

CITY of MIST

The cover art is a dark, atmospheric illustration. In the center, a woman with long red hair, wearing a black dress and a red cape, sings into a vintage microphone. To her left, a detective in a blue uniform and cap aims a handgun while shining a flashlight. Behind them, a large, shadowy figure with a red cape looms. The background is a collage of crime scene elements: a 'CABARET' sign, 'TICKET' stubs, a 'MOUNDS' note, a 'NO 434327' tag, and yellow evidence markers numbered 1 through 9. Yellow 'CRIME SCENE DO NOT CROSS' tape is strung across the scene. The overall color palette is dominated by dark blues, greys, and vibrant reds.

KILLING HER **SOFTLY**

A HEARTBREAKING CASE OF SOULFUL JAZZ AND HAUNTING DEATH

CITY OF MIST

KILLING HER SOFTLY

A CITY OF MIST CASE



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HOW TO USE THIS CASE IN YOUR GAME

You can use *Killing Her Softly* as a standalone one-shot or as a part of the *Nights of Payne Town* story arc.

Within *Nights of Payne Town*, this case is the first of three cases that form the Personal Vein. It is followed by *Carnival of Machines* and *Broken Glass*.

Throughout this PDF, **red clues** (clues given in red cards) point the investigation to another case in the Personal Vein or in the *Nights of Payne Town* story arc. Reveal them to your players only if and when you wish to lead the story to the given case.

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CONTENT WARNING

This game contains mild language as well as strong themes of violence, crime, and immorality. It does NOT contain explicit representation of sexual acts. Parental guidance is advised.

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A soulful jazz singer needs the crew's help with deciphering a series of mysterious killings that circle her in a vicious ghost dance. From Downtown to Suburbia, people drop dead unexpectedly clutching their broken hearts, with the mysterious killer still rampant. As the body count rises, will the crew be able to save the City's residents from this haunting angel of death?

Killing Her Softly is a classic neo-noir "whodunit" investigation in which the crew traces the footsteps of a mysterious serial killer. Against the backdrop of a dicey jazz club and dirty alleyways, the crew examines crime scenes, crosses paths with NPCs from different walks of life, and overcomes altercations with dubious underworld figures. The case sets the players to falsely accuse an innocent NPC or simply assume he is guilty, while the real criminal feigns innocence and even seeks the crew's protection, fooling them, at least for a while.

A DUET WITH SORROW

Martha Ellis is one of the best small-time blues and jazz singers in the City, with a heart-rending voice whose grandeur is matched only by her melancholy. Perhaps due to her penchant for blues lamenting, Martha has awakened as the Rift of **the Banshee**, the keening Irish woman of the fair folk who would warn of a death in the family. After her awakening, she discovered that her voice could stir more intense feelings in her audience than before. Where once she brought tears to the eyes of a few sensitive listeners, she could now induce utter emotional collapse in an entire hall full of people.

When it first happened, Martha's manager spun it to the newspapers, labeling Martha as "Downtown's most soulful voice". But Martha struggled to keep her powers in check; her control of her audience's emotions was intuitive, but her own complex emotional state often tempted her to use her powers in ways she shouldn't have. As fewer people returned to her shows, following harrowing experiences, Martha's career went downhill. She fell into depression and alcoholism, and faced financial hardship. Very few music halls and cabarets would have her on stage.

MENDING THE BROKEN

Seeking help, Martha approached **Dr. Selma Perrin**, a psychiatrist associated with **Mending the Broken**, an organization offering help to Rifts (see *Broken Glass*). Reframing her powers in a positive way, Dr. Perrin convinced Martha that her songs can help people feel the sorrow and the pain they are trying to avoid. Martha's role, even duty, was to penetrate their resistance and open up their feelings so they could cope with their buried wounds.

This new understanding of herself helped Martha come out of the darkness she was enveloped in and gave her a new hope. She was able to focus herself better and her performances became more balanced and enjoyable. She managed to get a regular spot at the seedy but active "**the Washboard**" club. While on stage, she would search the audience for that special person, someone whose pain she could feel viscerally, someone who she thought needed her help. In actuality, her Mythos' ability of sensing an impending death drew her towards her victims; little did she know that she would be the one responsible for their demise.

MEANWHILE, A VISION OF DEATH

Not far from the Washboard, in the Industrial Zone, **John Nowak**, a deaf-mute factory worker, caught a flyer blowing in the wind. It was advertising a night at the Washboard, with Martha's picture in the center. As soon as his gaze fell on the flyer, Nowak awakened as the Rift of the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come (*A Christmas Carol*). His Mythos showed him a vision of Martha Ellis's possible death, filling him with sorrow and grief for the brutality of her untimely end, the wrongs she has committed, and the hate she was regarded with. Nowak felt compelled to warn Martha. He dropped everything, left work, and made his way to the Washboard.

THE FIRST VICTIM

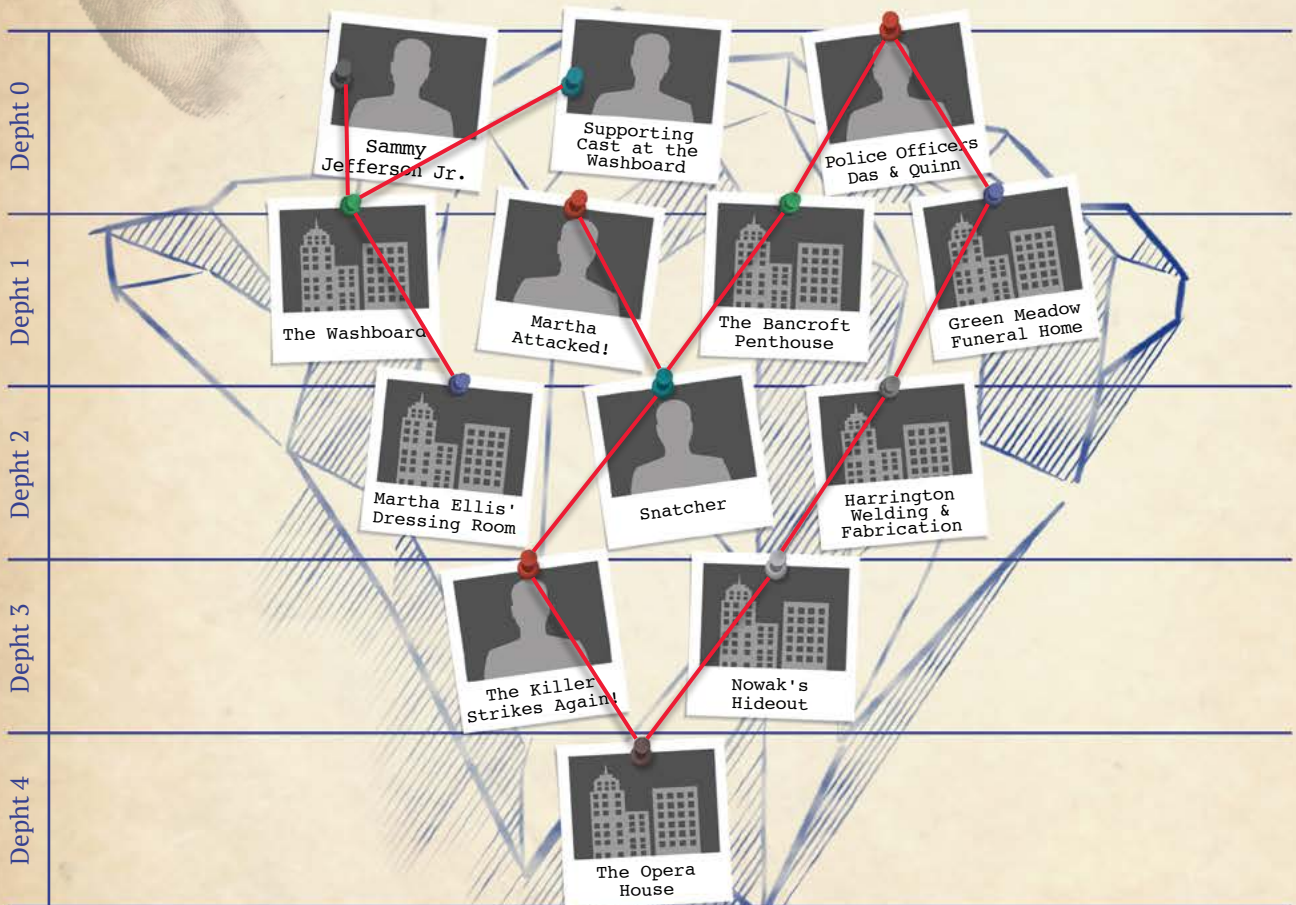
Darnell Fox was sitting in the front row that night at the Washboard along with two couples of his friends. Feeling himself a fifth wheel, Darnell seemed despondent and shy. All through the night, Martha felt her eyes drawn to the meek man. When his feelings of loneliness overwhelmed him and he left to get some fresh air, the singer took a break and followed him out. There, in the alley, she convinced him to stay for a private show – she would sing for him after hours, promising it would improve his mood. Darnell accepted out of politeness and the two later met alone on the Washboard stage.

