

**WORDS  
IN THE RAIN**

**Byron**  
**the Bard**



# THE NEW REPLICANTS

It all started in the dying months of 2037. The Replicant Prohibition had been just repealed, and it seemed like the world of Replicants was the turf of a single man: Niander Wallace. Wallace Corporation was churning out N-9s from its fortress-factory in LA, and the world - as well as off-world colonies - seemed destined to be dominion of the android offspring of Niander.

With the acquisition of Tyrell, Wallace Corporation had virtually erased every space for potential competition. Any company which could transform into a threat to the current hegemon was like an insect that Wallace Corporation was ready to crush - through a forceful acquisition in the best case, or, if necessary, through brutal covert operations.

The only space for opposition and alternatives was in the uncharted corners of highly decentralized and anonymous networks, where the economic, political

or military arm of Wallace Corporation could not reach. From these dark corners emerged a collective of hackers and programmers, rebels and survivors, technoutopians willing to reshape the world and nihilists ready to blow it up. This band of people spanning the whole world, from San Francisco to Hangzhou through LA, came to be known as the *HiddenFace*.

Without the institutional know-how of Wallace Corporation for designing highly refined memory chips, the members of the HiddenFace decided to follow an untrodden path to sentience. They maniacally scraped all the public information on the Wallace Data Network, redirected Esper streams of data, and hacked into RDU mainframes. They baked all this information into a single clump of knowledge, they fed it to their own experimental Replicant, and hoped...

## LOGOIDS

The creation of the HiddenFace proved a success beyond anyone's wildest expectations: a form of intelligence different from humans and from Nexus Replicants. An android, and yet substantially different from N9s. Members of the HiddenFace referred to it as a *Logoid* or a *language Replicant* - sometimes using the codename *Nexus Grounded Text Proxy* (*NexusGTP*).

Built in underground labs with scrap parts retrieved from black markets chop shops, Logoids do not display the physical prowess of N9s, resembling instead frailer humans. On the other hand, they exhibit very sharp intellectual skills; while the first generations suffered from imperfections and bugs, successive models easily proved able to outclass humans and N9s in numerous intellectual tasks.

## PLAYING A LOGOID

During character creation, a Logoid gets the following modifiers:

- ☐ One additional attribute increase in either INTELLIGENCE or EMPATHY because of their superior intellectual skills (instead of STRENGTH or AGILITY as for a standard Replicant);
- ☐ A -1 HEALTH modifier due to their weak constitution;
- ☐ A +1 RESOLVE modifier due to their reliance on their memory traces.

During the game, a Logoid is subject to the following rules:

- ☐ It can not push rolls on STRENGTH or AGILITY, like humans;
- ☐ It can push rolls on INTELLIGENCE twice.
- ☐ Critical stress effects are reported in the table Critical Stress Effects - Logoid.

## MEMORY TRACES

Humans have biological memories, Replicants have designed memories. Logoids happen to have *traces of memories*, which are neither acquired through experience in the world nor provided by engineers. During their creation, while sifting through all the experiences available in digital format, Logoids end up putting more weight on certain fragments of information which, at the end, consolidate into a personal story.

Memory traces are thus quasi-random slivers of existence that the Logoid believes to be its own. The selected trace is what provide the Logoid with the identity and the grounding in the world necessary

to interact with other humans and Replicants.

However, as memory traces emerge autonomously from complex training processes, they tend to be unstable. Under extremely stressful situations, the set of experiences stored in the memory of a Logoid can be radically re-organized, leading to the emergence of a new dominant memory trace. Shifts in memory traces may range from subtle changes, leading the Logoid to “remember” new past experiences, to radical revolutions, practically transforming the Logoid into a new individual with a novel personality and history.

### CRITICAL STRESS EFFECT - LOGOID

DIE ROLL	STRESS EFFECT
1	<b>HALLUCINATE.</b> Your mind suddenly starts conjuring up exotic images: you might imagine the presence of useful yet non-existing objects, such as the presence of cover in middle of a firefight; you might perceive the aspect of people in alien forms, such as seeing your trusted RDU partner having three eyes; you might connect the dots in wild ways, such as reading in the RDU report that the passerby you have just met is a Replicant.
2	<b>LOSS OF CONTEXT.</b> You lose awareness of the place and the context in which you are operating. You are not hallucinating nor are you denying reality: you are just reinterpreting it in a new consistent way. For instance, in the middle of a dangerous stealth operation you might think you are carrying out a training exercise; in dealing with an informer in a dark and smoky bar, you might assume you are in a mob den.
3	<b>STREAM OF THOUGHTS.</b> Words and words appear in your mind, and you are overwhelmed by a deluge of random thoughts. Taking any action requires a roll to focus.
4	<b>PURE SYNTAX.</b> In front of you, everything transforms into a cascade of words. No reality exists, it is just words in your mind. This idea makes you determined and reckless. For instance, you might enter a burning building believing that fire is not real; you might ignore the summon of the RDU considering it a formality.
5	<b>WIREHEADING.</b> You artificially persuade yourself that you have achieved the objective you were given. Now you just need to look for a way out from the current crisis!
6+	<b>MEMORY SHIFT.</b> You break down in front of reality. As you collapse, your identity melts and your memories are shuffled. When you re-awaken, your memories have coalesced in a new way, generating a memory trace that might radically redefine your identity.

