies a rolled and tied latex mattress; there is a small metal topped desk with two empty drawers on both side and a simple metal chair in front.

The desk is empty apart from a small box with an LED screed, keypad with the digits 0-9 a red button and a grey one marked “call” below the keypad is a grille concealing a speaker. This is an intercom system which connects the various rooms of the bunkers green zone by dialing a three digit code and pressing call, the red button disconnects. The caller’s number will be displayed on the LED display. (Determined PC’s can therefore work out the numbers for each room – for ease it is suggested that the GM uses the numbers on the map, padding out using the digit 9, this room is therefore 992. When a number is dialed the intercom in the corresponding room will sound with a shrill “trim phone” type ring – to answer the user must press the “call” button.

Throughout the room the floor is tiled with rubber. In the south east corner is a small but functional bathroom containing an open shower and drain, a washbasin and a toilet. Also at the foot of the bed is a plastic trunk or locker which contains a set of black clothes, (jeans, jumper, socks and unisex underwear), a webbed belt with a holster attached and a carabineer with a single small key. There is also a set of cutlery a pocket knife and a set of twelve "ration pack" type foods – very old earth – which heat when opened, upon contact with the air. Finally underneath all of this is a small black plastic case which is locked (the key is attached to the above mentioned belt). The case when opened contains a fully functional old earth blaster. The box has compartments to hold a power pack and charging unit, but these are empty. The charger is in a power socket under the desk with a fully charged power pack.

Water & Fuel / Waste Processing (3)

This fully self contained unit is the height of old earth technology and cannot be reached without excavation, the only connection to the main bunker complex is through a small conduit carrying water, power and waste reprocessing pipes. The unit functions by drawing water from the surrounding rocks after which a chemical processing unit extracts hydrogen providing almost limitless hydrogen cell energy. This in turn operates a reprocessing unit which takes waste from the bunker and breaks it down, cleaning and recycling as it goes.

If this unit were to be excavated, in today's post cataclysmic world it would be a priceless artifact.

Service Lift (18)

This area is little more than a large concrete bunker. A control panel set onto the North wall opens a set of sliding reinforced concrete doors in the roof and raises and lowers the hydraulic service lift. The lift is capable of raising c. thirty (30) metric tons. A loud siren sounds for fifteen (15) seconds, both above and below ground, before the doors will open. Operation of the lift is also accompanied by "reversing" type beeping designed to clearly alert those in the vicinity to its operation. The lift will not operate whilst the roof doors are shut.

The bathroom is identical to that in area 2.

On the lift at present sits a partially dismantled and clearly damaged transport, it is obviously in the process of receiving repairs.

Amber Zone

The Amber Zone is reserved for two decontamination chambers, these allow access between the red and green zone. Decontamination takes one hour during which all airborne bacteria is extracted and the air in the chambers is purified.

Decontamination Areas (4, 19)

These two chambers are identical in shape, size, decor and operation. They require a key card in order to gain entry. Once a key card has been validated the large locking wheel may be operated to unlock and open the heavy metal door.

The Inner and outer doors are identical but may not be opened simultaneously. Once both doors are locked, neither will open for one hour. A countdown clock (Lost Style!) will tick annoyingly down 59:59:59... When it reaches zero a loud Klaxon will sound and the door may be opened, this klaxon is not actually audible outside of the decontamination chamber.

Two of the walls have wide wooden benches around them and there is a visible security camera set behind reinforced glass above the bunker side door, otherwise these chambers are empty.

Green Zone

The Green Zone is the main inhabitable area of the bunker complex. It is well protected and all air is subject to purification and antibacterial treatments.

Corridors (22)

The corridors are well lit with lights fitted into the false ceilings, the floors are hardwearing linoleum tiles and the walls are tiled with blue rubber. The main corridor is quite nondescript except for a large pool of blood and decomposing matter below one of the air vents a little over half the way down its length towards the laboratory. Dragged into the vent and decomposing badly is the eviscerated body of the Facilities Head, Robert Michaels. The purpose of this is to make the characters aware of the vents.

Accommodation (5)

This location was for the head of operations for the bunker. It is larger than the other accommodation as it functions as an office as well as a living area. In keeping with other accommodation there are a number of standard items of furniture; Sofa chair, coffee table, bookshelves, screened sleeping area with bed a small table and footlocker. The footlocker contains only clothes and a small pouch with three keys inside – these fit the filing cabinets in the office area.

The bathroom contains an open shower and drain, toilet and washbasin. The floor is rubber tiled and the walls are tiled with crimson ceramic tiles. There is a cabinet with a mirrored door on the wall above the washbasin.

The area that is clearly used as an office has three filing cabinets, a desk, and an office chair. On the desk there is an intercom identical to that location 2.

