

OF GATES AND GOLDS™

SIN CITY: VOLUME TWO



AN ADVENTURE FOR THE WORLD OF DARK CONSPIRACY™

OF GATES AND GODS

SIN CITY: VOLUME TWO

by
Marcus Bone

An Adventure for the World of Dark Conspiracy



CREDITS

Dedication: "To the most important person in my life – Emma."

Design: Marcus Bone

Development and Additional Design: Mike Lichucki

Graphic Design: Ken Whitmen

Typesetting: D.B. Lincoln/Team Frog Studios

Cover and Interior Graphics: Steve Stone

Cover Illustration: Steve Archer

Copy Editing: Mike Lichucki

Proofreading: Mike Marchi

Interior Illustrations: Josh Hoops

Publisher: Dynasty Presentations, Inc.
P.O. Box 221
Lake Geneva, WI 53147
www.dynastypresentations.com

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ISBN: 1-892886-06-5

Version 1.0

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FOREWORD

They don't want you to see this book. I had to sneak around Ken Whitman and the DPI staff and put this in myself. I swear the conspiracy exists on every level.

This book contains more information on New Centennial and drags your Player's Character on a fast vicious tour of the town. My main focus was the Citadel area, so here it is. Originally this was a very short book because government officials in the Citadel didn't want you to know about the cruel ugly details. They bought off Ken and Dynasty and that's why I had to sneak this forward in (along with the Citadel section).

This may be the last time you hear from me, I don't expect to live long after this book hits the market. So if you read that I slipped and fell or died of natural causes, don't believe it. They are out to get me, and if you have read this they might just come after you!

Keep this book hidden and what ever you do don't show it to the players! For God sakes they don't need to be dragged down with us!

Marcus Bone
April 1999

Note: After Publication Marcus Bone was shot in a freak deer hunting accident. Currently, the accident is being investigated but the police believe there to be no foul play involved.

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THE CITADEL SOURCEBOOK

INTRODUCTION

"What can you say about New Centennial City? It sure seems to have its fair share of problems, but nowadays, who doesn't? At least that is what I keep telling myself."

-Anonymous

You are now entering New Centennial City or, as the locals like to call it, "Sin City." I would like to welcome you to the second installment of a six-part series. In the first part of the series, "The Shadow Falls", the players and referees were introduced to the general makeup of Sin City and were involved with an investigation of a strange cult. My purpose in the second book of the Sin City saga is to bring you a more in-depth view of the Citadel, home of the corporations in the city. Between now and the end of this supplement you will have an understanding not only of what the Citadel looks like, but also how its inner workings tick.

As with the first book, there are two sections to the book. The first section is an overview of the many people and places that make up the Citadel and how they combine to produce such an interesting and diverse culture in contrast to the rest of Sin City. The second part of this book is the next installment of the campaign introduced in the first book - involving the players and their characters delving deeper into the ongoing mystery that is New Centennial City.

A REFEREE'S NOTE

All the information that I have presented in the first section of the book will reveal nothing of the ongoing Sin City plot. Therefore, it would be perfectly acceptable for any prospective players to read. In fact, it may even be of use to players who have characters that originate in the Citadel to read this section of the book to better understand how their own unique piece of the city works.

FEELING FOR THE CITADEL

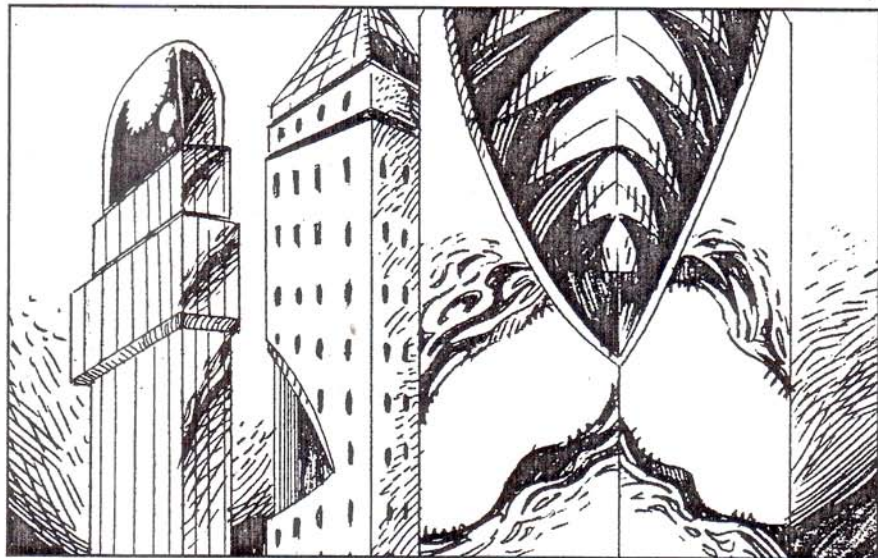
"Just watch people, you can see when they are in the wrong. There's that quick glance over their shoulder, as if someone was watching them, judging them. Mind you, I'd believe it if you said there was."

