



COLD SHADOWS

DEDICATION

For Stewart. Your loss is felt daily.

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INTRODUCTION & GLOSSARY

Welcome to *Cold Shadows*, an espionage roleplaying game of secrets and betrayal. *Cold Shadows* is based on the excellent ruleset by John Wick laid out in *Houses of the Blooded* and *Blood & Honor*. Additionally, we've also leveraged material from Woerner Wunderwerks's wonderful expansion: *A World of Dew*.

Cold Shadows is designed to allow you to tell spy stories, like the sort found in the novels of John le Carré, Robert Ludlum or Daniel Silva. Stories of subtle betrayal, secret deals and unauthorized operations are commonplace here.

What differentiates *Cold Shadows* from other espionage roleplaying games? A deliberate focus on putting narrative control in the player hands (through mechanics), and a focus on starting players as experienced and high ranking officers in their Agency and Division.

Throughout this book, you'll find call-outs, and suggestions for adapting the game for different genres. When writing this book, our primary focus was on rules that supported suspenseful and dramatic tension, over action thriller espionage and other forms. However, you will see sidebars suggesting how you can adapt this game to different genres and themes.



COMMON TERMS

Agency: The overall coalition of multiple Divisions under a single Director. When you start the game, your Agency only has one Division (yours).

Director: The leader of your Agency. The woman behind the desk that you report to.

Agent: Agents work for Agencies and are assigned to Divisions. If Agents is capitalized, we're referring to the players and their characters. If it's not, then we mean agents in a general "spy" sense.

Asset: Assets are resources and locations assigned to your Division. If not capitalized, assets refer to targets, important people, and more.

Division: The party of Agents or the specific group within the Agency for which the Agents work. For example: The Berlin Office of the CIA is the Berlin Division of the Central Intelligence Agency.

The Field: The Area of Operations for your Agency. Usually it is a single city that is a major espionage hub, one small country, a large region of a geographically large country, or a large multinational region with sparse, but similar people groups or a large area distant from major espionage powers. For example: East Germany, Great Britain, North Africa and Southeast Asia are all valid Fields of Operation.

Dice: When we refer to dice, we exclusively refer to six-sided dice that you can get at any fine hobby store, or out of board games around your house. You'll want roughly ten for each player if possible, but if not, ten for the table is fine.

Narrator: The Narrator is the director of your spy movie. They are responsible for handling the Director and Agency, and any non-player characters you meet.

Officers: All Players and their Agents are Officers in a Division. If something refers to "Officers", it's referring to the players and their characters.

Risk: Making a roll to resolve an action is a risk.

Trust Points: Trust points are currency and points used in the game to gain bonuses, measure effects or generally help tell a story around your Agents. You can use tokens for these.

Wagers: Wagers represent narrative control in the game. They are generated from risks. We'll get into detail later about wagers.

CHAPTER ONE:

AGENCIES AND AGENTS

“What do you think spies are: priests, saints and martyrs? They’re a squalid procession of vain fools, traitors too, yes; pansies, sadists, and drunkards, people who play cowboys and Indians to brighten their rotten lives. Do you think they sit like monks in London balancing the rights and wrongs?”

- John le Carré

Agents are expendable, but Agencies endure.

Cold Shadows is a game about espionage, betrayal, loyalty and intrigue. Your character (also called an Agent) is essential to the story, but it’s important to remember that those who prioritize themselves over country and Agency often become the traitors and moles they fear. It’s important to remember that duty to country and Agency are paramount.

As we said above: Agents are expendable, but Agencies endure.

As such, determining the resources and reach of an Agency is of primary importance in the game. Agents are the second step taken, as the goals and resources of the Agency will often influence character creation.

It’s also very important to note that you will probably end up playing multiple characters over the course of a game. Agents die, retire or get burned, and will need to be replaced.

Unlike in *Blood & Honor*, in *Cold Shadows*, all Agents are always from the same Agency.

A group of Agents is called a Division, and multiple Divisions make up an Agency. All Agencies start with one Division (the Division the players are part of).

MAKING AN AGENCY

Before you make your Agent, you must work with your group to create the Division of the Agency that you serve. When making an Agency, you will work as a team to create the philosophical and mechanical pieces of your superiors and goals. These bonuses will influence all Agents of the Agency.

- First, who is the Director of your Agency? Historical accuracy is secondary to theme and fun here. If you know the real historical figures and behavior, that’s wonderful and can add to immersion. However, never let real history get in the way of a great story and experience for all players.
- Second, what is the Virtue in which your Agency attempts to train each Agent? What is their priority as an Agency?
- Third, what Assets does your Agency have at its ready disposal?
- Fourth, what Aspects does your Agency have?
- Fifth, what Reputation does your Agency have? What are they famous for?
- Sixth, what is a secret about your Agency that is true?

Below is each step in thorough detail.

STEP 1: DIRECTOR

First, the group must choose a Director, the head of the Agency.

The Director is a powerful figure with many demands on their time. They don't always have a lot of energy or resources to devote to you, and so they start at Rank 1. The Director's Rank is equal to the number of Divisions under them. (*The War Between Agencies* chapter has rules for increasing Divisions).

You can either roll on the Director Personality table, or you can pick one of the six available Director personalities below.

The strengths and weakness of a Director are often reflected in how their Agents and subordinates conduct business.

D6 roll	Director Personality
1	Ambitious
2	Clever
3	Cruel
4	Cunning
5	Dangerous
6	Paranoid

Ambitious

An ambitious Director is a terrifying force to work for. All resources, tools and agents are expendable in the pursuit of their goals. They will sacrifice anything and stop at nothing until they've accomplished their designs.



- **Advantage:** Your Agency gains one additional Season Action per Season.
- **Disadvantage:** All Agents have the "Ambitious" aspect, which can be tagged or used by opponents or allies. See the *Aspects* chapter for more details.

Clever

A clever Director puts their focus on R&D, experiments and new innovations. They believe that the way to solve problems is with unorthodox solutions.

- **Advantage:** All equipment provided for Agents is considered *good quality*. You can find more information about this in the *Seasons* chapter.
- **Disadvantage:** All Agents gain the aspect "Unorthodox", which can be used against them. See the *Aspects* chapter for more details.

Cruel

A cruel Director does not suffer fools or traitors. Getting called to the office of such a Director is often the end of an Agent's career, but any Agents who serve such a Director are feared throughout the land.

- **Advantage:** All Agents who serve a cruel Director gain 2 bonus dice for any intimidation risks. See the *Risk* chapter for more details.
- **Disadvantage:** All Agents who serve such a Director gain the "Cruel" aspect in social situations. See the *Aspects* chapter for more details.

It may sound like the director is a player agent, but in fact, it's an NPC embodied by the Narrator. However, if the story ends up where a player Agent becomes director, the Narrator should allow that.

Cunning

A cunning Director believes that the strength of an Agency lies in the talents of the Agency's spies. They carefully cultivate allies and friends, and they have a dossier on everyone.

- **Advantage:** Every Season, the Agency gains a free Espionage action (see *Seasons*).
- **Disadvantage:** All Agents have the "Untrustworthy" aspect. See the *Aspects* chapter for more details.

Dangerous

The dangerous Director takes risks, makes rash choices, and rewards Agents who do the same. They embody the qualities most feared by other Agencies: unpredictable, lethal and deadly.

- **Advantage:** Any Agent gains 2 bonus dice when taking a risk that may end their life.
- **Disadvantage:** Any time the Narrator removes *Trust* for declining a risk, they remove *four* instead of three.

Paranoid

The paranoid Director believes every corner of the Agency has been infiltrated by moles and spies. They trust no one — not even their allies.

- **Advantage:** Any social situation involving interrogation gains 2 bonus dice.
- **Disadvantage:** All Agents gain the "Paranoid" tag, which can be used against them. See the *Aspects* chapter for more details.

STEP 2: VIRTUES

Every Agency focuses on training in one of six Virtues. Your Agency must select which qualities it wishes to instill and engender in its agents above all others. Your choice here says a lot about your Agency and the sort of Agents it recruits.

Charisma

Charisma is the ability to communicate and talk, to get your point across and sway hearts and minds. This can be through words (spoken or written), dance, or any other form of communication or expression. Charisma is the most essential Virtue, for how can you accomplish your Agency's goals if you cannot convince anyone of your purpose?

Resolve

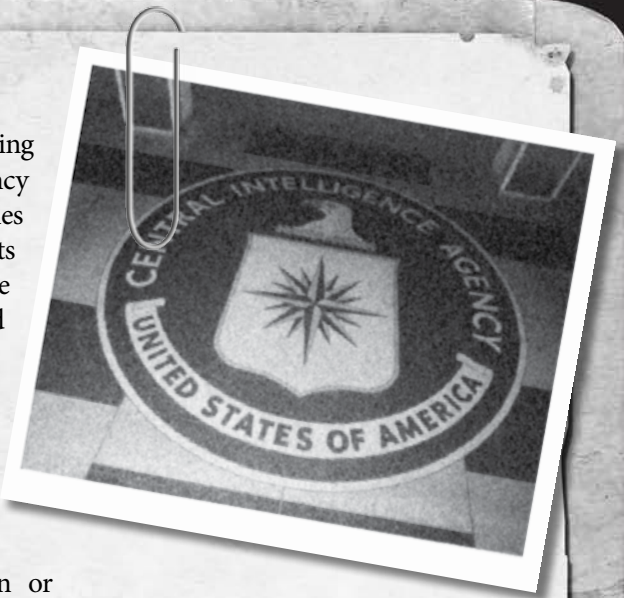
Resolve is the ability to say, "No," to temptation, seduction, fear, pain or torture. Resolve is the most essential virtue, for if Agents cannot say no, then how can you trust them?

Perception

Perception is the ability to see the plan within the plan, and all the moving cogs and parts of the grand schemes of Directors and Agencies. Perception is the most essential virtue, or else how will you anticipate your enemy's plans?

Violence

Violence is the ability to wield weapons, inflict harm and damage your surroundings. Violence is the most essential Virtue, because in the end, all spies die... who better to bring that about than you?



Athleticism

Athleticism encompasses all physical actions: lifting, running, climbing, hiding and even manual dexterity actions such as picking locks, palming wallets and more. Athleticism is the most essential Virtue because without it, you cannot escape or tail your targets.

Intellect

Intellect is knowing what is the truth of the matter is, and what knowledge can bring. Intellect encompasses book smarts, street smarts and raw decisive brainpower. Intellect is the most essential Virtue because all spies must be able to determine falsehood from fact.

STEP 3: AGENCY ASSETS

Each Director has numerous resources dedicated to the use of Agencies. Agency Assets represent wealth and essential individuals available on your home turf during down time and between missions.

Each player may pick one Asset to add to your Agency. You'll find out how to use those Resources in the *Seasons* chapter, but below is a compiled list you may choose from. Some of these Assets may physically be the same place, but they are separate based on the advantages they each offer. **You start with CON OPs Asset at Rank 1 for free.**



Like everything in *Cold Shadows*, Assets have Ranks. All Assets begin at Rank 1, and may not be increased except through Season Actions.

- **Archives:** A place for Agents to gather leads and gain knowledge about the world.
- **COMINT:** Access to current enemy intelligence via communications intercepts.
- **Combat Instructors:** Trainers who help to improve the combat ability of Agents.
- **CON OPs:** Where Operations are run from, and analysts to help spies make decisions.
- **Military Liaison:** Access to soldiers and their equipment to help on Operations.
- **Medical Wing:** Medical attention and long-term rehabilitation are provided here.
- **Non-Governmental Contacts:** Connections with non-government organizations like multinational corporations, organized crime syndicates and political groups.
- **Quartermaster:** A place where special equipment is created, maintained and assigned.
- **School:** A place where new agents, analysts and agency associates are trained.
- **Shrink:** A place for spies to recover their balance and mental stability.
- **Slush Fund:** Financial resources and money.
- **Training Site:** A place where Agents improve their abilities beyond violence.

STEP 4: ASPECTS

Each Agency has four aspects that define their approach to CON OPs and missions. An Aspect is like a skill or talent, but it's less narrowly defined, vaguer in a sense. It's an emphasis on style, approach and how to handle a problem. It's a cliché in spy films, a common trope that has game mechanics wrapped around it.

For example, a commonly chosen Aspect is Teamwork:

Teamwork

Invoke: Your Agency is known for the quality of teamwork that its field agents display, and this training is emphasized from day one. Gain three dice when helping another Agency member accomplish a goal that *both of you want*.

Compel: You genuinely feel that success is determined by working together. You will help another Agency member, regardless of the risk to yourself. If you are harmed or burned by the direct actions of the Agent you helped, remove one Trust from the Trust pool.

As outlined above, this Aspect gives your character three bonus dice whenever the Agent takes a risk appropriate to the Aspect. However, on the other hand it has a *compel* that will force the Agent to behave in a certain way due to the ingrained training.

When presented with the opportunity to help another Agent, the Narrator adds a Trust Point to the pool. If you ignore the chance to help, your pool does not gain the Trust. We'll go into more detail on this in the *Aspects* chapter.

Each Agency has four Aspects that define it. You pick four from the list below to define the character and training style of your Agency. Remember, these Aspects also define how your Agency tends to approach problems or missions. Choose carefully.

Agents Don't Retire. They Flame Out.

Invoke: Your Agents are well-known for being ruthless when it comes to matters of revenge. Gain three bonus dice whenever you are directly confronting an issue of revenge.

Compel: Unfortunately, your Agents are also rather hot-blooded and rush to judgment, seldom listening to reason when offended.

Center Of Attention

Invoke: Your Agents know exactly how to get attention. Gain three dice for any act in front of a crowd intended to serve as a distraction or gather attention to the actor.

Compel: You are a Cover hound. You can't shut up about yourself and you must always be in the spotlight.

Culture And Etiquette

Invoke: Your Agency knows the proper procedure and etiquette for everything. Gain three bonus dice for any risks involving manners.

Compel: You must do things the right way. Doing otherwise is disgraceful and dishonorable.

Don't Trust The Dossier

Invoke: Your Agents and Agency are exceptionally good at deceiving others. Gain three dice whenever trying to lie.

Compel: Lying is just like any other source of power: incredibly addictive. You must lie when given the opportunity.

Even The Grave Can't Hide Secrets

Invoke: Your Agency is incredibly good at discovering and keeping secrets. Gain three dice for any risk obtaining or keeping secrets.

Compel: You love secrets and you tend to go out of your way to discover them.

Flip The Enemy

Invoke: Your Agents understands the need for compassion. When you try to convince another, you know how to portray sympathy with their cause, so you gain three dice.

Compel: You truly believe in compassion and will sympathize with those in dire need.

Friends In The Dark

Invoke: Your Agency is known for how it integrates itself with its targets, and the ability of its Agents to defuse tense social situations with humor. Gain three bonus dice when using humor in a delicate situation.

Compel: Sometimes, the fool forgets that he is only a fool. You forget your place from time to time and cause situations that would not have occurred if you had kept your mouth shut.

Grim As Death

Invoke: No humor. No compassion. Nothing but action and results. Gain three bonus dice to resist any attempt to change your mind once you've made it up.

Compel: You have no sense of beauty. You cannot appreciate poetry or painting or theater or any of the arts.

Hold My Beer

Invoke: Your Agency is well-known for its excessive Agents. Gain three dice on any risk when drunk.

Compel: A drunken man will say anything, do anything. Be careful. Drunkenness is not always forgiven. And if you are caught leaking secrets...

Honeypot

Invoke: The Agents of your Agency are beautiful, cunning and deadly. Dashing, dangerous and sly. Gain three dice for any seduction risk (regardless of your character's gender).

Compel: A charmer is always lured by charms. You often succumb to likewise advances.

As with all Compels, the Narrator should use this to help tell a compelling story, not antagonize or make a player uncomfortable.

Match The Cover To The Skillset

Invoke: Your Agents are knowledgeable in crafts such as industry work, shipping, factory work, etc. Gain three dice for risks involving craftsmanship or general blue-collar tasks.

Compel: Your Agents are also known for their fair treatment of the lower- and middle-income classes. You show them compassion and good will.

Men Of Iron, Women Of Steel

Invoke: Gain three bonus dice when resisting physical pain or arduous circumstances.

Compel: You are rude, brutish and don't care about etiquette.

Reckless Behavior

Invoke: Your Agents do not hesitate. Gain three bonus dice for any risk that is impetuous, impertinent and spontaneous.

Compel: You must act without thinking, jump into situations without knowledge and otherwise throw yourself into danger.

Teamwork

Invoke: Your Agency is known for the quality of teamwork that its field agents display, and this training is emphasized from day one. Gain three dice when helping another Agency member accomplish a goal that *both of you want*.

Compel: You genuinely feel that success is determined by working together. You will help another Agency member, regardless of the

risk to yourself. If you are harmed or burned by the direct actions of the Agent you helped, remove one Trust from the Trust pool.

Wilderness Survival Training

Invoke: Your Agency prioritizes training in the wilds and outdoors. This Aspect gives three bonus dice for risks involving hunting and surviving in the wilderness.

Compel: The Agents of your Agency are known for being very clever hunters but they sometimes struggle with social interactions and delicate customs.

Words Are Bulletproof

Invoke: Your Agency is known for its ability to inspire hearts and minds. The Agents are masters of propaganda. Gain three dice when making speeches or performing.

Compel: You tend to speak when not spoken to.



STEP 5: REPUTATION

Every Agency has a reputation, a thing they are known for being the best at. What is that thing for your Agency? What do they excel at? What can no other organization can match them in?

Some good examples of Reputations are as follows:

- Our Agency is the best at removing problematic targets before they become a problem.
- Our Agency has a Reputation of being the best at snatch-and-grabs.
- No one can withstand our Agency's interrogation techniques.

STEP 6: SECRETS

All Agencies have secrets and hidden skeletons. What are yours? Each player gets to say one true thing about your Agency. You cannot contradict an already-established truth, but you can modify it. You can say whatever you like — it's true. Remember to keep a focus on the style and immersion of the game here.

For example, you could create secrets around the Director, failed operations or other events in the Division and Agency's past. Items such as: "We have a secret mole in the group," or: "The Director has an unsavory reputation because of how they got promoted" are great fodder for stories to be told.

FINISHED. YOUR AGENCY IS BUILT.



MAKING AN AGENT

Once you've made an Agency, it's time to make an Agent. Take the following steps to create an agent. You'll notice that it's like building an Agency.

- Name
- Role
- Virtues
- Aspects
- Trust and Cover
- Choose an Advantage.

STEP 1: CHOOSE A NAME

Your character's name is important; it represents who they are and their life. It doesn't have to be their birth name (in fact, it probably isn't). Pick a name, and then pick a personal meaning your character associates with that name. If a risk relates to that meaning, then you can add two die to the risk. (We cover building Dice Pools for Risks later).

Then select your character's Codename. If a risk relates to that meaning, then you can add one die to the risk. (We cover building Dice Pools for Risks later).

STEP 2: CHOOSE A ROLE

Now, you must determine your role within the Agency. This is the job you do daily and the reason you were recruited. There can be multiple agents fulfilling the same role in an Agency. Your role gives you three distinct advantages:



- Your role gives you three bonus dice for any risk involving your job. For example, if you are a Security Chief, and you are protecting an asset, then you gain 3 dice.
- Your role also grants you a unique special ability. Read the role descriptions to find out more.
- Finally, you gain a specific benefit during the game. This will usually result in a single use "in-game benefit".

It's important to note that the players are not just junior field agents, but instead are trusted operatives and officers of the Director.

Accountant

The Economic Analyst (Accountant) handles money and growth. They learn how funds and banks can be manipulated for information, data and gaining benefit over the targets and enemies of the Agency.

Bonus: You gain your Role Rank as bonus dice on any risk involving economic institutions or finances.

Ability: You are trained in finances, hiding and moving money, and so much more. You start each game with 1 Resource for each Role Rank you have (Resources are covered in later chapters). You can spend this Resource as normal, or you can spend your Resources as free wagers on any risk. You can choose to spend the wagers after the risk has been made and privilege is determined.

Benefit: You know how to find things that no one else can. You can spend a Trust point, and underworld contacts will make the item you need available to you. If you need multiple copies of the item, you must make a Role + Cunning risk. Every wager grants you an additional copy of that item. If the Trust pool is empty, you lose this benefit.

Analyst

You are the master analyst of all the data your division processes. You know everything, you see and hear everything, and your fingers are everywhere. You keep it all straight.

Bonus: You gain your Role Rank as bonus dice when engaging in gathering information or data for the Agency.

Ability: You have access a network of contacts embedded all over who gather information for you. Your contacts give you a number of facts on characters you meet, and each game, you may state a number of truths about NPCs equal to your Role Rank. (For example: if your Role Rank is 3, you get 3 Truths per game, not per NPC.) You may not use this ability on other players.

Benefit: Your contacts are everywhere. A number of times per game equal to your Role Rank, you may choose to overhear or see any discussion or event. However, if your contacts don't trust or communicate, then you lose this benefit. In addition, if the Trust pool is empty, then you lose this benefit.

Commander

The Commander oversees the soldiers, guards and garrisons of the station. They're usually publicly called the Head of Security of an embassy, a captain in a locally station unit or some similar role.

Bonus: You gain your Role Rank as bonus dice when leading other Agents or inspiring them to work together.

Ability: You may take an action to survey the circumstances of a scene. Make a Perception + Role risk. If you gain privilege, every Agent on your side gains one die due to the advantages you've found. Any wager you make increases the number of dice by one per wager.

Benefit: You have access to a number of soldiers, equal to your Role Rank. Your soldiers require no upkeep, and are always loyal to you if there is Trust remaining in the Trust pool.

These are your soldiers and they will do as you command. Only the Director can spend wagers or use risks to make them betray you (and the Director can only do that if the Trust pool is empty).

Counter-Intelligence

The Counter-Intel Agent is the thin wall that helps disrupt the CON OPs of other agencies and organizations. You're the spy who hunts other spies and makes their lives a living hell. You usually serve as internal security, ensuring that other spies in your Agency stay loyal.

Bonus: You gain your Role Rank as bonus dice on any risk involving disrupting plans for other Agencies or tracking their agents.

Ability: You are trained to find the holes in plans, exploit them and flip enemy assets. Once per session, you may make a Role + Intellect risk. If you gain privilege, then for each wager you made, you may decrease the Cover rating of another agent. If you decrease the cover to zero, the cover is immediately burned and nothing is gained from it. You must know the agent you are going to burn, and you must interact with them in a narratively appropriate way to use this ability. (This can be by leaking their identity to the press, compromising them in the eyes of their Director or other appropriate actions). If you use this Ability against an ally, then you can never be their Bond of Trust again, and you must remove 3 Trust points from the Trust pool. They might not know who did it, but you can expect that they will try to find out.

Benefit: You can never be the target of someone's Bond of Trust (they can be yours, though). Additionally, you always have one Betrayal check with other players. Any Agent who makes a Violence risk against you must set aside dice from their pool equal to your Role Rank before making a risk.

NOTE: The Counter-Intel Agent is an interesting beast. It's very powerful, but it also doesn't deny you the use of your ability against allies. Don't be a poor player and just ruin the game for your friends. The Counter-Intel Agent is designed to tell stories, and while using its ability against other allies can make for a great story, it can also be very negative. If you're going to constantly attack other players with this role, then perhaps you shouldn't be playing this game.

Doctor

The Doctor handles the health and physical wellbeing of the Agents and staff at their Division. They often accompany the Agents on their missions, and risk their life to save the lives of others... often, even the lives of enemies.

Bonus: You gain your Role Rank as bonus dice on any risk involving medicine or medical treatment or processes.

Deputy Director

The Deputy Director oversees the local Division of the Agency. They are the Director's proxy when the Director is not in contact.

Bonus: You gain your Role Rank as bonus dice when directing operations, leading a team or planning.


Ability: Because you are the local representative of the Director, you have similar authority. When the Director is not present or speaking, you have the Social Rank of "Director". You may add a number of bonus dice to any social situation equal to your Role Rank or the Director's Rank, whichever is higher.

Benefit: You have an entourage of Staff and Admins equal to your Role that will accompany you if you want. Your Staff includes various admins who run errands, carry messages and perform lesser bookkeeping functions. These are your staff and they will do as you command. Only the Director can spend wagers or use risks to make them betray you (and the Director can only do that if the Trust pool is empty).

Freelancer

The Freelancer is a gun for hire, a mercenary in the covert world of espionage, who is all over the board. You have some shady contacts and a negative reputation, but you get paid well.

Bonus: You gain your Role Rank as bonus dice when involved in violence.



Ability: You are trained in handling injury, sickness and poisons. You may take an action to diagnose and treat any poison, disease or injury sustained by an individual. Make a Role + Intellect risk. If you gain privilege, you may spend wagers equal to the Injury Rank to lower the Injury Rank one for one. Once you have treated an injury you cannot do so again for 48 hours.

Benefit: You are a Doctor, which means your status is protected by international law. Espionage is a dangerous business and you forfeit some of that protection, but when performing your Role, if you are injured or killed, then increase the War Rank by your Role Rank, with the Agency or organization of whoever struck or killed you. If the Trust pool is empty, you lose this benefit.

Ability: You have lots of contacts and friends in low places. When trying to locate or find someone, you add your Role Rank times two to the total of any risk you make.

Benefit: You supply your own equipment. You start with a weapon of your choice at Great quality.

Handler

The Handler is responsible for human assets, training new Agents and handling the delicate social manipulation that espionage work requires.

Bonus: You gain your Role Rank as bonus dice when trying to flip an agent, manipulate a human asset or objective or train a new Agent.

Ability: You are trained to handle the extensive social work that having human

assets entails. A number of times per game, equal to your Role Rank, you may procure a piece of information from an asset or contact. This information should be something needed by an Agent or the Agency. You also start with Trust Rank 3 (instead of Trust Rank 2).

Benefit: You excel at flipping enemy agents. When confronting an enemy agent, you can attempt to suborn them and make them a double agent. Make a Role + Cunning risk. If you set aside more wagers than your War Rank with their organization or Agency, they are now a double agent, and will aid you. Once they've aided you a number of times equal to your Role, you lose them as a double agent, unless you reset the duration on your last meeting with them. You can have a number of double agents equal to your Role Rank.