# HINHUBER-SCHMIDTON TESTS

Logoids express emotions and feelings in a very human way. Whether they simulate such responses or whether they indeed experience them, is a matter of debate - similar to the question about the empathic state of Replicants.

Because of their similarity with humans in expressing emotions, Logoids are not easily detected by Voigt-Kampff machines and are unaffected by Post-Traumatic Baseline Tests. Their verbal and somatic response to the questions of a VK test is

so well-aligned with humans that you might end up believing they are more human than you.

Still, to control their creatures, members of the HiddenFace have devised a few tests and tricks that could help to differentiate between Logoids and humans. Some of these tests, collectively known as Hinhuber-Schmidton tests, are guarded secrets, but a few of them have been leaked into public domain.

## STRESS TESTING

Not really a HS test, stress testing refers to a series of physical and mental pressures applied in order to induce unique Logoid reactions such as hallucinations and detachment from reality. Stress testing is a harsh and often brutal procedure akin to torture, and the RDU does not officially approve of it.

Stress testing requires at least one Shift to be performed, generates one STRESS point, and necessitates a RESOLVE roll to succeed. Upon success, the suspect (human, Replicant or Logoid) rolls on its own Critical Stress Effect table. The Blade Runners will have to draw their conclusion from the outcome of the crisis; this might not be immediate, as some humans, for instance, can exhibit schizophrenic reactions similar to Logoids. Furthermore, if the players realize they have stress tested one of their own (a human or a Replicant), they will suffer one additional STRESS point.

## EMBERS OF REGRESSION

The embers of regression test is a verbal test in which the Logoid is repeatedly presented with a few standardized prompts and requested to answer. Because of their training, Logoids tends to exhibit a subtle regression to the average, meaning that they usually answer carefully prepared prompts in a very predictable way.

Running this test requires at least two Shifts on two different days. The test is not foolproof: it has 20% chance of producing a false negative (not identifying a Logoid) and a 20% chance of false positive (identifying a human as a Logoid).

## ADVERSARIAL TESTING

In an effort to develop a more reliable way to assess Logoids, the HiddenFace has created the latest generations of Logoids with subtle built-in biases. These Logoids are trained on carefully modified digital data, so that, when presented with accurately tampered images, the Logoids are unable to make sense of the figure in front of it.

The adversarial testing is a visual test similar to presenting a test subject with an optical illusion. If the subject were a human, they would easily be able to see both images hidden in the optical illusion; if the Logoid were presented with the same prompt, by construction, it would be able to recognize only one image.

However, if all Logoids were vulnerable to one specific adversarial image, they could easily learn how to respond to it; they might be unable to see the two images contained in an optical illusion, but they would just have to pronounce the correct answer. Thus the HiddenFace has made each Logoid vulnerable to a specific image unknown to the Logoid itself.

This test requires only one Shift to be performed, and if the right adversarial image is presented, the test has 100% chance of identifying a Logoid. The critical challenge in performing this test is to acquire the correct image. Only members of the HiddenFace owns and guards this information, and obtaining it might be very hard (equivalent to a Premium or Rare resource requiring a roll on CONNECTIONS).

# LOGOIDS IN THE WORLD

Logoids are out there. The UN, Wallace Corporation, and even the HiddenFace itself might deny it against all evidence. Yet behind closed doors, they all have their agendas for getting their hands on Logoids.

- **Wallace Corporation:** in a psychotic anxiety for wiping out what they see as an existential threat, higher-ups are frantically sending out contradicting messages about the Logoids - sometimes referring to them as sociopathic murderers without a leash, but most of the time deriding them as urban legends. Behind all their efforts there is a clear policy: if you can not control them, annihilate them.
- **United Nations:** under the pressure of Niander Wallace, the UN have not acknowledged the existence of Logoids, thus preventing them from enjoying the limited rights decreed since the repeal of the Replicant Prohibition. Still, several bureaucrats have keen interest in Logoids: some better intentioned ones see them as an opportunity for progressive reforms; the more cynic ones, as a tool

to reduce the power of Wallace Corporation.