-Russell Pitrovich (local barber)

The Citadel is the shining star among the refuse of New Centennial City. It's the most dominant landmark of the city, towering above every other neighborhood like a stern master. To many of the citizens that is exactly what the Citadel represents - a symbol of repression and lost opportunities.

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To live in the Citadel is to live a life of blissful isolationism. The Citadel is a playground of the rich. It looks and feels out of place when compared to the rest of the city. The streets are clean, the people are well dressed and beautiful, and the buildings are bright and vibrant. When you enter the Citadel, you enter a whole New World unlike any other place in Sin City. Whereas the Square is the home of the old city, the Citadel is the new epicenter of activity. Even though the lights in the Strip burn long into the night, the lights are brightest in the Citadel. Unlike the Projects or the Suburbs, one can walk freely at anytime of the day or night in the Citadel, with streets free of rubbish and the unlucky dregs of society.



Perhaps the most striking thing about the Citadel is the buildings, not just those of the Corporations, but all buildings. They are large both in terms of ground area and in height, most exceeding 30 floors into the sky. As a result, the need for artificial light in some areas is constant day or night because the height of the buildings blocks out the sun. Each building embodies a unique style of architecture. These glorious monstrosities attempt to emulate the spirit of the successful 1920's while utilizing the best of modern materials. The overall effect of these large buildings makes one awestruck, and at the same time sick by the extravagant spending. It is not uncommon for entire blocks to be demolished every few years to make way for an even larger, more impressive building.

As a whole, the Citadel presents an image of things at its best and brightest. Intentionally so, as if the residences are attempting to block out the depression that infests the rest of the city. Everyone is dressed sharply and flamboyantly, even the lowliest of Citadel workers. On the outside, they appear happy and content. They realize how lucky they are to be immersed in the money and power of New

Centennial City. On the inside, however, they yearn for a sense of freedom and personal purpose.

Everything in the Citadel is a symbol of success. An opulent design throughout the city is evident on everything that's seen in day-to-day life; even the garbage cans are examples of modern art. Unlike the rest of the city, the beauty of the Citadel is a high priority. Wherever natural light does fall, green parks and tree-lined groves adorn the city. Wherever there is no natural light, ornate statues of the various founding fathers of the large corporations can be found. Wealth does have its privileges. It is almost as if all that is unsightly has been removed from the Citadel.

FORGING THE CITADEL

"We used to joke that any good road leads out of Centennial City. Not any more, I mean with the Greater Depression and the way in which the rest of the world seems to be falling apart. These days, it's a struggle to find one good road that doesn't lead to the Citadel."

-David Drecker of Sin City

It was Howard J. Tatum, a long-serving city counselor, who first introduced the idea of the Citadel. He envisioned a number of corporations working together to save Centennial. At the time, the full effect of the Greater Depression had come down hard on many people, including the industrial and economic powerhouses of the world. Trade and commerce in the city had reduced to a trickle and government support was sparse and misdirected. Someone had to take charge, to become a visionary for the future, and that man was Howard Tatum. At first, many of the larger corporations were not receptive to the ideas of Tatum and his team. However, one event soon changed their minds.

In 1999, two of Centennial's corporations were thrust deep in a paper war over the access rights to the port. Suffice to say that both corporations had invested large amounts of time and money on securing an available and well-maintained dockyard. The war started small enough, with lawyers and courts, but quickly expanded with a number of behind-the-scenes gun battles, kidnappings and assassinations. All too soon these battles spilled over into the streets of the city itself. Innocent bystanders began to be injured, and city property was being destroyed. The government refused to give any assistance, stating that it was the city's problem and the city council did not have the policing resources to control the continuing troubles. It was quickly reaching a crisis point, people were afraid to walk the streets, and the police began to limit their patrols to the areas around the Square.

The other corporations also started to feel the pinch, trucks not reaching their destinations, personnel disappearing, and more importantly the port was becoming

a demilitarized zone. Finally, enough was enough. After six months of siege-like conditions in the city, the losses had become too great, the risks too high. The other major corporations of Centennial united under the flag of the City Council, electing Howard Tatum to head a board of some of the most powerful businessmen and women in the world. Within days of its inception, the board had issued the two warring factions an ultimatum, desist all conflict or face the wrath of the combined corporations.

The two factions had little choice and quickly stopped their war. Unfortunately, they were still unable to solve their differences and worse yet, they were now buried under the debts incurred over the last six months. Their infrastructures began to collapse. Soon they began selling their assets, and the corporations, which had banded together under Howard Tatum, profited with cheap new acquisitions. These corporations were pleasantly surprised by their success as one united board, while still retaining their own identities. Soon the other motions that Tatum proposed were accepted, including the most important in the city's history: the creation of the Citadel.

Within five short years Howard Tatum was seen as the savior of the city. Centennial became New Centennial City and the power and prestige of the Trading Council was increased. At its peak, the Council had 20 members made up from corporations based both locally and internationally. Things were looking up, the Depression appeared to be over, and the Trade Council had taken up the support that was lacking from the failing government. There was work for the people as the Citadel grew, with construction becoming the main source of income for many families. But the paradise could not continue for long, something had to give. The corporations were again becoming greedy at the expense of the citizens. Money and power were to be again the driving force in the city.