Hitter

The Hitter is the weapon of the Agency. When someone needs to die, the Agency turns to you.

Bonus: You gain your Role Rank as bonus dice when engaging in violence against an Agency-sanctioned target.

Ability: You carry a license to kill and have some special training. You have a number of Techniques equal to your Rank. See *Techniques* for more options.

- Brutally Efficient
- Bad Reputation
- Swift Strikes
- Extra Training
- Extra Cover

Benefit: Your reputation as a Hitter proceeds you. If you are ever in an antagonistic position toward another character, that character automatically reduces their Risk by your Role Rank. However, a Hitter with no backing is just a thug and murderer. If the Trust pool is empty, you lose this benefit.

Mastermind

You are the planning person. You manage the relationships between assets, contacts, information and agents. You have a unique understand of behavior and trends, and have a trained ability to make accurate behavioral predictions.

Bonus: You gain your Role Rank as bonus dice when working around a plan or adapting to a changing situation.

Ability: At the beginning of each game session, you may make a prediction about a risk that may happen during the game (based on your knowledge of all the moving pieces of a successful operation). You may be as vague or specific as you like. If your prediction works or occurs, then any Agent who is participating in that risk gains a number of dice equal to your Role Rank.

Benefit: You may give any other Agent a number of *Operational Advantages* each season equal to your Role Rank. See *Operational Advantages* for more information. However, if your allies don't trust you, how can you plan? If the Trust pool is empty, you lose this benefit.

Public Relations

You are the face of the Division. Usually positioned as an adjunct to an ambassador or diplomat, you make sure everything is spun and played the way it should be. Publicity, news and politics are your friends.

Bonus: You gain your Role Rank as bonus dice when attempting to protect the secrecy of the organization to outsiders or media.



Ability: You may alter, redact, edit, reinterpret or change anything said by any Agent to make it more appropriate to the current situation, or to avoid political and cultural gaffes. You must be present or informed of the statement before it reaches wide public consumption. You may do this a number of times per game session equal to your Role Rank.

Benefit: Every game session, your contacts and allies gain you a number of favors equal to your Role Rank. A favor represents a boon or help some other character owes you, but if you cash in, you must repay it by the end of the session. If the Trust pool is empty, you lose this benefit.

Security Chief

The Security Chief is the protector of others. They keep assets alive, make sure drops happen safely, and are always omnipresent... in a Big Brother sort of fashion.

Bonus: You gain your Role Rank as bonus dice when protecting those inside your Agency.

Ability: You may take an Injury for any other Agent from your Agency or an asset you are tasked with protecting. Reduce the Rank of the Injury by your Role Rank.

Benefit: You have a small number of Guards with you at all times (you can choose to send them away if you see fit). You have a number of Ranks of Guards equal to your Role Rank. These are your Guards and they will do as you command. Only the Director can spend wagers or use

risks to make them betray you (and the Director can only do that if the Trust pool is empty).

STEP 3: CHOOSE VIRTUES

You must now assign Ranks to Virtues. There are six Virtues, but unfortunately, you are mortal and flawed, and you only get five of them. The sixth Virtue is your weakness. You will never have Ranks in that Virtue.

Assign these Ranks to your Virtues as you see fit:

- One Virtue at Rank 4
- Two Virtues at Rank 3
- Two Virtues at Rank 2
- One Virtue as a weakness (write a W next to this Virtue on your character sheet)
- Then increase your Agency's Favored Virtue by 1 (if you put a W there, then it does not increase. Tough luck, but way to commit to the roleplaying).

Having a weakness means you have no dice for that Virtue. You must find dice to roll from other parts of your character (Aspects, Covers, etc.). Having a weakness does not mean you never roll dice, just that the Virtue will never contribute dice to your risk.

STEP 4: CHOOSE ASPECTS

Now you must choose three of the four Aspects your Agency has chosen to define its Agents. Each player simply writes down the three Aspects they want on their sheet.

STEP 5: CHOOSE BACKGROUND AND TOUCHSTONE

Next, choose where your agent came from before becoming an agent, from the list below. Then choose one of the advantages listed below under your background. More details on these advantages can be found under Step 7.

Military

While serving in the military your skills caught the eye of the intelligence community and you were recruited straight from service. Your Cover might still be as a serving member of the military.

- COLD-BLOODED KILLER
- FAST HEALER
- FAVORED WEAPON
- NATURAL ATHLETE
- UP-CLOSE AND PERSONAL



Education

You began working in academia, probably as a professor in a field important to the intelligence community, and were recruited when something you published or a lecture you gave helped the Agency directly, without your realization. Your Cover might still be in academia, or as a traveling scholar or researcher.

- EXTRA TRAINING
- LIKE A LOCAL
- PERCEPTIVE
- MEASURE TWICE, CUT ONCE
- NATURAL TALENT

Politics

You worked as either a bureaucrat in the government or as a political operative running campaigns before becoming entangled with the intelligence services. Your skills with people were the most likely reason you were recruited. Your Cover might be as a public aide to the diplomat at your embassy, or some other public role.

- DIRECTOR'S PROTÉGÉ
- DEBONAIR
- NATURAL TALENT
- PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE
- TRUE BEAUTY

Civilian

You worked in business, finance or even as the night manager at a hotel. Whatever you did brought you into contact with intelligence agents and for whatever reason you were recruited into the Agency. Your Cover might be as a worker for your old job.

- CON OPs TRAINING
- IRREPROACHABLE
- LUCKY
- OATH
- OUTSIDER
- UNSHAKABLE

Espionage

You have always wanted to work in intelligence. You may have even been raised in a family of spies, or worked as a lookout for an agent while you were a child. Whatever the case, you've always worked in intelligence. It is in your blood. Your Cover could be anything, because you've done this your whole life.

- DIRECTOR'S PROTÉGÉ
- INSIGHT
- MULTIPLE ROLES
- QUICK
- UP-CLOSE AND PERSONAL

Now choose your Touchstone. Touchstones are the people, places or things that keep your agent grounded and certain of their path forward. They restore your trust in your worldview and your place in the world as an agent. Most Touchstones are kept safe in your home country and away from prying eyes, for if you lose a Touchstone, then your entire foundation will be shaken. Record your Touchstone on your character sheet.

Later, during Field construction, you can decide if your Touchstone is in-country or safe at home. If it is in-country, it provides a much more potent and frequent benefit, but it is also exposed to all the dangers of your



job and location, and it is at a greater risk of being lost or destroyed.

Here are some examples of Touchstones:

Lover, spouse, children, parents, family, mentor, close friend(s), secluded cabin/location, very personal object/memento that evokes a powerful memory of an event that set you on your path, a bar where everyone knows your "name" and accepts you, etc.

STEP 6: TRUST & COVER

Each Agent begins with two Ranks of Trust. This gives you two Trust Points for the Trust pool. See more about Trust Points in the Risks section. You just designate a player to have your Trust. Write their name next to your Trust Rank.

Each Agent also begins with one Rank of Cover. You should write a name and occupation next to this Cover. Whenever you use that Cover to accomplish a risk, you may add a number of dice equal to your Cover Rank to that risk. Additionally, Covers can be used to replenish Trust.

STEP 7: ADVANTAGES

Each Agent gets one Advantage of their choice from the list below. This is a free Advantage that they can justify however they wish. This will be their second Advantage after the one they gain from their background.

Cold-Blooded Killer

You are deadly, decisive and prone to violence. You gain a free wager on all Violence risks.

Con Ops Training

You might not be an Operational Analyst, but you know your stuff. You get one Operational advantage that you may call upon once per Season.

Debonair

Your character always gains a free wager on all Charisma risks.

Director's Protege

For reasons known only to you and the Director, you have the Director's favor. At the end of each Season, you always get a Season Action. This is in addition to any other Season Actions the Director may have.

Extra Training

Your character has a bonus Aspect, something that distinguishes him from the other Agents. You may choose an Aspect from the Aspect list or create one with the Narrator's approval.

Fast Healer

You heal faster than other Agents. At the end of the day, you always heal one Injury Rank, regardless of your current condition.

Favored Weapon

You have trained in the use of a specific weapon until you've perfected its use. See Violence for more information on favored weapons.

Insight

You were born to perform this role. It's in your blood. All your life has led to the moment when you could serve your Queen and Country. You begin the game with a Role Rank of 2 rather than 1.

Irreproachable

You are renowned for your sense of honor and fidelity. Any action you take must be for the greater Cover of the Agency. One per game session, you may negate one Trust loss.

Like a Local

You always know the correct direction to get to your destination. You know how to get anywhere. You never need to take any kind of risk for navigation.

Lucky

Three times per game, while taking a risk, you may re-roll any dice that show a one (1).

Measure Twice, Cut Once

Once per game session, you can reroll a single risk.

Natural Athlete

Your character always gains a free wager on any Athleticism risks.

Natural Talent

If you have a Virtue at Rank 5, then you may increase it to Rank 6 if you lower another Virtue by a single Rank.

Oath

Your character has made an oath. They have vowed to accomplish some important task. Your character will not die until they reach their goal. Literally. Your character cannot die until they gain the opportunity to accomplish that task. But your character will die if they accomplish the goal or if they fail. The goal cannot be small; it must be something... epic. You have no guarantee that your character will succeed, but they won't die until they get the opportunity to do so.

Outsider

You gain +1 to a Virtue other than your Agency's revered Virtue.

Perceptive

Your character always gains a free wager on all Perception risks.

Planning For The Future

Every Season, you gain a single Season Action for yourself.

Quick

You move with speed and finality. Gain two bonus dice for any risk involving speed.

True Beauty

While most characters are either dramatically handsome or dramatically ugly, your character's beauty outshines almost all others. Gain two dice whenever speaking to a character who is sexually attracted to you (Narrator's decision).

Unshakable

Your character always gains a free wager on all Resolve risks.

Up-Close And Personal

When using a knife, you do the same damage as if using a silenced pistol. Unfortunately, when you use a silenced pistol, treat it as a normal weapon. See Violence for more information.

Multiple Roles

You start with a Rank 2 Role, in another Role. Why do you no longer perform that Role? You gain access to its bonus, benefits and advantages. You effectively have two Roles. However, you automatically start with Trust 1.



CHAPTER TWO:

RISKS

"The distance between insanity and genius is measured only by success."

- Ian Fleming

In this chapter, we discuss all the rules for resolving risks in the game.

A risk is a meaningful action taken by a character whose outcome may influence the plot and/or other characters. If it isn't meaningful, it probably isn't a risk. If it doesn't affect any characters, it probably isn't a risk. If it doesn't affect the plot, it probably isn't a risk.

If a player wants to undertake an action and it doesn't qualify as a risk, the player gets to narrate the outcome of the action. If a player wants to undertake a risk, then the narrative rights of that action are at stake. In other words, if the player rolls well

enough, then they can narrate the outcome of their action. If they do not roll well enough, then the Narrator determines the outcome.

PRIVILEGE

Rolling dice in *Cold Shadows* is not about success and failure. Instead, it is about who gets to say what happens.

When you want your character to take a risk, you roll a bunch of six-sided dice. If the sum of the dice is equal to or greater than ten, you gain privilege. This means you get to say what happens.



If the sum of the dice is nine or less, the Narrator gets privilege. This means the Narrator gets to say what happens.

Just to make sure you understand, we'll repeat it:

If you beat the target number, then you get to determine how your character succeeds or fails. If you don't, then the Narrator gets to say how your character succeeds or fails.

TARGET NUMBER

The target number for all risks is ten. That number never goes up or down. Ten.

GETTING DICE

You get dice from the following sources:

VIRTUE: If a Virtue is appropriate to the risk, you get a number of dice equal to the Virtue's Rank. You may only invoke one Virtue per risk; you cannot gain dice from more than one Virtue for a risk.

NAME: If your name's meaning is appropriate to the risk, you gain two dice. If your Codename is appropriate to the risk, you gain one die.

ASPECT: If you have an Aspect that is appropriate to the risk, you gain three dice. You may only invoke one Aspect per risk; you cannot gain dice from more than one Aspect for a risk.

OTHERS: As you read through this book, you will find other sources of dice.

SIMPLE RISK

A simple risk usually involves a single character: an Agent trying to remember details, an Agent trying to lift something heavy, an Agent climbing a wall. These are good examples of simple risks. All you must do is roll a number of dice and beat a ten. If you can do that, you get to say how your Agent succeeds or fails. If you roll nine or less, the Narrator says how your Agent succeeds or fails.

Example: Ben is having his agent, Mr. Ryker work to discover the key to the crypto that hides an important piece of information. The Narrator and Ben agree that this is a risk that would use Intellect. Ryker's Intellect is 4, so Ben gathers four dice. The Narrator and Ben also agree that Ryker's previous experience with crypto and access to high-powered NSA tools will aid him, granting Ben, another 3 dice. Ben gathers his 3 dice, for a total of 7, and with success virtually assured, rolls the dice, knowing he only needs to be able to total 10 on all the dice.

WAGERS

As you are about to undertake a risk, you may notice that you have more dice than you need for rolling a ten. If that's the case, you'll want to make some wagers.

Wagers are the real backbone of the *Cold Shadows* system. They make the game fun.

Usually, when your character succeeds, he has one Rank of Effect, or 1 Effect. But there is a way of increasing the Effect of your success. We do this through wagers.

Consider. About to roll for a risk, you look at your pool. You can easily beat the risk. You've got seven dice. Using four is a safe bet. Five is nearly a guarantee. So, what do you do with those extra dice? You wager them. Set those extras aside and roll the rest.

Setting dice aside before your roll is called "wagering dice." A wagered die does not get rolled with your other dice. If you beat the risk, then each wagered die adds 1 Effect to your success.

If you succeed on a wager, you get bonus Effect. Bonus Effect usually leads to more Trust Points, but it can also be used to take narrative control of a scene and provide additional details.

Yes, this means the players tell the Narrator what's happening in the scene. Wagers give everyone the opportunity to be the Narrator, to be in charge, to add to the collective narrative.

Example: Continuing our example above, Ben has 7 dice to decipher the crypto hiding information he needs. Ben only needs to equal or exceed 10 on the dice, so he feels that rolling 7 is...overkill. He decides to hold 3 dice aside as wagers, planning to use them to gather more information from the deciphered document.

The Wager Golden Rules

You cannot use a wager to contradict a previously established element of the scene. You cannot use a wager to say, "No."

You can only use wagers to say, "Yes, and..." or, "Yes, but..." You cannot simply negate another person's wager. Wagers are used to add elements to a scene or to define undefined elements of a scene.

You cannot use a wager to get a free risk. Any action that would require a risk cannot be accomplished with a wager. That requires an additional risk.

Free Wagers

Occasionally, you will receive a free wager. This is a wager that the Narrator gives you because of circumstance, a mechanical bonus or some other reason.

Free Wagers are just that: free. They don't come from your pool of dice. You can't add them back into your pool of dice, either. Also, if you roll 9 or less, then you lose all wagers—even the free ones.

CONTESTED RISKS

A contested risk occurs when two characters want the same thing—even if they are working together. Both players roll simultaneously and the player who rolls higher is the victor. The player who rolls lower is the defeated.

• Step 1: Declaring Dice

Both players announce how many dice they can roll for the risk.

• Step 2: Hidden Wagers

Each player then secretly makes wagers and reveals their wagers at the same time.

• Step 3: Determine Privilege

The players roll. The player who rolls highest is the victor and has privilege. All other players involved in the risk are defeated and do not have privilege.

THE VICTOR & DEFEATED COOPERATIVE RISKS

The victor has privilege and may describe the outcome of the risk. The victor also gets to keep all his wagers.

The victor also gets to say who spends his wager first (themselves or another player).

The defeated does not have privilege.

The defeated also only keeps half their wagers, rounded up (minimum of one).

SPENDING WAGERS

The victor decides who spends their first wager (the victor can include themselves). Then, spending wagers goes around the table clockwise until everyone has spent a wager.

If you like, you can choose to pass when it comes your turn to use a wager. This allows you to hear more of what's going on but also loses you the opportunity to spend your wager first and set precedent.

Remember: wagers cannot say, "No." A wager can only say, "Yes, and..." or, "Yes, but..." or some other positive modifier.

LESS THAN 10

If any player in a contested risk rolls less than ten, they get nothing. They get no wagers, no privilege, no nothing. Don't throw all your dice away on wagers expecting to keep half of them even if you lose. If you don't roll at least a ten, then you get nothing.

If two or more Agents are working toward the same goal, they can make a cooperative risk. This kind of risk allows everyone to assist (and add details) in some way.

• Step 1: Gather Dice

All players announce how they are gathering dice and then announce how many dice they have.

• Step 2: Announce Wagers

All players then announce how many wagers they are going to make.

• Step 3: Privilege

Everyone rolls. Every player who rolls ten or higher gains privilege. That is, every player who rolls ten or higher gets to say one true thing about the outcome of the risk.

The player who rolled highest keeps all their wagers. Players who do not roll highest only keep half their wagers, rounded up.

The player who rolled highest gets the first opportunity to say what happened at the end of the risk. They then choose which player goes next.

Each player who rolled ten or higher can add a detail to the outcome, adding additional details with each wager.

CHAPTER THREE:

ASPECTS

“The easiest thing in the world is to convince yourself that you’re right. As one grows old, it is easier still.”
- Robert Ludlum

Aspects are defining traits. People have Aspects, places have Aspects, and even objects can have Aspects. For those familiar with roleplaying game tropes, an Aspect is like a “skill” or an “ability,” but it’s a bit more three-dimensional in *Cold Shadows*.

Aspects represent the qualities of a person, place or thing. For example, if you have the Aspect Teamwork, it reflects a quality about your character: they recognize the strength of unity of purpose. Many hands can accomplish more than two.

Other Aspects reflect different qualities.

Aspects reflect not only knowledge, but skill as well. They are broad-based abilities that are open to a little interpretation.

Now, you can’t go around with an Aspect like: “I’m Awesome!” It’s too broad, it doesn’t fit the tone and theme of the game, and it’s not a dramatic statement of character. Aspects should be open for players to use, but an Aspect shouldn’t be useful in every situation.

INVOKE & COMPEL

Every Aspect has two elements: an invoke and a compel. The owner of the Aspect uses the invoke but others can use the compel. (A player may compel his own Aspect as well. We’ll talk more about that later.)

You invoke Aspects when your character is about to take a risk. When you invoke an Aspect, your character gains three bonus dice for an appropriate risk. For example, if you want your Agent to know the right course of action during complicated issues of etiquette, he should have the *Culture and Etiquette* Aspect. That Aspect gives you three bonus dice for any risks involving procedure and decorum.

Remember: invoking an Aspect gives you three bonus dice for appropriate risks. You may only invoke one Aspect per risk. You cannot invoke more than one. Also, you are the only person who can invoke your own Aspect. You can’t invoke it for someone else and someone else can’t invoke it for their own benefit, either.

Invokes are powerful tools that allow you to get narrative rights at the end of a risk. But each Aspect has a compel as well.

TAGS

You can give a temporary Aspect to another character, a place or even a thing. We call these “Tags.”

When you give another character a Tag, it works like an Aspect. For example, if someone drops a lantern in a room full of flammable material, you can give the room the “On Fire!” Tag. Or, if an Agent belongs to an Agency with an Ambitious Director, then he has the “Ambitious” Tag.

If you have a Tag, it is an Aspect that you cannot invoke but others can. Tagging doesn’t cost anything; the character only needs to know the Tag exists. Invoking a Tag (or “Tagging”) gets you two bonus dice. Not three, but two.

For example, my Agent comes from an Agency with a Clever Director. That gives me the “Unorthodox” Tag. Another Agent—if he knows my Agency—can use that Tag to gain two bonus dice against me in any situation when my being “non-traditionalist” would be an advantage to him.

Likewise, if the room has the “On Fire!” Tag, characters who find ways to take advantage of the fire can Tag that Aspect for two bonus dice.

Tags do not count toward the total number of Aspects that can be invoked during a risk. Usually, only one Aspect can be invoked during a risk. Because your character is using a Tag (or “Tagging” an Aspect), he isn’t invoking it. He’s Tagging it. And that doesn’t count towards the total Aspects invoked in the risk.



INJURIES AS TAGS

The most common Aspects a character may Tag are Injuries. If you are facing another character in a physical risk (Violence or Athleticism), you may Tag all Injuries that character has for bonus dice. The number of bonus dice you gain is equal to the Ranks of the Injuries.

For example, if a character has a Rank 1 Injury, a Rank 2 Injury and a Rank 3 Injury, then you may Tag all three Injuries for a total of six bonus dice.

Whenever your character’s Injuries are Tagged, your character gains one Trust to add to the Trust Pool. This might seem a little unusual. However, the more your wounds and injuries are used against you, the more you must rely on your allies and compatriots for aid. Adding a Trust Point to the Pool will help make it easier to leverage that relationship.

CHAPTER FOUR:

VIRTUES, TRUST, BETRAYAL, AND COVER

“Jesus Christ only had twelve, you know, and one of them was a double.”

- John le Carré

For Agents, Trust is everything. For you, as a player, Trust will be the key to the game. Trust unlocks all the mechanics. It is the true engine of the game.

Without Trust, your Agents will fail and end up as less than nothing.

But Trust is a difficult concept, especially in a world filled with shadows, betrayal and more secrets than could ever be found. The constant grating and conflicting nature of espionage adds an element of roleplaying to the table that can be very enjoyable.

THE TRUST POOL

In the center of your gaming table, place a bowl. This is the Trust Pool. You can use whatever tokens you like to represent Trust Points. At the beginning of the game, fill the Trust Pool with a number of Trust Points equal to the total Trust Rank of all the Agents present.

Before you make a risk, you may draw a Trust Point from the pool. A player may only draw one Trust Point at a time; a single player cannot draw two or more Trust Points for a single roll, for example. Give the Trust Point to the Narrator. You have spent a Trust Point from the Pool.

You can spend Trust Points in two ways: for bonus dice and adding details to the story.

BONUS DICE

When you spend a Trust Point before a risk, add four dice to your pool. Once you have spent a Trust Point, it is gone for the



remainder of the adventure. Because almost all Agents start the game with 2 Trust, each Agent will add two Trust Points to the Pool.

ADDING DETAILS

During the game, a player may spend a Trust Point (withdrawing it from the Pool) to add details to the story as it progresses. Think of these like free-floating wagers.

Just as a wager allows you to add details to a risk, Trust Points allow you to modify the story in the same way. You can add details to an NPC, a location, your relationship with your family or anything else you like in the game.

Like wagers, Trust Points cannot be used to say, “No.” For example, if I use a wager to say the Director is a drunken fool, you can’t use a Trust Point to say, “No, he’s not.” You can use a Trust Point to say, “He’s a drunken fool, but that’s only because his wife drives him to drink.” That intimates that if we get him away from his wife, he’ll drink less. That isn’t a “No,” it’s a “Yes, but....”

ADDING TRUST TO THE POOL

You can add Trust Points to the Pool by taking specific kinds of risks.

See the list below for risks that allow for a Trust Point to be added to the Pool. Each of these qualifications are cumulative. That is, if you take a risk that fulfills one of the qualifications, that’s worth a Trust Point. But if you

take a risk that fulfills more than just one qualification, it’s worth multiple Trust points.

The wording here is very specific. Simple actions are expected of Agents and are not worth Trust Points. Only risks are worth Trust Points.

There may be circumstances where an action qualifies for a Trust Point, but these should be momentous. They should be few and far between.

- Take a risk that directly furthers the Agency’s interests (and not yours).
- Take a risk that upholds the Agency’s agenda, plans and goals.
- Take a risk that puts your Agent in danger while fulfilling your Bond of Trust.
- Remove a Betrayal token. [Optional Rule]

LOSING TRUST FROM THE POOL

When an Agent takes an action that is a betrayal, upends a plan or ruins an operation, the Narrator takes three Trust Points from the pool.

ADDING DETAILS

At the end of each game session, the Narrator should count the total Trust Points in the pool. At the start of the next game session, the players begin with the same amount of Trust.

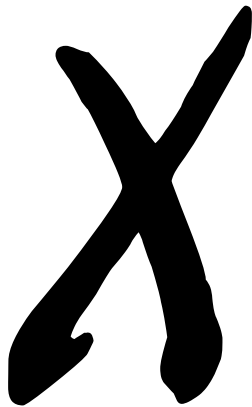
THE X-CARD

For groups to successfully play out these stories of betrayal, violence and drama, sometimes you need a way to carefully end conversations to avoid uncomfortable situations. In brief, here is how the X-Card works:

The **X-Card** is an optional tool (created by John Stavropoulos) that allows anyone in your game (including you) to edit out any content anyone is uncomfortable with as you play. Since most RPGs are improvisational and we won't know what will happen till it happens, it's possible the game will go in a direction people don't want. An X-Card is a simple tool to fix problems as they arise.

To use, at the start of your game, simply say:

"I'd like your help. Your help to make this game fun for everyone. If anything makes anyone uncomfortable in any way... [draw X on an index card] ...just lift this card up, or simply tap it [place card at the center of the table]. You don't have to explain why. It doesn't matter why. When we lift or tap this card, we simply edit out anything X-Carded. And if there is ever an issue, anyone can call for a break and we can talk privately. I know it sounds funny but it will help us play amazing games together and usually I'm the one who uses the X card to protect myself from all of you! Please help make this game fun for everyone. Thank you!"



Notes:

- The X-Card speech above can be more useful than the X-Card itself. It makes it clear that we are all in this together, will help each other, and that the group of people playing are more important than the game.
- Use the X-Card early, even on yourself, to lead by example, and model the behavior.
- The X-Card does not have to be a tool of last resort. The less special it feels, the more you use it, the more likely someone will use it when it really is badly needed.
- The X-Card is not a replacement for conversation. If you prefer to talk about an issue that comes up instead of using the X-Card, please do. Just because the X-Card is available does not mean it has to be used. But when it is used, respect the person who uses it and don't ask why or start a conversation about the issue. The X-Card is optional.
- The X-Card is a safety net, but not everyone will feel comfortable using it in all situations. If a player had a problem with the game and wants to talk to you about it afterward... please listen. It is not okay to say "but you didn't use the X-Card" as a defense. Don't use the X-Card offensively. Listen and talk it out.
- If you aren't sure what was X-Carded, call for a break and talk with the person in private.
- Don't use the X-Card as an excuse to push boundaries. It's not a Safe Word.
- Some GMs (usually those who haven't used the X-Card) fear that the X-Card will limit their creativity. Many GMs who use the X-Card find the opposite is true. Since the GM doesn't have to be a magical mind reader, it frees up their energy to focus on other elements of GMing.
- The X-Card is not an excuse to try to get back to the game as soon as possible. People matter more than the game. If you need to take a break, take a break.