The three filing cabinets contain the following;

1. Staff details – there were a total of nine (9) staff at the bunker, a file exists for each (see appendix and handout)
2. Administrative details – files outlining the purpose of the bunker, the existence of and the bunkers affiliation with the Darwin institute. Players can learn of the program to find a cure for the cannibalistic plague. A file exists for each of over fifty “test subjects”, mostly reject carriers almost all marked as either “deceased”, or more disturbingly, “terminated”. There are five (5) files without such designations. See handout and appendix for details.
3. This cabinet is actually a disguised cupboard, unlocking the top drawer allows all three to swing open as a single door. Upon opening the players will find a small locked strongbox – the key to this can be found on the belt of the corpse belonging to NAME OF HEAD MAN. If opened the box contains a security key card (a master card for the bunker), a bunch of keys; one for the armory, one for the weapon rack and finally a key to the transport in location 18. Also in the cupboard are a “steelthrower” and a box of one hundred (100) spikes.

Accommodation (6, 8, 10, 15)

The accommodation areas are identical with the exception of the color used for the main décor and other details noted below.

All units are designed for a couple sharing and they contain the same standard living area furniture; Sofa, chair, coffee table, bookshelves, screened sleeping area with beds (location 6 has a double bed whilst all others are twin singles), a small table and footlocker.

All of the accommodations have en-suite facilities these contain an open shower and drain, toilet and washbasin. The floor is rubber tiled and the walls are tiled with white ceramic tiles. There is a cabinet with a mirrored door on the wall above the washbasin.

On the wall beside the door is an intercom unit identical to that in location 2.

Conference Room (7)

This room is largely unremarkable; it contains a large oval table with twelve (12) chairs. There is a low cupboard atop which are twelve cups and saucers as well as a coffeemaker, three (3) unopened jars of coffee beans and a coffee grinder.

The cupboard itself contains stationery; paper, paper clips, pencils etc.

On the wall beside the entry door is an intercom identical to that in location 2.

Security Office (16)

This room is dominated by a large oval desk with three embedded monitors, labeled one, two and three from left to right. There is also a control panel and key pad with buttons labeled D1, D2, E1, C1, C2, L1 and X1 there are also three buttons with the numerals one, two and three.

The letter, number combinations refer to the various security cameras in the bunker; D1, D2 are the two decontamination chambers. E1 is the entry stairwell. C1, C2 are the two corridor cameras. L1 is the camera in the laboratory and X1 in the service lift area.

To activate a camera it is simply a matter of pressing the corresponding button, followed by the monitor number on which you wish to display it. (Pressing D1 followed by 1 results in the decontamination chamber – area 4 – being displayed on monitor 1).

The body of Ray Blandy, head of security lies on the floor. He has been very cleanly decapitated and much of the flesh from his limbs has been eaten away. Ray was surprised at his desk by a Ghoul entering the room from the ceiling vent. His head lies where it fell under his desk and the chair, desktop and surrounding area are covered in blood. Observant characters may spot bestial paw prints not only on the floor but the walls and ceiling as well.

The desk itself has a single locked drawer; the key is attached to the belt of Ray Blandy's corpse along with a fully charged shock stick. The drawer contains little of interest other than; a plan of the facility (excluding the Blue Zone – see players map), a number of blank key cards, a list of access codes to program the cards. The desk also accommodates an intercom (see details in location 2) as well as a key card programmer. The programmer has two modes, individual access can be granted by placing a card in the bottom of two slots, (coded red) and keying the appropriate access code and pressing [PROG], entering the same code again will remove it. Alternatively a second, already programmed card can be added to the units other slot (coded green), then by pressing the [PROG] button the card in the green slot will be duplicated.

At the rear of the security office is a door to another room (location 17), there is a sign on this door reading "Control Room". Beside the door is a standard access key card reader.

Finally on the wall of this room are mounted two "lasso poles", the type used for trapping large dogs or other wild beasts and keeping them at arm's length.

Control Room (17)

The area known as the control room is actually a holding pen for test subjects whom have yet to be processed, captured, bought or kidnapped from the wastes they are brought here to be held whilst initial tests are completed and paperwork filed. The control room can only be entered from the security office and requires a keycard to do so. The room itself is Spartan containing only two metal bed frames, bolted to the floor, a washbasin and toilet. The floor and walls are tiled with grey rubber tiles.

The room currently contains three Death Marchers that were locked in before the ghoul breakout. They have been here for some time and are ravenous, they will attack immediately that the door is open forcing their way out into the security office.

Water / Power / Air / Plant Room (21)

This area is a much larger version of the unit that powers the Red Zone Accommodation area (location 2). In addition there is a large machine which facilitates the compression of waste products into fuel logs. As long as the bunker is in operation and waste is disposed of via the sinks, drains and toilets as well as through the kitchen waste disposal the resources are almost limitless.

On the wall beside the entry door is an intercom identical to that in location 2.

This room is currently home to the Ghouls, they have nested here and had a litter of pups, see appendix. If the pups are encountered with the adult ghouls then the adults will attack allowing the pups to escape.

Laboratory (20)

Once well equipped this is a scene of total destruction; every glass vial, every petri dish, every piece of equipment has been smashed, every paper shredded.