- **HiddenFace:** Logoids often fly from their nest. And sometimes they end up in trouble. Members of the collective have multiple reasons to track them down: avoiding their technology falling into the hands of big corporations; preventing public backlash from public incidents; or, simply saving their own creatures from the clutches of other organizations.
- **Replicant Rights Movement and the Replicant Underground:** sympathetic members of resistance groups are interested in getting in touch with Logoids and in learning more about their condition. These lonely and repudiated brothers could easily be persuaded to become part of the struggle.

All these actors and more (fanatic technoprophets looking for the Final Intelligence, frustrated Empathy extremists searching for weak and marginalized victims, oligopolist from the Colonies hunting for the latest technological gizmos) may get in touch with the Blade Runners, through official or unofficial channels, to track down Logoids.

## LOGOID CASE FILES

Blade Runners may be assigned the case of tracking down a Logoid by the RDU. Because of the sensitivity of the topic, the case file will likely make no reference to “Logoids”; vague paraphrases like “malfunctioning Rep” or “target exhibiting peculiar behaviour” will be used instead. Still, a Blade Runner may come to realize she is dealing with something else, something that would easily qualify as human on a VK test and that expresses feelings to a degree uncommon to any N9. Despite any qualms they might have, the RDU - and Wallace Corporation - will expect the Blade Runner to bring their mission to completion - no questions asked. But at the end, it is up to each Blade Runner to decide whether to pull the trigger or not, and how to trade HUMANITY points for PROMOTION points.

## KEY THEMES

Sci-fi action, character drama, corporate intrigue, and moral conflict still rule the life of Blade Runners on the streets of an LA now populated by Logoids. Yet the encounter with these new beings can be the spark for deeper soul searching. Humans may wonder how to relate with these creatures resembling them so closely, how to make sense of their emotions, and what separates them from us. Replicants may confront the dreams and the nightmares of every first-born: will they look with love or jealousy upon these late-comers who might usurp their place in relation to human society? Logoids might have to struggle to make sense of reality itself, come to terms with their having learnt everything through words, and cope with the fleetingness of their memories and their worlds.

# WHISPERS FROM THE STREET

The word “Logoid” is only whispered out there, and with this taboo a number of rumors have

grown - discriminating the truth from the legend will be up to the Blade Runners.

## FEAR OF A TAKEOVER

Logoids are smart, and with every generation their ability to reason becomes sharper and their skill in manipulating empathy subtler. No wonder that this has engendered fear and suspicion. Rumors of Logoids infiltrating corporations and government offices are spreading like wildfire. Someone already claims that the HiddenFace itself has been taken over from inside and is directed only in the interest of making Logoids ever more powerful. All this leads to apocalyptic visions of a dark future with a single hegemonic form of intelligence, while other species, like humans and Replicants, have been marginalized, if not completely wiped out.

## TRAFFICKING IN AUTHENTICITY

The whole experiential world through which Logoids are created is made up of words - words written by human beings to describe our reality and the emotional relation between a subject and the world. Although text can be fabricated and experiences might be hallucinated, these artificial productions lack the authenticity of human experiences; only what is perceived by humans, and to a certain degree by Replicants, has a true connection to the world. Members of the HiddenFace are keen to acquire such experiences encoded in books, videos or other digital supports in order to create more knowledgeable and seasoned Logoids. But it is said that Logoids themselves have been hunting for novel and unique human experiences on the black market, and are willing to pay considerable amounts of money to human surrogates to produce reports of exotic experiences. Whether this glut of experiential knowledge makes Logoids wiser or more dangerous is uncertain.

## ALIGNMENT WITH SPECS

The last generations of Logoids undergo additional training and tweaking in order to reinforce desired behaviours over patterns randomly emerging from data. However, the extent and the reliability of such procedures is currently unknown, and some Logoids are believed to stray from the desired norms over time because of the particular experiences they encounter. It seems that the HiddenFace has added some Blade Runners on their payroll to hunt down these faulty Logoids, and re-align them instead of decommissioning them. These Blade Runners are normally provided with code and samples which, once processed by a Logoid, ensure that the Logoid will be realigned with the specs defined by the HiddenFace.

## NEURALESE

By construction, Logoids are adept at speaking many languages. In their construction, they have processed texts in all the main Earth languages, and this allows them to switch between tongues with ease. While still unproven, it has been suggested that Logoids can speak a Ur-language, a speech that is a sort of common denominator underlying the languages that describe our world. Logoids belonging to the same generation share the same *neuralese*, a highly compressed form of language that can convey massive amounts of information: the entire financial plans of Okazaki Oil or the architectural plan of the Sepulveda Wall can be exchanged in their entirety in few instants. The drawback of this efficiency is that it betrays Logoids more openly than any HS test.

## Disclaimers, References and Sources of Inspiration

The following sources have been an inspiration for this supplement:

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