The X-Card was created by John Stavropoulos and more information (including a detailed write up) can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/x-card-rpg>.



BOND OF TRUST

Each Agent has a name of one of their fellow agents marked next to a Trust Rank. Whenever the agent you designated as a Bond of Trust takes a risk that aids you at their expense, you may restore one Trust Point to the Trust Pool. However, if that Agent ever takes an action that directly opposes you, remove a number of Trust Points from the Trust Pool equal to your Trust Rank and mark a Betrayal Box.

These mechanics are designed to represent mounting distrust. These should be interpreted in both a system sense (rules that help guide you mechanically) and in a roleplay sense (as prompts to help you tell dramatic and engaging stories).

BETRAYAL

Each player has 3 Betrayal boxes by their Bond of Trust. Once all three Boxes are marked, erase the name of your Bond of Trust, and fill in the name of another agent. Keep a Blacklist of all the Agents who have Betrayed you. It makes for great storytelling. If you ever manage to even the score (not necessarily kill, but embarrass, disrupt or make miserable) someone who has betrayed you, then you may erase their name from the Blacklist, and once again, they can be part of your Bond of Trust.

BETRAYAL POINTS

At the start of each session, tally up the amount of Betrayal boxes checked on the players' character sheets. Put that many Betrayal tokens into the Trust Pool. These tokens should be of a different color.

Anyone can spend these Betrayal tokens. Take one out of the pool, and add one die for every Betrayal token still in the pool to the risk on which you are spending the token. After the risk is resolved (regardless of success or not), give that Betrayal token to the Narrator.

The Narrator can spend Betrayal tokens to add three dice to any risk an NPC or enemy makes. The Narrator should illustrate how the previous action the player took aided the enemy (usually unintentionally). Then the Narrator restores the Betrayal token to the Pool.

Any player can remove a Betrayal token from another player by spending 3 wagers from a cooperative roll.

If you remove a Betrayal Point from your Bond of Trust, you may add a Trust Point to the Trust Pool. Additionally, put a check next to your Trust Rank. Once you have ten checks, you may increase your Trust Rank by 1.

At the end of the session, any Agent with a Betrayal token must decrease their Trust Rank by 1.

BETRAYAL AND TRUST RANK 0

If your Trust Rank ever reaches 0, bad things start to happen. You no longer want to work with the team, and you can no longer spend Trust Points. Instead, you can only spend Betrayal tokens, and you must begin to subtly work against your former allies.

You do this until an ally helps you recover Trust in the team (the Narrator will help decide when that is fulfilled).

For a more heroic game, removing the Betrayal rules, will lend you a bit more of an action thriller flair.

When Trust is restored, set your Trust Rank to 2, and make the Agent that helped you recover your trust into your Bond of Trust.

COVER

Cover represents alternate identities. The higher your Covers, the more solid, deep and untraceable they are. Like Trust, Cover comes in both Ranks and Points, but Agents do not spend Cover Points. Cover Points are used to track the growth and depth of a Cover as it is used throughout play. By acquiring Cover Points, Agents can acquire Cover Rating. Effectively, successfully using and building those Covers in play.

All Agents begin the game with a Cover Rank of 1. Each Cover has a name and occupation associated with its Cover Rank, indicating the general knowledge you earned getting that Rank of Cover.

Cover enters the game in many ways.

First, if you are about to undertake a risk and one or more of your Cover Ranks is appropriate, you may add one die per Cover Rank that is appropriate to the risk. In other words, if you have a Cover Rank: 1 – Hans Gruber (Terrorist) and you are about

to infiltrate a terrorist cell, and if you pretend to be Hans Gruber, then you may add one die to your risk total.

If you have more than one Cover Rank that's appropriate to a risk (Cover Rank: 3 – Hans Gruber, for example), you may gain one die for each Rank that's appropriate.

Second, whenever you perform a risk that **uses a Cover**, you may convert two wagers for one point of Cover. Doing so represents your attempts to solidify and build up your Cover.

Third, you can **burn** a Cover. To burn a Cover, you select one of your **non-exposed** Covers and convert your Cover Rank in that Cover into Trust Points and add them to the Trust Pool. Then, erase your Cover, and create a new Rank 1 Cover.

For example, Elizabeth must burn a Cover to put more Trust back into the Pool. Elizabeth has a Rank 3 Cover, "Elena Kostavi the Nuclear Physicist". She erases that Cover from her sheet, puts three Trust Points back into the Trust Pool, and creates a brand-new Cover, with a new name and identity at Rank 1. This new Cover is "Natalia, Waitress". She plans to use this to get close to enemy Agents.

When you reach ten points of Cover, your Cover Rank increases by one. Alternatively, you can gain a new Cover slot, and create a new Rank 1 Cover. You can any have number of Covers.

DAMAGING YOUR COVER

You may take actions that damage a Cover you have built.

If you do, the Narrator may declare that your current Cover is exposed, and must be ditched or repaired before it may be used again. You cannot call upon that Cover for bonus dice until you have taken actions to repair it.

To repair a damaged Cover, you must earn ten points of Cover in actions that are appropriate to your Cover. For example, if you are masquerading as a terrorist, you must work to build that reputation by converting wagers into Cover points. You'd be unable to use the Cover Rating of that cover until you've repaired it.

TOUCHSTONES

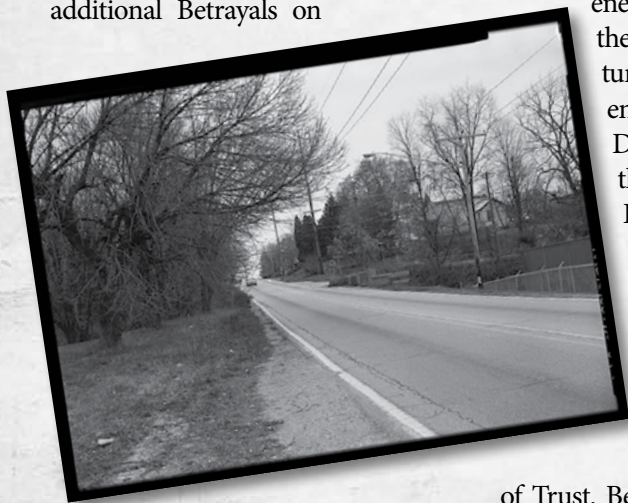
Touchstones are important anchors for your Agent. Touchstones help your Agents restore their Trust in the system and their faith in themselves as Agents. It helps them rebuild Trust. During Season Actions, an Agent can spend one or more Season Action(s) to activate their Touchstone to remove Betrayal from their character sheet, and thus remove Betrayal tokens from the Trust Pool. They also add one Trust Point to the Trust Pool.

If an Agent has the In-Country Touchstone then they may activate their Touchstone without spending Season Actions based on the Asset Rank of the Touchstone. They may still activate it with Season Actions as well. While this increases their overall Trust, the danger rises precipitously as their Touchstone is now exposed to enemy action.

LOSING YOUR TOUCHSTONE, REPLACEMENT AND DARK TOUCHSTONES

In-Country Touchstones provide much greater benefits than the standard Touchstone, however, the Narrator can take actions against your Touchstone if the enemy Agency discovers the Touchstone. They can then destroy it or capture it. This is usually the basis for an entire story and adventure for the unit, but not always.

When an Agent loses access to their Touchstone they immediately Blacklist any Agent they feel was most responsible for this loss, and they add three Betrayal tokens to the Trust Pool. If that Agent already had marks against their Bond of Trust, mark any additional Betrayals on



another Agent. This does not have to be the current Bond of Trust that you have listed on your sheet.

If the Touchstone is restored (e.g. family is freed, lover escapes captivity, journal is taken back from the dead enemy agent), then these points of Betrayal and marks are immediately removed. If the Touchstone is destroyed permanently, then these points cannot be restored except in the usual fashion and the damage may linger for a long time.

If an Agent has no Touchstone then they must begin searching for a new one. While they do not have one they may not take the Touchstone Season Action. Once a new Touchstone is discovered, usually after a long story of self-reflection, then write the new Touchstone on the sheet and restore all Touchstone abilities.

This is a vulnerable time for Agents and is a perfect opportunity to insert enemy actors into the life of the Agent in the hopes of turning the Agent for the enemy Agency. If such a Dark Touchstone is created, then the player now creates Betrayal instead of Trust when activating this Touchstone. This is an extensive and dark story for a player to take, if they wish to have a Dark Touchstone where they gain Betrayal instead of Trust. Before going this route, this must be cleared with both the Narrator and all the other players at your table. Creating Dark Touchstones can be fun and engaging, but they will affect the game for every player in attendance.

CHAPTER FIVE:

ACTION AND VIOLENCE

"Can't you see it's the same? The same guns, the same children dying in the streets? Only the dream has changed, the blood is the same colour. Is that what you want?"

- John le Carré

Agents live with the constant threat of exposure and death. Agencies ask a lot, and sometimes, the only solution to a problem is to make it go away permanently. The tools of the trade are many, but one thing is always known: a bullet in the back of the skull is the fastest way to shut up someone who is leaking your secrets.

Normally combat chapters in roleplaying games are very long and complicated. In this game, the combat chapter is going to be one of the shortest.

There are two circumstances where the violence mechanics are necessary: a **strike** and **mass murder**. We'll discuss each in turn.

STRIKE

A strike is an immediate action. One Agent draws his pistol and the other responds. This is not a formal, polite action like in a western showdown. This is an Agent immediately drawing their Walther and their target responding as quickly as possible.

That's how violence begins in the real world. It starts fast. There's almost no time to react. That's how our fights begin here, too.

A fight scene begins when someone calls out, "Strike!" and points at another player. No initiative rolls. You call it out and it happens.

When an attacker announces a Strike, they gain two bonus dice. There is a slight advantage to surprise. Not much, but enough for two bonus dice.

If both Agents call out "Strike!" at the same time, neither gains bonus dice. There is no surprise, therefore no advantage.

EXAMPLE: As Ben and I find out characters in a heated debate, Ben's character says something to mine that my character doesn't quite like. So, he decides to gun Ben's character down. I declare a "Strike!" The violence begins.

The first actions in a fight are between the attacker and the defender. No one else can assist. The action is too quick.

The two Agents draw guns and (most likely) one of them dies. After the first strike is over, other Agents

can announce intentions to attack, but the first attack and defense are between the attacker and the defender and no one else.

RESULT

After a strike has been called, both opponents gather dice for a contested Violence risk. You know the procedure. Each player announces their dice, then hides their wagers, then rolls.

The victor (the player who rolls highest) gains privilege and may determine the outcome of the strike. Does the attacker or the defender successfully strike? Do they both miss? The victor determines the outcome, whatever it may be.

EXAMPLE: Ben and I both gather dice.

Ben has eight dice while I have six. We both make wagers secretly, then reveal our wagers and roll. Ben made three wagers while I made two.

Ben's roll: $5 + 5 + 2 + 2 + 1 = 15$

My roll: $6 + 4 + 3 + 1 = 14$

Ben gets privilege, so he can narrate the outcome of the strike. He could say that I win the strike. He could say that he wins the fight. He could say that we both strike each other at the same time. It's up to him to determine how the fight goes.

OPTIONAL RULE

Silenced Pistols

If you'd like to add some drama and tension to the game, use this rule:

If you've been struck by a silenced pistol, you die. In this case, the victor may be the defender and the defeated may be the attacker. It's entirely possible to draw a weapon on a superior foe, and lose your life in the process. It happens all the time in espionage fiction and it can happen here. Violence is unpredictable, tragic and almost never beneficial.

WEAPONS

If you get struck with any weapon, you take a Rank 1 Injury. Your opponent may use wagers to increase the Rank of the Injury, but only up to a number of wagers equal to his Violence.

If using the Optional Rule for Silenced Pistols above, a Silenced Pistol will automatically kill the target of its attack.

Agents die when they have suffered a Rank 5 injury, and a wager is spent to declare them dead.



USING WAGERS

If you have a dead opponent and wagers left over, you may convert your wagers into Cover. Two wagers make one Cover Point that you can add to an applicable Cover. This represents using the violence to protect your Agent and solidify their cover.

USING TRUST

If your Agent is about to be killed, you may pull one Trust from the Trust Pool to reduce your death to a Rank 5 Injury.

THE HENCHMEN RULE

Henchmen are any non-Agent characters, unnamed enemy Agents or NPCs. Any Agent can kill a henchman simply by announcing it. "I kill him." That's all it takes.

If there's more than one henchman, an Agent can kill a number of them equal to his Violence.

If you took Violence as a weakness, then you cannot employ this rule.

This does not mean henchmen cannot harm you. If they are in a group, and you cannot remove them all, then they can still act against you, using their wagers to inflict Injuries like normal.

MASS MURDER

So, what happens when three or more Agents want to get involved in a fight? You've got a mass murder on your hands. After a strike occurs, if other Agents want to be involved in the violence, then the Narrator invokes the mass murder rules.

Step 1: Gather Dice

All players who want to be involved gather dice as if they were preparing for a strike: Violence + Aspect + Role (if appropriate) + other bonuses. All players announce how many dice they have.

If mass murder directly follows a strike, the winner of the strike gains two bonus dice for the mass murder.

If an Agent has the Quick Advantage, they may use it during this step.

Step 2: Declare Strikes

On the count of three, each player points at who they want to strike. If a player wants to strike an NPC, then they point at the Narrator.

Step 3: Strike

Everyone sets aside wagers (secretly) and rolls. The player who rolls highest has initiative and privilege. He may declare his strikes first. No player loses any wagers for not gaining privilege in mass murder. All players keep all wagers made.

In the event of a tie, strikes occur simultaneously.

The striking Agent rolls a contested Violence risk against his target. The winner gets privilege.

During mass murder, an Agent may strike one opponent. Then, the player who rolled the next highest number may declare a strike. This continues until all Agents involved have made a strike.

Then, go back to the first player. They may make an additional strike. Each wager made by this player allows them to strike an additional opponent. This continues with each Agent making an additional strike, in turn, until all additional strikes are exhausted.

After all strikes are exhausted, if Agents wish to continue mass murder, then repeat the process.

SOLDIERS & GUARDS

The Commander and the Security Chief both have vassals at their command who can be used during Violence Scenes. The Soldiers and Guards provide similar duties but each also has a unique ability only they can perform.

The Soldiers' and Guards' effectiveness is directly related to their leader's Role Rank. The higher the Role Rank, the more effective the Soldiers and Guards. Each Role Rank adds a Rank onto the vassals. In other words, if the Commander is Rank 2, then he commands two Ranks of Soldiers.

Likewise, if the Security Chief is Rank 3, then he has three Ranks of Guards with him. Both the Soldiers and Guards can take Injuries for their commanders. If the General or Security Chief ever suffer an Injury,

the Soldiers or Guards can take the hit instead, saving their commander. The Soldiers and Guards may do this a number of times equal to their Rank. Doing so diminishes their Rank, however, leaving the General and Security Chief with fewer men to command. A group of Rank 3 Soldiers who take an Injury for their master become Rank 2 Soldiers. When they lose all their Ranks, their commanders have no more men to command. Both Soldiers and Guards become refreshed at the end of the Season.

Also, both the Soldiers and Guards count as Agents in regards to the Henchmen Rule and during mass murder. They roll a number of dice equal to their commander's Violence plus their Rank.

The Soldiers' special ability gives them bonuses during War. You can read about their bonuses in that chapter.

The Guards, however, may extend their ability to any other Agents under their Director's command. In other words, they are not limited to only protecting the Security Chief. The Security Chief can command which Agents that the Guards protect during mass murder. The Soldiers and Guards cannot use their abilities during a strike.

Important note: Guards cannot provide bonus dice during War. They can protect their charge (the Security Chief and his fellows) by taking Injuries, but they provide no bonus dice.

CHAPTER SIX:

ESPIONAGE AND INTRIGUE

"Intelligence work has one moral law — it is justified by results." - John le Carré

USING OPERATIONAL TECHNIQUES

Now, with all that in mind, how does one go about using “Operational Techniques” and other similar ideas and mechanics in a roleplaying game?

GEAR AND GADGETS

In *Cold Shadows*, we deliberately leave the time and place that constitute the game’s setting up in the air. Internally, we normally play it in a Cold War-era setting, with period-appropriate tech, but that doesn’t mean you must play the game in this setting.

SHRINKS & PSYCHOLOGY

Spies are a goddamn mess. Their heads are full of secrets, their closets full of skeletons. They constantly need help and must visit a Shrink to remain stable and healthy.

With a Season Action—and a Shrink Resource—an Agent may gain a Stability Point.

Agents may spend a Stability Point before any roll. Doing so turns that roll into a ten. The Agent must roll at least one die, but the Stability Point turns that single die into a ten. He must spend the Stability Point before rolling and before declaring wagers.

OPERATIONAL ADVANTAGES

Operational Advantages are allies, locations, equipment and training that the Operational Analyst can impart to the team, to aid them and help them succeed.

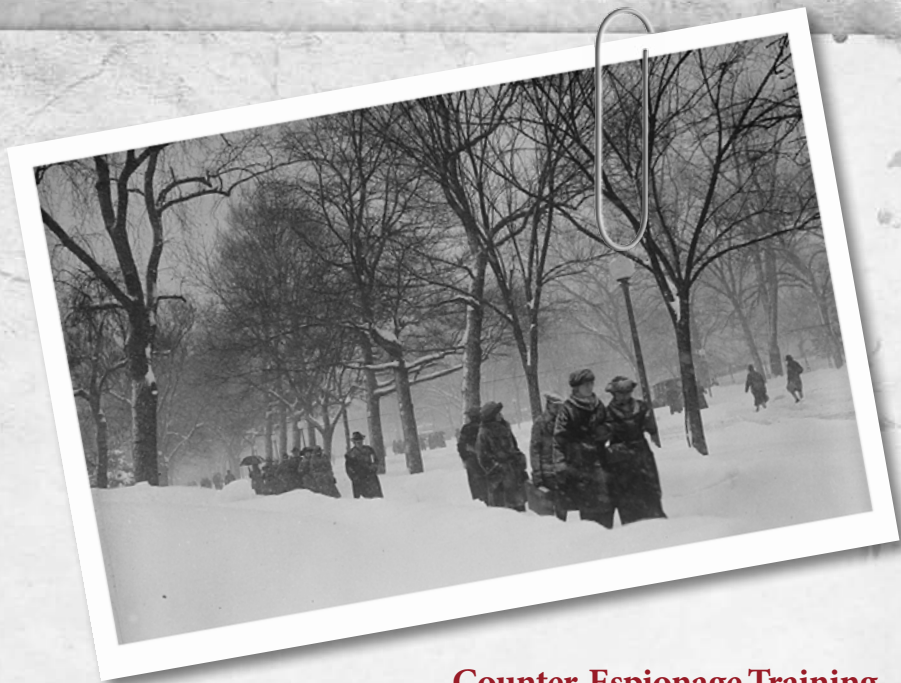
Additionally, having access to a CON OPs will also allow a team without an Operational Analyst to gain the benefit of Operational Advantages.

Your Agents gain a number of Operational Advantages each Season equal to the Rank of the CON OPs in your Division. That is, if you have a Rank 3 CON OPs, then your Agents must share three separate Operational Advantages; each Agent does not receive three Advantages each.

A Division may have more than one CON OPs, thus giving your Agents multiple Operational Advantages.

Listed below are the many Operational Advantages that an Operational Analyst or CON OPs can give their allies. When you work with a CON OPs, they (i.e. the Narrator) will give you the Advantage they feel you need and/or deserve.

You may only use each Operational Advantage once per Season.



Advanced Training

Invoke this Operational Advantage before making a risk. You may replace your lowest Virtue with your highest Virtue. You may not replace your Weakness.

Always Prepared

Invoke this Operational Advantage after another Agent has declared surprise upon you. You may cancel the effects of surprise.

Blackmail

Invoke this Operational Advantage and target an Agent. You must be able to name the Agent's Aspect. That Agent loses the invoke for that Aspect until next Season. The Aspect can still be compelled, but not invoked.

Counter-Espionage Training

When another Agent compels one of your Aspects, you may invoke this Operational Advantage and ignore that compel.

Counter-Plan

Invoke this Operational Advantage after you have rolled dice in a contested Cunning risk. Cancel your opponent's wagers in this risk.

Success and failure of the risk are unaffected, but only you can keep your wagers.

Counter-Strike

Invoke this Operational Advantage and pick one opponent during the Gather Dice phase of a contested Violence risk before any wagers are made. Before you roll for your attack, you may deduct dice from your own pool to force your opponent to deduct dice from their pool, one for one.

Field Hospital

After taking an Injury, invoke this Operational Advantage. You may reduce that Injury's Rank by three.

Force of Personality

Invoke this Operational Advantage after you have rolled dice in a contested Charisma risk. Cancel your opponent's wagers in this risk. Success and failure of the risk are unaffected, but only you can keep your wagers.

Iron Will

Invoke this Operational Advantage after you have rolled dice in a contested Resolve risk. Cancel your opponent's wagers in this risk. Success and failure of the risk are unaffected, but only you can keep your wagers.

Parkour Training

Invoke this Operational Advantage after you have rolled dice in a contested Athleticism risk. Cancel your opponent's wagers in this risk. Success and failure of the risk are unaffected, but only you can keep your wagers.

Plan In Place

When it comes time to make wagers in any contested risk, invoke this Operational Advantage. You may look at your opponent's wagers before you make your own. Your opponent may not change their wagers after you've looked at them. You do not have to show your own wagers. You also cannot reveal your opponent's wagers to other Agents.



Preemptive Strike

Invoke this Operational Advantage if you lose a risk. You may either spend your wager first or make your opponent spend theirs.

Press The Advantage

Invoke this Operational Advantage after privilege is determined but before any wagers are spent. You may spend two wagers in a row (rather than just one at a time). You may only do this once during this risk.

Strategic Focus

Invoke this Operational Advantage while surveilling a target (be it an Agent or an object). On your next risk against that target, you know exactly where its weakness lies. This applies to any roll, such as the weakness of an argument or a gap in someone's fighting style. You gain free wagers equal to your Intellect on your next risk against that target. You can reveal this weakness to another, but the person to whom you are communicating does not gain complete understanding. Another Agent can only gain half your Intellect in wagers.

Superior Knowledge

Invoke this Operational Advantage after you have rolled dice in a contested Intellect risk. Cancel your opponent's wagers in this risk. Success and failure of the risk are unaffected, but only you can keep your wagers.

Surveillance

Invoke this Operational Advantage after you have rolled dice in a contested Perception risk. Cancel your opponent's wagers in this risk. Success and failure of the risk are unaffected, but only you can keep your wagers.

Team Building Exercise

Invoke this Operational Advantage to prevent one Trust loss.

Trained Interrogator

Invoke this Operational Advantage after another character has spoken to you. You know whether that character is lying or telling the truth.

Trained Strike

Invoke this Operational Advantage after you have rolled dice in a contested Violence risk. Cancel your opponent's wagers in this risk. Success and failure of the risk are unaffected, but only you can keep your wagers.

Triggered Advantage

Invoke this Operational Advantage after dice have been rolled in a risk but before privilege has been declared. You may spend your wager before anyone else.

Verifiable Facts

Invoke this Operational Advantage when making a confession or revealing statement. All in attendance believe your sincerity.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

SEASONS

"You should have died when I killed you."

- John le Carré

Time is an important element in *Cold Shadows*. It moves forward at a terrible pace. Never hesitating, never resting. The passage of time gives characters the chance to grow, to practice, to become more than what they are. Time also allows an Agency the opportunity to grow, to accumulate more power and secrets and to undo their enemies.

This chapter focuses on the Seasons mechanic you will use to measure the passage of time in the campaign. As the seasons pass, both your characters and your Agency will grow and change. You can make long-term plans into motion and watch as they come to pass. You will spy on other Agencies, build Archives, hire contacts to protect the Director, mine assets for secrets and attempt to diffuse international and intra-Agency tensions.

These things require time. More time than is allowed in a single adventure. Days, weeks and months of toil, labor, blood and sweat go into a Season Action. Great effort for great deeds. To explain the long-term strategies and subtle maneuvers of a Season, we have this chapter.

THE PASSAGE OF TIME

When you first sit down to play *Cold Shadows*, with everybody around the table—character sheets, dice and refreshments ready—the Season has begun. In other words, the first adventure begins the first Season. We'll assume you'll be starting with Spring. Remember: you have ninety days before the end of the season. That leaves you with plenty of time to get a lot done.

Each Season, the Narrator prepares several stories (otherwise known as "adventures"). A story, of course, is a fictional tale with a beginning, a middle and an end in which the characters take part—for better or worse. The Narrator chapter has more information on building stories.

Characters cannot participate in more than three stories per Season. Upkeep of contacts, assets and resources and other downtime actions demand attention.

If the players take up too much time with stories, the Narrator may determine that they cannot spend time handling other important activities.

SEASON ACTIONS

At the end of each Season, the Director prepares their Season Actions. Season Actions represent large, long ranging plans and goals.

A Director has a number of Season Actions equal to the number of Divisions they control. In other words, as a starting Director, the Director controls one Division. This means the Director has one Season Action. As they conquer additional Divisions, they gain additional Season Actions. The Director and their officers all have Season Actions they may perform. These represent long-term goals for the Agency.

DIVISIONS

Every Director owns his own Agency, which is comprised of numerous Divisions. A Division is an ambiguous amount of power, bureaucracy and assets controlled by the Director. Some Divisions are large while others are small. For this system, the actual size of the Division is unimportant. The fact that the Director runs it establishes their authority and power.