Six floor to ceiling plexiglass cages about 2m square are empty, one with its door hanging off, swinging on its remaining hinge. There is nothing here that is salvageable, even the intercom by the door is smashed beyond use. The cages are still strong enough to hold the Ghouls if they could be lured in. The cages can be locked with the keys that can be found on Andrew Fleming's belt. Fleming and Alexander have been literally ripped apart and the flesh from almost every part of their bodies has been partly eaten away. It is impossible to separate the body parts or distinguish who is who. It is possible to recover their access key cards and Fleming's keys.

Canteen / Common Room (9)

This large space is logically, if not physically divided into two areas. Firstly there are four sets of tables and chairs, providing seating, canteen style for up to twelve people. Secondly there is a more relaxed area where armchairs and sofas, again for up to twelve people, are arranged by low tables.

The room however is a scene of considerable devastation, chairs and tables are broken and overturned. Allan Masters, Lisa Knapp and Tanya Myler were ambushed in this room by the Ghouls.

The bodies are entirely dismembered and many of the bones have since been picked clean. Characters may recover the victims access key cards from the carnage enabling identification.

The north east corner of this area contains both a ladies and gents toilet facility. Both are empty, the ladies facility contains three washbasins and four toilet stalls, whilst the mens facility has three washbasins, two stalls and two urinals.

On the wall beside the entry door is an intercom identical to that in location 2.

Armory (11)

This sounds much grander than it actually is. The armory is an empty, undecorated concrete room with one locked metal cupboard which is bolted to the floor. Above the door there is a security camera trained on the cupboard which can be monitored from the security desk. The cupboard when opened contains;

- One boxed Old Earth blaster, complete with charger and power cell. It will require a complete eight hour charge before it can be used.
- Two Shock Sticks - fully charged.
- Two Steelthrowers, complete with two boxes of 100 spikes (200).

Cold Store (12)

This room is only accessible from the kitchen and requires an access key card to gain entry. As well as the usual key card reader on the wall beside the door there is also a thermostat. This takes the shape of a small LED display and two buttons – an up and down. The display shows a figure of five degrees at present, if they adjust the figure using the buttons the number will flash until the desired temperature is actually reached.

The room contains a huge supply of foodstuffs, much of it has begun to decay, despite the coolness of the room, and there are a number of large animal carcasses hanging all neatly butchered and obviously ready for cooking. The room also contains the two Death Marchers that were trapped by Lisa Knapp and Tanya Myler before they were ambushed by the Ghouls. Note that all the food in this store is highly infected with the cannibalistic plague.

The Death Marchers will attack on sight, lumbering slowly towards the open door.

Kitchen (13)

The kitchen is large, but fairly standard. It contains a large solid fuel burning stove which heats two ovens. The kitchen is a veritable arsenal of melee weapons from knives to brooms. The GM should make a roll on behalf of characters who are searching for a particular kitchen implement. The exception to this is anyone searching for a ladle, they will immediately trap the fingers of their main hand in a drawer inflicting +1FAT and resulting in a minor impediment to any actions requiring manual dexterity. On the wall beside the entry door is an intercom identical to that in location 2.

Dry Store room (14)

This room is only accessible from the kitchen and requires an access key card to gain entry. The dry store is an Alladins cave of canned and packaged foodstuffs. It also holds a large stock of solid fuel bars which are intended as fuel for the ovens in the kitchen – these are made from compressed waste products. See area 21.

Blue Zone

The Blue Zone is a series of access ducts which carry key services around the Bunkers Green Zone areas, they are not monitored by closed circuit television, nor do they have any lighting.

Access / service ducts & air conditioning / recirculation vents

These ducts should be thought of in many ways as the kind of air vent that plays a part in so many science fiction movies, except these are not nice clear metal tubes, they contain a host of cables and pipes which deliver water, power, data recirculated air and other services around the green zone.

The ducts may be crawled through, however the passage is tight, single file and all tasks are at two levels of difficulty greater than normal. Note that the Ghouls and Ghoul pups navigate these without penalty and at their normal movement rate.

- Blue 30mm pipes – water
- Black 50mm pipe – waste
- Black 20mm multi-core cable Red, Blue, Yellow – Power Live, Neutral and Earth respectively.
- Grey 4mm cable – intercom system
- Blue 6mm cable – security video
- Metal 80mm Pipe – recirculated air, terminates in vents above each opening in the ducts

Appendix A – The Ghouls

ADULT GHOUL STATISTICS

FITNESS	5	SKILLS	
AWARENESS	4		Athletics 3, Brawling 4, Survival 5, Tracking 6
CREATIVITY	3		
REASONING	3	GIMMICKS	
INFLUENCE	0		Photosynthetic Skin, Carnivorous Teeth, Bestial Grip, Toughness (3), Life Sense