There, in the solemn spotlight, Martha sang for him, voicing the Banshee's lament at its most sorrowful, singing about a boy who had no-one to call his own. Darnell collapsed, overwhelmed with loneliness, but the more Martha sang the more in pain he seemed. The cathartic moment Dr. Perrin promised did not come. But Martha Ellis could not stop. She was both foretelling his death and enacting it, until finally his heart gave in and he died of his intensified sorrow (an unexplained heart failure, a Sleeper coroner would later say). Just as this happened, Martha saw John Nowak, a tattooed skinhead in a hoodie, at the far end of the club's floor, witnessing it all. Nowak handwaved and mumbled to warn Martha of the future that awaited her if she continued down this path, but lacking words his warning fell on deaf ears. Martha tried to lament him to death and naturally failed as he is deaf, so thinking on her feet she started crying for help. The Washboard bouncer, Syrus, arrived to see a dead patron on the floor and a suspect hooded figure fleeing the scene.

FURTHER LAMENTATIONS

Shocked at what happened and the predicament she was now in, Martha Ellis didn't know what to do. She swore never to talk to Dr. Perrin again and never to sing the song of the Banshee. But the more she repressed it, the more it tried to emerge in her evening performances. To keep her career, she had to find a way to let the Banshee have its fill. So far, two more victims fell prey to the Banshee's lament: an unhappy trophy wife whom Ellis killed at her Downtown loft and a man mourning for his dead son, who dropped dead when the singer performed at the funeral. This last death happened only a day ago.

In both cases, John Nowak was there to witness the killing and try to dissuade Martha from her destructive path. In both cases, Martha was able to pin the death on him or at least disassociate herself from it, at his expense. The police now have three unexplained Downtown deaths connected with Nowak. **Officers Chaavi Das** (*Gramadevata*, a town's guardian spirit in Hinduism) and **Matt Quinn** (Sleeper) are working the case, searching after their main suspect, the skinhead in the hoodie.



Name: **THE ICEBERG**

MARTHA

Martha Ellis is a voluptuous woman in her mid 50s, usually enveloped in a flowing floral dress and head-dress during the day and a sparkling evening gown that shows her curves at night when on stage. Her mannerism and garb exude a sense of melancholy and drama, of someone whose time has passed, but is still holding on to the grandeur of the past. Her pitiful state is accentuated when she is inebriated (all too often these days). In the spotlight, however, her commiserating streak turns heartfelt, and she truly touches her audience with a deep and soulful mood.

PACING MARTHA

Martha appears throughout the case, across Depths. The PCs will likely have multiple interactions with Martha as they investigate the case and as their suspicion of her part in the deaths becomes more and more founded.

Try to use Martha's lies and deceptions to keep the PCs away from the truth long enough for the case to progress. At the same time, remember to **play to find out** and surrender the truth to them if they earned it fair and square. Remember, even if Martha is exposed early on, the crew still faces the challenge of incriminating her and apprehending her before she can do more damage.

PAIN BEHIND THE EYES

Martha is naturally attracted to lamentable emotions in the people she meets. When she senses someone's pain, she remembers it and can tap into it with a song later on.

When a PC **Investigates** and scores a 7-9, or as a hard move, you can choose to ask the player about their character's own sorrow and assume that Martha knows it (per her custom move **Pain Behind the Eyes**). This is a good chance to give the character's themes and backstory some airtime.

At first, Martha appears deeply sympathetic and understanding. However, revealing the PC's private pain also sets the PC up for Martha's keening hard move.

Martha's Danger profile appears on page 18.

To delay the revelation that Martha is the killer, give different types of clues when the PCs **Investigate** Martha:

- Provide only partial answers to their questions when they spend a Clue.

- If they roll 7-9, choose to give vague or part-true part-false answers in order to keep the truth hidden from them for a while longer. For example, if a PC is checking if Martha is lying you can let them know it is difficult to determine clearly due to her state or intoxication, or reply that she seems very much on edge, which may be due to lying but may also simply be a result of the stress of recent events.

When the pressure rises and the PCs demand answers, Martha will candidly reveal false information to the crew in order to maintain their trust and to provide a valid explanation for her behavior. Here are some **part-true-part-false clues** you can use; Martha can also reveal this even without the PCs **Investigating**.

To excuse her presence at a crime scene, Martha may feign confiding with the crew and revealing her powers. She will claim she can feel impending death and that she is irresistibly drawn to where the killer will strike, trying to warn the victim.

She will ascribe her own methods to the killer (and technically, she wouldn't be lying), hinting that she thinks the killer somehow causes the victims to die of grief.

Martha could even allege that the killer is the same person who sabotaged her performance in the past (see below) and that it's someone with a grudge against her, creating a red herring for the crew to go after.

Asking around about Martha or researching her background can reveal some of her tumultuous history:

Martha is one of the best small-time blues and jazz singers in the City. She briefly gained fame as "Downtown's most soulful voice".

After a fiasco where the entire crowd at her concert had an emotional breakdown, and medical services had to be called in, the papers labeled her as too intense, and her career tanked. She was quoted saying the incident was an act of sabotage against her career and that the perpetrator used psychoactive drugs in the drinks that night.

She then took to drinking, became a depressed eccentric, and was only ever seen again publicly in the lowliest and most obscure of Downtown clubs.

DEPTH 0: **THE HOOKS**

The crew may become involved in the case in the following ways:

- **The police** could be reaching out to the crew for help with their mystery killer, especially if the crew previously worked with the police or runs an investigative agency. Officers Das and Quinn just began investigating the strange occurrence at the funeral house, and are stumped at this point in the investigation: they have three seemingly unrelated suspicious deaths where the skinhead in the hoodie was placed. Their boss seems to think it's a coincidence and has given them 72 hours to reach a breakthrough in the case, after which they will have to drop it. Both Das, who is a Rift, and Quinn, a Sleeper, believe they have a serial killer on their hands, but they don't have a clue about his motive or method yet. (They still haven't connected the last two deaths to the Washboard, so they don't suspect Martha Ellis in the slightest). To recruit the crew, Officer Das will make contact by phone or show up at the crew's hangout; she'll relate the details of the case and ask for help but stress that the killer should be brought to justice and that the matter must be resolved in accordance with the law.
- The owner of the Washboard, **Sammy Jefferson Jr.** (Sleeper), may contact the crew to bring the Darnell Fox death to rest. Not so much shaken by a death in his club as he is worried of interrupting his singer's lucky streak, old Sammy senses that his diva is on edge since the case and wants to make sure no harm comes to her. Likely connected to PCs who lean toward the wrong side of the law, Sammy could hire the crew to find the fellow in the hoodie and make sure he doesn't pull that kind of stunt again in his club. Sammy is a middle-aged man usually wearing a stained dress shirt, suspenders, and dress slacks, and adorning a typical jazz-club-owner panama hat. He's a shrewd businessman and plays a mean bluegrass tune if you put a banjo in his hands.
- **A member of the supporting cast could become a victim of Ellis.** Someone close to one of the PCs could invite the PCs to the Washboard for a performance of Martha Ellis. Choose a character that is carrying some distinct personal pain and could easily become Ellis's next mark. The supporting character could be found dead the next morning or, if you'd like to give the crew a chance to save her, be a part of the Killer Strikes Again! triggered scene on page 18.