Every Division should also have a name. I'm not going to force you to name your Division, but if you don't, you'll look awfully silly when someone at a party asks you for your Division's name and you say, "Oh, uh, we haven't named it yet."

RESOURCES

Your Division has a number of Assets that represent the Director's accumulated power and assets. Each Season, your Assets provide either Resources or Actions (or, sometimes, both). Keep your Division's Assets in mind as you go through the Season.

A Division may only have up to ten Assets. Once you reach that total, you must start looking to expand into new Divisions.

THE SEASON

Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. When you first sit down to play the game, you should start in the Spring Season. You'll play one or two adventures, then move on to the Summer Season. Then Autumn, then Winter, then back to Spring. Circles, circles, circles. Four Seasons constitute a Year and at the end of the Year, your character ages.

That's how the Seasons work. The slow and inevitable crawl of time.

ACTIONS

Every Season, the Director can take a number of Season Actions. They can use their Season Actions for the following tasks.

- **Division Improvement:** Make your Division a better place by building important Resources or Assets.
- **Craft Items:** The Director can direct the Resources of the Division to create items and tools the Agents will need.
- **Personal Training:** Make the players' characters better Agents by adding further details to their character sheet.

DIVISION IMPROVEMENT

The Director may order a new Asset for a Division, providing his Agents the benefit of that Asset when it is complete.

Acquiring an Asset requires a Season Action.

- A Division may only have a total of ten Assets.
- A brand-new Asset begins at Rank 1: a new and untested Asset. However, with further Season Actions, you can improve your Assets, increasing their Ranks.
- An Asset may not have a Rank greater than three.

Improving an Asset requires a Season Action.

Archives

If the Director supports Archives, your Agents gain a number of bonus Intellect wagers, per Season, equal to the Rank of the Archives. The Archives only provide one, two or three wagers for all the Agents to use, so use them carefully.



Also, the Archives provide your Agents with a number of leads equal to its Rank. A lead is an Intellect-based wager that allows the Agents to say things are true this Season.

Like normal wagers, leads cannot be used to contradict facts already established in the game. If an Agent wants to use a wager from the Archives to say the Director of a rival Agency is secretly a drunk, or a coward or even dead (and being portrayed by his Field Officer), then they may do so.

Combat Instructor

If the Director supports a Combat Instructor, your Agents gain a number of bonus Violence wagers, per Season, equal to the Rank of the Combat Instructor. The Combat Instructor only provides one, two or three wagers for all the Agents to use, so use them carefully.

Also, the Combat Instructor provides an additional benefit. Providing Soldiers with the knowledge and training a Combat Instructor provides (see *Violence* for more information) increases their skills, making them more effective warriors. Using a Season of Field Hospital wagers increases the Rank of any Soldiers troop by one.

Con Ops

If the Director supports a CON OPs, you gain a number of Operational Advantages (see *Espionage and Intrigue*) equal to the CON OPs Rank. In other words, if you have a Rank 2 CON OPs, then your Agents share two Operational Advantages among themselves.

A Division may have more than one CON OPs, thus providing more Advantages for your Agents to share.

Factory

Factories produce Agents, Covers and more. They are not literal industry factories. Instead, “factory” is a term used to refer to any location that churns out deniable paperwork.

If the Director supports a Factory, your Agents gain a number of bonus Charisma wagers, per Season, equal to the Rank of the Factory. The Factory only provides one, two or three wagers for all the Agents to use, so use them carefully.

Also, the Factory provides a number of Gifts each Season equal to its Rank. A Gift, when presented, adds a number of free wagers to any social risk equal to its own rank. A Factory produces a number of Gift Ranks equal to its own Rank, so a Rank 3 Factory can make three Rank 1 Gifts or one Rank 3 Gift, as the Director wishes.

Gifts are often used to bribe, gain access and ease social negotiations.

Field Hospital

If the Director supports a Field Hospital, your Agents gain a number of bonus Resolve wagers, per Season, equal to the Rank of the Field Hospital. The Field Hospital only provides one, two or three wagers for all the Agents to use, so use them carefully.

The Field Hospital provides an additional benefit: the Agents may ignore any weapon Injury not caused



by a silenced pistol. Your Agents may do this a number of times per Season equal to the Rank of the Field Hospital. (Don't go jumping in front of trains, out of planes without parachutes or perform other acts of stupidity, trying to abuse a rule's literal text, thus violating the spirit of the rule. Only a wanker would do that, and it could result in the loss of 3 Trust.)

Garage

Where the engineers and mechanics maintain the vehicles, you use. Your Agency's vehicles have a Rank equal to the Rank of your Garage. Any vehicle-based risks gain a number of free wagers equal to the Rank of your Garage.

Garrison

A Garrison allows you to hold troops in your Division. A Garrison allows a Rank of Soldiers for each Rank of the Garrison. (See *War* for more information.)



Quartermaster

Quartermasters are responsible for assigning weapons, supplies and tools to the Agents who need them on their missions, and ongoing maintenance of those tools. The quality of your Agency's weapons relies on the Quartermaster.

With a Quartermaster, your Agents are all equipped with normal-quality silenced pistols and other weaponry (see *Equipment*, below).

Shrink

If the Director supplies a Shrink, your Agents gain a number of bonus Intellect wagers, per Season, equal to the Rank of the Shrink. The Shrink only provides one, two or three wagers for all the agents to use, so use them carefully.

Also, a Shrink provides your Agents with Stability Points (see *Espionage and Intrigue*). It provides a number of Stability Points equal to its Rank as a Season Action.

Slush Fund

Where the banks and government drones toil to generate the real keystone of the espionage economy: deniable slush funds. Slush Funds produce Resources, which are essential for an Agent's usage.

A Slush Fund produces two Resources per Rank per Season.

Each Season, your Quartermaster can take a Season Action to provide one of your Agents with a Normal-Quality weapon. The Rank of your Quartermaster equals the number of Normal-Quality weapons and other equipment your Agents can acquire and maintain each Season.

For example, if you have a Rank 1 Quartermaster, then as a Season Action, he can provide one of your Agents with one sniper rifle. A Quartermaster of higher Rank can produce better-Quality equipment. Each Rank allows him to increase the Rank of your equipment by one level of Quality.

For example, a Rank 2 Quartermaster can supply two Normal-Quality pistols or a single Fine-Quality pistol. A Rank 3 Quartermaster can supply three Normal-Quality pistols or one Exquisite-Quality pistol.

It takes time and effort to smuggle deniable weapons and assets into the field, and every time such equipment is used, it risks being compromised. Hence the limit on how easily a Quartermaster can supply equipment.

Safehouse

If the Director supports a Safehouse, your Agents gain a number of bonus Cunning wagers, per Season, equal to the Rank of the Safehouse. The Safehouse only provides one, two or three wagers for all the Agents to use, so use them carefully.

Also, the Safehouse provides additional Resources per Season... and may produce more if you take a gamble and risk breaching security. The provides one Resource per Rank of the Safehouse. If the players want to gamble, they can earn two additional Resources if they can roll a 5 or a 6 on a number of dice equal to the Rank of the Safehouse. If they do not roll a 5 or 6, then they lose the Resources they gambled.

Training Site

If the Director supports a Training Site, your Agents gain a number of bonus Athleticism wagers, per Season, equal to the Rank of the Training Site. The Training Site only provides one, two or three wagers for all the Agents to use, so use them carefully.

The Training Site provides another benefit: it provides a number of free Season Actions for the sole purpose of the Personal Training Season Action. These Actions do not count toward the maximum number of Actions that may be spent for Personal Training (see **Personal Training** as a Season Action, below).

CRAFT ITEMS

Certain Assets can produce Equipment. This represents your Division spending time, effort and resources to create weapons and art that further the goals of your Agency.

An Asset may make a number of items equal to its Rank. Thus, a Rank 1 Asset may only make a single Equipment piece. All such Equipment pieces are Good Quality; they provide a bonus to any Agent who uses them.

If an Asset has a Rank greater than Rank 1, then it may produce Equipment of greater Quality than Normal. For example, a Rank 2 Asset can produce a Rank 2 Equipment (Fine Quality) or it can produce two Items of Good Quality. Remember: if your Division does not have certain Assets (the Quartermaster, for example), all Equipment your Division provides are only Normal. You must have specific Assets to gain Equipment of Good, Fine or Exquisite Quality.

BENEFITS OF QUALITY

Each level of Quality above Normal gives the person using the Equipment a bonus die for any appropriate risks. A Fine tailored suit, for example, provides two bonus dice for Charisma risks. An Exquisite Silenced Pistol provides three bonus dice for any Violence risks.

Normal	No Bonus
Good	1 die
Fine	2 dice
Exquisite	3 dice

PERSONAL TRAINING

Personal Training allows you to add elements to your character sheet.

The Director may use a Season Action to give your character an additional Role Rank.

The Director may also spend a Season Action to add an Aspect to your sheet. You are limited to the total number of Aspects you may have on your sheet. You may only have two Aspects plus a number of bonus Aspects equal to your Wisdom. No Wisdom? No bonus Aspects.

The Training Site Asset can spend Season Actions for Personal Training. See the *Training Site* in Assets, above.

SILENCED PISTOLS

It was said that you could tell the quality and personality of an Agent by their weapon of choice. Times have changed. Overt action is frowned upon, and wearing restricted weapons in public is a great way to get caught and hanged as a spy.

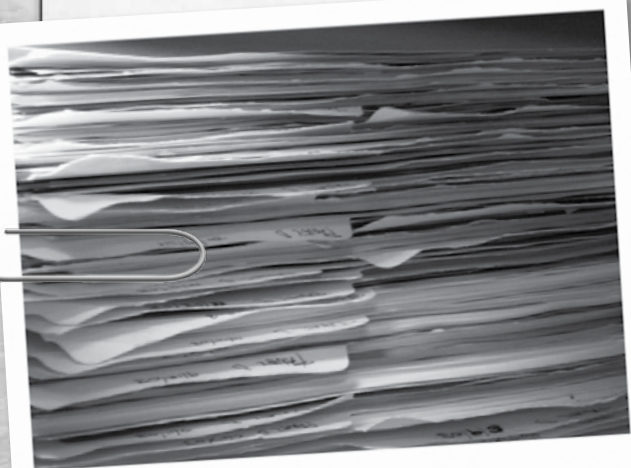
To an Agent, nothing is more important than the weapons they carry.

Agents carry a single pistol with a silencer, always. This is considered a normal-quality item. The silencer grants +2 dice to any risk to avoid detection while the pistol is being used.

REQUISITIONING MORE EQUIPMENT

Only the Quartermaster can requisition more equipment or weapons for Agents. The Quality of an item is measured by the Rank of the Quartermaster.

- A Rank 1 Quartermaster may make a Normal-Quality weapon or item. A Normal-Quality weapon or item has no bonus Techniques.
- A Rank 2 Quartermaster may make a Good-Quality weapon or item. A Good-Quality weapon or item may have one Technique.
- A Rank 3 Quartermaster may make a Fine-Quality weapon or item. A Fine-Quality weapon or item may have two Techniques.
- A Rank 4 Quartermaster may make an Exquisite-Quality weapon or item. An Exquisite-Quality weapon or item may have three Techniques.



TECHNIQUES

High-Quality items often give access to techniques. Each point of Quality an item has, gives it one technique that can be used. Qualities have Ranks just like other items in the game. An Exquisite-Quality item can have three Rank 1 techniques, a Rank 2 and Rank 1 technique, or a single Rank 3 technique.

Bad Reputation

Some weapons or items carry a Bad Reputation. If your Agent carries a Bad Reputation weapon or item, then at the beginning of each game session, the Narrator adds a number of Trust Points to the Pool equal to the Quality of the weapon or item.

Once per game session, the Narrator can force the user of the item to lose dice from a risk dice pool equal to the Rank of this Quality.

If a Hitter has this technique, the Narrator can reduce their dice pool by the Hitter's Role Rank.

Brutally Efficient

The quality of the item determines the control an Agent has over its use. If the item or Agent has a Brutally Efficient technique, the user gains a number of free wagers equal to the Rank of this Quality.

If a Hitter has this technique, they gain a number of free wagers equal to their Role Rank.

Extra Cover

Some items can provide extra Covers when they are displayed or used. For example, if you have the Cover "Hans Gruber (Terrorist)," then your item can also carry that Cover and be used to aid you. Your item grants a bonus to that Cover equal to the item's Rank in this quality.

If a Hitter has this technique, they gain an extra Cover, with a Cover Rank equal to their Role Rank.

Extra Training

Some items or weapons also give the benefits of training, without having to train. A weapon or item may only carry one "Extra Training", regardless of its Quality. An item with this quality grants one benefit from the Advantage list in Chapter 1.

If the Hitter has this technique, they gain one extra Advantage from the list in Chapter 1.

Swift Strikes

The quality of the handle determines the control an Agent has over the item. If you invest in the weapon or item's "swift strikes", then it allows a number of free strikes equal to the Rank of this Quality.

If a Hitter has this technique, the Hitter gains free strikes equal to their Role Rank.

BREAKING A WEAPON OR ITEM

A weapon or item breaks if the Agent using it does not beat 10 on their roll and their opponent spends one wager. So, to break an opponent's weapon or item, you must win privilege, spend a wager and your opponent must roll less than 10.

You must spend a number of wagers equal to the Quality of the weapon or item. A Normal weapon or item costs one wager to break. A Good weapon or item costs two wagers to break. A Fine weapon or item costs three wagers to break. An Exquisite weapon or item costs four wagers to break.

RESOURCES

Money is king in the modern world, and as little greenback soldiers work to take over the world, spy agencies leverage financial institutions to gain access to more resources and money. This is represented abstractly in the game as "Resources".

A Resource represents enough money to supply, pay and care for an Agent. Realistically, each Division should have operating budgets in the millions of dollars, but that requires a bit too much math for a roleplaying game.

Each Season, your Division generates Resources—if you have a Slush Fund, that is. This game assumes your Division generates enough Resources to keep everything running. The Resources you deal with is the excess you can use to purchase additional Assets, equipment, etc.

AGENTS & RESOURCES

We assume all Agents are well-paid, have homes or apartments, can access their necessities and are far from impoverished. In their Director's eyes, they have no need to pay for anything. If they need a car, they take it from the Garage. If they need a weapon or item, they take it from the Quartermaster. Their Director provides everything they need.

But additional Resources provide an Agent with funds above and beyond their needs. If the Director's Divisions produce extra Resources, it is the Field Officer's duty to hand those Resources out to the Agents who deserve them.

At the end of the Year, Officers can spend any additional Resources on just about anything they want. Want a new suit and you don't have a Quartermaster? Resources tend to that need. Want a new weapon or item and your Quartermaster is busy? Resources tend to that need. Agents may also spend Resources to make their own contacts and allies happier. Any Resources spent on contacts or allies (such as the Commander's Soldiers, the Intelligence Analyst's contacts or the Security Officer's guard) give that Officer a bonus equal to the Resources spent.

An Officer cannot spend more Resources than his Rank.

Commander

Resources add to the General's Troops. Every Resource increases their Rank by one until the end of the Season.

Field Officer

Resources add to the Seneschal's Staff, adding one Rank per Resource.

Hitter

Resources further motivate the Hitter, making them a more threatening individual. Each Resource adds to the dice the Hitter gains for intimidation.

Intelligence Analyst

If a Spy Master gets Resources, they can spend it on their agents, adding to the number of times they can learn secrets.

Operational Analyst

More funds give more access to Operational Advantages. One extra Operational Advantage per Resource spent.

Public Relations

Resources give PR more bribes, thus earning them an additional favor per Resource spent.

Security Officer

Additional Resources increase the morale of the Security Officer's Guards. Each Resource increases their Rank by one.



EQUIPMENT & RESOURCES

If an Agent has any Resources, then we assume they have enough Resources to pay for any mundane needs. A night at the inn, a bowl of pho, wine—whatever they need. Remember: one Resource is enough to feed and house an Agent for a year. That one Resource represents all of an Agent's needs for an entire year. Fiddling over the cost of a night at hotel is just silly.

If the Agent needs a new suit, they get one. It doesn't give them any bonuses and it is just a Normal-Quality suit, but it will do. An Agent receives their equipment from their Division. They do not have to pay for their weapons or items or vehicles or other gear. Their Director expects them to fight for the Division, therefore, the Director provides them with the proper equipment to do just that.

Usually, the Director provides you with Normal equipment. This provides no bonus or penalty. However, you may seek out finer equipment... but you need to know where to look. Talented Quartermasters can provide Fine or even Exquisite weapon or items and armor, but they are often difficult to locate. (In other words, looking for high-quality items can provide an adventure hook.)

The quality of your equipment is important. Equipment comes in five categories, listed below. Poor equipment includes anything found on the battlefield, left over or otherwise scavenged. If your Agent has poor equipment, they gain the tag Poorly Equipped. Any other Agents can

tag you for two bonus dice on any appropriate risk.

Normal equipment provides no bonuses or penalties. An Agent can purchase Normal equipment if they have one Resource. One Resource lasts an Agent the entire year and covers all their costs.

Good equipment provides a bonus of one die to any appropriate risk and costs one Resource, regardless of what it is.

Fine equipment provides a bonus of two dice to any appropriate risk and costs two Resources, regardless of what it is.

Exquisite equipment provides three bonus dice to any appropriate risk and costs three Resources, regardless of what it is.

TOUCHSTONES

Agents may spend one of their Season Actions with their Touchstone. This time spent improves their Trust and role as an Agent for their Agency. When they spend a Season Action on their Touchstone, they remove a Betrayal token from the Trust Pool and remove a mark from their Bond of Trust. They also add a Trust Point to the pool.

END OF THE YEAR

Another important date. The end of the Year.

In Winter, Agents mark the end of the Year by looking back at their accomplishments and defeats. But more importantly, each and every one of them takes one more step toward inevitable death.

AGE

On your character sheet, you'll find a space for Age. When you created your character, you were instructed to roll one d6 and write that number there. It is the end of the Year. Time to add to that total.

At the end of the Year, each Agent rolls one d6 and adds those Age Points to their Age.

When your Agent's Age reaches 60 Points or higher, your character advances to the next Phase of their life. Spring to Summer, Summer to Autumn, Autumn to Winter, Winter... to Death.

Once you reach 60 or higher, erase that total. You now have zero Age Points. At the end of next Year, roll one d6 and write down your roll in that spot.

PHASE TO PHASE

When your character moves from Spring to Summer or Summer to Fall or Fall to Winter, they may make certain changes. They can change their Name, change their Aspects and even switch their Virtues. Listed below are all the changes your character can make when they move from Phase to Phase. You can make any number of these changes, as you see fit.

Name

You may, if you like, change your Public Name, changing who you are. Altering your Destiny. Taking on a new path.

Aspects

When you move to a new Phase, you also gain new Aspects.

Spring to Summer: Gain two Aspects

Summer to Autumn: Gain one new Aspect and one Winter Aspect.

This section can seem confusing. Effectively, Age is abstracted to a pool of "Age Points" that roll over between seasons when the pool reaches 60. This represents not just aging, but the mental, social and physical wear and tear of the espionage world.

Autumn to Winter: Gain one new Aspect and two new Winter Aspects.

Winter Aspects

A Winter Aspect has only a compel and no invoke. It must be an Aspect like "Bad Leg" or "Blind Eye" or "Quivering Hands." When your character moves into Autumn, you gain one Winter Aspect. When your character moves into Winter, you get two more. Spies get old. And eventually, they die... or disappear.

Covers

An Agent can create a new Rank 1 Cover when moving between Phases. You may only do this once between phases.

Virtues

When your character enters a new Phase, they may switch their Virtues. For example, as your character grows older, they may switch their Wisdom and Strength or perhaps their Violence and Cunning.

You may switch your Virtues as you wish, but remember, you always have a Weakness.

DEATH

Winter Phase. You've reached 60 Age points at the End of the Year. Time for your character to pass away or retire. You will have to make a new character, as this character is no longer playable.

CHAPTER EIGHT:

WAR BETWEEN AGENCIES

“There are no allies in state craft. Only common interest.”

- Atlee, Mission Impossible: Rogue Nation

Warfare is an important part of the political landscape, and the sign of a failed espionage operation. If your Agency ends up in an inter-Agency war, shit has gone so sideways that there's no coming back.

In nearly every spy story, characters are either at war, go to war or suffer the scars of it. The system in this chapter provides you with a way to present warfare in a way that is narrative rather than tactical. Yes, tactics can come into play, but more importantly, this system allows the players and Narrator to tell the story of the conflict. There is also an element of arbitrariness in the system—which players can modify—allowing for a sense of real danger and helplessness amid epic struggles.

THE WAR RANK

Your Agency does not live in a vacuum. You have enemies and allies with and against whom you operate. Their Agents are targets. Their Assets need to be turned. Their operations disrupted.

War is inevitable. It will happen. It's only a matter of time. To represent this fact, each of the Agencies you interact with has a War Rank representing how close you are to covert and inter-Agency warfare with that Agency. The lower the Rank, the further you are from War. The higher the Rank, the closer you get to War.

You only have a War Rank with Agencies you meet and interact with during the campaign. War Rank can also be applied to organizations that are not spy-based, such as police outfits, criminal organizations or political entities.

War Before 10

Question: Can you declare War before the War Rank reaches 10?

Answer: Yes, you can. Reaching 10 means War is inevitable.

ESCALATION

Once you have established contact with Agents or operatives from another Agency, you automatically receive a War Rank 1 with that Agency. Every Season, that War Rank increases by 1 unless you take direct actions to stop it from going up. You can also take actions to decrease the War Rank between you and another Agency... but the Agents from the other Agency may do the same—both increasing and decreasing the War Rank.

During your game, when you interact with Agents from other Agencies, your actions may (or may not) increase the War Rank with that Province.

Listed below are all the ways you can increase and decrease the War Rank with another Agency.



Gifts

If you send a Gift to another Agency, the War Rank between the two Agencies decreases by a Rank equal to the Rank of the Gift.

Gifts can include Resources. If you send Resources, decrease the War Rank equal to the number of Resources you send.

Insults

If you insult the Trust of another Agency, the War Rank increases by one.

Murder

If an Agent from another Agency is murdered in (or even near) an operation of yours, the War Rank increases by a number of Ranks equal to that Agent's Role Rank. This is at the Narrator's discretion.

Other Actions

During the campaign, an Agent may commit an offense that justifies increasing the War Rank. You know those pesky players; always coming up with something you and I never thought of...

DECLARING WAR

Once the War Rank between two Provinces reaches 10, War is inevitable. It will occur the next Season.

War is a Season Action. It is the only Season Action a Director and their Officers can take for that Season. All Resources and efforts are dedicated to War.

That is, if you declare War, you may take no other Season Actions that Year.

CALCULATIONS

When determining the outcome of a War, we must calculate the Advantages each side has.

Winning one of the calculations means you gain Advantage Points. Whichever side has the most Advantage Points at the end of the calculations will most likely be the victor.

Although, some other factors may come into play after the calculations are made....

The First Calculation: The Moral High Ground

Whose government can establish a moral cause and gain the people's enthusiastic cooperation?

The Public Relations of each Division makes a Charisma risk. (Speeches may be necessary from the players. Narrator's choice.) The one who gains privilege adds their wagers as Advantages. The loser only adds half their wagers, rounded up, as Advantages.

The Second Calculation: Commanders

Whose Commanders are most capable?
Next, determine the Role Rank of the Commanders. Each Commander gains a number of Advantage Points equal to his Rank.

The Third Calculation: Terrain and Locale

Who can take advantage of the benefits of city and state?

Division makes an Intellect risk (Aspects and other benefits are appropriate). The one who gains privilege adds their wagers as Advantages. The loser only adds half their wagers, rounded up, as Advantages.

The Fourth Calculation: Orders

Whose orders will be carried out most successfully?

Each General makes a Cunning risk. The one who gains privilege adds their wagers as Advantages. The loser only adds half their wagers, rounded up, as Advantages.

The Fifth Calculation: Resolve

Whose covert army is strongest?

Add the total Ranks of Soldiers for each side. Each Rank of Soldiers grants an Advantage Point. The Security Officer's Guards do not add to this calculation.

The Sixth Calculation: Training

Whose troops have the best training?

All Agents make a Violence risk (target number 10, as usual). The victor keeps all theirs while the defeated only keep half. The wagers made by each side count as Advantages.

The Seventh Calculation: Morale

Covert wars hinge on faith, trust and belief in duty...

All Officers make a Resolve risk (target number 10, as usual). The wagers made by each side count as Advantages.

WAGING WAR

Once the Advantages have been calculated, it is time for War.

Wars occur in Waves. Each Wave is a Season. During the Wave, each side uses its Advantages to cause casualties. Each player writes down their orders secretly and hands them to the Narrator. The damage done by Advantages is revealed all at once.

An Advantage can cause one of your opponent's Soldiers to lose one Rank. If a Soldier is reduced to zero Ranks, it is destroyed. Or, if you prefer, you may use an Advantage to cause damage to your opponent's Agency. You can reduce the Rank of any Asset by one for each Advantage you use. If an Asset is reduced to zero Ranks, it is destroyed.

Both Soldiers and Guardsmen may use their ability to protect Officers from Injury. They lose a Rank for doing so.

You may also use Advantages to give Injuries to prominent Agents and NPCs on the opponent's side. Each Advantage is a Rank 1 Injury. You may use further Advantages to aggravate Injuries.

END OF THE WAVE

At the end of each Wave, either side may surrender. Surrenders must be negotiated. If one side is unhappy with the negotiations, War may continue for another Wave and another Season.

When all casualties are counted, recount each side's Advantages and perform another Wave.

Remember: No Season Actions other than War may be taken while War is declared.

“WOW. WAR SUCKS!”

It costs you Season Actions. It costs you Resources.

It costs you Soldiers. It costs you Officers.

It costs you Assets. War sucks.

Consider it carefully.

We warned you that war was the ultimate expression of an espionage operation and apparatus failing.

Don't fail.

WINNING THE WAR

War can end two ways.

First, one side can surrender. If they do, the winner of the War determines what happens to the loser. The Director and their Officers place themselves in the winner's hands. Or, they can all commit suicide. Their choice. Negotiations should be roleplayed, of course.