GHOU "PUP" STATISTICS

FITNESS	2	SKILLS	
AWARENESS	3		Athletics 1, Brawling 2, Survival 2, Tracking 3
CREATIVITY	1		
REASONING	1	GIMMICKS	
INFLUENCE	0		Photosynthetic Skin, Carnivorous Teeth, Toughness (1), Life Sense

The Ghoul has intelligence on a par with a large pack carnivore, it is driven by a desire to hunt and to kill yet it does not need to feast, the creatures are self sustaining drawing on a PHOTOSYNTHETIC SKIN capable of providing the sustenance needed for their bodies. They have developed large CARNIVEROUS TEETH and a strong BESTIAL GRIP. They are no longer infectious but will pass their genetic traits on from generation to generation. They have lost all body hair, but developed thick leathery skin which acts as 3 point armour. The Ghouls also possess the LIFE SENSE gimmick.

The ghouls have been at large in the bunker for many months now; the fluorescent lighting has fed their photosynthetic skin and kept them nourished. They have built a nest in the plant room where

they find the warmth to their liking. They have begun to use the air ducts (blue zones) as a means of getting around the bunker, again they find the enclosed spaces comforting. The ghouls have bred and there is a young litter of six (6) ghoulish pups in the nest, they will remain there until disturbed when they will immediately disappear into the blue zone ventilation shafts and ducts.

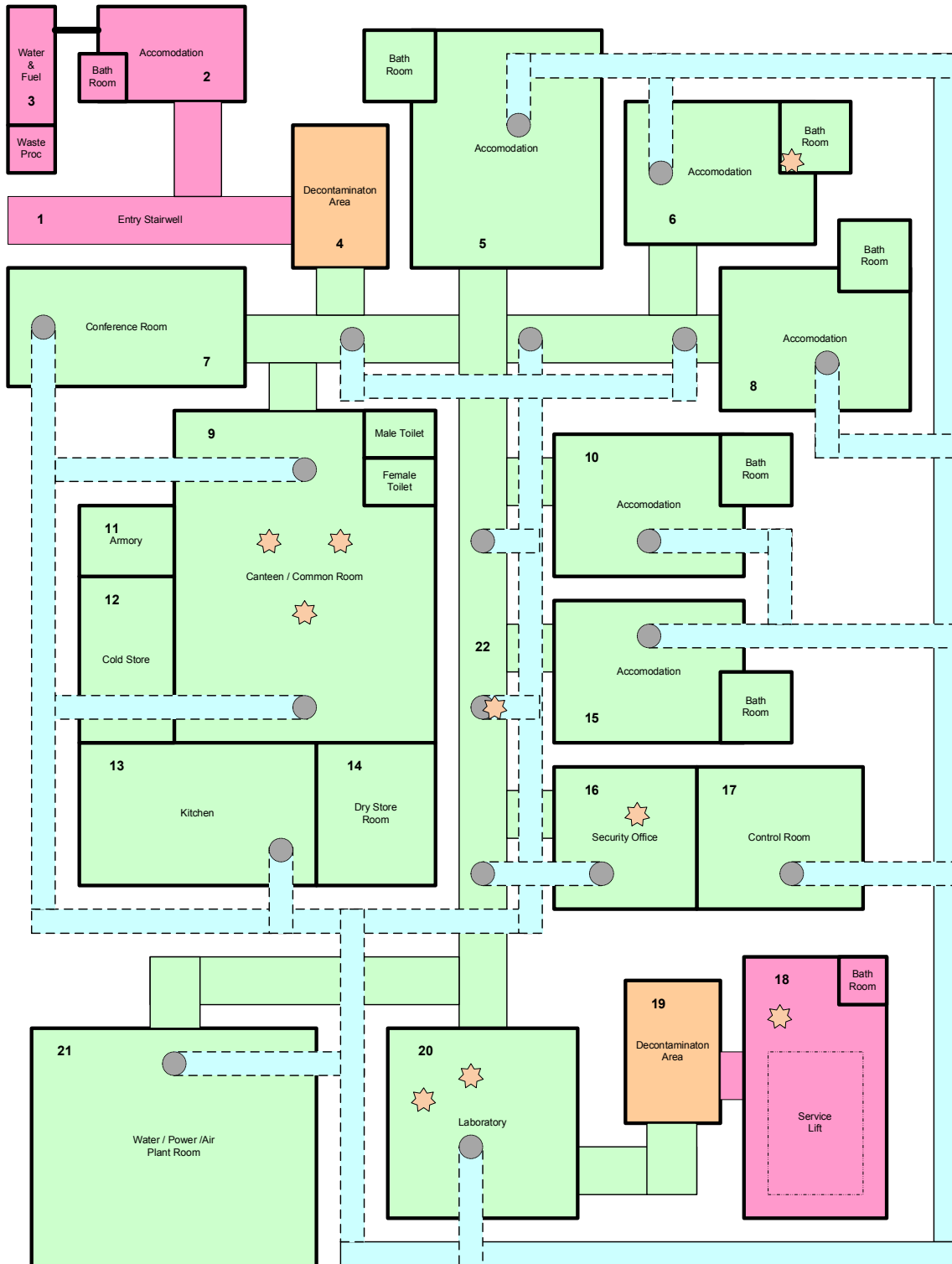
The pups hunting instincts are not yet as honed as that of the full grown ghouls, if they are attacked they will run and hide, however they will always return and attack as a pack. If captured at such a young age it may be possible to domesticate a ghoulish pup!