DEPTH 1: **LAMENTING OF THE PAST**

In this depth, the crew studies the crime scenes of the strange deaths that occurred Downtown. At first, they seem unrelated, but as the crew starts putting together the clues, it becomes evident that the Washboard club and its foremost singer, Martha Ellis, are at the center of it all.

THE WASHBOARD

Tucked in the basement of a grimey brown-stone building overshadowed by Downtown's great skyscrapers, the Washboard couldn't be located any lower without dropping into the sewers. Faint cellwo and piano notes echo in the maze of alleyways and underpasses that leads to its front door, below street level. The place seems scrubbed, as if trying to rise up to the occasion of having a fleeting shot at glory. The front door is covered with posters heralding Martha Ellis' next gig.

The Washboard is a long-standing establishment, a jazz and blues venue from the days the City was young. But unlike its more respectable brethren who started out low and built their dignity and reputation with the years, the Washboard was always a spot vaguely associated with the wrong kind of crowd. While the truly big crime lords stuck to their own clubs, this was a place where hustlers and good-for-nothing lowlives often congregated. In its heyday, the Washboard also attracted a flux of middle-class Downtown professionals who craved some edge and came here to rub elbows with the rougher regular clientele, and so business was good for everyone, for a while. But trends moved on and the masses with them, forcing owner after owner to sell the joint to the next hopeful entrepreneur.

The current owner, **Sammy Jefferson Jr.**, moved from the neighborhoods to the alleys of Downtown decades ago. He dabbled with pretty much everything one can on the streets, but he always had a love for music, and when the opportunity came, he purchased the club. Sammy knew all too well that to keep the place running he'd have to run other activities from the back room, yet his dream has always been to truly make it as a club owner.

The Washboard is a roomy club, capable of holding up to 200 patrons. The red-tinted lights set the mood but also give the place a dark and seedy vibe. There are two long bars lining the main room, and about 20 small circular tables scattered in front of a medium-sized stage. In the back there's a kitchen, a dressing room, and storage space, as well as an office for Sammy. A back door leads to a dirty back alley, even narrower than the one that leads to the front door.

INVESTIGATING THE DEATH OF DARNELL FOX

The coroner report says Darnell Fox died of unexplained heart failure.

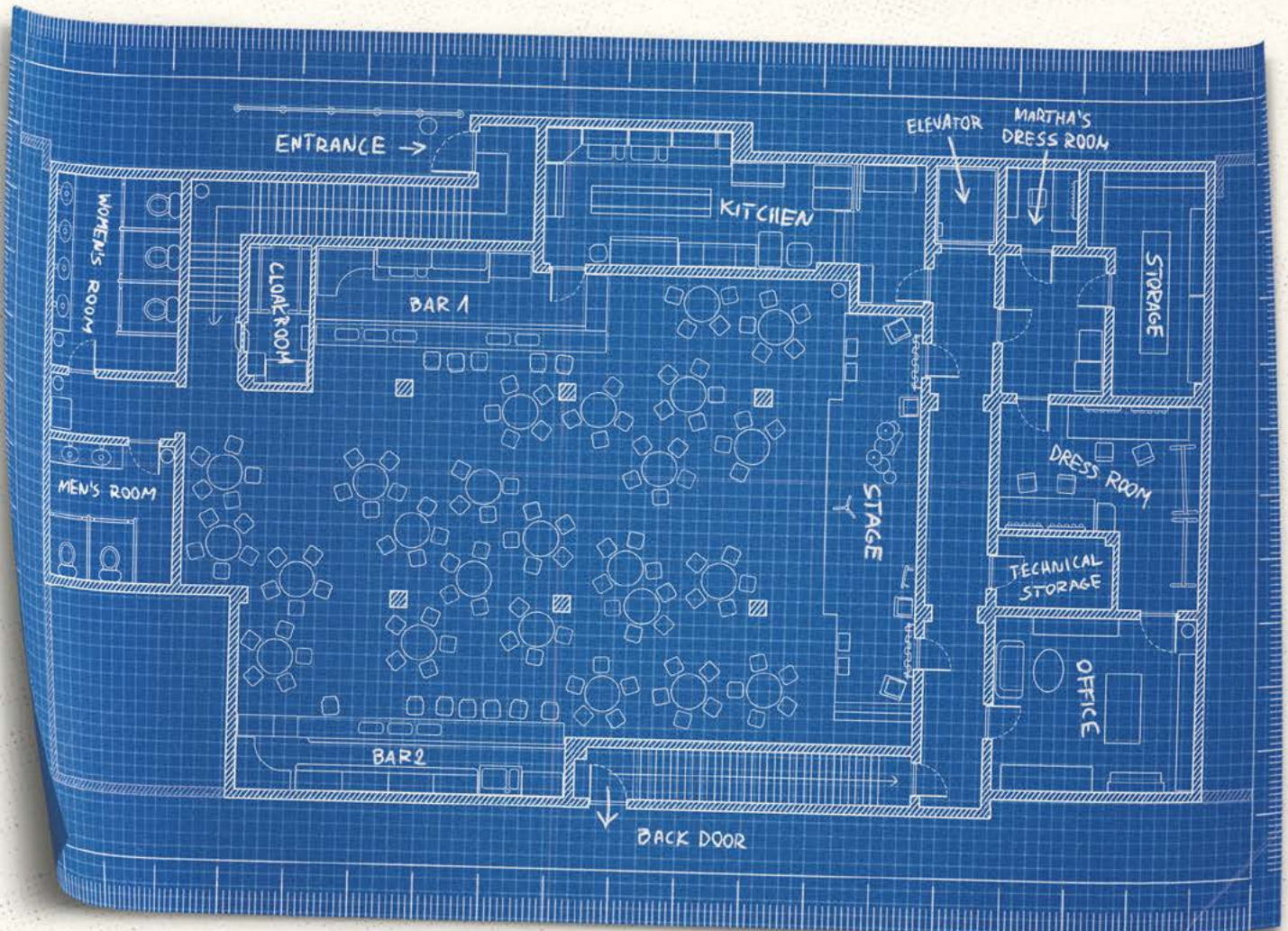
Everyone at the Washboard tells the same story: Martha and Syrus the bouncer walked in on Darnell and the killer having words, when they saw Darnell collapse and the killer fleeing. (This is a lie Sammy and Martha came up with, but all regular patrons accept their word as truth.)

The alleged killer must have broken the lock on the back door with a crowbar and slipped in while Syrus the bouncer was locking up the front.

Investigating Syrus could reveal Martha was already there when he arrived. Sammy gave him a bonus to say otherwise, to keep her out of it.

If confronted with the above fact, Martha would say Darnell asked to meet her after the show and then declared his love to her. It was normal for a lonely fan to get enamored with a performer, so she politely declined; but then the killer arrived and Darnell fell to the floor.

No one at the Washboard really knew Darnell or his friends. Asking around, Sammy and Syrus learned they were a group of young professionals looking for a place for a double date.



Darnell's friends are easy to find. They are still in shock, and ascribe his death to an undiagnosed cardiac condition. They tell of a shy and meek man who never mentioned being in any need of help, but if asked privately, some of the ladies would reveal he seemed extremely lonely. They all work for a local advertising firm.

Beyond the Mist, the place is a dreary bog of gloom and intense loneliness, both emotionally and symbolically, with muddy ground covered by low fog. An old sad tin whistle tune is playing far away. If a PC can contact Darnell's spirit, he is *overwhelmed-by-sorrow-4* and believes he died because he simply could no longer bear carrying on.