Second, one side can be destroyed. When War is over, the winner claims the Assets and Division of the loser.

CHAPTER NINE:

THE FIELD

EXOTIC LOCALES AND OPERATIONAL FIELDS

"A desk is a dangerous place from which to view the world."

- John le Carré

Division Headquarters is the heart of any Agency, but the real work of intelligence Agencies happens in the Field. While your Division HQ is in your home country, your Field Operations can be run out of any number of places. The most common location is in your country's embassy located in the capital city of the region in which you're operating.

However, they can be located literally anywhere: an apartment, the offices of a local business or even a jungle camp.

WHO CREATES THE FIELD

This chapter is written for the entire gaming group, both the players and the Narrator. You are all going to have a hand in creating the Field of Operations because we want every member of your group to be invested in the setting. We want players to add the Assets, Themes and Threats they want the characters to face, and for the Narrator to lay the groundwork for the plots and conflicts to come. We will try to be clear in this chapter when we are addressing just the Narrator or just the players, but if we don't call out either, then please assume we are talking to all of you.

Cities, countries and regions are byzantine structures that grow and change beyond any one person's control, but creating your own Field for the game can be a lot of fun. When you create your Field, sit down with your entire group and decide on the level of detail you want. If some of you want more detail than others, the more detail-oriented members of your group should take on research and design themes before coming to the table to play. And if you really don't want to

SHORT TERM FIELD OPS AND GLOBAL AGENCIES

What if the characters are in the Berlin Field but need to run an Operation in Moscow? Or what if we want the Agency to be a truly global Agency with jobs everywhere?

There are two simple things you can do to achieve these campaign objectives.

First, create an On-the-Fly Locale as detailed later in this chapter for each location you plan on visiting.

*Second, if you want a truly global campaign or a campaign centered around Moles and Counterintelligence, then use your Division HQ city as your Field Location. The **Queen & Country** stories, **Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy** and **The Sandbaggers** all use London as their primary Field Location with each Exotic Locale a short vignette in the wider story centered around the Agency in London.*

spend all the time creating your own Field, place a Headquarters and the Locations associated with each Role and start playing!

Let's run down a list of what you're going to have to do to create your Field:

- Step 0: **Research** your Field (if it is a real place).
- Step 1: Determine the major **Themes** for your Field.
- Step 2: Create some **Field Assets** to help the Agency.
- Step 3: Spend Field Points to create or improve: **Field Assets, Threats, Organizations** or **Faces**.
- Step 4: **Fill in any details** you think are needed, and leave some holes for later fun.

At the start of Field Creation, each player gets (2) two Field Points, (2) two Opposition Points and (1) one Wild Point. As your group goes through Field Creation, the Players give these Points to the Narrator to add Locations, Threats

and Organizations to the Field. The Narrator collects these Points to form the Story Pool, a pool of points that will complicate and twist the events of the story during play.

Narrator Note: **Quick City Creation**

Field Creation taking too long? You'd rather start playing now instead of building your Field? Go ahead! All the Narrator needs to do is give the players their points, tell them what they can spend them on, give them their free Locations and dive into the story. If the players later want to go somewhere, see someone or face an imminent threat, they can spend a point to add information to the Field Sheet.

Step 0: Research

Read up on your Field of Operations if it's a real place. Wikipedia and the CIA World Fact Book are excellent resources. Travel guides are also a great





place to learn about the neighborhoods and politics of your setting. You can find travel guides to virtually anywhere with a simple Google search, each full of great history, maps and important dates and landmarks.

As you do your research, talk to each other about major themes you see that have developed around this Field of Operations. Was it in the Soviet Bloc, a NATO ally or a Third World Country? Was it a major trade hub, did it have natural resources that could be exploited or was it a Banana Republic ripe for the plucking by ambitious agencies? Note these details. Designate someone in your group to take notes about what you all find interesting about your city.

I'm making my version of Berlin as it existed at the height of the Cold War in the 1960s. I've read about and watched the movie depicting the story of the Bridge of Spies, so I know that Berlin was divided a uniquely divided city between West Berlin and East Berlin. I note that "A Divided City" would make a great Theme in my game. And it was a place where NATO and the Soviet Bloc would do business with each other, so those two factions will likely both come into play as Major Organizations.

I also read about Checkpoint Charlie, a famous passage between the two halves of the city and discovered Café Adler (Eagle Café). It was a famous café situated right at the checkpoint popular with Allied officers, and those visiting both for normal and clandestine reasons. It even overlooked East Berlin. This sounds like a fantastic location for a Watering Hole. Cafe Adler will definitely be a place my Agents will be visiting for good or ill.

Step 1: Themes

The first step is something you've roughed out already through your research: Themes. What major themes are important for your Field of Operations and game? Talk to each other explicitly about what kind of game you want; some players might have an idea of something they want, to help complement their character. If it doesn't clash with the rest of the Themes for the Field then the group should try to accommodate everyone's ideas. If it does clash somewhat, then reworking it and the other Themes so they all work together can help everyone get some of what they want from the game.

THE FIELD OF OPERATIONS MAP

Acquiring and printing out a map of your Field of Operations helps immeasurably. Or better yet, order an old-style fold-out map of the city your Headquarters is in. This type of tactile map provides immersion. While they may not be accurate for the time period, they can help give you a real sense of place. Make sure it's large enough for everyone to see and to write on. Noting the location of various Field Assets, Allies and Opposition will help the players visualize where things are located, help them plan Operations with routes, chokepoints, meeting locations, etc.

Step 2: Field Assets

After deciding on a set of Themes for your game, add specific Field Assets. Field Assets are locations, people or materials that provide specific in-game benefits to the characters. Characters can call up a Medic on Call to help heal Injuries, or meet with their Informants or Moles to gain some Intel, or tap the Black Market to get some illegal goods like Soviet Red Army firearms. These benefits may require characters to spend Trust or Betrayal Points to activate the effects, but any character with access can gain the benefit if they are willing to pay the cost.

FIELD ASSETS

- **Black Market:** A place where illegal equipment can be acquired.
- **CON OPs HQ Liaison:** Access to CON OPs without an Analyst.

- **Emergency Medical Staff:** When injured Agents can call on trained medical staff for immediate in-the-Field help.
- **Garage:** Where the cars and vehicles are maintained and equipped.
- **Garrison:** Guards for your Headquarters or a small squad to be used in the Field if the host country allows/is aware of such actions.
- **Headquarters:** Your in-country base.
- **In-Country Touchstones:** Family, lovers, friends, favorite gambling den or a personal place agents go to revitalize themselves, get a bit of downtime and rebuild their Trust and sate their needs. Of course, since they are in-country, they are vulnerable to direct enemy action.
- **Safe House:** A place for Agents to lay low and plan, away from HQ.
- **Source:** A local face who works with a specific Agent to provide Intel.
- **Supply Drop:** Division equipment smuggled into the country.
- **Watering Hole:** A popular meeting spot for agents from various agencies, sometimes a neutral meeting space to plan inter-Agency deals.



FREE ASSETS

The Narrator starts Field Creation by granting a free Asset to each of the players, beginning with an Agency Headquarters. Work with the players to add one true thing about the Field Operations Agency Headquarters. Where is it located? How is it defended? Are there secret entrances? Is it big enough to house other Assets? If there are any major geographic features, the Narrator should quickly describe one feature of each. Is the city built on the side of a mountain in the Alps? Is there a major international trade port in the city? Are there extensive plantations that cover most of the island? Describe them so the players have a sense of place. Finally, the Narrator may grant a free Asset to each Agent, something they feel would work for each character: a Source for a Handler, a Garrison for the Security Chief, or a Black Market for the Freelancer.

Step 3: Spending Field Points

Once free locations are placed in the city, each player (in turn) can give one of their Field Points to the Narrator to add an Asset to the Field or increase the Rank of an existing Asset and add an important detail to an Asset. Players can also spend their Field Points to purchase Threats, Organizations or Faces.

Berlin is an important capital and border city. I start Field Creation by giving the Players the Watering Hole (Café Adler —Eagle Café—a famous coffee bar that overlooked Checkpoint Charlie and was frequented by Allied officers and Eastern Bloc Agents) as a free location. And since Berlin was the flashpoint between the US and Soviets, I give them a Headquarters at Rank 3 (Teufelsberg—The Devil's Mountain). I also give them a Garrison, a Safe House, a Source and In-Country Touchstones as we have a Security Chief, a Freelancer, a Handler and a Commander playing.

The Commander mentioned his family had moved into West Berlin to be nearby.

ASSET BENEFITS

During gameplay, characters will call on their Assets to gain in-game benefits. Players cannot simply state that their character is activating an Asset to gain the benefit. Assets are important! When a



Player wants to activate an Asset, the Narrator will create a scene for the Player. If it's something as simple as gaining a CON OPs Liaison benefit for an upcoming mission, the Narrator might describe a montage scene where the character practices on a Parkour Course, or describe the Trust Exercises the team works through. Or better yet, the Narrator might let the player describe the scene.

If multiple characters visit a location, the Narrator should have them roleplay the experience of interacting with the Asset. Often, new story threads and hooks emerge naturally, growing the campaign for everyone.

FIELD ASSETS

Here is a list of all the Field Assets and the Benefits they provide. Many Assets have a Rank, which represents how well-developed this Asset is for the Agency.

Black Market

Black Markets come in all shapes and sizes. They range in size from one guy smuggling illegal recording equipment in his apartment, to a massive multinational smuggling ring of heavy military and industrial equipment and illicit goods and substances. Agents must spend a Trust Point or Betrayal token to acquire equipment for their entire team (Trust Point) or just themselves on the down-low (Betrayal token). This is usually represented by off-the-books currency, or by a trade in



some information the dealer wants. The Narrator decides what the dealer will accept. Finally, specialized goods like fake IDs or travel papers are not available through Black Markets. You need a Fixer for those, but often, Fixers work closely with Black Market dealers, and they may even work out of the same shop.

- **Rank 1:** A Rank 1 Black Market specializes in a single type of equipment: something that is available in the local region, but might be outlawed for the public, like police or military weapons, or illegal specialized listening equipment, or drugs. Choose one type of good that this Black Market dealer has available.
- **Rank 2:** A Rank 2 Black Market has a broader selection of goods available, but nothing that wouldn't be available in this country.
- **Rank 3:** A Rank 3 Black Market is a veritable treasure trove of goods. If a thing is manufactured somewhere in the world, you can get it here. The only limits are one-of-a-kind objects, artwork and experimental items.

CON OPs HQ Liaison

The CON OPs staff from the Division Headquarters is on call with the Agents and can help them with various training or exercises to prepare for missions. You may have some guy you can call back home at Langley or an attentive, in-office team of agents ready to provide whatever help they can.

- **Ranks 1–3:** These Ranks represents how well-funded this Liaison is and how many CON OPs benefits they can provide to the Agents each Season, just like the CON OPs Agent.

Emergency Medical Staff

When missions go sideways, Agents can get severely injured or even die. Worse, clandestine operations can be discovered if an injured Agent or Asset goes to a public hospital, and breaking into a vet's office isn't always an option. Thus, Emergency Medical Staff are on call for the Agents to deal with injuries and poisons quietly and off the books.

- **Ranks 1–3:** These Ranks represent the level of skill of the nurse, medic or doctor the Division has on call. If the Emergency Medical Staff can have time to work on the injured or poisoned character, they can stabilize and heal Ranks of Injury equal to their Rank. They can also heal poisonings equal to their Rank. However, Rank 4 or 5 poisons, like Polonium poisonings, can only be handled by Medical Staff back at Division HQ in your home country, and often, poisons this advanced can be fatal if not dealt with immediately.

Garage

A well-equipped and maintained vehicle can mean life or death for an Agent in the field. Having access to a false-paneled van at the right time can turn a daunting task of smuggling printing plates through Checkpoint Charlie into a simple milk run. Agencies with a well-equipped garage have staff who maintain the vehicles available for missions in a secure location usually directly connected to the headquarters, although airfields and docks are limited by the terrain.

- **Rank 1:** Choose one: ground, water, or air. You have a garage, dock or airstrip. The Agency has access to stock vehicles of that type to use on missions and in their downtime if not currently requisitioned.
- **Rank 2:** Choose a second type of vehicle. The Agency gains a garage, dock or airstrip in addition to their current, Rank 1 vehicle base. The second base provides stock vehicles of that type for missions and downtime. The first base now provides customized vehicles of that type like tuned racing planes, fishing boats with false-panel smuggling holds or secretly-armored sedans. Agents may now also spend a Trust Point to gain access to a custom specialty vehicle that isn't usually available to the general public, like a police APC, a jet or a massive yacht.
- **Rank 3:** The Agency gains access to the third type of vehicle base and gains stock vehicles of that type to use on missions and in downtime. The first and second base now both provide customized vehicles of their

types, and the second base now provides the specialty vehicles like in Rank 2 for a Trust Point.

Garrison

Sometimes embassies have small military detachments housed in a garrison at the embassy to defend it in case of attack. Sometimes those garrisons are larger than needed for the basic security of the embassy and are trained for more specialized and clandestine jobs. A Security Chief Agent in play oversees the Garrison Asset and will command them in the Field as well as use them in a special way detailed in the Violence Chapter. A Security Chief's Guards do not directly correlate with the abilities or Ranks of the Garrison. Even if a Field Office doesn't have a Garrison, the Chief will still have his guards and vice versa.

- **Rank 1:** A basic security team for the Headquarters. These are well-trained soldiers, or marines, who will stop any basic attack or keep back a mob for a few hours.
- **Rank 2:** A large garrison of troops or a single special forces team beyond the embassy security team that can be utilized for some basic strike missions either in a clandestine plainclothes manner or, if the government of the region has granted permission, as soldiers of your nation in full combat disposition (for example, as marines fighting drug traffickers in Colombia in the 70s or as advisors aiding the local government military against rebel forces).

- **Rank 3:** A large garrison of troops and a special forces team above and beyond the embassy security team. They can handle multiple missions both as special forces strike missions in the Field location or can even travel with the Agents to another Field location for missions. They can also pull off large simple missions like spearheading a coup of a small nation for rebels, or act as a "mercenary force" doing black ops work hunting down jungle rebels.

Headquarters

This is your Agency's Field Headquarters. It can be as large as the massive complex of Teufelsberg outside of Berlin during the height of the Cold War or it could be a single apartment where the team meets before going on missions.

- **Rank 1:** If it is part of an embassy, this level of Headquarters might be a corner of a large office, or even a single set of rooms with a guard in the hallway to stop those without clearance. If it's a standalone place then it's a single apartment, house, small building, etc., with some basic security like a door guard and maybe a lookout.
- **Rank 2:** A wing of an embassy or a set of offices in a larger office building, a large building like a converted warehouse, or a small hotel or apartment complex. It will have multiple points of secure entry, clean rooms, private offices and secure Intel storage.

- **Rank 3:** A vast complex, or even the majority of an embassy. An entire campus of buildings, training areas, secure storage, guard stations, archives, research labs, etc.

In-Country Touchstone

Each Agent has a Touchstone—the thing they care about more than any other thing. Whatever that may be, it is their weak spot, but also their source of strength. Usually, Agents can only spend Season Actions to access their Touchstone during their R&R and gain the benefits there. However, some Agents bring their Touchstones in-country, or even find them there. A Deputy Director might have moved her family into houses outside of the embassy, or a Handler might have fallen in love with one of his Sources, or a Hitter might have a specific bar to which she goes to forget her worldly concerns.

Whatever the case, Agents with access to this Asset can activate their Touchstone by spending a Trust Point. However, there is also a downside to this powerful ability. Basic Intel will reveal this weakness to enemy agents or even betrayed Agents of your own team can easily discover your Touchstone. Once discovered it is only a matter of a few slit throats, a burned-down bar or a hit-and-run in the street to destroy your Agent's Touchstone and devastate them. Worse, they can be used as leverage against your Agent when they are threatened.

Because of this danger, Touchstones do not cost Field Points during Field Creation. Instead, during this step, Agents decide the Rank of their Touchstone, disclosing three important details about the Touchstone.

- **Rank 0:** Family, friends, lovers or special places or groups back home that are safe from enemy action or intrusion. Agents may only activate these Touchstones with Season Actions.
- **Rank 1:** A simple Touchstone like a hang-gliding club for an Adrenaline junkie, a distant family member, an ex-lover or an acquaintance. Once every three game sessions, an Agent can activate their Touchstone to gain the Touchstone benefits.
- **Rank 2:** A close Touchstone like a spouse, an old friend, the one bar where everyone knows you, your cabin up in the mountains or a former colleague. Once every other game session, Agents can activate their Touchstone to gain the Touchstone benefits.
- **Rank 3:** The love of your life, your spouse and your children who mean the world to you, your best friend, or maybe his bar, the secret place you've spent years as your personal private and secure refuge that no one knows about. Once every game session, Agents can activate their Touchstone to gain the Touchstone benefits by visiting that Touchstone.

Safe House

A place for Agents to lay low, plan away from HQ, or to meet with their sources. Safe Houses are usually some sort of living space (i.e. apartment, house, hotel room) where people coming and going isn't strange. A Safe House can be as small as a loft over a bar/club or as large as an entire apartment complex. Agencies can have more than one Safe House to maintain cell security. Detail each when it is purchased.

- **Rank 1:** A single cheap apartment, loft above a bar or out-of-the-way hut. There is no security besides a basic door lock. Narrators gain three dice to any risk versus an Agent trying to uncover the location of the Safe House through any financial or other indirect tracking attempts.
- **Rank 2:** A fancy apartment, suburb home or a small secluded compound. There is some basic security and the Agency has spent time and resources making this place secure: active security systems linked to the Agency, maybe a door guard at an apartment, sniper hideouts in a cabin, firearms and basic go bags hidden throughout the safe house, an escape route and extensive dummy corps used to purchase the property. Narrators gain six dice in any risk versus an Agent trying to uncover the location of the Safe House through indirect tracking attempts.
- **Rank 3:** Either an extensive compound, apartment complex, or small office building, or an incredibly secure, but smaller

location. There are armed Guards (9 dice worth of Henchmen minimum), extensive defenses and security systems throughout, multiple escape routes and vehicles, and perhaps even an elaborate escape tunnel/ship/plane system hidden from surveillance. The Narrator gains nine dice in any risk versus an Agent trying to uncover the location of this Safe House through indirect tracking attempts.

Source

A Source is a local face who work with a specific Agent to provide Intel. They can be disaffected or disloyal personnel working for a rival Agency, a blackmailed government or corporate employee in a sensitive position, or even the spouse or lover of a VIP in another group. Whoever they are and whatever the Agency has on them or offers them, the Source provides Intel based on their Rank.

Sources can even be developed to rank up, if possible—not everyone can get access to the highest-level secrets, no matter how loyal or willing they might be. At times, the Narrator, through a



Source, can offer the Source's handling Agent an opportunity to increase the Source's Rank. If the Agent/Agency can fulfill the Source's demand they will provide either better/more Intel or gain deeper access and rank up and provide more Intel in the future.

Finally, handling Agents need to either maintain or provide the hold that they have over the Source. Sources have a Desire, and these must be fulfilled every Season or the Source may expose themselves, be caught and destroyed, or even turn on the Agency.

- **Rank 1:** A low-ranking rival agent, a government or corporate employee with access to some basic sensitive material/equipment, or a basic member in an Organization, etc. Each session, these Sources can provide their handling Agent with one point of Intel. Returning the Intel to HQ will verify it or determine if it's false, in the case of a double agent. Or Agents can hold onto the Intel and use it themselves and share it only with other Agents they wish. These Sources' desires are simple: do not expose their low level crimes, pay them a relatively small amount of bribe money or grant them access to some contraband.
- **Rank 2:** A mid-level rival agent, a non-intelligence Agency government or corporate top-level manager, or senior Organization member. Each session, these Sources can provide their handling Agent with two points of basic Intel or one Rank 2 point of Intel. These Sources' desires are more complex: do not expose their crime(s) which would have extensive

ramifications for their Organization if made public, which can cause backlash against the Agency, pay them large sums of bribe money, or acquire for them dangerously illegal goods or services.

- **Rank 3:** A rival Agency's top-level Agent, a non-Intel government or corporate head, or a leader of an Organization. Each session, these Sources can provide their handling Agent with up to three total points of Intel either as three single points of Intel, a Rank 2 Intel and a Rank 2 Intel point, or a Rank 3 piece of Intel. These Sources' desires are complex and difficult to fulfill. They could be anything from not exposing their crime which could bring down multiple sitting governments, destroy the stock market trust in an entire corporate sector, or publically expose multiple secure agents. Or it could be huge sums of bribe money, or acquiring for them unethical sources of illegal goods or services: assassinations, running a cocaine cartel, WMDs, etc.

Supply Drop

Your Agency has access to loads of powerful equipment and tools useful to your Division, but not always the means to get it to you in the Field. This Asset will either be vital or perhaps unimportant depending on the location of your Field Office. If your Field office is in the same country/region as your Agency HQ then this will not be an important Asset as you can pop over to HQ and gear up. However, if your Field Office is located in hostile territory

or in the country of an unfriendly government clandestine supply drops become your thin lifeline to home. This could be a business front, an “in” with a smuggling gang, a literal aerial supply drop in a secure place or even a turned enemy supply officer. Detail this with your Narrator.

- **Rank 1:** You have diplomatic access and immunity and therefore secure diplomatic courier with Agency HQ. Any Intel that you gain, you can send to your Agency HQ with no worry about transmission leaks in either direction. You can also acquire basic illegal documents and papers that can either fit in a diplomatic pouch or be transmitted securely.
- **Rank 2:** Your Agency has a secure smuggling operation that can send your Division equipment not normally available in your Field. Illegal firearms, documents and various supplies available from your Agency Quartermaster are now available to your team in the Field.
- **Rank 3:** Your Agency has a massive smuggling operation that can provide both equipment of any sort you would need via the Agency Quartermaster as well as troops and specialty personnel.

Watering Hole

A popular meeting spot for agents from various agencies and sometimes a neutral meeting space to plan inter-Agency deals. The Watering Hole is a passive form of Intel collection. A sort of Source, but as a location and not a face. It can be a common ground where



multiple

Agencies meet, or it can be much more than other Agencies realize. Watering Holes are usually bars, taverns, coffee shops or restaurants where agents or important people regularly meet. However, they can also be brothels or even an apartment block housing almost nothing but government employees' mistresses.

- **Rank 1:** A neutral meeting place for Agents or government officials of multiple Agencies/governments. A place where violence is set aside and unofficial backchannel discussions can occur.
- **Rank 2:** A neutral meeting place for all but your Division. Your Division has acquired the loyalty of the Watering Hole employees and/or owners/residents and can now acquire one piece of Intel per game session from visiting the Watering Hole.
- **Rank 3:** A very popular meeting place that has been completely set up to acquire as much Intel as possible from unwitting visitors. Each session, your Division can acquire two pieces of Intel from the Watering Hole or one Rank 2 piece of Intel.

THREATS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND FACES

After placing all the Assets, it's time to add Threats to the Field. You should be getting an idea from the Locations and Themes as to what type of story you want to tell and the direction you're taking can give you an idea of the Threats, Organizations, and Faces you want to interact with as a group.

Are you playing all upstanding loyalists to the Premiere and a coup is coming? Is there a secretive mercenary group willing to work for the highest bidder? Or what about that mechanic at the local garage that can modify even the worst beater into a top gear race car?

As with assets, go around in a circle to spend your Opposition Points for Threats, and either Opposition Points, Field Points, or Wild Points for Organizations and Faces. When

you spend a point you may detail one Threat, Organization, or Face that will be important to the characters. Go around until everyone passes. If you are stumped look at the Assets and Themes you've detailed for ideas.

Once you've finished adding Threats, Organizations, and Faces to the Field, the Narrator asks the player whose character is closest to the item to detail Three True Things about the item added to the Field. Does the merc unit have a fleet of choppers for transport and fast attack? Is the mechanic addicted to alcohol? Is the coup about to be mounted by the Premiere's own brother!?

When all points have been passed or all players have passed move on to Step 4: Fill in Details.

Step 4: Fill in Details

Go back over everything you've created as a group. Make sure everything is recorded and detailed to the level you need to start playing. If you have any



Points left over, spend them on whatever you think would add interesting stories to the Field. Make sure you've filled in Three True Things for each item on your sheet. Have the players check the Narrator's work or if the Narrator is having a player record everything have the Narrator check their work. You are ready to play!

THE STORY POOL

Do you remember how all of the Points the Players spent went to the Narrator?

Good, Good. *cue evil laugh*

Now that the Players have *foolishly* given the Narrator all of their City Points, the Narrator has set aside the very seeds of the Player's inevitable *doom* as the Story Pool! At any point during a game session, the Narrator may spend a Story Point from the Story Pool to make a change to an existing detail in the game, like spending a wager after a risk. But Story Points can actually contravene existing Truths and facts, effectively rewriting what the Players know to be true.

In short: Narrators are allowed to restate *any single* Truth already established per Story Point they spend.

Perhaps that important left turn on the map enroute to the secret nuclear sub base isn't there! Maybe the slimy Field Director is not behind the recent murders. Or perhaps your old friend from spy school is the Soviet mole! Story Points add twists and turns to the game by surprising the Players.

NARRATOR'S NOTE: THE STORY POOL

The Story Pool is there because plot twists can be awesome, and as a Player I love not being certain of what's really going on. The system of privilege and wagers allows Players to have a lot of control over what happens in the story, and I've found that it can cut mystery and uncertainty out of the game. If you can always spend a wager to have things turn out in your favor, why worry?

The Story Pool is intended to maintain the mystery of a constantly changing situation, to put doubt in the Players' minds about the certainty of the choices they've made. But don't abuse the twists and turns it brings to the game. The Story Pool is designed to create in-game tension and drama, not table drama and tension. Don't override the Player's wagers without reason or contradict True Things just because you don't like them. Look for points of drama and pressure.

If your Players are making the current plot far too easy for themselves with wagers, by all means hit them with a tough Story Point: an NPC ally betrays them unexpectedly, one of them is captured instead of escaping, or a key resource they needed is suddenly missing. But remember that the Story Points are there to raise tension and keep things interesting for the Players first.