Appendix B – Key card access details for inhabitants of Bunker 0472

The following matrix identifies the areas that can be accessed with the keycard from each of the individuals in the bunker. The keycard that Hal possesses at the outset will only access areas 1,2,4,18 and 19.

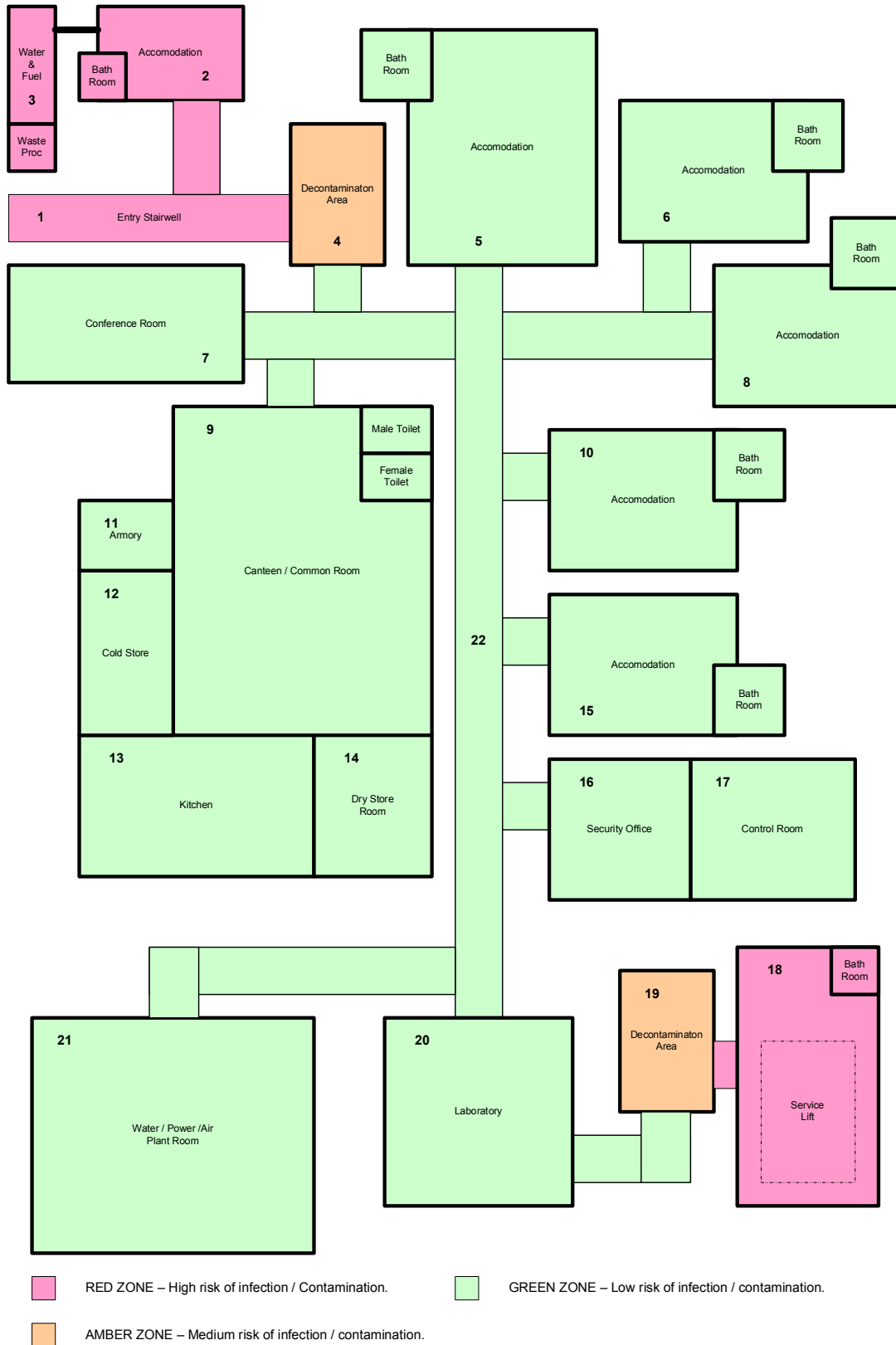
Name	Role	Room																			
		1	2	4	5	6	7	8	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
Robert Micheals	Head of Facility	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Ray Blandy	Head of Security	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Miriam Leadbury	Head of Science	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	
Cameron Alexander	Scientist	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	
Andrew Fleming	Scientist	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	
Tanya Myler	Lab technician	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	N	
Allan Masters	Cook/Security Assistant	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N		
Neville Leadbury	Technician/Engineer	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	
Lisa Knapp	Admin Assistant	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	