INVESTIGATING THE WASHBOARD

Sammy is using this place for more than just music. A little bootlegging, a little illegal gambling, sometimes even fencing low-risk stolen goods, but nothing more. He is willing to pay the crew to keep it under wraps, or pay Syrus to bully them into keeping quiet.

Sammy is betting all his chips on Martha Ellis' success in hopes of going legit and letting go of some of his dubious back room activities. He seems like he is willing to go to great lengths to keep the singer – or her singing – from harm.

Someone in the regular crowd at the Washboard heard of another patron who recently died of a heart attack, pointing the crew at the Bancroft Penthouse. Another person says the singer, Martha, was involved in a drama at the Green Meadow Funeral Home not two days ago.

SAMMY JEFFERSON JR. ★

HURT OR SUBDUE 1 / BREAK SPIRIT 3

- **Shifty:** When you Investigate Sammy, he first takes *shifty-2*.
- **Weather the Storm:** When Sammy makes you an offer, the MC will put a reward on the table as a temporary story tag. If you accept his bribe, you get the tag.
- **Keeping Tabs:** When Sammy decides to turn on you, he gives you a status of *implicated* with one tier for every tag you accepted from him through **Weather the Storm**. You may **Face Danger**.
- **Defuse the Situation:** When Sammy grabs a banjo and starts playing, everyone who can hear him chills the hell out. As a soft move the MC can choose one for each listener: reduce an emotional status by one, burn an emotional tag, or give *chill-1*.
- Threaten someone with a holdout pistol or a crowbar (*back-to-the-wall-2*) or make good on his threats or (*flesh-wound-2* or *banged-up-2*)
- Help someone relax (reduce an emotional status by one, burn an emotional tag, or give *chill-1*)
- Welcome someone with a smile and open arms
- Suggest to step aside to talk business
- Tell the band to start playing, now

SYRUS, THE BOUNCER ★

Syrus has been a bouncer at the Washboard for the past few months. A typical muscleman, he towers over most patrons at 6'4" and has arms like logs and a torso like a barrel. A shining bald head, a tight black T-shirt, and a thin 'stache to keep him cool but threatening.

HURT OR SUBDUE 2 / BRIBE 2

- **Not on My Shift:** When Syrus enters the scene, give him *alert-2*.
- **Boxer Moves:** When Syrus is attacked with mundane hand-to-hand physical blows or weapons, reduce the tier of the resulting status by 1.
- Thump someone (*disoriented-2*) or put them in a headlock (*restrained-3*)
- Throw a disoriented or restrained person outside (*humiliated-2*)
- Look down on someone over his huge folded arms

OFFICERS DAS & QUINN

Whether they requested the crew's help or they are just hovering around the crime scenes looking for answers, Downtown beat officers Chaavi Das and Matt Quinn will find a way to stick their nose into the crew's business.

This devoted dynamic duo make everything that's happening Downtown, and in the City, their business. Officer Das is a short, feisty, and direct policewoman who proves big punches come in small packages. As the Touched Rift of Gramadevata, a town's guardian spirit, she wields – alongside her taser and pistol – the protective powers of a tutelary deity. She can create magical shields that shelter people and property from harm, both physical and magical.

Officer Quinn – a tall, handsome, cornfed hunk – is actually a big teddy bear who prefers to avoid violence (until duty calls, at which point he proves a capable combatant). While he is a Sleeper, he is the kind who

believes all conspiracy theories but never really delves into them. He will follow Das through thick and thin, even when he can't see what she sees. While he often says he wishes he could see through her eyes, he really doesn't, a fact which keeps him firmly asleep.

The pair can serve as backup or support NPCs that help, tip off, and guide the crew throughout this case, vein, or story arc. They can also serve as a royal pain in the butt for PCs that run illegal activities, always showing up when it's least convenient. If they become temporary or permanent allies of the crew, they can be represented by an extra theme.

DAS & QUINN

Ally

IDENTITY

It's our job to keep the streets Downtown safe.

POWER TAGS

working the beat, police work, banish evil, devoted to their work, combine brawn and brains, create a magical shield, interview witnesses, access to police files, the usual suspects, heart of gold

WEAKNESS TAGS

must report ANY illegal activity, Das is a blunt force instrument, Quinn is a big softy, trouble with the boss

THEME IMPROVEMENT

□ **Sacrifice:** When you get a hit on Face Danger, you can always choose to extend the outcome to one person or object around you that you can protect, at the cost of exposing yourself. On a 10+, they take no status and you take the status with -1 tier. On 7-9, they take the status with -1 tier and you take the full status. If the move is *Dynamite!*, on a 12+, you can choose to fully protect both of you (instead of one of the other 12+ options).

DAS & QUINN ★★/★

While they are both beat officers, both Das and Quinn use the Detective Danger profile (MC Toolkit, page 148) to reflect their exemplary police skills. Officer Das also has the Mythos Power Set Messenger of the Light (MC Toolkit, page 154).

HURT OR SUBDUE 3 / CORRUPT 5 / OVERRIDE AUTHORITY 3

- **Powers of Deduction:** When Das or Quinn survey the scene for the first time or as a hard move, the MC will ask you one question. You must reply with a straight answer or a solid lead. The officer knows your answer, even if your character didn't speak it.
- **On the Ball:** When Das or Quinn enter the scene, give them *alert-1*.
- **Protection from Evil (Das only):** When Officer Das takes a status from a source that is inherently evil or dark, reduce the tier of the status by 2.
 - Put someone on the spot (tell the truth or take *pressured-2*)
 - Shoot a suspect or a threat with a firearm (*gun-shot-wound-3*) or taser (*stunned-3*)
 - Cuff a suspect or tighten the handcuffs (*hand-cuffed-2*)
 - (Das only) Bless or enchant someone to protect them from harm (*protected-2*)
 - (Das only) Banish the forces of evil or darkness (*banish-3*)
- Observe a scene and discuss it with each other
- Find a piece of evidence
- When alone, call for police backup

THE BANCROFT PENTHOUSE

Meticulously furnished with the best and trendiest interior design money can buy, every corner in the Bancroft penthouse is a demonstration of wealth and power. Stepping inside on the reflective marble floor, you realize it's all just a lead up to the grand finale: a panoramic view of the City rooftops surrounds the condo. Breath-taking, but boy, does it feel empty.

Tiffany Bancroft was Martha Ellis' second victim. A beautiful woman in her late 30s, Tiffany turned heads everywhere she went, and the Washboard was no exception. Martha noticed her walking in with her husband, **Ross Bancroft**, who she later learned was a high-flying executive in a Downtown-based hedge fund. While outwardly the couple looked glamorous, Martha sensed a sadness in Tiffany. She met her at the ladies' room and invited her for a smoke and a drink in her dressing room. When Tiffany opened up about her loveless marriage and her unfulfilled life, Martha realized the young lady was feeling trapped in her perfect existence. She wanted to help her, so they exchanged numbers and agreed to meet the following week.

Martha paid a visit to the Bancroft penthouse and when the opportunity came, after much talk and wine, sat by the Bancrofts' grand piano and sang her hostess to death. Nowak showed up just in time to witness her kill Tiffany but he was already being pursued by the building security. Realizing he was late, Nowak fled the scene. Hearing security nearby, Martha Ellis took the opportunity to leave via the service stairs, unseen. When security arrived, they split between Nowak, the alleged perp, and the victim, but no one thought to look for Ellis.

INVESTIGATING THE DEATH OF TIFFANY BANCROFT

The coroner report says Tiffany Bancroft died of unexplained heart failure.

According to the building's chief of security, a skinhead in a hoodie, about 25-30 years old, tricked the guards and made it to the elevators. From there he went on to the Bancrofts' penthouse and probably scared Tiffany Bancroft to death. He narrowly escaped the guards by crashing through a window and falling onto a dumpster, fleeing the scene before he could be apprehended.

If the search is expanded beyond the incident with the intruder, security cameras or a jolt to the concierge's memory would disclose that Martha Ellis paid a visit to the victim about three hours before the intruder showed up. She was not seen leaving.

