

Connecticut Crowley is the reluctant Supervisor of the Northeast Division. His region is comprised of the City - the prison area, the Midway - a gathering spot where suburbanites watch the goings-on in the City and the Suburbs. When a Sentry - a cybernetic prison guard in the City - disappears, Crowley is charged with finding out how and why. Months pass and, with the Sentry case at a standstill, Crowley suddenly has a rash of mysterious suicides in the suburbs to contend with as well. Hanson Keel, a victim who - like the others - mutilated himself in the process of his suicide, is of particular interest to Crowley because of his associates. Before Keel's death, Crowley views him in a holding cell where Dr. Haskell demonstrates that Keel's body reacts strangely to outside stimuli.

In the Midway, Crowley meets with a couple of Keel's associates who happened to be black marketeers for the City. Information gleaned from the marketeers, Peter Lucas and Lexington Doyle, leads Crowley into the City and a Sentry named Lloyd. Later, a creature in one of the maintenance tunnels under the Midway kills a worker. Midway Security captures the creature and informs Crowley that it is not a mutation but a construct; a genetic hack job used as a courier of high tech gene manipulation equipment into the City. Not long after Crowley interrogates Sentry Lloyd, he is found dead in the City and the cause of his death, drowning, is suspect. In the early morning hours of the following day, Crowley is attacked by Lloyd in his high-rise apartment in the suburbs. During an examination of Lloyd's body they find that he has been rewired and reprogrammed but, when they try to probe deeper, Lloyd self-destructs. The aftermath of Lloyd's attack leaves Crowley's apartment destroyed. He is then forced to move in with Loretta, a hermaphroditic clone with translucent skin that Crowley has known since she was a child. On a night out in the Midway with Loretta, Crowley discovers the cause of the suicides; a device that temporarily re-maps the brain so that the user can see and feel sounds and smell colors among other things. Continued use of the machine permanently re-maps the senses and the resulting 'reality' drives them to suicide.

In his gut Crowley knows that everything will lead back to the City, and it does. Specifically, it leads to Alden Flood, a megalomaniacal geneticist imprisoned in the City for the cloning of a human: Loretta. Outfitting himself with special weapons, including a sonic rifle and repulsor net, Crowley enters the City in search of an answer.

After an exhaustive search and with his equipment on the verge of auto-destruct, Crowley confronts Flood in a cave deep beneath the City. An army of genetically manipulated creatures ranging from huge bastardized vermin to large, poisonous frogs guards Flood. He proudly displays his work-in-progress, a genetically altered human that he hopes to clone into an army with which to wage war on everything outside the City. With time running out, Crowley destroys Flood's creature and attacks Flood and his minions with the rifle. Crowley fires indiscriminately as the sound waves ricochet off the walls creating offshoot vibrations. Those vibrations eventually cause the cave to collapse, killing everything inside including Flood. Crowley barely escapes the chaos by way of a tunnel used by Flood's couriers. He emerges from the tunnel and is met by an armed City Surveillance Team investigating the seismic anomalies created by his rifle. They escort Crowley out of the City and he eventually meets with the Governor and gives his report.