THE FALL FROM GREAT HEIGHTS

"For a while Centennial was the place to be. You know the "in thing". The stores were packed with shoppers, and buildings were going up quicker than you could blink. But that all changed, like any fad it all soon passed. The people faded away and all that was left was the dregs..."

-Geoff Sanderson (corporate yuppie)

Within a year so much changed, beginning with the Council's change of direction. Howard Tatum was again at the forefront of the movement, promoting his idea vigorously. He met with as many of the corporate heads to present what was to become one of the most important decisions to ever affect New Centennial City. What was so important? What could shake the foundations of the Trade Council so deeply?

Tatum had tabled a document that meant many of the corporations based in New Centennial would lose their place on the Trade Council, and therefore their influence throughout the entire city. Tatum had seen that information was the future for the city. With many of the resources mankind had taken for granted quickly being depleted, industry was becoming less important, while technology grew to take its place. Tatum had also seen that New Centennial was neither large enough, nor had a population big enough to support any industry that relied on massed resources. Information was the direction the city and its corporations had to turn to. His aim was to attract the large corporations, making the city the place where decisions that changed the world would be made.

Unfortunately, this alienated many of the corporations already based in the city, some of which were based on Oil and Transport. With Tatum's new vision there was no place left for them. For a week the Citadel almost came to a standstill, as the board tried to decide whether or not to accept Tatum's proposal. More memos were passed from CEO to CEO, that week than at any other time in the Citadel's short history.



In the end it came down to a vote, the Council divided almost in half with a small majority favoring Tatum. However, all was not yet played out. As Howard Tatum drove to that all-important meeting, his car was intercepted. What happened next is open to speculation, but by the end of the incident, Tatum and his bodyguards were dead, and the assailants had made good their escape.

As the news of the assassination reached the Trade Council, the meeting broke up in an uproar, the Pro-Tatum supporters accusing their opponents of planning the assassination. The Anti-Tatum Group, attempting to press onwards with their own

proposals. For a while, it seemed as though the days of the Council was over, and open warfare might yet again erupt. Fortunately, at the hour of need a new power arose.

Hayden Cord, the CEO of the Greater Western Bank, worked the floor, just as he had done in his younger days as a stockbroker. Talking to both sides of the Council, he soon convinced most of them that arguing and open violence would not advantage anyone. Not all agreed though, some of the members left the boardroom, taking with them any influence their corporations would ever have in the City.

Most of the corporation heads swallowed their pride and returned to the table, discussing their differences rather than fighting. A number of historic decisions were reached at this meeting. Tatum's original motion was upheld, causing five industrial corporations to angrily leave the table for the last time. They were unwilling or unable to conform to the Council's new laws. For the rest, a new vision for the Citadel arose, where each corporation would build a new towering skyscraper around the new Trade Council Building. This Trade Center Tower was to be the new meeting place for the Trading Council, but a meeting place with a difference. The members of the Council would not physically meet, but rather use video-conferencing to speak... never again would any of the Council members have to meet face-to-face.

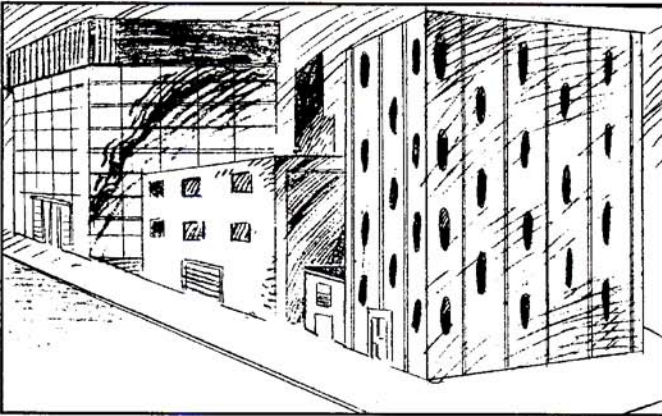
THE CITADEL TODAY

Not much has physically changed in the last ten years of the Citadel. The corporate skyscrapers and the Trade Center tower were built within months, and the corporations have continued to build their power bases in the city. But based on the Council's edicts, the Corporations based in New Centennial City have primarily focused on trade and acquisition of information. This has led to many of the resident corporations to base their offices in the city, and distribute their production centers around other large cities.



THE CITADEL IN-DEPTH

The Citadel is not just a collection of buildings. In reality, it is made up of people and their various systems of life. Each person living or working in the Citadel is an individual, and of course when you bring a group of individuals together the unpredictable can occur. Therefore, a culture unique to the Citadel alone has arisen which is confusing and alien to those who interact with it for the first time. Just like your first visit to the big city, life in the Citadel can be a daunting and perplexing experience.