The neighbors heard the piano playing before Tiffany died, but Ross Bancroft knows the piece was just for show and that neither him nor his wife could play.

There is one ticket to Martha Ellis' show at the Washboard next week on the piano.

Someone (Martha) called Snatcher's number from the loft, around Tiffany's time of death.

Beyond the Mist, the penthouse seems afflicted by the same swamp as the Washboard, albeit with gnarly dead trees giving off the feeling of long-dead hopes and dreams and a prevailing emptiness. If a PC can contact Tiffany's spirit, she is *bitter-and-angry-3* and doesn't really want to discuss what happened, believing she died because she finally realized it was her only way out.

INVESTIGATING ROSS BANCROFT

Ross Bancroft, husband of the late Tiffany Bancroft, is a cold-hearted hedge fund executive that was looking to get out of his suffocating marriage and keep his fortune by murdering his wife. He is a red herring, because he never got to enact his plans and he is not the killer in this case. Fearing that an investigation will reveal his former plan, he is *uncooperative-2* and wants the case dropped as soon as possible.

Ross Bancroft seems to be maintaining his normal routine, working late at the office of his hedge fund and drinking whiskey alone at the apartment at night. He doesn't seem as heartbroken as you'd expect.

If asked on the reason for his wife's death, he would curtly say that his late wife was so accustomed to her bubble of refined perfection, that she was scared to death by the sight of an intruder, and her heart betrayed her.

Ross Bancroft was planning to use an expensive poison that simulates a heart attack. He flushed the vial down the toilet when Tiffany died but it snagged somewhere in the building's pipe system. Simple bloodwork cannot detect the poison, or lack thereof, but Mythos powers or advanced lab work would show Tiffany didn't have it in her system. To access the body, the crew must hit the morgue.

If the crew snoops around Ross Bancroft too much, he may reveal his true colors and hire someone to get rid of them. Ross can afford anyone, especially old enemies and Nemeses of the crew who would work for money. Otherwise, his go-to crew for this kind of work are the paramilitary mercenaries the **Valhalla Boys** (Varangian Guard, an elite unit of Norse warriors who served as the personal bodyguard of the Byzantine Emperor). The Valhalla Boys are instructed to ensure the crew doesn't investigate Tiffany's death.

THE VALHALLA BOYS ★★★

The Valhalla Boys are run-of-the-mill mercenaries, usually dressed in a mixture of military and leather that perfectly marries functionality with intimidation. Tactically-trained and battle-hardened both in their Mythos and in their mundane training, they're capable of taking out most low- to mid-power Rift teams they face. The Valhalla boys wield shotguns, crossbows, throwing axes, and grenades.

HURT OR SUBDUE 4 / BRIBE 4 / THREATEN 5

- **Collective:** This collective has a few members and a size factor of 1.
 - **Trained Paramilitaries:** When the Valhalla Boys enter the scene, give them *body armor* and *alert-2*.
 - **Berserker:** When the Valhalla Boys take a status of physical harm or subdual, if *hurt-or-subdue* isn't maxed out, the MC may give them *berserk-2*. This status applies both to attacks targeting the berserkers (including mental attacks) and when **Facing Danger** against their attacks.
-
- Signal each other silently or with clicks and then execute a tactical routine (giving themselves *tactical-advantage-2* or removing up to two tiers of negative tactical statuses)
 - Overwhelm a target with suppression fire (*cornered-3*) or aggressive firepower (*gunshot-3* or *bleeding-gash-3*)
 - Give their defeated enemy a message from their employer (give an *intimidate* status with a tier equal to that of a physical harm or subdual status the target has)
-
- Deploy in a star formation, back-to-back, showing their training

GREEN MEADOW FUNERAL HOME

There's a CLOSED sign hanging on the knob of the front door of this deathly-silent suburban funeral home, but the door is slightly ajar, and someone is heard working inside. The old house seems to creak and whisper when you enter. Inside, there is a portrait of yesterday's dearly departed on the floor of the foyer, a teenager. There was some kind of struggle here, it seems. The shattered glass from the broken picture frame has not yet been swept.

Adam Walsh was Martha Ellis' third and latest victim. A single dad of three who had recently lost his 15-year-old kid (Teddy) to an illness, Adam was drowning in despair. Martha, who was hired to sing at Teddy's funeral and felt the depth of his darkness, almost felt like his savior when she channeled the Banshee in her and sang about his endless sadness.

Nowak showed up uninvited to the funeral, barging through the doors and kicking up a ruckus just in time for everyone to see him exchange surprised looks with Adam Walsh. Adam Walsh, who didn't recognize this man, suddenly felt a sharp pain in his chest and rushed to the men's room, where he collapsed, hearing the last notes of the song that killed him echoing from the funeral hall.

This time Martha was caught face-to-face with her ghostlike pursuer and, knowing she couldn't outrun him, resorted to shouting "It's the killer!", driving the crowd to besiege Nowak and push him out the front door. Martha hurried to her car and drove away; Nowak fled by the skin of his teeth again, with bruises and cracked ribs.

INVESTIGATING THE DEATH OF ADAM WALSH

The coroner report says Adam Walsh died of unexplained heart failure.

Adam Walsh was mourning the death of his son Teddy, who had died of an illness. The family lost the mother years ago. Adam had two girls who now live with relatives, at least until the end of the investigation.

All who knew him can tell that, understandably, Adam Walsh was crushed by the death of his son.

The attendants of the funeral saw him clutch his chest when he laid his eyes on the intruder in the hoodie. Then the singer shouted “It’s the killer!” and the people in the room pursued him out of the funeral home, some of them getting physical, but he got away. Adam Walsh was found dead in the bathroom moments later.

Observant attendants describe the intruder as smelling of machine grease and burnt chemicals. Studying the spot where he was wrestled to the ground, collecting chemical samples from a torn piece of his hoodie, and/or tracking him in other mundane or mythical means could lead to Harrington Welding & Fabrication.

The owner of Green Meadow Funeral Home, Sylvia Martinez (Sleeper), was the one who invited Martha Ellis to sing in the funeral. She did this as a favor to her friend Sammy Jefferson Jr, owner of the Washboard and Martha Ellis’ manager.

Beyond the Mist, the funeral home is a cacophony of *loud-and-angry-3* deceased spirits, and it’s hard if not impossible to find Adam Walsh’s ghost, who is still hugging his son’s ghost and weeping somewhere in a dark corner. Any of the spirits here would say they witnessed Death himself visiting the funeral home today (Nowak, Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come), and heard his herald (Ellis, the Banshee). There are traces of the same swamp as the Washboard and the Bancroft penthouse, but it is muddled with much afterlife activity.

MARTHA WAS ATTACKED!

You’re startled by the sudden ring of your phone. On the other side of the line, Officer Chaavi Das / Sammy Jefferson Jr. sounds infuriated. “The killer got to her. He jumped Martha Ellis. She made it somehow, but she’s roughed up. You better come down here.”

Sooner or later, Nowak finds his way to Martha Ellis and tries to warn her of her miserable future. This occurs off-screen, without the knowledge of the crew, most likely at the Washboard or at her apartment. Unfortunately, Nowak is not very planned; he tries to communicate but can’t get his message across clearly

(on top of being mute, he is borderline illiterate; he has basic reading skills, but can’t write very well). Knowing from their first encounter that she can’t sing him to death, Ellis pulls out a holdout gun; Nowak wrestles it out of her hands, and in the process, she gets bruised. When things get physical, Nowak hesitates, realizing he won’t get through to Ellis, and flees again. Optionally, he comes out with a gunshot flesh wound, leaving blood at the scene.

When the crew arrives, Ellis is sitting in the back of an ambulance covered in a blanket. She is both *shaken-2* and *inebriated-2*; failed attempts to remove these statuses may end with the paramedics taking her away abruptly (**Deny Them Something They Want**). As explained above under Martha (page 6), the singer will try to spin this incident to her advantage.

Martha will claim to have been attacked. Her recounting of the event would be accurate except for the assault she tries to pin on Nowak.