Appendix C – Bunker 0472 GM's Map

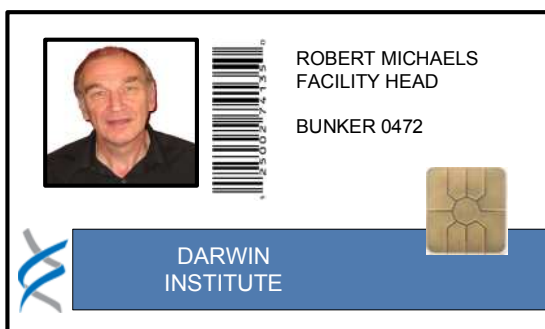
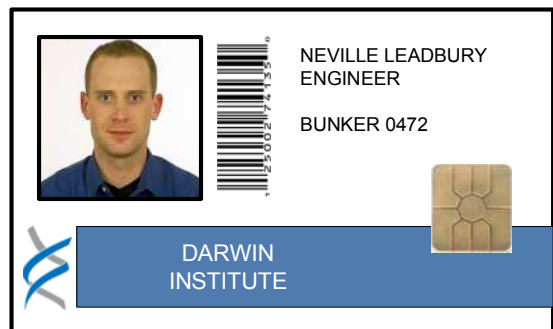
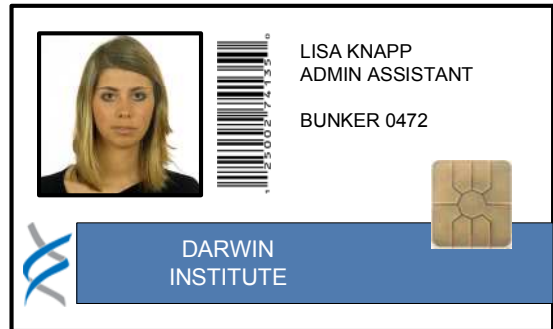
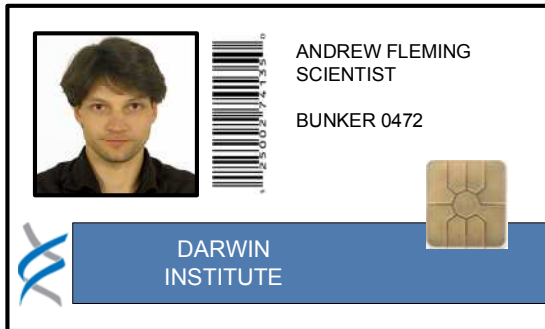


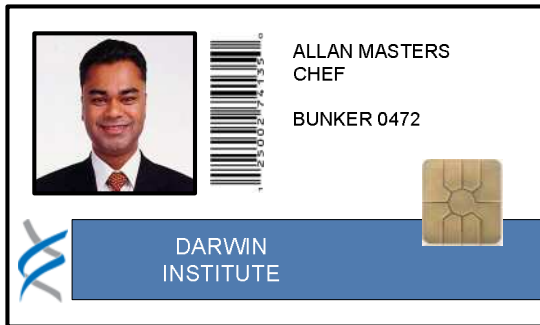
- RED ZONE – High risk of infection / Contamination.
 - AMBER ZONE – Medium risk of infection / contamination.
- GREEN ZONE – Low risk of infection / contamination.
 - BLUE ZONE – Access / service ducts & air conditioning recirculation.

Appendix D – Bunker 0472 Player’s Map



Appendix E – Bunker 0472 Staff Access Cards





Appendix F – Pre-generated character backgrounds

Hal – Pure Strain Human

I am a pure strain human. For my entire life I have lived and worked in a self contained vault, comfortable and unaware of the true ravages of the outside world and blindly believing the purist propaganda that all mutants are corrupt, inherently evil and dangerous. In my role as a security officer I came into constant contact with groups of ROM's (Radio Operated Mutants – cybernetic enhanced and subdued mutants used as troops to hunt the Mutant population).

However, I was basically ignorant of the cruelty of the programs that created the ROM's, like many I believed that ROM's had been liberated from the nightmare existence of being condemned to live the life of a Mutant, that they had been given a kind of purity and purpose. Then I met Delilah.

Delilah was a Mutant captured by a ROM patrol and sentenced to augmentation; however she managed to escape into the vault. It was I who captured the young girl and handed her back to the augmenters. My superiors were pleased and I was promoted to a security role working in the cybernetic laboratories – I was appalled by what I witnessed, realising that not all mutants were the abominations that we were led to believe, I saw the ROM programme for what it was.