PEOPLE OF THE CITADEL

There are two classes of people in the Citadel: the corporate executives and the rest. The executives ask for little, as their position in corporate hierarchy entitles them to anything they desire.

Nothing is beyond their reach. If you have the influence or the money, as an executive you can do just about anything. This class of people and their families are for the most part set for a life of luxury and good health. This is not to say that they don't work hard. Actually, they are some of the hardest-working people in the Citadel, with long hours and highly stressful tasks. It is the motivation for this work that is suspect. Where most people in Sin City work to put food on the table, the executive works to gain more power and prestige.

Most executives believe that their position in life is their God-given right, and for the most part seem reluctant to even think of others in less fortunate positions. If they do think about the underprivileged, it is usually to mock their laziness. Their secluded life experiences have taught them that if they try hard enough, money and life's luxuries will come their way. They just don't realize that most people in the city have never had any opportunities given to them. The executive culture of the Citadel is unique in itself. People of this social standing judge on looks and presentation, rather than experience and skills. They speak their own language, one of high finance and power. Their verbal and written skills are, as one would expect, a class above anyone else in the city. Even those that have fallen from favor can be

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noticed in a crowd, acting as if they deserve something special. To be an executive is a blessing in the Citadel, but it is a curse when one is faced with interacting with Sin City's normal population.

On the other hand, the majority of the workers in the Citadel



are the same as those that live in the 'Burbs or the Projects. The main difference being that they have a skill or trade that one of the corporations finds useful. By far, most of the tower workers are clerks and paper pushers that do the menial but necessary tasks to make big business run smoothly. The next biggest employer would be the massive number of police and security that are deemed necessary for the Citadel to remain free from the influence of the rest of the city's poor and desperate. Finally, there is Citadel Maintenance Services (CMS). The CMS workers are all specialists and tradespeople in their chosen professions, reduced to finding work within the Citadel to survive. There are, of course, many other social groupings in the Citadel each fulfilling a specific niche and yet with not enough numbers to be picked out among the general populous.

The regular class of worker has much more in common with their brethren outside the Citadels walls than with that of their powerful corporate leaders. In fact, most are forced to live outside the Citadels walls, as apartment prices and availability mean that it is not feasible for them to live near their work. These people interact with the unprivileged everyday, and in most ways mimic their mannerisms and dislikes for the executive class. However, all is not that easy for them. Most of the cities underprivileged population views them with the same hostility as they place on the corporate executives. They are seen as "too good" for the normal city, as if they hold special privileges above and beyond the regular citizens of Sin City.

Due to their lack of assimilation, much of the working class of the Citadel has banded together, making sections of the burbs their exclusive domain. They have also begun to develop their own language and colloquialisms. So now when an executive refers to the Citadel, a worker would instead call it the "del." Instead of "going to the office," workers "clock it in," and when the corporates go on a "power lunch," most of the Citadel is in the "thirty minute frenzy." But such is the life of the Citadel working class, they have made a life the only way they know how, by squeezing themselves between the worlds of power and poverty and it is their lot in life to be liked by neither.

TRANSPORTATION

One of the things that you notice in the Citadel is the lack of traffic. Compared with the rest of the city, where it can take up to an hour during high traffic times just to get mere blocks. The Citadel, even at the busiest of times, is almost devoid of traffic. The reasons for this of course are simple. First, a large majority of the Citadel's high paid workers live within blocks of their work, therefore any sort of transportation is not necessary. Sometimes, they even live within their work building. Their commute consists of an elevator ride. Second, workers that do not live within the Citadel are forced to commute to work everyday. The two main sources are buses and elevated buses. (See The Shadow Falls, for a more detailed description of elevated buses). Also, large public parking buildings around the outside of the Citadels walls assist in the reduction of traffic. This means that both the traffic is reduced, and a higher level of security inside the Citadel is maintained. Finally, the Trade Council has mandates in order that prohibit any heavy vehicles from entering the Citadel's city limits. Strong fines and strict regulation deters others from driving into this area.

All of this leads to a rather traffic free environment, which adds to the feeling of the Citadel being entirely another world. The only automobiles that most people see are the limousines of the high paid executives as they make their way from one high-powered meeting to another, and the courier vehicles that transport people and information quickly and efficiently. At night, the traffic is at times denser than during the day, when the cleaners and workers of the CMS go about their nightly business.

COMMUNICATION

There are a number of ways to communicate in the Citadel. Of course there is an excellent phone service, especially when compared to the rest of the city. No one in the Citadel ever complains of crossed lines or disconnected calls. This technology is based on fiberoptic cabling which was common in the late 20th Century, but which has become too expensive for mainstream lines in 2013. Other ways of getting information between people both inside and outside the Citadel include Ex-Mail, a very fast messaging service that employs the use of satellite. The system involves a personal message center, that works much like a pager, only that it allows the message to be stored for later reference and lets the receiver communicate back immediately. By using voice recognition software, it allows you to speak into the organizer and have the message sent when and where they wish. This is a very handy piece of personal communication equipment that comes at a very hefty price. There are always the older, more tried and tested systems, such as the courier. In Sin City the courier is a tough breed, having to be ready for all eventualities

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and willing to protect their clients information with their lives. Although this may seem a bit extreme, some of the items that the couriers are required to carry could easily mean the downfall of one corporation and the rise of another if it was to fall into the wrong hands. Couriers are required to transport materials that normally would be outside the domain of the mail service, i.e. people and equipment.