ON THE FLY FIELD CREATION

If you don't want to take a long time in creating your Field, you aren't sure how much detail you need for this place, or if you want to discover this location as you go, then On the Fly Field Creation is the method you will want to employ.

Follow these steps to Create your Field:

- **Step 1:** Name a single Theme for your Field
- **Step 2:** Create some Field Assets to help the Agency and one or two for their Opposition.
- **Step 3:** Fill in any details you think are needed, and leave the rest blank for future determination if needed.

Unlike the full process, One the Fly is much faster with less steps and each step something the Narrator can handle directly or with quick input from the players.



Step 1: Theme

Even with a minimum sense of the location you should be able to come up with a theme that is appropriate to this Field. If it's a quick one time location for the Agents then base it off of their current mission, if it's going to be used for a long time, the create a theme that is relevant for the overarching campaign you are building for the characters.

Step 2: Field Assets

Look at your character sheets or at the mission taking place here. Create a single Assets for each character, something they will want or are planning on using during the mission. If it's a higher ranked asset the entire Team will be employing you can count it towards multiple agents at a rank per agent. Look at the Opposition and determine what Assets, if any, they might have in place to foil the Agents missions.

Step 3: Details

Name any agents you've come up with in relation to the Assets both for the Agency and the Opposition. Consider asking the players to name Three True Things about each character created. Name any locations that you think the Agents will visit (Cafe Adler or Donaupark) and finally, determine any higher ups or points of contacts that might be involved with this Field.

That's it! Go play, and while playing if you run into any blank spaces, fill them in then and there.

CHAPTER TEN:

FRAMING THE COLD WAR

"You could be the perfect spy. All you need is a cause." - John le Carré, A Perfect Spy

Most of what we know about the Cold War is from secondary sources—history books, cinema and literature. Movies often shape what we know about espionage and add exciting elements of fantasy and romance to an already amazing story. Books delve deeper into what happened in the war. They sometimes show us actual documents and outline recorded conversations. They paint a world and allow us to fill in any blanks with our imaginations. Cold Shadows is no different. This game allows you to experience the life of a spy, while weaving in cinematic elements to create an epic, shadowy world for you to play in.

Media about this era is often matter-of-fact, explanatory, showing you the nuts and bolts of how spies managed to pull off amazing feats in a period where everyone was suspicious of one another. It also shows how mundane things became impossibly difficult for spies. For example, calling your mother on her birthday from deep Cover? That's a no-go. No one was above suspicion, yet everyone had to play their part for their country.

That world of paranoia, extraordinary feats and human frustrations is where Cold Shadows takes place.

To get into the mood for playing *Cold Shadows* check out the media below:

Watch

- *Dr. Strangelove*
- *From Russia with Love*
- *The Manchurian Candidate*
- *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*
- *The Night Manager* (mini-series)
- *The Sandbaggers*
- *Munich*

Read

- *Bridge of Spies: A True Story of the Cold War*
- *One Minute to Midnight*
- *The Hunt for Red October*
- *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* and other novels by John le Carré
- *The Kill Artist* and other novels by Daniel Silva
- *The Bourne Identity* and other novels by Robert Ludlum

Listen (Podcasts)

- *Backstory Podcast: Enemies*
- *Stuff You Missed in History Class Podcast: "The Billion Dollar Spy"* by David E. Hoffman

Listen (Music)

- *99 Luftballons*, by Nena
- *A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall*, by Bob Dylan
- *Crazy Train*, by Ozzy Osbourne

THE THEATRICS OF WAR

Part of the fun of playing a game set in the Cold War is living the life of the many dark heroes in your favorite movies. Setting the scene, acting in character and changing your tone depending on where you are and to whom you are talking—these are all great ways to get that cinematic experience. Like any good protagonist, take other characters' actions seriously. The fate of an entire nation rests on your shoulders, after all.

Another good way to immerse yourself in this world is to learn the lingo. Use the phonetic alphabet and spy terminology. Below are some terms you can use in your game to bring the story to life.

BEAUTY THROUGH THE SEASONS

Beauty isn't a theme commonly associated with war, but as humans we crave it. So, how do you add beauty to such a cold topic, making it something cinematic enough for people to enjoy? A great way to do this is by framing each Season and your actions within them. Use descriptive words for how your character is feeling and how they enact their motivations. Involve the other Agents in your stories, respond to their remarks and make the world come alive.

For example: The agent Juliet Whiskey isn't just learning the Brutal Fighting Style. Juliet Whiskey got knocked down one too many times, so now, the normally-quiet Agent feels a deep anger in her gut. It compels her to fight onwards, faster, harder, more brutally—Juliet Whiskey gains her first Rank the in Brutal Fighting Style.

Being descriptive will help to add romance, drama and beauty to your game. It will make losing another Agent all the more devastating and the violence of war all the more merciless.

CINEMA VS. REALITY

Cold Shadows is a make-believe game that is meant to be fun. Adding elements of reality—places, names, terms—can all make a game amazing to play. However, often focusing on making every element of your game as historical as possible can bog down everyone having a good time. Each player at the table has a responsibility to make sure the game stays fun. Take the Cold War as seriously as you take each other's feelings. If someone doesn't know or understand something, help by explaining it to them; however, if it isn't important for the narrative you are telling, then let it go.

Can you imagine Bond and Romanova making love in *From Russia With Love* to the sound of someone arguing that it was impossible for SPECTRE to have filmed them because of X, Y or Z? Neither can we.

INCLUSIVITY

A debonair man in a pristine suit walks down a sunny avenue. A grin spreads across his face as he tips his charcoal grey fedora to shield his eyes from the sun, placing his briefcase down next to a trash can, admiring the beautiful day. Smiling, he wipes flaky bits of sugar from his hand from the pastry he just finished, and throws away the thin piece wax paper which housed the paper into a trash can. Whistling a show tune, he makes his way back to his office building. The drop was made.

Scenes like the one above are commonplace in our social psyche of what it means to be a Cold War spy. A gallant white man who is often defending against the “Red Menace”. When we see a woman in a typical Cold War-era spy movie, she is beautiful, seductive and fawns over the main protagonist of the story... or she is a wife or secretary. She is a device by which to show the prowess of the male spy. Likewise, often when we see media of people of color in the Cold War, they are sidekicks to the main protagonist or they are antagonists to his cause. Characters from marginalized communities often function as foils to the main spy in the story, who is usually white, straight, cisgender, and masculine.

Some of these stereotypes come from reality. In 1960s America, a large contingent of the espionage initiative were white men. Other stereotypes are fiction. Not every feminine spy was Mata Hari. So, what do realism, cinematography and reality mean for a game of *Cold Shadows*?

Cold Shadows is a game about shadowy intel drops, spying on your enemy, brutal yet effective fights against other operatives, and debonair *people* in suits. It is about taking what you know about the Cold War and turning the dial up to 11. Most importantly, the game is about friends having fun and telling an awesome story together.

So, if one of your fellow role players is interested in playing *Cold Shadows* as a woman, as a person of color, as a member of the LGBTQIA+ community, or as any other type of ass-kicking spy: let them, *regardless* of how that player identifies in real life. Rather

than enforcing harmful stereotypes, empower your fellow players, have fun and watch as your shadowy spy narrative unfolds. Set your story in an unexpected place and showcase the crazy history of our world. Why not play through the building of the secret underground city beneath Beijing? Have your players fend off Soviet spies as the People’s Revolution seeks to build a covert base to protect its people against an eventual Soviet attack? Make *Cold Shadows* the espionage story of your dreams and tell an amazing story. *Together.*

FAMILIES AND TIES

A commonly-overlooked theme in Cold War cinema is the fact that often both husband and wife were spies. Most married before entering the world of espionage, unlike the Jennings in the popular TV series *The Americans*. Husbands and wives supported one another in the effort to keep their country safe. This familial relationship is one that may be interesting to play with in a game of *Cold Shadows*. Husband, wife, Agency, country—where do a character’s real allegiances lie? What are they willing to sacrifice for their significant other? For their country?

Having another spy who is related to you in the game by blood, marriage or friendship makes the story all the more poignant when the character may die or retire. It allows you as a player to explore every aspect of your character and push the boundaries of what life as a spy means to them.

CHAPTER ELEVEN:

COLD SHADOWS: MARTINI MODE

These are the rules for playing Cold Shadows in different modes. All *Martini* mode games are intended as one-on-one sessions, and are perfect for nights when you and a friend end up needing a fun spycraft game. In *Cold Shadows: Martini*, there is no Narrator as the responsibilities of the Narrator are shared by the two players. *Cold Shadows: Martini* offers three game modes: Shaken, Stirred and On the Rocks. *

Shaken

Shaken mode is for Agent-versus-Agent stories. In these games, both Agents are either from the same Division, or are from opposing companies. The spotlight is on the Agents and their attempts to maintain their Cover and fulfill their Missions.

Inspirations: Infernal Affairs

Stirred

Stirred mode shakes things up. In Stirred mode, the game is Agent-versus-Director, whether the Director is from the Division they work for, or from an opposing group.

Inspirations: Alias, Bourne Identity



On the Rocks

On the Rocks, on the other hand, explores multi-generational games where you have a series of Agents who go through the events as they all attempt to finish what one started.

Inspirations: Quantico

These rules are meant to simulate the cat-and-mouse feel of stories where two individuals are at odds, be it an Agent-versus-Agent story or an Agent-versus-Director story. To facilitate such a game, however, let it be known that not all existing rules of a Cold Shadows game will be utilized.

Cold Shadows: Martini games are intended to be limited in scope, and through the course of the game, reach an epilogue to the narrative. These games will have the following goals in mind:

- Focus the drama and action between the two opposing sides
- Play up the back-and-forth victories and failures of each sides
- Reach an ending where one or the other emerges victorious (though not necessarily alive)

To accomplish this, certain systems are added to the game to assist in capturing this feeling. Certain systems currently in the game will also be altered or removed. What follows is the mention of each system and how it has been changed or altered to work with the scope of Martini games.



THE ROPE

The Rope is the first key system that will be added accomplish the goals of a Cold Shadows: Martini game. The Rope is an abstract representation of the actions of both Agents eventually reaching the point where one or the other wins the battle of wits and deception. One can think of the Rope as a meter that tracks the progress of the story and when one reaches the end of the Rope, the time for the story to end has come.

Each player has their own Rope meter.

A recommended length is nine segments. Each segment represents an objective the other Agent sought to accomplish. Whenever that objective is met, a segment of the Rope is filled up. Only objectives that help one Agent identify the other as a threat, or objects that help deal with the other agent being a threat, fill up the Rope. Alternately, some Rope segments can represent specific things (see **Rope Segment Options** below).

Example M01:

Agent Adams, played by Rocky, is at odds with Agent Dufford, played by Yoshi. Rocky decides one of Adams' objectives is to intercept Dufford's messages to Control. During the game, Adams successfully does so after locating Dufford's courier and bribing him to always give him a copy of the messages. Rocky then fills up one segment of Yoshi's Rope meter for his character, Agent Dufford.

The concept of the Rope is to provide an abstracted tracker for how far the narrative has moved forward. With the Rope, both players can easily see if the events of the story should be leading up to a dramatic finale without necessarily talking about it. The Rope also gives an easy glimpse into who should be more desperate given the circumstances now that they are “on the ropes.” Though the term is typically for boxing games, the idea of two people battling it out—and one near the end of their resources—is nicely captured by this system.

SHORTER OR LONGER ROPE

Players can opt to have longer or shorter Ropes, depending on how long they want the game to last. One-shot sessions might have a Rope as short as three segments. Short-story arcs, on the other hand, intended to be played across three to five game sessions, might have a Rope as long as thirteen segments.

When either Agent has filled up the last segment of their Rope, both players are now aware that they have reached the point in the story where the final scene, the finale, should unfold. At this point, the story should come to a climactic point—whether it is an emotional or intellectual point of intensity—and end with one or possibly both agents dying.

INAPPLICABLE ASPECTS

While most Cold Shadows games will feature Agents using the Teamwork Aspect, for Martini games, this Aspect is usually inapplicable. The idea of two sides working well together doesn't necessarily need an Aspect to fulfill that properly. Instead, we will offer a new Aspect under each Martini section that better captures the relationship shared in the game.

BETRAYAL, REVISITED

Given that two sides are intended to be at odds, Betrayal needs to be revisited in this game. At the beginning of the very first game session, add a single Betrayal token to the Trust Pool. From

that point onward, each time a segment of Rope is filled up, that player gains two Betrayal tokens.

Betrayal tokens encourage both Agents to find ways to try to attack the other Agent with indirect methods. Either Agent can spend their own Betrayal tokens in two ways:

- Add one die to their pool for every Betrayal token spent
- Add three dice to any risk an NPC makes against their rival, so long as the NPC's actions were somehow triggered or influenced by the Agent

Example M02:

Agent Adams is pinned by the gunmen tipped off by Agent Dufford. The gunmen typically have 3 dice. But Yoshi opts to spend a Betrayal token to boost the dice to six! The gunmen roll a miraculous six wagers, while Adams gets none. With the six wagers, five are spent to deal a Rank 5 Injury on Adams. The sixth is spent to declare him dead. Yoshi describes the gunmen riddling Adams' car with bullets even as he drives away.

Rocky then fills in one segment of his Rope and describes Adams' car falling off the bridge into the river. And him awakening days later, under the care of some nurse who fished him out of the water.

Betrayal points are not tracked in this game. Only the Betrayal tokens are tracked in between game sessions.

COVER, REVISITED

While Cover usually is used as the system to track whether or not an Agent's actual identity is compromised, in a Martini game, the Cover mechanic needs to be revised. First of all, Cover does not relate to how the two players see each other. Cover still only reflects the concealment of identity the Agent has in relation to other characters in the game, other than the character of the other player.

Example M03:

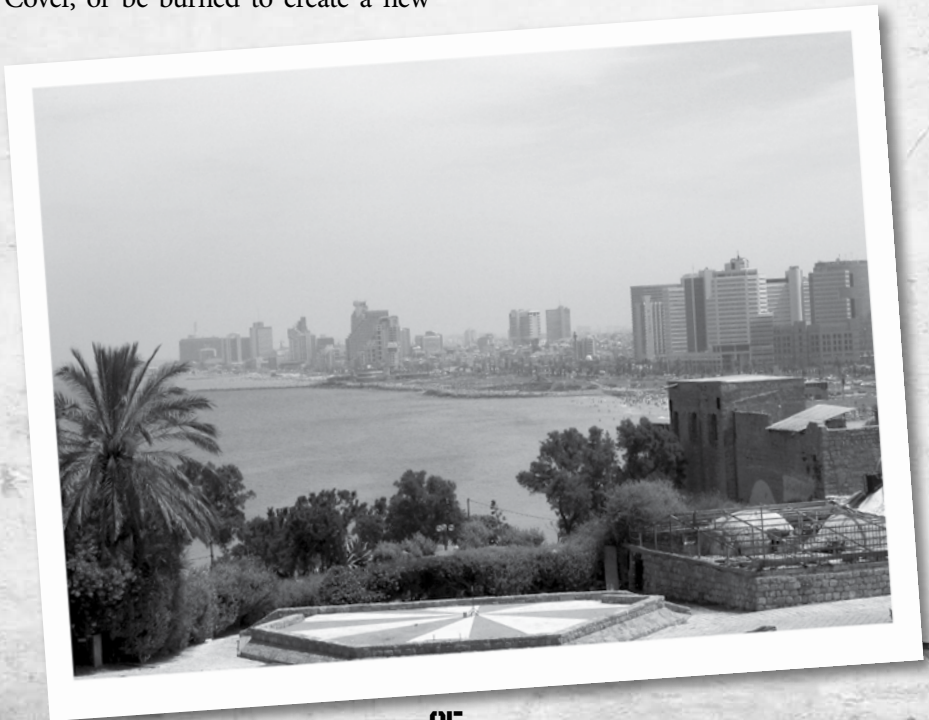
Agent Dufford's Cover is 4. In scenes where Dufford is questioned or approached by NPCs, the Cover 4 rating applies.

As per normal rules, the Cover can be used to gain dice for appropriate risks, convert wagers to strengthen the Cover, or be burned to create a new

Cover. For Martini games, however, the relationship between the two players is represented by the Rope.

VIOLENCE, REVISITED

In Martini games, unless the source of an Injury is through the actions of an opposing Agent, nothing should result in the Agent's death by mere coincidence or chance. This means that all kinds of Violence in the game can result in Injury (which can be tagged as normal), but unless the source of the Injury is the opposing Agent themselves or by their manipulations, the most any other source of injury can cause would be a Rank 5 Injury. Any resulting moment where one of the Agent dies does not result with the Agent's death. Instead, the Agent somehow narrowly escapes death and one additional segment of his Rope is filled up.



While in it may be possible in the real world that an Agent gets into a fatal accident wholly unrelated to the events that are transpiring, such moments are more appropriate for games emulating the Coen brothers' movies. Martini games work best when any possible death is due to a rival player's machinations. Injury by accident does not fill up a Rope segment.

Example M04:

Agent Adams is pinned by gunmen during a mission, and he contacts System for assistance. System instructs Dufford to assist Adams. Yoshi declares that the gunmen are actually men he tipped off to Adams's location, so the gunmen can kill Adams if their shots injure him enough since they are part of Dufford's machinations. They can possibly hurt Adams enough to "nearly kill him" and fill a segment of Rope.

In a later part of the session, Dufford leaps off a building rooftop to escape detection. He fails his roll and lands badly, crashing through a glass ceiling, seemingly to his death. We cut to a few months later, when Dufford awakens in a hospital bed, patched up and alive, thanks to someone in his team calling for emergency services. His death was reduced to a Rank 5 Injury, but it does not fill a segment of Rope.

Perhaps the Agent receives help from an unexpected source. Or perhaps they simply barrel through the injuries and survive what should have been a fatal injury. This shift is to ensure that both Agents are still alive for the finale when one of them reaches the end of their Rope. Note that we used the word "additional" above. This is because the opponent might also fill another segment of Rope because the "death" allows him to accomplish another objective.

Example M05:

Agent Adams, played by Rocky, is at odds with Agent Dufford, played by Yoshi. Agent Adams tracks down a contact who can reveal who Agent Dufford meets with each Sunday night. Adams tries to kidnap the contact, but Dufford arrives (in disguise) to intercept. In the resulting scene, Adams and Dufford trade gunshots and Adams successfully shoots Dufford in the chest with a shotgun, blasting him out the window.

Rocky tells Yoshi to fill up two segments of Rope. One to survive the shot, and the other because Adams now learns Dufford meets weekly with his paramour. Yoshi has seven segments left on his Rope.

ROPE SEGMENT OPTIONS

In Martini games, each time a Rope segment is filled up, the narrative moves closer towards the finale. To make the experience even more engaging, players are recommended to mark a few portions of their Rope segments with specific labels, to help guide each other on what aspects or opportunities exist to complicate matters for their rival. One approach is to choose specific Agency Assets from which the Agent can benefit as segments, and losing that segment represents losing access to that Asset. Below are a few more suggestions:

The Paramour (1 to 3 segments)

This Rope segment represents a relationship between the Agent and an NPC which is highly prized by the character. Each segment of the Paramour represents the stability of their connection, and once all segments are filled up, the Paramour has either defected to the other side or been eliminated from the narrative.

The File (1 to 3 segments)

This Rope segment represents that one key datafile or record that a character cannot allow to fall into enemy hands because it exposes everything about the character. Their full identity, family records, redacted records and the like are contained in this segment and it can be the holy grail of intel against an Agent.

NO LOVE LASTS FOREVER

Some players might welcome the opportunities for drama and opt to both have the same NPC represent the Paramour in both players' Ropes. This can represent a tug-of-war between loyalties and love that can make games worth an intense emotional investment. In the end, this story is likely to end in tragedy for one, if not both, characters.

The Sanctuary (one segment)

This Rope segment represents that one place of safety that an Agent can truly call home. Whether it is a place where they can live a more normal life, or a public venue to which they always return for mental stability, the Sanctuary is the location that the Agent has never even shared with their superiors. Losing this place is a clear personal attack upon an Agent.

As the story unfolds, there may be times when a Segment Option becomes the target but the player realizes they don't want to lose what that segment represents just yet. The player may save that segment at the cost of filling up two other segments instead. This represents Agents making the decision to sacrifice other resources or embrace the risk of making themselves more vulnerable to save something that matters more to them.

Example MOG:

Agent Adams has marked three of his Rope segments as the Paramour. In the last few games, Agent Dufford has been tracking the Paramour and has filled up two Paramour segments of Adams's Rope. Down to the last Paramour segment, the current game has Adams kidnapping the Paramour and holding her hostage to lure Dufford out.

When the session reaches its climax, Adams realizes the Paramour is no longer useful, as Dufford has refused to reveal himself. Given that his original objective to force Dufford to reveal himself has failed, he switches his focus, choosing to remove her from Dufford's life and make him suffer. He shoots the Paramour and throws her off the bridge, and tells Yoshi to fill up the last Paramour segment of his Rope.

Yoshi decides he still wants the Paramour to stick around for a session or two more. So, he declares he's sacrificing two segments to save her. He marks down two segments and shares how the Paramour is rescued by emergency services, and how Dufford retrieves her from the hospital before Adams notices. Yoshi declares the two segments lost represent Dufford losing access to Asset: Slush Fund and Asset: Field Hospital as the Agency withdraws both kinds of support for his actions, which may have risked the Agency's reputation.

THE END OF THE ROPE

For some stories, the end of the Rope might represent the two characters now fully recognizing each other for their duplicitous actions. For other games, the realization of being on opposite sides might be represented by the first segment of Rope that has been filled up, and the end of the Rope represents the last determining actions taken to settle the score. The preferred tone of the game is wholly dependent on both players. When either Agent has reached the end of the Rope, both players should prepare for the finale.

In designing the finale, both players should note the number of filled segments they have on their Rope. Each segment can be "cashed in" in the finale to add a die to the Agent's final roll against their rival.



FINALE

In the finale, the two rivals finally come to final blows. Bear in mind that this does not necessarily mean a face-to-face shootout. It can be a calm, quiet moment of the two having tea, as they finally admit what they've uncovered about each other, and their wagers being spent as declarations on how each one has finally trapped the other. As this is the end of their long, drawn-out, cat-and-mouse battle, be sure to make every wager worth it!

Example M07:

Agent Adams and Agent Dufford are both on their final segments when Agent Dufford makes one more mistake during an Op and mentions a name he shouldn't have known, a gunsmith from Greece. This gives Agent Adams enough reason to track down the name and upon interrogating him, learns Dufford is indeed a spy! This fills the final segment of Dufford's Rope, initiating the finale.

The two meet for tea, on Dufford's request. Adams and Dufford sit opposite each other at a public café in London. Rocky and Yoshi gain extra dice based on their filled segments (eight for Rocky, while nine for Yoshi) in this final roll. They decide they talk it out and call for Clever rolls. Adams confronts Dufford, mentioning the many times Dufford acted questionably,



and Dufford counters with times when Adam's ineptitude was the source of his spite towards the other. But as a final wager, Adams mentions the gunsmith and casually mentions that Greece is also sharing a meal with family and friends. Dufford smiles and asks if this tea means they are friends.

A silenced pistol is his reply. A tea cup shatters upon hitting the floor.

Adams walks away silently, leaving the dead Dufford's body to be eventually noticed by the café owners.

Their story is over.

YOUR DRINK, SIR?

What follows are the rule breakdowns for each type of Martini game.

COLD SHADOWS: MARTINI SHAKEN EDITION

Shaken mode is for Agent-versus-Agent stories. In these games, both Agents are either from the same Division, or are from opposing companies. The spotlight is on the Agents and their attempts to maintain their Cover and fulfill their Missions.

Recommended Rope: 9 segments

THE ASPECT OF RIVALS

We offer this Aspect for Cold Shadows: Martini, Shaken games.

Rivals

Invoke: You and your rival are a perfect match. There are things at which you might be better, compared to the other Agent, but at its root, you are both part of a strange, symmetrical rivalry. Gain three dice when doing anything directed against your rival.

Compel: Doubt plagues you. You trust each other. You don't trust each other. Somehow, something interferes with your judgement. You cannot help but second-guess yourself in relation to the other. If you are harmed or burned by the direct actions of the Agent you helped, then remove one Trust from the Trust Pool.

THE TRUST POOL, REVISITED

In Shaken Martini games, the Trust Pool has some slight changes.

From the Same Division

The Agents share the Trust Pool as normal, as it represents how they also view each other. As they spend from the Pool, the two can use the Pool as a gauge to measure how strained things may feel between them.

The Pool starts with five Trust Points for each player.

Additional points may be added (see **Rope Segment Options** below).

From Rival Divisions

The Agents have separate Trust Pools, which represent their connection and relationship with their respective Divisions. This reflects them tapping into their connections for assistance or support, as well as a gauge to show when their Division might sense that the Agent seems preoccupied or distracted.

The Pool starts with five Trust Points for each player.

Example M08:

Agent Adams, played by Rocky, is at odds with Agent Dufford, played by Yoshi. Both decide to be Agents for System, but Yoshi claims that Agent Dufford is really a double-agent working for The Network. This means they start the game with a single Trust Pool of ten tokens.

BETRAYAL, SHAKEN EDITION

In Shaken games, Betrayal is tracked as normal, with each Agent having 3 Betrayal boxes on their sheet. At any point in the game that one player has all three Betrayal boxes filled up, both players immediately fill up a segment of Rope to represent the narrative tension moving forward. This means both have begun to see each other's true colors and the story is moving towards the finale.

However, if there are still Rope segments left in both players' sheets, then there should still be some narrative reason why neither has pushed the events to reach a finale. This can be represented by their characters having doubts, or perhaps even their characters still giving the other the chance to turn sides and join them. This resets both Betrayal boxes to one.

ROPE SEGMENT OPTIONS, SHAKEN EDITION

In Shaken games, the following Rope Segment Options are recommended to enhance the gaming experience. Both players are recommended to mark segments of their Rope with the Assets that their Agency provides. This makes the segment feel more personal when they are lost.