They say I snapped that it was stress and there may be some truth in that. But I set about a campaign of sabotage aimed at freeing a number of ROMs from captivity and destroying their control units in the process, among them was what was left of Delilah, her mind gone she had no recollection of my part in her capture only that I was responsible for her liberation. I was subsequently arrested and tried for my offences; I was sentenced to exile from the vault and was taken to the surface and deposited alone in the wastes. With no way of knowing how to get back into the vault and without food or water I wandered for a little over two days before being set upon by a pair of ferocious Crater Cats – I would most certainly have met my end had it not been for the timely arrival of two ROM's, Delilah and David, all that was left of the group that I had helped to escape the vault. Since then we have travelled together, picking up waifs and strays and helping those less fortunate and trying to eke out an existence in the wastes.

Delilah – Radio Operated Mutant

I grew up in the wastes; I know I was a mutant like my parents, like their parents all the way back to the beginning, but I can't remember who they are or where they are. My name is Delilah, they told me that when I woke up. I couldn't think for myself. I tried, but it was just heavy, dull, almost as if I didn't want to think for myself.

They told me I was to hunt mutants, to kill mutants... It didn't sound right, but it did feel right. I was with a group of seven others when a security officer ordered us into a lift shaft, we stood there, waiting and then he attacked us with some kind of tech device – it hurt my head, I wanted to hurt him but I couldn't, my arms wouldn't move, he was a pure not a mutant, I can't attack him. Why is he doing this I ask, then it happens. It was like a balloon had burst and my head was free. I sank to my knees, what had felt black and white was again colour. I looked for the security officer, he was doing the same to the others, one by one until we all stood looking at one another. It felt good, but almost as though there was no point anymore, we didn't know what to do.

"You're free" he said, "Climb the shaft – I think you can get out, go back where you came from."

I looked at him, tears in his eyes, "I'm sorry, climb please and get out now". We began the climb, two of our number fell, I never saw them again."A week later, just David and I left, we found him; alone in the wastes. Crater Cats would have had him – we thought about leaving him, but maybe he has some answers for us, this security officer. Since then we have travelled together, picking up waifs and strays and helping those less fortunate trying to eke out an existence in the wastes.

David – Radio Operated Mutant

"What do you want to do David?" I watched his lips move in slow motion, I tried to think, what did I want to do? "Serve" my voice said - I'm not sure I wanted to say it but I did. "Who are you going to kill David?" this time no thought – it came like a reflex action "mutants". I was with a group of others when a security officer ordered us into a lift shaft, we stood there, waiting for more orders and then he attacked us with some kind of tech device – it made my head hurt. I wanted to hurt him but I couldn't. He was a pure, not a mutant, I couldn't attack him, I had to serve him. Then it happens. It was a snap, like something broke, like a bubble had burst and my head was free of the water. I fell to the floor, what had felt heavy and blurred was now light and clear. The security officer helped me to my feet; I could feel his touch, not rough, gentle.

"You're free" he said, "Climb the shaft – I think you can get out, go back where you came from."

I didn't ask why or who he was, I didn't understand but I didn't care. His tone told me we were in danger, I knew what that was. I felt scared. I climbed for my life and reached the doors. I saw two of our number fall to their deaths, I was sorry. It was strange to "feel" these emotions. I was welling up, shaking, I wanted to cry. I found the manual control and opened the doors – heat and stale air rushed over me as we ran into the wastes. I didn't know why but it felt right, I was home again.

A week later, there was only Delilah and I left, but the dangers were less. We knew when to travel, when to hide. It was then that we saw him, the Crater Cats stalking him, the security officer, Hal. Since then we have travelled together, picking up waifs and strays and helping those less fortunate trying to eke out an existence in the wastes.

Gabriel – Robotic Implanted Human

I opened my eyes to see a human male bending over me, toolkit to hand, I could feel my body shell unusually cold, beginning to respond and warm. The human spoke, "Can you hear me? Your body shut down, you've been unconscious for a while I'd say – who are you?" I thought hard, but there was nothing I could recall about how I came to be lying here, I knew my name, my past to a point, but then a blank.

I could remember the operation, the pain, getting used to this new body, missing the senses of smell and taste. I remembered watching the first exchanges of nuclear weapons, but not why they happened. I remembered too that there had been a group, friends and colleagues. It was all too difficult to remember. I could feel the gyros in my body active again, strength returning to my limbs, I stood and surveyed the human and the creatures with him, they were also human, one male one female, but with crude cybernetic implants projecting coarsely from their skin.

“How long have you been here?” asked the cybernetic enhanced female. I paused, “What date is it?” I asked. The female looked slightly confused, “I’m not sure...” I looked at her with my artificial eyes beginning to process information better now, feeling my joints lubricate and loosen. “Well what year is it?” I asked. “Year?” she looked quizzical, “its 198PC of course.”

“Well in that case, my name is Gabriel and I have been here for a little under 200 years”.

Saul – Evolved Animal (Ape)

It’s not easy being an ape. Everyone assumes you are stupid, like this fool, he made a joke about working for peanuts – like I haven’t heard that before. I took his job, recovered his property as asked, of course it turns out that it isn’t exactly his property and now rather than pay me he says he is going to shoot me. It’s not like it is the first time I’ve been lied to by an employer, this is just the latest in a long line of bad clients. They all seem to want my services, the best scavenger and repo-man there is. But no one ever wants to pay up.