Lastly, the normal conventional mail service still works efficiently in the Citadel, and compared to the rest of Sin City, the mail actually gets through!

SECURITY

In the Citadel you are always being watched. Every shop and building has cameras, both inside and out, that look for both trouble and indiscretions from their patrons. Although for the most part these are redundant, crime is not as rampant in the Citadel as it is in the other neighborhoods in the city. Observant officers are behind many of cameras. Any problems, whether they are a security risk or not are logged into the books for future reference. A police officer cannot be too careful. Shoplifting during their watch can lead to immediate unemployment. Officers with families need the steady salary that these types of jobs provide. Independent work is dangerous, and the pay unpredictable.

The security presence becomes more visible as soon as one enters the streets. Corporate security and police officers seem to be on every street, especially when compared to the rest of the city. For the most part these officers let the citizens of the Citadel go about their day to day lives unhindered, although they can by edict of the Trade Council legally stop and search anyone they see fit. This however is a



rare occurrence, as to detain the wrong man can lead to a quick and brutal termination of employment. Yet as with most security personal, they do have a knack for knowing who should and shouldn't be in certain areas, and woe to any person in the Citadel without some valid form of identification.

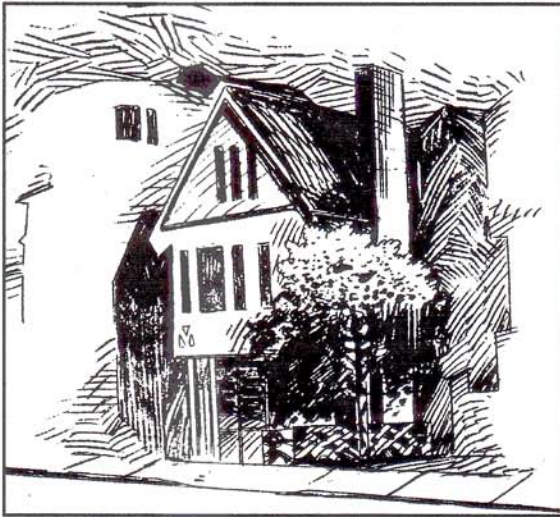
Every building and even most open locations are electronically locked. Workers have to produce passkeys just to get to the bathroom, let alone get into their workplace. The gates at the four entrances to the Citadel are extreme examples of this, where

the average worker is subjected to numerous ID checks, and electronic security frisks before even being able to enter the neighborhood. Despite the fact that the residents and workers of the Citadel live under the gaze of "Big Brother," most are happy to accept this rigorous security in the knowledge that it means that the undesirables are kept out of sight.

LIVING SPACES

Living in the Citadel is an expensive pastime. The prices that one can pay for accommodation are exorbitant. These prices are driven even higher by the demand, and exclusive status that one gains from their occupation. Therefore, the majority of regular Citadel workers are destined to never occupy one of the Citadel's apartments. Even if a worker was ever able to afford such accommodation, they may well be disappointed. Although even the worst apartment building in the Citadel is a step above the best available anywhere else in the city, for the most part this class of building offers little more than two or three-room housing. For the most part, the apartments are inadequate for a family of any size. These buildings are also extremely strict on what an occupant may or may not do to their rooms. For example, tenants may not paint their rooms without approval from the building management so that a proper color scheme can be maintained throughout the building. There are also regulations on noise and the use of the shared appliances and storage spaces. These rules in no way deter the huge number of applicants that apply for any available room. The proximity to their places of work, and the added security of living in the Citadel, outweigh any other considerations.

Then there are the executive apartments, most of which are situated inside indi-



vidual towers of their respective corporations. These of course, are reserved solely for those that have shown that they are a benefit to the company, and rarely change hands. Unlike most of the regular accommodations, these executive rooms reflect the individualism of their occupants. It is common for executives to rank themselves against their peers by the contents of their respective apartments. Not surprisingly, many executives spend

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large amounts of money on importing interesting and diverse artifacts from around the countryside and the world. This material competition helps perpetuate the cycle of greed. For an executive, having more money soon loses its appeal. In the Citadel, where space is at a premium, the size of your accommodation can sometimes be more desirable than a pay hike.

THE POWERS BEHIND THE WALLS

"There are 12 grand towers of differing heights and construction that dot the Citadel. There seems little pattern in their placement. Although I have heard, from many a pilot, that when one looks down on the Citadel there seems to be a strange symmetry to its layout. Their winking beacons reminding some of the great constellations we see in the skies."