If asked how she survived and if she discerns that the crew are Rifts, she may reveal herself as a Rift and say she was able to resist the killer’s magic, which tried to drain her life away.

Martha asserts that the killer has a personal interest in her. If she’s revealed herself as a Rift, she’ll tie it to the legendary connection they share.

The scene of the fight shows signs of breaking and entry and of a struggle consistent with Martha Ellis’ statement.

Beyond the Mist, the place has the same swampy feeling as the other crime scenes. However, closer inspection shows the source is Martha and not Nowak.

Optionally, Nowak can be identified via a print he left at the scene and/or blood, if he was shot. His police record has a battery conviction over a bar fight, and his parole officer can point the crew to his workplace, Harrington Welding & Fabrication. His police file or parole officer could also reveal he is deaf (this would speed up the case).

DEPTH 2: FALL ON DEAF EARS

MARTHA ELLIS' DRESSING ROOM

Martha Ellis's so-called dressing room smells of dead flowers and alcohol. The small, cramped converted storage room at the back of the Washboard was probably all the owners could spare to satisfy the diva's demands. The walls are lined with newspaper cutouts and posters of her glorious past. The title "Downtown's Most Soulful Voice" seems to stick out. Under the vanity, there's a bin with dozens of small plastic liquor bottles. The poor soul was just starting to pull her threadbare life together, and now this.

Searching Martha's dressing room at the Washboard could provide some insight into the singer's past, but it's not easy to access. When she's not there, the room's door is *locked-2* and Sammy or Syrus are always *watchful-2*, mindful of anyone snooping around the back rooms.

Some of the newspaper clips on the walls have parts that were cut out or redacted with a black marker. Comparing to the originals (perhaps through microfilm research) will show these are the sections where Ellis is criticized for her over-emotional performance.

Beyond the Mist, the dressing room has a faint print of the Banshee Mythos, represented as a vision of a melancholic bog, with faint trills of a tin whistle in the distance.

In a locked drawer, among lots of memorabilia, there's the calling card of a therapist, Dr. Selma Perrin, of a therapist association called Mending The Broken. If the crew calls Dr. Perrin, she may reveal details of Ellis' troubled past to get rid of them. If she realizes they are Rifts, she may take an interest in them, inviting them to meet her. See a possible encounter with a Mending The Broken therapist in the case *Broken Glass*.

HARRINGTON WELDING & FABRICATION

Driving outside of the city center and down this part of the Industrial Zone always has a sobering effect. Over there, people dream of money and fame, while over here, the people labor day and night just to make ends meet. Harrington Welding & Fabrication is just this kind of place, a greasy workshop where the sounds of buzzsaws and machinery is loud enough to keep conversations private, but the local eyes follow you everywhere you go.

Harrington Welding & Fabrication is John Nowak's workplace, but he hasn't shown up to work for a week. The foreman, Miles McFarland, can answer some questions about Nowak, but he's *suspicious-3* of the crew and has a soft spot for Nowak, so he wants to make sure he isn't assisting anyone who wants to hurt Nowak. If the crew convinces him that Nowak was involved in the murders or if they threaten his business, he may open up (reduce the status accordingly).

John Nowak is deaf and mute. This is an important clue because it rules him out as the person who called Snatcher and it rules him out as someone who uses singing to kill.

Foreman Miles has not seen John Nowak or heard from him since that afternoon last week, when he saw Nowak pick up a jazz club flyer on the wind and strangely stare into the distance for a while, looking sad. Miles kept the flyer; it's the Washboard ad for Martha Ellis.

John Nowak is alone. His elderly parents died years ago, he has no known relatives.

John Nowak is a stand up guy and everyone at the factory will attest to that. His battery charges were a result of a misfortunate altercation where he tried to defend a friend in a bar fight, and ended up being sued.

John Nowak knows the Industrial Zone well and can survive on the streets. If he doesn't want to be found, he is probably squatting in some abandoned factory or rusted silo. (See Nowak's Hideout for details about finding him.)

SNATCHER

A harrowing face covered in oozing scabs and scars is the first thing that strikes you about Maurice, AKA Snatcher. Then you notice that he's wearing a thick, battered, and blood-stained plastic apron, and carries around an unusually large meat cleaver. You reassure yourself that it's normal for a butcher, but you also can't stop wondering exactly what sort of meat comes under his knife.

Maurice Alrawi (Ghoul), known in the criminal underworld as Snatcher, offers a no-questions-asked body removal service. He works out of an old butcher shop in the Industrial Zone, where he carves up and devours the bodies he is hired to hide. The body is most often the key component of his payment.

Snatcher is a dangerous witness, who has a small but vital clue that can turn the investigation around. He can be played as a **location**, where the crew seeks him out at his butcher shop to get answers about the call made to him from the Bancroft Penthouse; or he can be played as a **triggered scene**, where he shows up angry when the Killer Strikes Again! to claim the body he was promised. In both cases he is uncooperative, and the crew must strike a deal with him or force his hand in order to get the clue.

The person who called Snatcher to get rid of the body changed their voice to mask it, a common tactic in this business. (This indicates the killer can speak, ruling out John Nowak.)

Snatcher couldn't even tell if it was a man or a woman, which he admits is unusual (and may point that the caller had some skill or training in changing their voice).



SNATCHER ★★★

HURT OR SUBDUE 4 / BEG FOR MERCY -

- **Monstrous:** When Snatcher takes a status that is countered by his wide frame or by his rotting flesh, reduce its tier by 1. When the MC makes a hard move with Snatcher, he can hit two targets or hit a single target for +1 tier.
 - **Hangry:** When Snatcher is denied a body promised to him, give him *hangry-3*.
 - **Gravediggers:** Snatcher can call for his assistants for help (Create a new Danger: Gravediggers, with *hurt-or-subdue:3*, a size factor of 1, and cleavers causing *nasty-cut-2*).
 - **Who's Your Daddy:** When Snatcher feeds on a body but does not consume it, the body turns into a ghoul with the same abilities as Snatcher's except the ghoul slashes with their claws, does not have the move **Gravediggers**, and has *exorcise:2*.
-
- Go for a limb with his cleaver (*slash-3*) or wrap a metal chain around someone and drag them along (*chained-3*)
 - Violently break free of restraints (remove up to 3 tiers or burn up to 3 tags)
 - Feed off flesh (*vicious-bite-3* and reduce one tier of harmful status or give himself one tier of positive status for each tier inflicted)
-
- Screech and growl, exposing sharp and bloody yellow teeth
 - Take the form of a body he devoured

DEPTH 3: TOLL THE DEATH KNELL

NOWAK'S HIDEOUT

The Industrial Zone looks like one big haystack. Everywhere you turn you see abandoned factories with grimey, broken glass windows; piles of concrete pipeline parts; endless lots with fleets of parked trucks. John Nowak could be anywhere. Your faraway gaze meets the smoke and steam rising above the district, as the foghorn in the docks nearby blows unnervingly like a funeral toll.

When he's not following Martha Ellis around, trying to warn her of her impending doom, John Nowak, Rift of the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come, lays low somewhere in the Industrial Zone. He may be deaf and mute, and he may have very little to his name, but Nowak knows the streets here and he is a veteran urban survivalist. Currently, he has settled in a machine-operated section of a car factory that is only rarely visited by personnel.

FINDING THE HIDEOUT

Finding the hideout won't be easy. Nowak is *covering-his-tracks-3*, and any wrong turn the crew takes in the dark, empty streets and forsaken buildings of the Industrial Zone could have them facing local gangs, industrial-grade hazards, or stray Conjurations emerging out of the many thin places around. The Valhalla Boys, Snatcher, or any of the crew's Nemeses could take this opportunity to strike.

CAPTURING NOWAK

Once the hideout is located, seizing Nowak may prove harder than expected. If the PCs score 7-9 on their **Investigate** move to find Nowak, you can choose to have Nowak know they are coming, in which case he will flee, starting a chase. If Nowak escapes, he will show up again when **the Killer Strikes Again!** or during Martha's performance at **the Opera House**.