He moves in closer, puts the slug-thrower against my temple. “Sorry Saul, its just business. I can’t have any loose ends on this one and to be honest there is no way I could pay you anyway.”

“It’s ok Clive, I understand.” It’s true I do understand - he’s just another low life scum bag who wants to kill me. I move my cigar to the other side of my mouth and take a drag, “You sure you don’t want to pay me instead Clive?”

“Like I said Saul, it’s not personal and there can’t be any loose ends”. I can feel him begin to squeeze the heavy trigger.

Then I rip his arms off. No loose ends, huh?

I take what money he has, more than he promised to pay me as it happens. Now I’m off to the cantina, I’ve heard that some guy called Hal is looking for a good scavenger.

Lazarus – Rejected Human Carrier (Ghoulish Reject)

No one in my family ever knew how I became infected with the plague. I was fifteen, healthy, doing well with my studies and about to begin an apprenticeship with my Uncle. We lived in safety and comfort in a communal enclave. My mother thought that it was the water or perhaps an animal bite, I didn’t know, it didn’t matter. However I contracted the plague it changed the course of my life, it changed me.

At first I thought it would kill me, I’d lose myself to the cannibalistic rages, succumb completely, become one of the unliving a danger to all. I feared that my family would be forced to kill me for their own safety, to see my body burnt before it could rise again.

But, it didn't happen. The cannibalistic urges subsided, diminished; I became able to control the desires. I won't say that in all the years since then I haven't tasted human flesh – but the truth is I don't need to. Although the infection wasn't able to claim completely it was clear that I was different, that I couldn't remain in the enclave, or with my family, that from now on my life would be different. Those that I had known since birth were distrustful and scared of me, in the end I was forced out into the wastes. I learnt quickly; to beg, to steal, to make my way in the wastes.

Many years have passed in what seems like the blinking of an eye and I have truly adapted to my new life, seized this second chance. I began to study plants and medicines, healing. I have learnt how to help people, to relieve pain, to ease suffering – even if only the most desperate will let me near them.

That's how I met Hal and his band – he was bought to me by two ROM's, a strange sight the pure man being borne along by these two rogue creatures. Hal was half dead with exhaustion and exposure. I tended his wounds, I never would get used to the touch of his skin - so clear and soft. He recovered and we became friends and I have travelled with them since. We do what we can for others and we do what we need for ourselves.

Samson – Rejected Human Carrier (Wasting Reject)

I thought my life had been hard as a child, and then I was captured by the road warriors and thrown into the pits. I realised quickly that strength meant survival. The road gangs fed me, but only so I could fight for their entertainment. I learnt quickly, I had to. Feel no pity, regret nothing, fight today live tomorrow.

I remember the day that Hal and his friends arrived like it was yesterday, they had been captured and would surely have ended up in the pits but the road warriors didn't reckon on Hal's cunning. Becoming captured was just the first step in their plan; in the end between them they slew the entire road warrior crew and freed everyone from the pits, mutants, scamps, rejects, everyone. Out of the corner of my eye I saw the knife thrown at Hal – no one else did – I managed to throw myself at him and knock him to the ground, the knife bouncing harmlessly off of the wall of the pit.

The man that threw it had one time been my jailer, a cruel and cowardly man and now I stood with him in my grasp. His fear was palpable, I could smell it and I could see in his eyes that he knew I could kill him in an instant, but his fear was that I would take my time. So I placed my hand on his cheek, my acid touch burning his skin – marking him for life. “Run” I said, “Remember me and tell the others. There is no place that will ever be safe for them now that I am free”. I let him go and he ran.

Since that day I have travelled with Hal and his bunch of misfits, I find I fit in just fine.

Noah – Evolved Animal (Dog)

So there I was playing cards, full house – couldn't lose and yet this guy draws four aces, now I'm no fool puppy so I call him a cheat.

“Cheat am I? You lose you lousy fur ball” is his oh-so witty come back. Now I don't mind being labeled a fur ball, but to suggest that I might have lice or ticks, well that's beyond the pale. Up I stand, he leans back and points some kind of high tech gun at me, I go for my knife – I don't get on

with guns, he squeezes the trigger and my life flashes before my eyes, then nothin' I'm not dead, his gun fails – best luck I had all night.

Anyway to cut a messy story short, his friends disappear and he admits that he was cheating, he can't afford to cover his debts so I take his transport and leave him standing in the lot with his cargo and no clothes.

I've always had problems with technology, unless it has wheels – I don't know why but when it comes to wheels I am one dog that was meant to skim across the wastes with my head out of the window, the wind in my fur.

I met up with Hal and his merry band a while back now and I've been shipping them from place to place, everywhere we go we seem to pick up someone new, but I'm a friendly kind of guy – unless you mention fleas.

Anyone for cards? Wuf!