- Alex Whitman (local historian)

THE TRADE CENTER TOWER

The most impressive building of all Sin City is the Trade Center Tower, the enduring symbol of Howard Tatum's dream, and the virtual meeting place for the Trade Council. The Trade Center stands atop a narrow, three-pronged pedestal and is reminiscent of the Space Needle in Seattle. The core of the pedestal is comprised of three closely-packed cylinders. Two of the cylinders contain elevator shafts. The third contains a little used emergency staircase. Support fins radiate out from each of the three cylinders, widening at the top and bottom of the pedestal to provide stability for the significantly wider, saucer-shaped structure at the top. Halfway up the pedestal, is a widened ring that serves as a security checkpoint. Neither the elevators nor the staircase reach all the way from ground level to the saucer above. Each of the elevator shafts is serviced by two elevator cars. One car services the lower half of the cylinder, traveling only between the ground and the security ring. The other car services the upper half of the cylinder, traversing the span between the ring and the first level of the saucer. The occupants of the lower elevators must get out, and pass through a highly guarded security checkpoint before ascending a small escalator to the upper elevators that go between the ring and



the saucer atop of the tower.

The first (lowest) level of the saucer is the headquarters for the New Centennial City Police Department. It is from here that coordination of the police units across Sin City takes place. Since the upper set of elevators climbs to this level and no further, it is the perfect guarantee that unwanted visitors do not reach the upper administrative levels of the Trade Center. This level is no normal precinct, only the chiefs of the police department maintain offices here. The bulk of the Sin City police force has buildings scattered throughout the city. The upper levels of the saucer are reached from this level via elevator shafts and escalators located on the outboard rim of the saucer.

The second level is Administration. Every council member has to be certain that his or her interests are being represented properly in the affairs of Sin City. To that end, corporate offices are maintained in the Trade Center. This is not where the day-to-day operations of the individual corporations take place. This is merely where matters of policy, as they pertain to the business of the Council are arranged and disseminated to the other council members.

The third level is the data center. The data center is reached from the level below via staircase. It houses the computers, television and satellite uplink equipment that makes the Trade Center operate. Because the Trade Center is the nerve center of the Council, it is imperative that all of the key players stay in constant communications not only with each other, but with their respective offices as well. It is possible to communicate with any point on the planet, whether through satellite, radio, cellular, or by old-fashioned telephone lines from this area of the Trade Center. Direct connection is maintained at all times with the corporate headquarters of all Council member corporations via secure, encrypted optic-fiber network. There are three men in charge of keeping the data center running smoothly: Bruce London, Greg Fasner and Roger Johnson. At any given time, at least one of these men is physically in the data center, and at least one other is on call to come in at a moment's notice.

The smallest and uppermost level is the Council Chamber. This room is reached via a separate elevator from the administrative level. The Council Chamber is a richly appointed boardroom. The floors are thick with red cut-pile carpet that cushions the footsteps of all within. The circular mahogany table with ebony inlay is the focal point of the room. High, red leather, wingback chairs encircle the table. The walls are of mahogany paneling with polished brass wall-sconces shining up toward the ceiling. At the center of the ceiling is a doughnut shaped skylight comprised of liquid crystal panels which allow the room to be bathed in natural sunlight should the occupants wish it, or can be made more opaque to block out the sunlight altogether. On the wall opposite the elevator entrance hall, a well stocked wet bar is maintained. Each station around the center table is equipped with the latest in computer videoconferencing equipment. No expense was spared to ensure that the occupants of this room would be immersed in luxury.

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The greatest irony of the excesses that have been lavished upon the Trade Council members is that none of them is ever in the chamber. The video-conferencing equipment that rings the table is as close as any of them ever get to sitting in that room. Despite all the precautions and security that surround the Trade Center Tower all seemingly put in place to ensure the safety of the Council members, nobody enters the chamber. The videoconference equipment pipes information down to the Data Center, and then out to the individual council members. The original intention was for the CEO's to regularly meet the discuss matters of business. Unfortunately, the attempts on the lives of the two original warring corporations CEO's (and indeed, the successful assassination of Howard Tatum himself) put the fear of proximity in the hearts and minds of these most powerful people in all of Sin City.

THE INDIVIDUAL CORPORATIONS

Although each corporation has representatives on the Trade Council Board, each individual corporation is as different as can be, both in focus of interests, power bases, and the way they do business. All the corporations that have major interests in Sin City are relatively new, in that they have either been formed from the merger of several older companies, or they have recently grown to fulfil a niche in world's changing power structure. As different as they are, they have one thing in common, greed. There are at least a dozen major corporations that make up the Trade Council, and below I will detail but a handful. It is also important to remember that many other corporations have offices based in New Centennial City, but rather than building a tower, they have chosen a more modest accommodation within the Citadel. As I detail each corporation I will explain their main areas of business, some history to their current situation, and their prestige and reputation.