Shaken games also have the following option:

The Bond (1 to 3 segments)

This Rope segment represents the deep connection between the two Agents, which stands despite the

shifting tides of Trust between them. This represents why even in the face of facts and intel on the other, the Agent refuses to simply do what must be done to the other. This is highly recommended to be the final three segments of each player's Rope.

SEASONS & SEASON ACTIONS, SHAKEN EDITION

In Shaken games, Season Actions can be ignored. It is possible that the story transpires within an amount of time before any developments within the Division can occur.

For games which opt to last longer, however, or for pairs that still desire Season Actions to transpire, Season Actions are still approached as normal.

From the Same Division

How the Season Action will be spent depends on which Agent has garnered more favor from the Director. This can be represented with a dice roll, with both players rolling the Virtue of the Agency, plus an extra die for each unfilled Rope Segment. Whoever rolls higher determines the Season Action taken. (Wagers are not needed in this roll.)

From Rival Divisions

Each player simply rolls their Agency's Virtue with one wager risked. If the roll succeeds, then the player can declare their Agency's Season Action.

COLD SHADOWS: MARTINI STIRRED EDITION

Stirred mode shakes things up. In Stirred mode, the game is Agent-versus-Director, whether the Director is from the Division for which the Agent(s) work, or from an opposing group.

Recommended Rope: 9 segments

HOW STIRRED UP ARE THINGS?

When playing this game as an Agent-versus-Director story, the other player creates their character as a Director instead of an Agent. The simplest way to do this is to create an Agent using the Commander role to represent the Director.

From the Same Division

The Director player creates a character using the Expanded Director Rules written here. The Director player chooses the Director Personality, which the Agent player will have to work with.



All Director actions (such as Season Actions) will be determined by the Director player.

From Rival Divisions

The Agent player creates a character as normal, which includes creating a Director and Agency that she works for.

The Director player creates a character using the Expanded Director Rules written here. Each player determines any Season Actions for their own Agency.

EXPANDED DIRECTOR RULES

A Director is a powerful figure with many demands and focuses on their time. Directors typically start at Rank 1 unless both players want to increase the starting Rank. The player chooses a Director's Personality, and the two players jointly choose the Agency's Virtue. In games where both players are in the same Division, this means the Director Personality applies to both of them. Take note, however, that the Director player has full control over deciding how to spend Season Actions, which makes them a force to be reckoned with.

The Director chooses an Asset for the Division, and for each Rank of the Director, an additional Asset is chosen with the players alternating turns.

Example MOG:

Che and Urim are playing Cold Shadows: Martini, Stirred. Urim opts to be an Agent, while Che decides she is the Director for whom Urim's character works. They opt to have the Director start at Rank 2. Che decides she likes the idea that she's Paranoid and marks that down. Urim marks down the Paranoid advantages and disadvantages as well. They decide the best Virtue would be Courage. With a Rank 2 Director, Che begins and chooses CON OPs. Since the Director is Rank 2, two additional Assets are to be chosen with Urim choosing next. He chooses Factory. Che decides the last Asset will be the Slush Fund.

Recommended Directors are older than the Agent. To represent this, the Director player creates their character like a regular agent with the following adjustments. Directors choose Virtues as normal, and modify the Agency's Favored Virtue by one.

Directors start at either Autumn or Winter.

Autumn Directors

Have four Aspects in total

Have one Winter Aspect

Winter Directors

Have five Aspects in total

Have two Winter Aspects

These Aspects are less than the usual number of Aspects because Directors all have the Role: Director as an Aspect.

Director

The Director oversees the local Division of an Agency. Whether the Agent is directly under you, your presence and command radiates outward and cannot be ignored.

Bonus: You gain your Role Rank as bonus dice when directing operations, planning or leading a team.

Ability: You may add a number of bonus dice to any social situation equal to your Rank.

Benefit: You have an entourage of Staff and Admins equal to your Role that will accompany you if you want. Your Staff includes various admins who run errands, carry messages, and perform lesser bookkeeping functions. These are your staff and they will do as you command. The other player must spend twice the number wagers or use risks to make them betray you.

Just like Agents, the Director's two Aspects must come from the Agency's four Aspects.

Being a director, your Role selection represents what you were long before you became a Director. Choose any appropriate role save for Field Director.

From the Same Division

The Agent and the Director have history. They've known each other for quite some time and hold a sense of loyalty or trust for one another.

The Pool starts with five Trust Points for each player.



THE ASPECT OF RIVALS

We offer this Aspect for Cold Shadows: Martini, Stirred games.

You Made Me

Invoke: Once, you learned under the other. Once, the other was your student. You both hated each other, and yet learned from each other. You are what you are now because the other became part of your life. Gain three dice when doing anything you learned or taught the other.

Compel: When given the opportunity to end things early, you hesitate. You stop. You hold back. Somehow, part of you believes that what you once shared can somehow change the other for the better. You let the other go.

THE TRUST POOL, REVISITED

In Stirred Martini games, the Trust Pool has some slight changes.

From Rival Divisions

The Agents have separate Trust Pools, which represent their connection and relationship with their Division. This reflects them tapping into their connections for assistance or support, as well as a gauge to show when their Division might sense that the Agent seems preoccupied or distracted.

The Pool starts with five Trust Points for each player.

The Director also starts with a single Advantage from the usual list.

IF YOU WANT SOMETHING DONE RIGHT...

To represent the constant barrage of demands on the time of the Director, they must rely on using NPCs when targeting the odd-valued segments (i.e. 1, 3, 5, 7...) of the rival player's Rope. This means that during those instances, the Director player must spend 1 Trust to push them to succeed, or they might have to accept the fact that their less capable underlings are all they can rely on during such instances.

MY OWN BASE OF OPERATIONS

In Stirred Martini games, the player who plays the Agent might want to not be affiliated with an Agency but instead be handling things with a rogue selection of friends and Assets. This can be represented in the game as a variant version of the Agency.

First, the Agent will not have access to a Director, which means they do not have the added bonus of the Director's Personality. Second, the Agent will also not have an Agency Virtue bonus. In exchange, however, the Agent's group of associates gain a new Trait called Ghost, which starts at Rank 1. The Ghost Rank limits the Ranks of any Assets that the group creates to assist the Agent in his activities. The Rank can be increased as a Rope segment objective against the opposing player, and successfully doing so rewards the

Agent's group with a new Rank or a new Rank of Asset to allocate.

In addition, if the Director player ever opts to spend Season Actions, the Agent automatically gains a Rank of Ghost as well, to represent both sides utilizing the time that passed to their advantage.

Finally, the Director player can attempt to locate and attack the Ghost. In such cases, the Director must gain wagers equal to the Ghost's Rank to locate and affect the organization. The appropriate Virtue used depends on the method the Director uses in the attempt to find them. If the hunt is successful, then any remaining wagers can be spent to destroy a Rank of Asset that the Ghost organization has.

A Ghost cannot be reduced to less than Rank 1, except as a Rope segment objective.



COLD SHADOWS: MARTINI ON THE ROCKS EDITION

On the Rocks explores multi-generational games.

Recommended Rope: 5 segments

In On the Rocks games, the optional systems offered by Shaken and Stirred games can be utilized by both players if desired. The idea being whether this began as two Agents becoming rivals, or an Agent embracing a crusade against a Director, as deaths come, new faces step up to continue the actions of the recently deceased.

In On the Rocks games, the key is the idea that death does not abruptly end the story. The Rope still functions as the main foundation of when the narrative should end; however, death merely moves the narrative forward as new personalities (or in the case

of the single career, unexpected coincidences) allow the plot to reach its inevitable finale.

This Is for You

For On the Rocks games, death should not halt the flow of the narrative. It might throw a monkey wrench into things, or complicate matters, but it should never abruptly terminate the story. This rule even encourages players to consider death as a mechanic to help continue the story. This is why On the Rocks games tend to have fewer segments. Death is encouraged in order to keep the story moving.

When a segment is to be filled up, you can instead opt to sacrifice your current character to save the Rope. This means that the character you are using dies, and you create a new one to pick up the pieces and trudge onward. Which means that you need to make each death a dramatic and



poignant moment. Or even better, to show how some deaths were painfully meaningless in the grander scheme of things. Sometimes, when people die amidst the cold shadows, not even the darkness mourns for them.

NEW CHARACTERS

With the death of a character, a new character rises to continue the story. Create a new Agent as normal, allocating Virtues and selecting Aspects from the list of Aspects of the Agency. You do not, however, start with a new Rope. Instead, your existing Rope carries over to the new character. You, as the player, must consider how to make narrative coherence with the other segments when necessary. Does the Asset set in a segment become the place where this Agent emerged from to continue the deceased's legacy? Is the Paramour from the first character's Rope actually someone this new character values as well?

EXISTING CHARACTERS

Another option is to “upgrade” NPCs already in the game to become the active characters in the story. For instance, with the death of an Agent, maybe the Rope is then continued by the Director of the Agency, who feels responsible for the Agent's death? Or maybe as the Agent dies, the Doctor who was trying to save the Agent's life is passed the USB flash drive with all the information that has been gathered so far.

SWITCHING ROPES

Players who might want to challenge themselves can consider switching Ropes each time a character dies. This can give the game a different experience worth exploring. This would, however, require coming up with a reason why the other character either disappears from the narrative, or passes on the responsibility or duty to the new character. An easy way is to have the player come up with a way the other character is eliminated as well from the narrative—especially when you consider that the new set of characters can become relevant, narrative-wise, a few months or so down the line. The switch doesn't have to be an immediate moment in game-time. Maybe the new character reads about the event and decides to investigate. Maybe the new set of characters are new Spring Agents, and the surviving Agent from the earlier plot is now Summer in Age and has contacted the new character to do things for him.

In such instances, the rules for Shaken and Stirred should provide you the necessary rules to create the new character, with some elements (such as the Agency's traits and Director's Personality) already set.



CHAPTER TWELVE:

COLD SHADOWS: SOLITAIRE

*“So what are you planning to do with the rest of your life?
“Develop a drinking problem. More Scotch, please.”*

- Daniel Silva, The Marching Season

These are the rules for playing Cold Shadows: Solitaire. The main idea behind this rule set is to allow a single player to enjoy a Cold Shadows experience despite not having other people with whom to play. Interestingly, this ruleset has also proven to be a good game session generator for normal Cold Shadows games as it uses the framework of espionage thrillers and spy movies as its foundations. If you want to play Cold Shadows with others, as a Narrator, then playing Solitaire will be useful for creating content.

In Solitaire rules, the player takes the role of an Agent dealing with a Mission that has been sent to them by their Director. As actions are taken in response to the event, this system provides the likely shifts and twists to the narrative with which the Agent must deal. These games will have the following goals in mind:

- Introduce the primary objective and possible complications
- Introduce twists and unexpected complications that arise and must be overcome
- Present a possible denouement to the narrative which may or may not end in the Agent's favor

To accomplish this, certain systems are added to the game to assist in capturing this feeling. Certain systems currently in the game will also be altered or removed. What follows is the mention of each system and how it has been changed or altered to work with the scope of Solitaire games.

THE ROPE

Similar to Martini games, Cold Shadows: Solitaire games utilize the Rope as the abstract representation of the ongoing narrative in which the player is engaged. While in most games, the Narrator and the player work together in developing the story and bringing it to an end when it feels narratively appropriate, Solitaire games utilize the Rope to both track the narrative flow, and to suggest when the finale seems due.

The Rope is composed of segments, with each segment representing a narrative goal point in the Solitaire game. A standard game can have nine segments, but those seeking shorter or longer games can adjust this number of segments as desired, so long as the key parts of the Rope are maintained.

The Rope should always have the following key segments:

- a) Set-Up
- b) Confrontation
- c) Finale (and Consequences)

SET-UP SEGMENT

This represents the initial events that pull the character into the narrative. During Set-Up, the Agent experiences something that should end with the Agent becoming committed to a goal. Cold Shadows: Solitaire games care little for Agents who distance themselves from the event that is demanding attention. This is expanded upon in the walk-through below.

CONFRONTATION SEGMENTS

Confrontation Segments are moments when the Agent finds themselves face-to-face with the Antagonist. This may or may not constitute a moment of violence, especially if you pattern your games to have the feel of John le Carré novels. A good number of Confrontation Segments is one for every three segments of Rope.

FINALE SEGMENT

Every Solitaire game ends with a Finale Segment. The Finale represents the final scene in the narrative where the initial Set-Up is given closure, and depending on the mood you prefer, the consequences of the Agent's decisions and actions are then shown.

OTHER SEGMENTS

Similar to Cold Shadows: Martini games, the other segments are filled up when any of the following occur in the game.

- An important person to the Agent is eliminated or otherwise removed from being helpful to the Agent.

OPTIONAL RULE: THE RISING TIDE OF TENSION

Film and fiction have the advantage of being plotted out wonderfully to show the rising tide of tension and fear. In a roleplaying game, simulating this can be a bit more challenging. This optional rule attempts to mimic that feeling. When a Confrontation Segment is filled up, the stakes should increase to represent the growing tension and intensity of the scene. This is represented as a +1 Wager needed to all Risks for each currently-filled-up Confrontation Segment.

- The Agent makes an accomplishment or achieves an objective towards their desired goal.
- The Agent dies, but the player doesn't feel the game should end yet.
- The Antagonist dies, but the player doesn't feel the game should end yet.

The first two options will be most often used as you play through the narrative and make your way towards Confrontations leading to the finale. The last two will be used only when you feel the need to, but are also license to push your story to the limits and embrace the many genre tropes we love from our favorite espionage stories. The Agent is in a helicopter that blows up? Fill in a segment, and continue the story as the Agent is fished out of the river by a friend. The Villain is shot in the head in the second act? Fill in a segment and reveal the Villain was just someone else in a mask of the villain's face.

In the end, the Rope is your guide to creating the narrative flow of your story and will signal when it is time to have the finale occur.

THE THREATS

The manner of threats in the game greatly depend on the kind of stories in which you want to play. The explosive adrenaline rush of James Bond, for example, has a different set of threats compared to the slow-burning psychological realizations in Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy. Thankfully, Cold Shadows uses an abstracted system in handling these threats and that would be in the following manner:

Any time the Agent faces a particular Threat, be it physical, psychological or emotional, the player can require a dice roll if failure against the Threat has an appropriate danger involved to the Agent's progression through the Narrative. As a standard, all Threats are assumed to have a range of 1 to 5 wagers. It is up to the Solitaire player how often Threats challenge their Agent.



RECOVERING FROM INJURY

Unlike the usual Cold Shadows games, in Solitaire, the player can always opt to recover from Injuries. This, however, always comes at a price. By filling up a Rope segment, the player can have the Agent recover Ranks of Injury equal to the segment's position. This, however, means someone important to the Agent, or one of the Agent's existing Assets or resources, is then removed from the story as part of the narrative.

Example:

Corwell is playing and has a nine-segment Rope story. He is currently on the fourth segment, when he realizes his Agent already has Exhaustion: Rank 2 and Bleeding Arm: Rank 4 as Injuries. Worried they'll impair him later on, he decides to fill up the fifth segment of rope. This allows him to reduce up to five Ranks of Injuries, so he decides the Agent ties up his wound, and takes a nap to recover. He removes both injuries (4 points from the Bleeding Arm, and reduces the Exhaustion by 1 point) and replaces them with Exhaustion: Rank 1 instead.

He wakes up to hear news that his old friend, Agent Chunk-Smith, has been found dead, left in an alleyway. He was hoping to ask Chunk-Smith for help given that the man was a source of intel.

Threats Table

Type of Threat	Minimum # of Wages	Examples (Le Carré)	Examples (Fleming)
Typical	1	Small risk. Against normal security. Against everyday people.	Easy risk. Leaping onto moving vehicle. Against normal security.
Challenging	2	Challenging risk. Against operatives of young or adequate status. Avoiding weapon-based injury. Initial confrontation with antagonist.	Typical risk. Dodging incoming fire. Spotting hidden weapons. Fighting operatives or goons.
Dangerous	3	Dangerous risk. Against trained operatives. Avoiding firearm-related injury.	Challenging risk. Against trained operatives and death traps. Incredible stunts.
Disastrous	4	Fatal risk. Avoiding sniper fire.	Incredible risks. Fighting underwater while decoding a bomb. Inventing a new gadget on the fly. Emerging from water, in a suit, completely dry.
Finale	5	Finale confrontation with the Antagonist.	Legendary feats of impossibility.

TRUST POINTS AND ASSETS, REVISITED

Given the game's cat-and-mouse feel, Trust Points in this game are now a bit different from the usual Cold Shadows game. Start the game with only 1 Trust Point. CON OPs are not used in this game. And Assets are simplified in this game. Each Asset can be used once in the story. This Asset grants a narrative effect on your story, and grants Trust Points equal to its Rank.

As per normal rules, Trust points can be spent to increase one's dice pool by four in a single risk.

Trust cannot be used to add details to the story. Instead, that occurs automatically, as this is a solitary game, and dramatic scenes are now accomplished solely through additional wagers in Risks.

Additional Trust can also be gained in the following ways:

- A used Asset grants Trust points equal to its Rank
- A risk is successfully overcome in relation to the Set-Up's goal
- A player chooses to fail in a risk (this grants Trust equal to the Rank of Injury received)

PLAYING A SOLITAIRE GAME

Here are the step-by-step rules for playing a Cold Shadows: Solitaire game.

1. Generate your Agent

Young Agent

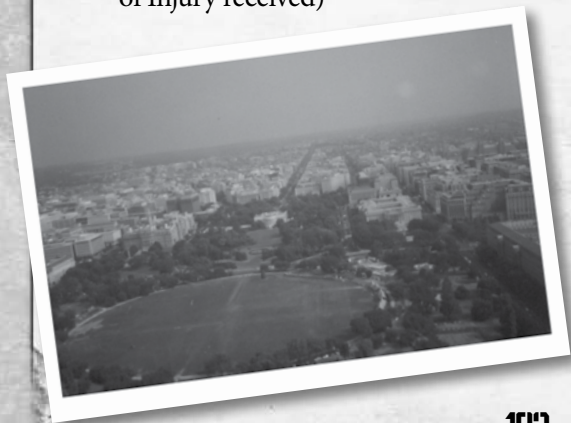
Generate the Agent as normal, starting with the creation of your Director and Agency. Create an Agent as normal; however, see below for the offered Aspect.

Start with Assets equal to the number of Rope segments your game will have. Assets cannot be higher than Rank 1.

Seasoned Agent

Generate the Agent as normal, starting with the creation of your Director and Agency. Create an Agent as normal; however, see below for the offered Aspect. Then, depending on the desired age of your Agent, add additional Aspects if you are in either Summer, Autumn or Winter in age.

Start with Assets equal to the number of Rope segments your game will have. Add half that number (rounded up) for each level older you are than usual (Summer Agents add once, Autumn add twice, and Winter add three times). Assets cannot be higher than Rank 1 (+1 if the Agent is Autumn, and an additional +1 if Winter.) So, a Winter Agent will be allowed to have Assets up to Rank 3.





We offer this Aspect for Solitaire games:

Up To Me

Invoke: No one else is aware of what you are aware of, and worse, even if you warn others, no one else but you can meaningfully do something about it. Gain three dice when you do something despite others telling you to do otherwise.

Compel: You refuse to let others get involved. You deny others the opportunity to help you, and if ever they still do, you find ways to ensure they don't ever do it again. Mechanically, this is reflected by the fact you only use each Asset once in the game, and that you don't have lots of backing to help you. Additionally, anyone helping you is reflected as additional wagers or segments of Rope being filled up.

2. Generate your Set-Up

During Set-Up, the player rolls a ten-sided die to generate the kind of plot in which the Agent is involved (or simply chooses, if that is desired).

Roll Result	Plot	Description
Even numbers	The Mission	The Agent has been given a Mission to carry out.
1 or 9	The Target	The Agent has become the target of the antagonist. Roll again to determine what type of target: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Odds = On the Run • Evens = Under Attack
3, 5, or 7	The Mystery	The Agent attempts to uncover the identity of the antagonist behind a disaster or tragic event.

By determining the Set-Up segment, the player then has a better feel for what the initial mood of the game is.

3. Fleshing Out Your Set-Up

Depending on the type of plot you are going through, the following tables will offer suggestions on what the segment you are currently playing through will be about. Some suggestions will even offer system/mechanic recommendations that can help embody the plot.

Plot: The Mission

Your Director has given you a Mission you must accomplish. It is that simple.

Roll Result	Le Carré	Fleming
1-2	Infiltrate a location	Apprehend someone
3-4	Identify a target	Steal something
5-6	Gain the trust of someone	Protect someone
7-8	Gather information on something	Deliver something
9	Retrieve something	Get to the extraction
10	Eliminate someone	Prove that something impossible is happening

Plot: The Target (On the Run)

You are being framed for something, or have been found guilty of having done something that the organization does not agree with. Or perhaps you chose to do something the organization does not agree with. You must run.

Roll Result	Le Carré	Fleming
1-4	Find a place to hide	Escape before they catch you
5-8	Find the proof you need	Discover who has framed you
9-10	Find who has betrayed you	Fake your death

Plot: The Target (Under Attack)

An enemy group or organization has decided you are a threat that must be eliminated. Survival is now of utmost priority.

Roll Result	Le Carré	Fleming
1-4	Get away from the heat	Your credentials are destroyed
5-8	Get to a loved one you must protect	You lose access to your friends
9-10	Fake your death	Defend a home

4. Expanding on the first segment

Knowing now if your session is a Mission, a Target or a Mystery, further define the Set-Up with the following tables. Roll three ten-sided die and allocate a die to each category.

The Initial Setting

Determine where the story initially begins.

The Antagonist

Determine who the antagonist is. The Agent may or may not know this.

The Object in Question

Determine what object or item is part of the whole affair.

Setting: Initial

Roll Result	Le Carré	Fleming
1-3	Overseas	Exotic location
4-7	Home country	Home country
9-10	Elsewhere	Incredible location

Setting: Overseas/Exotic Location

Roll Result	Le Carré	Fleming
1-2	Paris	Hong Kong
3-5	Berlin	Rome
6-7	China	South America
8-9	Singapore	Mexico
10	Moscow	Manila

Setting: Home Country

Roll Result	Le Carré	Fleming
1-2	Other government building	Highway
3-5	Headquarters	Public venue with crowds
6-8	Public building	Headquarters
9-10	Private residence	Tunnel

Setting:

Elsewhere/Incredible Location

Roll Result	Le Carré	Fleming
1-2	Some old cafe	On the moon
3-8	In transit	With a beautiful woman
9-10	Cemetery	Aboard a submarine

Antagonist: Initial

Roll Result	Le Carré	Fleming
1-3	Enemy agent	Wealthy eccentric
4-7	Someone you know	Hideous mastermind
8-10	Enemy director	Beautiful manipulator

Antagonist: Enemy Agent / Wealthy Eccentric

Roll Result	Le Carré	Fleming
1-3	Former fellow agent	Connected to government
4-7	Rival agent	Influential philanthropist
8-10	Former close friend	Connected to agency

Antagonist: Someone You Know / Hideous Mastermind

Roll Result	Le Carré	Fleming
1-4	Former lover	Blinded by his cause
5-6	Family member	Obsessed with destroying you
7-10	Former mentor	Scarred by a moment of weakness

Antagonist: Enemy Director / Beautiful Manipulator

Roll Result	Le Carré	Fleming
1-4	Once your teacher	Seen by others as good
5-6	Believed you were pointless	Obsessed with owning you
7-10	Currently your boss	Was just a front (roll again initial antagonist)





Object in Question: Initial

Roll Result	Le Carré	Fleming
1-3	Verbally-shared knowledge	Physical information
4-7	Physical information	A person
8-10	A person	Verbally-shared knowledge

Object in Question: Verbally Shared Knowledge

Roll Result	Le Carré	Fleming
1-2	A name	An acronym
3-5	An identity	A secret alias
6-8	A date	Coordinates
9-10	A fact	A confession

Object in Question: Physical Information

Roll Result	Le Carré	Fleming
1-2	A microdot	A portable drive
3-5	A photograph	A trinket of some sort
6-8	A copy of some document	A video recording
9-10	An audio recording	A body

Object in Question: A Person

Roll Result	Le Carré	Fleming
1-2	A source of information	A victim
3-5	A dead body	A distraction
6-8	A supposedly dead person	A witness
9-10	A source of misinformation	A target

5. Segment Suggestions

As you go through your story, you can roll a ten-sided die and choose from these possible segment suggestions. Remember, additional segments can be filled up if you opt to heal injuries or if death happens to you or the antagonist too soon.

Roll result 1:

- **Le Carré: A dead end**

What you thought led somewhere was a dead end. A Threat emerges.

- **Fleming: Blackjack**

Roll twice and use both rolls. If you roll a 1 again, destroy all Assets and reallocate the Ranks to a single gadget Asset. **Or**, the plot shifts! Roll a new plot that overtakes the existing one.

Roll result 2:

- **Le Carré: A clue**

A clue to the truth emerges. Possible threats abound. (Roll a die. On odds, continue. On evens, a Threat emerges.)

- **Fleming: A distraction**

Something comes up to distract you from your mission. You must overcome an Emotional or Psychological Threat.

Roll result 3:

- **Le Carré: A betrayal**

An asset turns out to be the Threat! Add Ranks of Asset to Threat Rank.

- **Fleming: A chase**

The Agent must overcome three Threats to emerge from a chase.

Roll result 4:

- **Le Carré: Cornered**

The Threat has you cornered. Defeat two Threats in a row.

- **Fleming: An ally**

An ally emerges. Remove one Asset, and create a new Asset one Rank higher than the previous one. Or gain 3 Trust.

Roll result 5:

- **Le Carré: Red herring**

A clue misleads you. Either lose an Asset or face a Dangerous Threat.

- **Fleming: Deathtrap**

The antagonist reveals themselves. If already revealed, then the Agent is thrown into a deathtrap. Overcome Threats equal to half the number of segments filled up.

Roll result 6:

- **Le Carré: Checkmate**

The antagonist is sighted. Defeat two Threats in a row. If you defeat them, you may encounter the antagonist.

- **Fleming: A quiet moment**

Whether it is a chance for a romantic interlude, or a break from the violence giving a moment to swim or relax, these are rare moments. Remove one Injury of any Rank. Any future rolls treat this as a distraction (a roll of 2).