NOWAK'S HIDEOUT ★★

CAPTURE NOWAK 4 / NOWAK ESCAPES 3

- **Factory Hideout:** When you enter Nowak's Hideout, take *watched-2* and give Nowak's Hideout *deafening noise*.
 - **Strings and Tripwires:** When you **Sneak Around** Nowak's Hideout without first **Investigating** the scene, you trip his system of visual cues. On a 10+ or 7-9, Nowak knows you're coming, but he can't see you yet.
 - **Chase:** When *capture-Nowak:4* maxes out, Nowak is cornered. When *Nowak-escapes:3* maxes out, Nowak flees (**Deny Them Something They Want**).
-
- Provide Nowak with an escape path (give Nowak *escaping-1*)
 - Block pursuers with a dead end, a metal grate, or a collapsed pile of gears (remove one tier from *capture-Nowak* or give someone *stuck-2*).
-
- Churn and clank loudly

NOWAK ★★

John Nowak is a tall, lean, and wiry man in his late 20s. He has an intimidating air about him, whether because of his Mythos' atmosphere or because of his broken nose, shaved head, and many tattoos, ranging from cheesy Christmas-themed illustrations to creepy skulls, tombstones, and crows. He usually wears a dirty hoodie pulled over a tanktop, worn-out cargo pants, and work boots.

HURT OR SUBDUE 3 / (BANISH OR BIND 4)

- **Ghostly Apparition:** When Nowak's *hurt-or-subdue* maxes out, he doesn't die or pass out. Instead, his body becomes incorporeal. *Hurt-or-subdue* becomes an immunity (*hurt-or-subdue*:-) and all statuses on it are removed. Nowak gains *banish-or-bind*:4. Until he learns to control this ability, he materializes after the next downtime.
- **Deathsense:** Nowak can sense an approaching death. As a side effect, he can instinctively dodge attacks that would kill him. When Nowak takes a status that would kill him and that can be dodged given his precognition, he ignores the status instead.
- **Silent Toll:** When Nowak's deafness first becomes apparent or relevant in a scene, give him *deaf*. He is immune to Martha Ellis's Banshee keen.
- **Flash Forward:** As a hard move, Nowak forsee the grim future of a person he can see and makes a rough sketch depicting it. Upon gazing on the sketch, the person whose future is depicted sees his predicted fate and becomes *emotional*-3 or *terrified*-3.
- **Urban Survivalist:** When Nowak enters the scene give him *alert*-2. At the end of each downtime, if he lost his last hideout, he finds a new one (Create Danger: Nowak's Hideout).
- Throw a powerful punch at someone (*staggering*-3) or grapple them (*restrained*-3)
- Wave his hands and mumble in warning of what's to come
- Receive a vision about someone's death or grim future

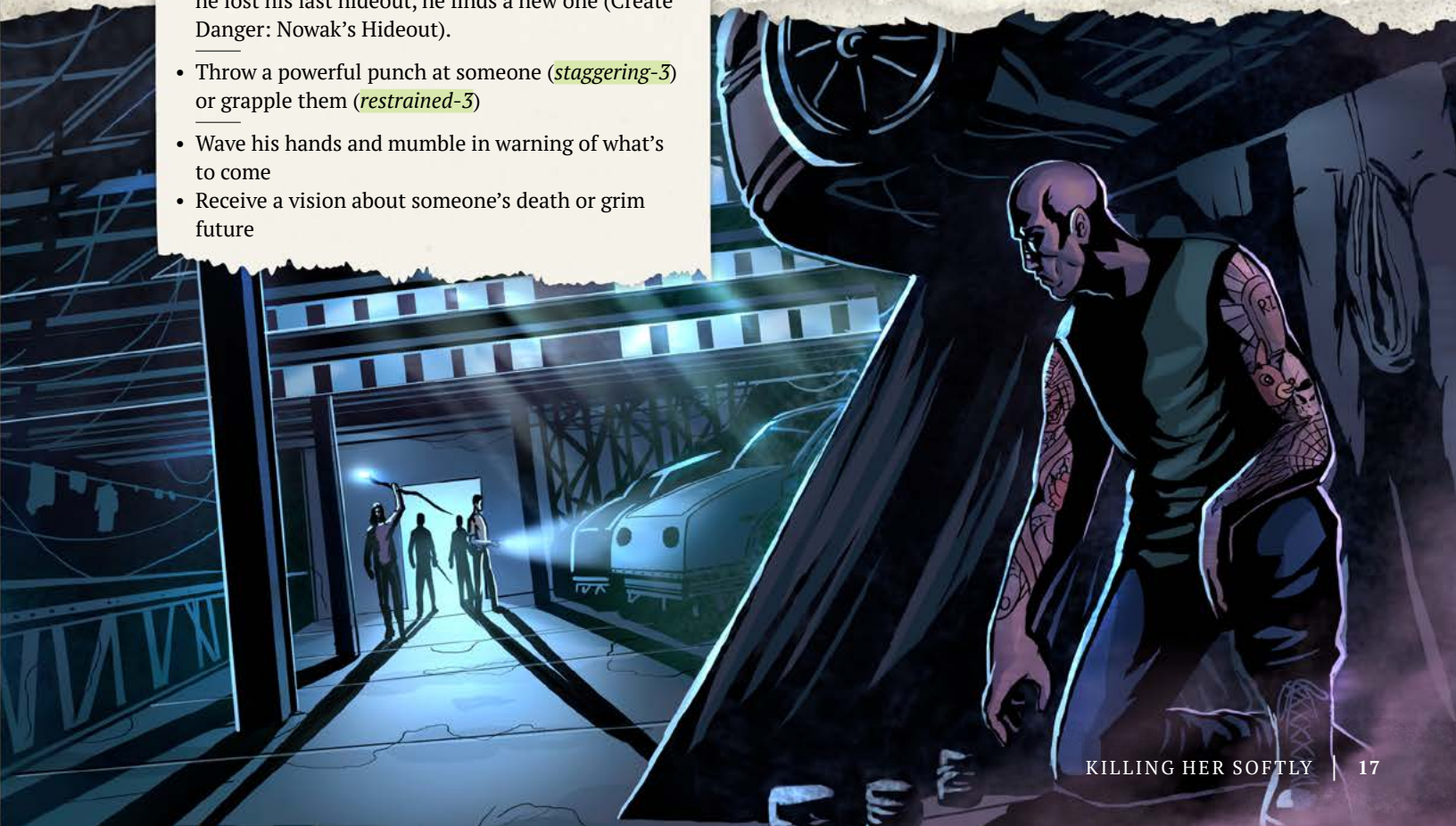
INTERACTING WITH NOWAK

Once cornered, Nowak will wait to see what the crew does next. If the crew is still suspecting Nowak at this point, they might attempt to subdue him or even take revenge for his alleged victims and hurt him.

Communicating with Nowak is difficult; being deaf, mute, and partly illiterate, John Nowak is an isolated man. Most conversational skills (and power tags) won't work here, and he must be assuaged before he can be approached. When someone tries to gain Nowak's trust, give him *apprehensive*-2 if the crew has not acted violently against him, and *afraid-for-his-life*-4 if they have. Once cooperative, Nowak can easily answer yes-or-no questions, point at people, objects, or pictures, etc.

When he saw Martha on the Washboard flyer, Nowak had a flash of her future. He's vague about the exact details of Martha's future, but if pushed he could sketch a newspaper page with Martha's picture titled MURDERER.

Sensing the impending deaths, Nowak tried to stop Martha at each of the crime scenes, but he was too far or arrived too late. He needed to be closer to Martha to be able to intervene in time, but the crew and/or the police forced him to lay low and keep his distance.



Nowak is immensely frustrated with his inability to communicate and doesn't understand why he was given this morbid gift of foresight if he cannot even help anyone. He is on the brink of despairing.

He is also genuinely sad and sympathetic for Martha, who is too caught up in her own pain to see the harm she's inflicting on others.

THE KILLER STRIKES AGAIN!