UDS – UNITED DISTRIBUTION AND SERVICES

This Corporation grew out of the last great relief operations of the government. What began as a relief fund, focused on supporting national agriculture and aiming to supply all the citizens with food and clothing, has become one of New Centennial's largest Mega-Corporations. As with most government departments at that time, UDS was opened to privatization when the funds ran dry. This was on the proviso that support for the underprivileged and poor were maintained. An admirable aim, which was only a parting gesture from a government already letting its constituents down by defaulting on world loans and then selling its remaining assets for paltry sums.

All was fine for a while, until the depression deepened, and the demands for UDS support grew. It was then that the lawyers were bought in, successfully argu-

ing that while UDS was indeed responsible for maintaining the levels of support that had been given at the time of the signing, it was not to be obligated to extend this support, regardless of the need. So the rich became richer and the poor poorer. As a natural progression of its support services, UDS began to open many malls and department stores, undercutting many of its opposition, with the access it had gained from the original relief funds many and varied contacts. Today anything and everything is UDS. Whether it is the milk you buy at the corner store, to the new lounge suite, all the way up to the plants that you have in your windowbox. If the people will buy it, UDS will make it!

UDS is still run by a board of ex-government officials each fighting to gain enough power to one day topple the board and take over the organization themselves. However, the odds are very slim for this eventuality. With each board member in charge of just one section of the corporation, it is unlikely that one could gain enough votes to ever control the other officials.

UDS is also becoming an international power, investing in many overseas companies, and recently adding a number of canning plants to its portfolio. Its largest base now outside its home country is Asia, where it runs many industrial plants. The manpower of the Asian countries is a blessing for UDS. Now, they are able to produce products at prices its remaining locally based rivals cannot ever hope to match. It seems as if soon a monopoly may arise.

UDS is always looking for new territory to expand into and has many contacts within many third world countries to achieve their financial goals.

As such a big corporation, UDS has lots of executives coming and going to the various offices around the world. Because of its immense size, small problems and mistakes can be easily handed on to someone else down the line, so normally the biggest threat one can receive is being told that they are being shipped to one of the Third World offices. UDS is one of the most stable jobs in the entire world. This also means that its easy to get ahead at UDS, quite often positions up the corporate ladder are opened up, one day a junior executive might be pushing paper, and the next be the new head of marketing in the newest UDS office in Africa.

In Sin City the UDS tower is one of the largest, and one of the most beautiful. Upon entering the tower, one is taken aback by the range of art that adorns its halls and foyers. Ranging from Ancient Greek and Roman to the most modern of artists and styles, the public areas of the UDS are becoming a museum all by themselves. It's not uncommon to see groups of rich tourists being lead through the building, marveling at the astounding range of art.

The offices in the UDS tower are just as jumbled as the work assignments, and it seems as if someone has just played pin-the-tail-on-the-donkey with the department's individual locations. One may find that the head of one department is on floor 56, while one half of his department is on floor 34, with the other is on 16. This can be quite confusing to the newest office workers, and you still find even the most long serving executives sometimes spending hours trying to find the right

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departments. Key personnel are required to wear small location devices so that the building's central control can find their position at any given moment. All in all, UDS is an aggressive company. If it could get its act together, it would be an even bigger world power.

TASHICORP - AGRICULTURAL MEGA CORP

New Centennial City is the host to the world's largest Agricornp. Tashicorp owns and runs almost every important agricultural center in the world, and has influence in many different organizations and political parties around the world. Although based in Tokyo, New Centennial City is this region's operational headquarters, using the transport and communication systems of Sin City as the reason to base itself here. In fact, many of the small towns that dot the landscape around the city are massive farm complexes owned and run by Tashicorp.

Tashicorp is run very differently from the rest of the corporations in the city, acting almost separately from its mother office in Japan. The entire corporation is organized accordingly, each regional office is a virtual corporation unto itself, governing and supporting the Tashicorp assets that are under its control. Even with virtual independence, the best work must still be done. If Tashicorp Tokyo is unsatisfied with you, then heads will roll. Although all of the larger regional Tashicorp offices are autonomous, they are all run in very similar ways with a hierarchy that has been copied from its parent office. This is a style in which the business is divided into Houses, each House responsible for a certain area of the company. For example, there is a House of Internal Affairs, another for Production Affairs, and yet another for Production Distribution. Inside each of these Houses, there are smaller groups or Bureau's responsible for different sections of that House. An example of this is each House has a Bureau of Security, and of Acquisition, yet these do not override another House's authority. In this, I mean that a security guard from the Bureau of Security in Media Liaison, could only give orders to another security guard from the Bureau of Security from Internal Affairs in a media security issue.

This is a confusing system to get things done. To achieve anything, there is a lot of red tape and only those who really understand the House system can get things done efficiently. Therefore, while one executive may take days to clear up a problem, another could have done it with one simple phone call. Such is the world of big bureaucracy.

In the House system one does not do another job, even if it could be done easier from your position. This system is similar to the operating procedure of the police force. Yet, Tashicorp differs from the police force in that if a crisis does arise, fingers are not pointed at who is responsible, rather fingers are used to fix that problem, no one is ever blamed for an incident but everyone tries to fix it. This explains



Tashicorp success, each person does his or her own job, and pitches in when needed.