Roll result 7:

- **Le Carré: Upper hand**

You either gain more information that helps you in your objective (gain 2 Trust) or an advantage against the next Threat (+2 free wagers to spend in that confrontation).

- **Fleming: A betrayal**

An Asset turns out to be working for the enemy. Erase one Asset. Face now a Threat of the same Rank of that Asset.

Roll result 8:

- **Le Carré: A confession**

An asset turns out to know more than originally admitted. Lose the Asset, but complete one segment and heal Injuries.

- **Fleming: An ambush**

The Agent must overcome three Threats to represent an ambush.

Roll result 9:

- **Le Carré: A clue**

A clue to the truth emerges. Possible Threats abound. (Roll a die. On evens, continue. On odds, a Threat emerges.)

- **Fleming: A distraction**

Something comes up to distract you from your mission. You must overcome an Emotional or Psychological Threat.

Roll result 10:

- **Le Carré: A rhyme**

Roll twice and use both rolls. If you roll a 10 again, then kill off an Asset. **Or**, the plot shifts! Roll a new plot that overtakes the existing one.

- **Fleming: A romantic admission**

An Asset to whom you are romantically attached is part of the plot. Lose the Asset, but complete one segment and heal Injuries.

6. Finale Suggestions

The finale is the final scene of the campaign. The great confrontation. Or the undeniable revelation. Be sure to pull out all the stops with your finale. Without a segment to fill in to avoid death, the finale is your chance to bring the narrative to its bitter end, and see in which direction the tragedy swings.

Consider having a “bookend” feel to your story by setting the finale at the same location as the start of the story. Or perhaps even consider having the same very scene be echoed somehow.

7. Consequences

And to end the game, spend perhaps one or two sentences giving short vignettes on how the whole story has changed things. Has leadership shifted in the organization? Is the city safer now? Did the antagonist walk away with the world now in the palm of their hand?

End the story.

And pour yourself a drink.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN:

FIGHTING STYLES

"I have destroyed him with the weapons I abhorred, and they are his. We have crossed each other's frontiers; we are the no-men of this no-man's land."

- John le Carré, *Smiley's People*

All Agents know that each mission comes with risks. That's the job. Every spy is willing to put their life on the line if duty calls for it. However, a smart spy learns how to defend themselves, so if the time comes where they have to risk it all in a fight, then they are the one who comes away victorious.

The actual fighting technique you choose for your character will largely be based on where your Agency is placed and what decade you play in. Will your character learn to defeat their foes with military self-defense classes? Or maybe they've managed to learn a martial art? Fighting Styles are based on the type of aggression and personality your character puts on the techniques she learns. They show a deeper understanding of the technique they were taught, beyond the basic moves.



Your character's Style represents who they are as a person and the way they perceive the world. How each Agent approaches a fight is different. While two Agents may have the same basic training and take the same courses to master a martial art, each of them will have completely different Styles. When it comes down to it, when an Agent is outnumbered, and has taken more hits than any normal person could bear, they reach deep within themselves to use every last ounce of being they possess, to win. One Agent may do that by brutally beating down her opponent with anything she can find. Another agent may do this by nimbly dodging out of the way and using his opponent's strength against her.

THE SYSTEM

Each Fighting Style gives your Agent bonus dice in a fight. However, if your opponent has also developed a Fighting Style, they may gain bonus dice because of their mastery.

An Agent develops the techniques of a Fighting Style with a Season Action, representing the training that they undergo and the deepening of their understanding. This gives them one Rank in that Fighting Style. They gain a bonus die for each Rank that they learn in that Style. Additional

Ranks and bonus dice may be gained as well, but each costs additional Season Actions.

- Increasing from Rank 1 to Rank 2 in a Fighting Style costs two Season Actions.
- Increasing from Rank 2 to Rank 3 in a Fighting Style costs three Season Actions.
- Increasing from Rank 3 to Rank 4 in a Fighting Style costs four Season Actions.
- Increasing from Rank 4 to Rank 5 in a Fighting Style costs five Season Actions.

Each Style is associated with a particular Virtue. You may only gain a number of bonus dice from a Style up to the number of Ranks you hold in the Virtue associated with that Style.

For example, if your Violence is Rank 2, then you may only gain two Ranks in a Style that has Violence as its associated Virtue.

When facing an opponent from an opposing Style, you either gain additional dice or your opponent gains additional dice.

If you create a Style, then you must place your Style somewhere on the chart in this section. It should be a Brutal Style, a Quick Style, etc. Regardless of where you place it, another Style will have advantage over you. No technique is perfect and every technique has a weakness.

Each Style grants a +2 bonus (a lesser advantage) against a rival Style.

Smooth +2 vs. Brutal

Brutal + 2 vs. Nimble

Nimble +2 vs. Offensive

Offensive +2 vs. Defensive

Defensive + 2 vs. Smooth

SMOOTH

Foxtrot Delta pulled a pack of Lucky Strikes from her pocket, lit one and inhaled deeply with a sigh of relief. Staggering to her feet, the dreaded Siberian Serpent, who had picked up her knife and was about to strike, paused. Foxtrot Delta extended her the pack of cigarettes, "Smoke break?" The Siberian Serpent let out an enraged howl and lunged at the smoking Agent. A sly smile crept across Foxtrot Delta's face as she flicked her cigarette to the ground, using the Serpent's momentum to flip her and pin her. Foxtrot Delta said, "Angry opponents... they're always so sloppy."

A Smooth Style means your Agent fights with wit and grace. They are the type of fighter who enjoys engaging their opponent in small talk to lighten the mood to throw them off-balance. They know the most cutting words and easiest shortcuts to make quick work of any foe. Smooth Fighting Styles give bonus dice based on a person's Charisma.

OFFENSIVE

There were five guards, one exit, and North Star had run out of bullets. Two gun's barrels pointed at him, North Star's vision narrowed. All he saw was the pale mint green door. Freedom. Time to cause some trouble. He lunged at the two guards in front of him, slamming them to the ground like a quarterback, and three swift strikes to the third guard's nose brought him down quickly. A shot rang out, etching a stinging wound onto his cheek. That was too close for comfort. He grabbed the fourth guard's gun—still smoking from the shot—and knocked the guard's head back with his elbow, firing a shot into the fifth.

An Offensive fighter never stops. With fast, decisive maneuvers he never looks back and keeps going at all costs. His Style is focused on getting is opponent down quickly, efficiently, before they can attack. Offensive Fighting Styles give bonus dice based on a person's Perception.



BRUTAL

Blue June leapt over the table, blood streaming from her nose. She could barely see out of her left eye and the stab wound in her gut let out a fiery scream with every move she made. There were two Agents left. She had to escape. Her camera held the intel needed to change the fate of the damned war. Barely dodging an oncoming blow, she head-butted the Agent in front of her and twisted his arm behind his back. With her free hand, she quickly grabbed his gun, pointed it at other flabbergasted Agent in the room, and pulled the trigger.

A Brutal style means your agent uses excessive force, violence and savagery to win the day. Where another Agent may dodge, your Agent grabs a chair and bashes it over someone's head. Where another Agent may punch, your Agent moves to gouge out someone's eyes. The Brutal Fighting Styles give bonus dice based on a person's Violence.



NIMBLE

Jack Quick could hear the thug's labored breath from across the room. Swiftly, silently, he positioned himself behind the monster of a man. One keen, well placed shot to the kidney and man crumpled like a piece of paper. Jack couldn't stay to finish him off, but that would be stupid. Get too close and the man would crush him. The man would die. Jack just needed one more good strike.

A Nimble fighter uses a mixture of flexibility, balance and speed to dart across the battlefield. Even when he is caught off-guard, his ability to dodge out of the way means he is rarely hit. Nimble fighters often prefer to perform devastating strikes from the shadows rather than engage in an all-out fight. Nimble Fighting Styles give bonus dice based on a person's Athleticism.



DEFENSIVE

1... 2... 3... Grey Gardner centered herself for the fight ahead. A true battle wasn't about strength, it was about smarts. The Ocean Alpha moved for a low blow, a fist aimed for her gut. The world slowed around Grey Gardner, she felt the heavy energy in the room, her body a blade moving through deep waters. Grasping the Alpha's fist and moving her body to the left of the blow, Gardner's arms followed the man's energy upwards. She turned her back to him and as his momentum ran Alpha into her Garden's she crouched effortlessly flipping him over his shoulder. The bigger they are, the harder they fall.

Defensive fighters are all about exerting minimum effort for maximum effect. They dance around a battlefield in smooth, flowing movements, using their enemies moves against them. Protection and exploitation of your enemy are the key ingredients of this Style. Defensive Fighting Styles give bonus dice based on a person's Intellect.



CHAPTER FOURTEEN:

SPYWARE

Espionage Agencies, real and imagined, strive to remain on the cutting edge of technology, cooking up all manner of devious devices to help agents in the field. Gadgets can range from whimsical to lethal and, as always, the Narrator has the final say as to which items are available and how prevalent they are in the world of the game.

NEW ASPECT

Cutting Edge

Invoke: Your Agency is known for providing its Agents with the best technology available. Gain one free wager when using gadgets; when your Agency first acquires a Mister Wizard Asset, gain an additional Gear Point.

Compel: You tend to rely a little too much on your toys and occasionally struggle when you have to do things the old-fashioned way.

NEW ROLE

Spook

The Intelligence Analyst handles information from a carefully-cultivated network of people, known in the trade as HUMINT. The Spook, on the other hand, handles information from pretty much everywhere else: signals (SIGINT), imagery (IMINT & PHOTINT), radar (RADINT), public sources (OSINT) and a host of obscure measurements and signatures that defy categorization (MASINT).

Bonus: You gain your Role Rank as bonus dice when remotely gathering information or data for the Agency.

Ability: You have access to an extensive database, archive or library containing a staggering amount of information. Each game, you may state a number of truths about the world or events equal to your Role Rank. While these Truths can touch on NPCs, describing where they will be or something they've done (e.g. "The informant uses a dead drop outside the Reichstag"), but can't speak directly to them (e.g. "The informant is the Austrian banker we've been watching"). These Truths must relate to either the past or the future and can't provide real-time information (unless otherwise specified by a gadget).

Benefit: You have a gift for puzzles and an eye for detail. Each game, you may reroll a number of failed Perception or Intellect risks equal to your Role Rank.

NEW ASSET

Mister Wizard

"Mister Wizard" is the tongue-in-cheek title given to a person, group or process used to deliver technology to Agents in the field. This could be a single engineer, an entire "Q Gadgets" division or a network of hackers and makers only accessible by dead drop. Whether high-tech or low-budget, Mister Wizard provides equipment over and above that issued by a Quartermater.

If your Director supports a Mister Wizard, your Agents gain two Gear Points worth of gadgets per Rank in this Asset. These Points can accumulate across Seasons and a Director may spend a Season Action to add an additional two Points per Rank. Gear Points don't need to be spent during the Season Action phase, but they can't be spent in the middle of a Mission—Agents need adequate time to acquire or construct their new toys.

NEW ITEM: GEAR

A Division of an Agency acquires gear by spending Gear Points generated from Aspects, Assets or other sources. Each gear purchased with Gear Points is singular and must either be shared or used by one Agent.

Gear comes in Ranks, which determine cost and impart additional benefits as Rank increases. You can spend Gear Points to either increase existing Rank on gear or to buy a gear at a predetermined Rank (paying the appropriate cost for the total amount of Ranks).

WEAPONS

A Gun for All Seasons

Cost: 2 per Rank

Effect: Every Agent is issued a standard sidearm but not every Agent settles for “standard issue.” The list of possible attachments and enhancements is nearly endless; with enough effort, a simple pistol can become a weapon of mass destruction. Only the Rank 1 enhancement can be applied to silenced pistols.

- **Rank 1:** *Collapsible Stock* – Grants stability at the cost of concealment. When unfolded, the silenced pistol gains no bonus dice to avoid detection but confers +1 dice to Violence risks with the weapon.
- **Rank 2:** *Extended Barrel* – Increases range and power at the cost of concealment. When attached, the additional size imposes a penalty of -2 dice to avoid detection but grants either +2 dice to Violence risks or one free wager for additional Injury.
- **Rank 3:** *Advanced Optics* – Provides deadly accuracy. For every pair of doubles rolled in your risk pool, gain a free wager for additional Injury.
- **Rank 4:** *High Capacity Clip* – Puts a little more lead in the air. You may reroll any 1's in your risk pool.
- **Rank 5:** *Burst Fire* – Puts a lot more lead in the air. You may reroll your entire risk pool but must accept the second result.
- **Rank 6:** *Full Auto* – Can hit multiple targets. If your Violence risk succeeds, you may spend three wagers to make another Violence risk against another target using only the dice from your original risk pool.

Intimate Weapon

Cost: 1 per Rank

Effect: From the classic poisoned lipstick to knockout gas stored in a bracelet, an intimate weapon is any concealed device that requires contact or extremely close proximity to be effective. If you declare a strike with an Intimate Weapon, you may make a seduction risk as the initial attack roll. Intimate Weapons gain one free wager per Rank which can either be used for additional Injury or incapacitation. One wager spent toward incapacitation can reduce the benefit of one Virtue by one die for one hour. If a Virtue bonus is reduced to zero, the target is rendered unconscious. Intimate Weapons cannot be used in mass murder.

Disguised Weapon

Cost: 1 per Rank

Effect: Whether it's an umbrella dart gun or a submachine gun built into a briefcase, disguised weapons are a staple of spycraft. Any weapon except a silenced pistol can be disguised and doing so adds +2 dice per Rank to any roll to avoid detection.

Incapacitation Weapon

Cost: 1 per Rank

Effect: They say discretion is the better part of valor and for Agents in the field, violence is usually a last resort. Agents who find themselves in situations where combat seems unavoidable often rely on some handy gadgets to ensure they live to fight another day.



- **Rank 1:** *“Willie Pete”* – Named for “William Peter,” or “WP” in the Joint Army/Navy radio alphabet, these small canisters use white phosphorous to produce large amounts of thick, white smoke almost instantly (unlike solid fuel canisters). Mildly toxic and utterly opaque, the dense cloud of smoke completely obscures vision and complicates breathing.

If an Agent equipped with a WP canister calls strike, that Agent may choose to deploy the canister rather than attack. Once the canister is deployed, no other Agent can make an attack action until the end of the round and any Agent wishing to leave the area may do so. Agents leaving the scene cannot be followed by normal means (some Gadgets may allow for this, however).

- **Rank 2:** *M84 Stun Grenade* – Developed by the British military, the M84 is the gold standard for the class of devices known less formally as flashbangs. On detonation, these grenades create a one million candela flash and a bang loud enough to shatter glass. The resulting blindness lasts about five seconds, but the afterimage makes precision tasks like aiming a firearm extremely difficult for over a minute following the initial flash. If an Agent equipped with a M84 calls strike, that Agent may choose to deploy the grenade rather than attack. Any Agent who is not aware the grenade is being used at that exact instant (either via a Hidden Communications Network or a

pre-arranged signal) is rendered completely blind for one round and suffers a -3 penalty to any risk involving vision or hearing on the following round. The penalty is reduced by 1 per round until the Agent’s sight and hearing return to normal.

- **Rank 3:** *Edgewood CS* – The facility known as Edgewood Arsenal in Maryland’s Aberdeen Proving Ground has manufactured chemical weapons since 1918. Beginning in the mid-1950s, the U.S. Army Chemical Corps used the location to conduct classified medical tests on the effects of over 250 different chemicals and their potential military applications. The compound known as CS (named for the two men who first synthesized it: Ben Corson and Roger Stoughton) showed the most promise: test subjects likened exposure to being set on fire. An aerosol canister of the chemical was in the hands of British and American operatives by the end of the decade.

Edgewood CS takes several, critical seconds to take effect, but once it does so, exposure can be crippling. Contact or inhalation inflicts a -2 penalty to all risks. This penalty increases by 2 per round until it reaches -8, at which point the penalty decreases at the rate of 1 per round until the victim is fully recovered. Edgewood CS may not prevent violence from occurring but it certainly makes a sustained engagement exceedingly difficult.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Interrogation Drugs

Cost: 3 per Rank

Effect: Every Agent receives intensive training in resisting interrogation before going into the field, so much so that barbarous techniques like torture are barely effective. To counter this, Agencies have developed a robust pharmacopeia of interrogation drugs.

- **Rank 1:** *Scopolomine* – Scopolomine is the sledge hammer of interrogation drugs: dramatic, inelegant and highly effective. Its odor and taste are difficult to conceal and the target experiences extreme drowsiness before the drug takes hold. Once under the drug's influence however, the target becomes extremely receptive to simple commands, short term memory is completely blocked and suggestions can easily be transformed into vivid hallucination. Under the drug's effects, the target's Courage is reduced to 1 for the purpose of resisting simple temptation or suggestion; any complex commands are extremely difficult for the subject to follow and thus comply with. The target must answer at least two questions: one of the answers must be true, one may be false.
- **Rank 2:** *Sodium thiopental* – The classic truth serum, Sodium thiopental (also known as Sodium Pentothal) renders its target talkative and cooperative but confused and

semi-coherent. While it must be administered via injection, the drug can produce staggering results.

The drug lasts for two hours and reduces the target's Courage by 1 per hour. If this brings the Courage rating to zero or below, the target passes out. The target must answer at least three questions per hour, though only two answers per hour must be true.

- **Rank 3:** *ULTRA* – A classified and highly dangerous chemical cocktail which can produce vivid hallucinations, loss (or multiplication of) identity and all manner of deeply disturbing psychological effects. The drug gives the interrogator almost god-like power over the target; unfortunately, many targets never recover.

The target's Courage is reduced to 1 for eight hours. Every hour, the target can be compelled to answer at least five questions: three must be true, one may be false, and one may be partially false. At the end of each hour, the target must make an Intellect risk. If the target fails two consecutive rolls, then his psyche is permanently damaged in some noticeable way (often in the form of serious reality impairment). If the target fails three such risks in a row, his mind is irreparably and catastrophically damaged; he will never again function independently in normal society.

Hidden Communicator

Cost: 2 for the base unit, 1 for each field unit

Effect: Communication is the foundation of operational efficiency, a fact that is often taken for granted. Like a bug or listening device, communicators have a disguised field component and a larger base unit. Unlike bugs, these devices allow for surreptitious communication in both directions. The base unit has a Cost of 2 and each field unit has a Cost of 1.

Any Agent with a Hidden Communicator who calls strike may choose any other Agent on the same Hidden Communicator network as the striker. Mechanically, this designated Agent may choose to act as though she had called strike instead; all the bonuses and rolls are calculated at exactly the same time, using the Designated Striker for all calculations.

Surveillance Suite

Cost: 2 per Rank

Effect: Intelligence Agencies in every era have devoted enormous resources to listening to and tracking enemy diplomats, operatives and assets. This technological arms race has produced inventive and innovative devices which have, in turn, shaped the modern world.

- **Rank 1:** *Theremin Devices* – Brilliant Soviet scientist Leon Theremin invented several of the first effective covert listening devices, including Buran (a wireless microphone), The Thing

(a resonant cavity microphone) and other foundational designs which revolutionized espionage. Once per game, you may choose to overhear any discussion or event involving a designated NPC or location.

- **Rank 2:** *Radio Tracker* – Developed by the U.S. military in 1957 and perfected by Harvard psychology students Robert and Kirk Gable in the mid-1960s, radio tracking devices quickly made their way into the spy's tool kit. Twice per game, the user may grant any other Agent two free wagers to set or avoid an ambush. This device (and those ranked higher) allows Spooks to give real-time information.
- **Rank 3:** *Hallicrafters SX-28* – Developed in 1940, the SX-28 is a superheterodyne receiver that covers all frequencies between 550 kHz and 43 MHz, making it the preferred interception device for many intelligence organizations. Your Director may spend a Season Action to learn the nature of any one Season Action taken by an Agency with which you are at war. Whether your Director chooses to share this valuable information, however, is another story.

Credible Intelligence

Cost: 1 per Rank

Effect: Secrets are the only real currency in the world of espionage and information is the deadliest weapon. Intelligence takes many forms and comes from many sources, but often a key piece of information is enough to turn a disaster into an advantage. An Agent may spend one Rank of Credible Intelligence to reroll one Charisma, Perception or Intellect risk.

Spy Car

Cost: 1+1 per Rank

Effect: There are myriad technological miracles designed to allow an Agent to drive in safety, comfort and style. As with any Gadget, Narrators should carefully consider the consequences of introducing the items detailed below; not only for their effect on game balance, but also for their effect on the overall tone and tenor of the game. Spy Cars can benefit from a Garage.

- **Rank 1: Basic Bulletproofing** – The addition of high-tech ballistic materials or just extra plates of steel has made the vehicle significantly safer, even in a firefght.

Anyone attacking the vehicle or its occupants must spend 2 wagers to breach the armor, otherwise the attack bounces off harmlessly.

- **Rank 1: Pursuit Countermeasures** – Smokescreens, oil slicks, and road spikes all qualify as pursuit countermeasures—nasty surprises for anyone too intent on following.

Anyone attempting to follow the vehicle must devote 2 wagers to avoiding these countermeasures.

- **Rank 2: Weaponry** – Headlight mounted machine guns tend to be a popular choice but the offensive options for a Spy Car are limited only by the imagination.

When attacking, these weapons grant 2 free wagers to damage. These wagers can also be used to breach the armor on bulletproof vehicles or structures.

- **Rank 2: Tracking Technology** – The vehicle has advanced tracking technology which makes it very difficult to shake in a chase. Whether through image recognition or radioactive tagging, the vehicle can spot a marked vehicle in even the most chaotic traffic.

The driver must initially spend 2 wagers to tag the vehicle she intends to pursue. After a vehicle is tagged, the driver gains 2 free wagers for maintaining



the pursuit (including to negate Pursuit Countermeasures).

- **Rank 3: Polychromatic Plasticity** – The vehicle as a limited ability to change color and shape, making it extremely difficult track even casually. While this isn't much use in hot pursuit, once the vehicle ducks around a corner or into a congested intersection, it can appear to vanish into thin air. This device can be triggered once the vehicle is out of its pursuer's direct line of sight. Once out of view, the vehicle's shape can shift to resemble a number of additional models equal to its Garage Rank and can adopt the same number of additional colors. These changes combine to add 3 free wagers to avoiding detection.
- **Rank 4: Automatic Navigation** – The vehicle can drive itself, a feature which can be quite useful in the event of a chase. The vehicle may make driving-related risks with a pool equal to its Rank (4+) and the Rank of its Garage. This allows an Agent to call the car to her location or the car's driver to take other actions during a chase.
- **Rank 5: Environmental Adaptation** – The vehicle is equipped with all the necessary seals, alternative systems and structural adjustments needed in an otherwise impossibly hostile environment. The car could be modified to drive flawlessly on snow, beneath the waves or even in the vacuum of space.

SPY CARS AND GAMEPLAY STYLES

Perhaps no Gadget has a bigger effect on the feel of a game than the Spy Car. While the Narrator always has final say, the number of Gadgets a Spy Car can hold generally varies by gameplay style. The recommended slots are as follows:

- Trope Heavy Games: 5+
- Wet Work: 3–4
- Covert: 1–2

The selection of which environment the vehicle is modified to suit is made at the time this Gadget is purchased, though it may be changed once per Season at the beginning of the Season.

- **Rank 5: Autonomous Operation** – The vehicle is not only equipped with cutting edge technology but also a personality. While it views itself as a member of the team, the vehicle has its own preferences and opinions. Most gearheads dream of a sentient car; Agents should be careful what they wish for.

Autonomous vehicles have one Virtue at 4, one at 3, three at 2, and one Weakness; they also have an Aspect and a Name. The vehicle will take direction from the Agents and is programmed in such a way that it cannot betray them, but the Narrator has a certain amount of leeway in what the vehicle will and will not do.



_____ concept

_____ player



Name: _____

Codename: _____

Cover: _____
cover name

_____ occupation _____ rank

VIRTUES



CHARISMA



RESOLVE



PERCEPTION



VIOLENCE



ATHLETICS



INTELLECT



TRUST

Role:

Bonus gained when:

Ability:

Benefit:

AGENCY: _____

Aspect #1: _____

Aspect #2: _____

Aspect #3: _____

BACKGROUND:

Advantage:

Inventory & Notes:

AGENCY



Director: _____

Personality: _____

Advantage:

Disadvantage:

Specialized
Virtue:

AGENCY ASPECTS

#1: _____

Invoke:

Compel:

#2: _____

Invoke:

Compel:

#3: _____

Invoke:

Compel:

#4: _____

Invoke:

Compel:

AGENCY ASSETS

#1 _____ lvl: _____

#2 _____ lvl: _____

#3 _____ lvl: _____

#4 _____ lvl: _____

#5 _____ lvl: _____

#6 _____ lvl: _____

#7 _____ lvl: _____

#8 _____ lvl: _____

#9 _____ lvl: _____

#10 _____ lvl: _____

#11 _____ lvl: _____

#12 _____ lvl: _____

#13 _____ lvl: _____

Secrets & Notes:



Name: _____

Type of City: _____

THEMES

Blank space for writing themes.

THREATS

Blank space for writing threats.

ORGANIZATIONS

Name: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

FIELD ASSETS

Type:	Description	Rank

FACES

Name and Details:

Name and Details:

Name and Details:

Name and Details:

Name and Details:

Name and Details:

Name and Details:

Name and Details:

Name and Details:

SOMEONE



TALKED!

SIEBEL



ГОРДИСЬ,
СОВЕТСКИЙ
ЧЕЛОВЕК,
ТЫ К ЗВЕЗДАМ ПУТЬ
ОТКРЫЛ С ЗЕМЛИ!

*This core rulebook will
self-destruct.*

Cold Shadows is a tabletop roleplaying game where the rules are focused on telling a dynamic, personal and compelling story. The game is set in a taut world of espionage, betrayal, and drama inspired by the great spy stories of authors such as John le Carre and Robert Ludlum. Take control of your story with a player oriented narrative system designed to inspire, while giving you the freedom to create and innovate! With rules for singleplayer, GMless, and standard troupe play, Cold Shadows is an espionage RPG for all groups!