Left to her own devices, Martha Ellis will strike again, seeking an outlet for her complicated, tormented soul. Whether the crew suspects her or still believes she is the victim, it is time to throw a fat clue their way. This time around the crew will arrive in the nick of time to witness Ellis and Nowak battling it out.

The victim of Martha's next strike should be someone close to or liked by the PCs. Ideally, it should be one of the crew's supporting cast. Otherwise, Ellis may target a favorite NPC from the case such as Sammy Jefferson Jr. or police officers Das or Quinn, etc.

This triggered scene can play out in several ways:

- If Nowak is still on the loose, he arrives in time to interrupt the ending of Martha's song, but she locks him up in the bathroom, capturing him.

- If Nowak is locked up or worse, and the PCs already suspect Martha, they could be the ones looking for her, arriving in the middle of her song.
- If Nowak is locked up and the PCs don't suspect Martha, Officers Das or Quinn can walk in on Martha and the victim, and then call on the PCs to investigate, raising the possibility that they got the wrong man.

The attack occurs at the victim's home. When the crew arrives, Martha is *distraught-3* and of course *drunk-3* as last time. However, the victim isn't dead; the song was interrupted and they lost consciousness, conveniently falling into a coma.

Martha isn't aware that the victim isn't dead (not even her Deathsense can operate at her current level of intoxication). She relates to the victim as having passed away until someone notes that the victim is still alive, at which point she becomes very nervous.

Martha insists that 'the hooded killer' was the one who affected the victim (whether or not Nowak was at the scene). If she's told Nowak is locked up, she'll insist there's another killer.

Confronted about her song, she will claim that she was trying to help the victim.

MARTHA ★★★★★

HURT OR SUBDUE 1 / BEG FOR MERCY - / EMOTIONALLY HEAL 5 / (BANISH OR BIND 4)

- **Apparition:** When Martha's *hurt-or-subdue* maxes out, her body becomes incorporeal. *Hurt-or-subdue* becomes an immunity (*hurt-or-subdue*:-) and all statuses on it are removed. She gains *banish-or-bind:4*. Until she learns to control this ability, she materializes after the next downtime.
- **Deathsense:** Martha can sense an approaching death. As a side effect, she can instinctively dodge attacks that would kill her. When Martha takes a status that would kill her and that can be dodged given her precognition, she ignores the status instead.
- **Keen of the Banshee:** When Martha is incorporeal, anyone hearing her sing is affected as if she is singing about his or her personal pain.
- **Alcoholic:** When Martha Ellis enters the scene, give her *drunk-2*. As a hard move, she can give herself *drunk-2*.
- **Broken:** When you first try to discover or affect how Martha Ellis feels, she takes *full-of-self-hate-4*.
- **Pain Behind the Eyes:** As a hard move, the MC will ask you about your character's greatest pain. Martha can sense your answer.
- **Opera House Showdown:** When Martha sings to everyone at the Opera House, give the Opera House audience a spectrum of *rend-hearts:6*. When *rend-hearts* is maxed out, everyone in the Opera House audience dies of grief.
- Sing about one's pain, if she knows it (*emotionally-overwhelmed-4*, if the target is a PC and the pain is attached to a theme, they can mark Crack or Fade to let go of the pain and avoid the status)
- Push someone back with drunken force (if she's not incorporeal, *prone-2* or *bruised-2*)
- Pull out a concealed holdout gun and shoot someone (*gunshot-3*)
- Grab the mic

If exposed and threatened with consequences (such as arrest), Martha will drop her act, revealing the restless soul behind the facade. She will pick out one of the lead characters present and start singing, hoping to bring her would-be-captors down one by one and unleashing all the hatred and anger she has built up for those who misunderstand her and stand in her way to glory and fame. Unless she is helped, she won't calm down until she has killed someone with her keening. She would then come to her senses and attempt to flee the scene.

DEPTH 4: A DEATHLY NIGHT AT THE OPERA

THE OPERA HOUSE

"Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to the Opera House. Tonight we have a very special lineup of musicians and performers who will share with us the magic and mystery of jazz music. From the City's most beloved big band tunes to the most alluring and melancholic melodies, we have it all. Prepare yourselves for a long night of the soul... And now, to open up the performance, please welcome Downtown's most soulful voice, the enchanting - MARTHA ELLIS!"

This triggered scene offers a grandiose ending to the case in the event Martha Ellis has not yet been stopped, or if she was set free for lack of evidence. The crew catches wind of Martha's next performance: Martha Ellis will go on stage in a special jazz night at the City's Opera House, in a pivotal gig landed thanks to the relentless efforts of Sammy Jefferson Jr.

The PCs could arrive at this scene with different ideas in mind, depending on what they had discovered so far. They may wish to stop Ellis, to confront her, or, if she was able to fool them thus far, to listen to her music. They may also hear about this event as it unfolds and rush to the scene.

Martha Ellis, in any case, will reveal herself on stage as the Banshee she truly is. She's only partly aware of the feelings brewing in her, feelings of hatred and anger, guilt and extreme sadness - all circling around a deep sense of mourning for the past, her failing career, and the crimes she committed to save it. These feelings were always there, in every killing she carried out, and tonight they will push her to try and sing her ultimate performance, the quintessential swan song, and unlock the darkest emotions of not just one person but everyone

in the audience at once. If she is not stopped, the result would be a public disaster that will be etched forever as a painful memory in the history of the City.

Depending on their situation and what they know about Martha Ellis, the NPCs in the case may take different roles in the scene:

- As the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come, John Nowak still wants to warn Ellis from making the biggest mistake of her life and being forever hated by everyone around her. If he is free or able to break free, he will show up at the Opera House.
- Sammy Jefferson Jr., if he is still oblivious to the part his singer and client had in the killings, will be there, wearing his tackiest suit. For him, this night is about finally legitimizing his shady business and starting to make some real money. The bouncer Syrus may also be invited, serving as a personal bodyguard for the diva.
- Officers Das and Quinn could be doing traffic duty outside the Opera House on this busy night; they could be chasing an escaped Nowak on his way to the Opera House; or, if they suspect a crime, they might be there to "inspect the security arrangements" and keep watch.

MORE BROKEN GLASS

During this scene, when Martha's wailing hits a crescendo, every artifact of glass in the Opera House shatters - from stained-glass windows to lightbulbs - showering the audience with shards of glass. This is mostly for effect; the glass causes mostly panic and minor scratches but no substantial harm.



AFTERMATH

Here are a few questions to consider and points to revisit when you wrap up this case:

- What was the end of Martha Ellis? Was she healed, imprisoned, or killed? Even if someone found a way to banish or destroy the Banshee, Martha's emotion may have left a powerful print that continues to echo behind the veil of the Mist. If she was stopped in time, is she being helped to work through her issues? How are her powers contained? Perhaps she is admitted to the Municipal Institute for the Criminally Insane, where she will be groomed directly by Dr. Krystal Knight and resurface as part of her doomsday plan in *Broken Glass*.
- What about Nowak? Was he able to help Martha and accomplish what he set out to do? If not, does he continue to stop villains from ruining their future as a ghostly messenger of death, or did he despair and turn to evil, or back into the sleep of the Mist? Did he get to keep his job or was he sent to prison?

- With the similarities in their Mythoi, and their rather opposite mundane personas, do Martha and Nowak become mortal enemies or do they develop an inexplicable love that crosses space, time, and prison bars?
- What kind of relationship formed between the crew and officers Das and Quinn: a cold rivalry or a friendly alliance? Somewhere in between?
- How did the legal aspect of the case close? Was someone formally charged with the deaths of Darnell Fox, Tiffany Bancroft, or Adam Walsh? Did anyone help their families reach closure, or is it better to leave them in peace? Do their souls rest in peace or are they restless, seeking revenge?
- What is the future of the Washboard? Did Sammy Jefferson Jr. finally go legit or did he return to his usual sources of income?

Finally, if you are playing through the story arc, be sure to go back to the red lead of **Dr. Selma Perrin** of *Mending the Broken* (page 14), and sow the seeds for the next installment in this vein.

