

Mechanical Primum Mobile, ad infinitum

At what cost salvation?

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Background:

And humanity prospered, washing over God's own Earth. And the Land of Nod had filled. Humanity had sinned, as it had done before, but seems it will not do so again, for the Messengers, the Malakhim had came back. And they did wield retrovirus disease, swords of shining chrome, wings of brilliant glass and crystal. They are messengers of God's Wrath.

It is modern day, or it is recent past, or it is not so near future. Technology exists, and so do opinions that God and the angels are space-faring vehicles of extra-terrestrial life. These opinions are right, but not in the way imagined.

Humanity sins, as it always does, and forth come the host of mechanical angels, the Silver Host of God, ready to mete out judgment.

The angels come and wield their arms, they wield their tools of terror. Humanity becomes static as the angels proceed.

Mechanical parts replace the organic ones. Free will is stripped away, having been used and abused. Stasis, now and forever more.

How will you live in this time and age, how will you go into the quiet of the night?

Set-up:

5-15 minutes per "Exchange", the basic unit of play is one Exchange.

Two or more players.

One or more playing cards(1-13, 4 suits) decks, without Jokers.

A pool of tokens, anything would do.

Several sheets of paper, possibly an index card(3'x5').

Structure of Play:

In each Exchange, one player, a different one for each Exchange, plays the Mainframe, also known as the Godhead. He sets a scene up, narrating a situation in which angelic influence is present. Either an angelic manifestation, a supernatural manipulation of technology by angels from afar or the repercussions of such an act.

For each player who is not the Mainframe, there is one human character to be portrayed, at least, human for the time being. Write down the character's name, as well as its progress towards becoming a mechanical being on a sheet of paper. You can play the same character in every Exchange or you can play a different one, but the character must have some relevancy to the situation at hand.

Character Components:

Each Character has several components, to be noted on the index card used to describe it:

Name, concept, gender: Here you write the basic details, who and what this person is, how old they are and how they look. Nothing fancy.

Spades or Clubs: Is the character more physically (Clubs) or more socially (Spades) oriented? Write down the relevant suit's name on the index card.

Mechanical Progression: The number of Mechanism points the character has accumulated; how far the person is from transmogrification into a mechanical being.

Mechanics:

The mechanics are based on the card game Blackjack, also known as "21", with some minor changes.

In this game the Dealer is the Mainframe.

Blackjack Overview:

The dealer gives two cards to each player, including himself. One of the dealer's two cards is face-up so all the players can see it, and the other is face down(The face-down card is known as the "hole card").

Blackjack hands are scored by their point total. The hand with the highest total wins as long as it doesn't exceed 21; a hand with a higher total than 21 is said to *bust*. Cards 2 through 10 are worth their face value, and face cards (jack, queen, king) are also worth 10. An ace's value is 11 unless this would cause the player to bust, in which case it is worth 1.

The goal of each player is to beat the dealer by having the higher, unbusted hand. Note that if the player busts he loses, even if the dealer also busts. If both the player and the dealer have the same point value, it is called a "push", and neither player nor dealer wins the hand. Each player has an independent game with the dealer, so it is possible for the dealer to lose to one player, but still beat the other players in the same round.

A two-card hand of 21 (an ace plus a ten-value card) is called a "blackjack" or a "natural", and is an automatic winner.

The play goes as follows:

- If the dealer has blackjack and the player doesn't, the player automatically loses.
- If the player has blackjack and the dealer doesn't, the player automatically wins.
- If both the player and dealer have blackjack then it's a push.
- If neither side has blackjack, then each player plays out his hand, one at a time.
- When all the players have finished the dealer plays his hand. He must get to at least 17.

The player's options for playing his or her hand are:

- Hit:** Take another card.
- Stand:** Take no more cards.
- Split:** Have each card be the first card in a new hand. This option is available only when both cards have the same value.

Mechanical Primum Mobile Specific Mechanics:

When performing a "Split", you get a free "Hit" for each of the new hands. At the end of the Conflict, you get to choose which hand is the one you're using, which raises your chances of winning or getting the right suits.

These options do come at a cost, as each "Hit" beyond the first still earns you Mechanism points, as explained below.

When a situation in the game comes to a conflict, that is, one side wants one thing to happen, and the other side wants something else or resists them, we have a conflict.

The winner has his goal in the conflict achieved. First the humans describe the effect and fall-out of the conflict on their characters, and then the Mainframe describes the effect on the world and what happens regarding angelic influence in the world.

Note that some players may "Win" in regards to the Mainframe and others lose, narrate accordingly.

Each "Hit" the player takes earns the character one Mechanism point.

Each "Hit" the Mainframe takes earns each of the other players one Token.

For various purposes, cards from 2-10 are worth 1 point each, with face cards and aces being worth two points each.

Total the number of points' worth in Spades and Clubs cards, with the resolution and conflict being narrated and won using mostly the relevant type of conflict. Physically for Clubs and socially for Spades. If there is a tie, the winner of the Conflict decides which method will be used.

Every human who favours the suit used in a conflict gains one Token.

When a human character beats the Mainframe, count all the (Bleeding) Hearts on the table and divide them equally(rounding down) as Tokens amongst the humans who defeated the Mainframe.

When the Mainframe wins, count the number of (Mechanical) Diamonds on the table and divide them equally(rounding down) as Mechanism points among the human characters.

When some players lose and some win, compared to the Mainframe, do both of the above as applicable.

A Token can be used to change your card score on a 1-for-1 basis, in either direction.

Mechanism Points:

When you reach a new threshold of Mechanism points, more and more of you is claimed and turns mechanical, perfect, unchanging. The changes are listed in order of occurrence and the points they cost, individually, so if you have 20 points your limbs and skin are all mechanical, and you're 7 points from complete body transmutation.

Each hand is worth 3 points.

Each leg is worth 4 points.

The skin is worth 5 points.

Wings and complete body transmutation are worth 8 points, together.

The last step is that of eyes and voice, and is worth 9 points, the step of the soul.

After the last stage, you lose your free Will and become an angel. An instrument of God.