If there is one problem inside Tashicorp, then that is racism. Rarely is a position of authority given to a person of European descent. Rather all the executives, barring a very small and exceptional hard-working few, are either Japanese or of Japanese heritage. In fact, even when conversing with other corporations or authorities Tashicorp executives prefer to speak Japanese with their own people. This has led to many corporations and organizations employing people specifically for the task of meeting and speaking

with Tashicorp representatives. Those employees of Non-Japanese descent are disturbed with this situation, but are not foolish enough to bring it to a superior's attention.

The Trade Council also runs into difficulty dealing with Tashicorp. On occasion, Tashicorp representatives refuse to vote or even give input on some subjects, because they see it below their station. Some people think that this form of racism has arisen from the past actions of the Europeans who showed themselves untrustworthy and reluctant to even try and achieve things the Tashicorp way. Most others believe it's because Tashicorp is completely arrogant.

In the Citadel, the Tashicorp tower has risen so high; it nearly threatens the Trade Center Tower, and is itself a sparkling monument to the success that the rich in Sin City have achieved. Inside is a completely different matter. All the rooms and offices are Spartan in design, the floors are wooden with a bare minimum of furniture. It not uncommon to see an executive's office with just a desk, computer, and two chairs. In Tashicorp doctrine, "the less the clutter the more efficient the worker." Personal items are not banned from an employee's desk, but are frowned upon, and even the halls have a minimal amount of signs and directions.

This is not to say that Tashicorp always adheres to a minimalist theory, quite the opposite in fact. Tashicorp has a reputation of throwing the best and most widely attended parties in the Citadel, everyone who's anyone is there, and no one leaves early... or sober. This seems to epitomize Tashicorp, if one understands and respects their policies and customs, the rewards can be great indeed.

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MEDADMIN – MEDICAL CORP

It is an unfortunate but true fact that with the world falling deeper and deeper into an economic depression, the levels of health in even the most successful nations has declined markedly from the days of vitamins and antibiotics for all. Part of the reason would have to be the rising cost of the drugs we all once took for granted. Without government subsidies, most medication is now beyond the reach of many. However there was a catch, with the loss of these subsidies, many of the large powerful drug companies suddenly found that they has lost their major source of income. There was usually only one solution... merge.

MedAdmin is one of these new generation drug companies. Created out of three smaller businesses is now one powerful world entity. These days MedAdmin does not only create new drugs, but also markets and distributes the equipment needed in hospitals and surgeries. In fact, the three companies that formed MedAdmin are still independent wings, each of which operates under a loose set of guidelines set by the MedAdmin board of directors. The Browning Wing focuses on the materials needed in operating theatres, from clamps and scalpels to disposable gloves and sutures. Strangely enough, this wing's main clients are those corporations who are involved in small wars and supporting various political factions around the world. The Aries Wing is a more creative department working on new improved technology used in medical studies, including portable heart machines and more effective CAT scans and X-ray machines. Aries has a more mainstream clientele, with large hospitals, and paramedical services. The Norman Wing is the pharmaceuticals arm of MedAdmin. It is this section of the corporation that is based in Sin City. With distribution being a major concern, New Centennial City became a prime location to open this aspect of the corporation. Sin City offers all the services it needed, a port and rail system for dispatching its goods, a stable political environment for its headquarters, and plenty of test subjects. Yes, the last statement is correct, test subjects, many of MedAdmin's proles are also the junkies and addicts that it needs to test its new drugs. In exchange for food and shelter, many people are more than willing to risk the side effects that arise during drug testing. This isn't to say that all MedAdmin's proles are walking zombies, but some people are willing to try anything to rid themselves of their afflictions or addictions. Norman Wing is now firmly entrenched in the Citadel. They do have representatives on the Trade Council Board, but they are very quiet and never seem to want to draw attention to themselves.

The MedAdmin tower is one in pristine condition, inside and outside. The exterior is made of a white stone that is extremely easy to clean and maintain, and CMS (Centennial City Maintenance and Services) workers spend many hours each week doing maintenance work on it. The interior of the tower is rather similar, with a clean white finish. In fact, it reminds many of a hospital with that same sanitized

smell wafting through the halls. The rooms and offices are well laid out with instructions and directories on most free walls.

The tower itself is divided up into a number of smaller sections. Each section has a defined status. The majority of the tower is devoted to administration and supply. There are areas devoted to research, where new drugs are created. Deep in the recesses of the basement contains the testing section of the Norman Wing, where the drugs are experimented with and used on animal test subjects. Due to the lack of government supervision, some of the testing is rumored to be quite gruesome. The wails that come from some of the trucks carrying cargo out to the outlying areas, sounds unearthly. Lastly, there are the subject wards, where potentially marketable drugs are finally tested on volunteers. Of all the drugs created in the research labs, only 10 percent make it to testing, and about 10 percent of those are ever tried on human subjects. Of the drugs that reach the last stage of testing about 75 percent are eventually passed onto the market.

These areas all have their own administration, researchers and funds, so woe to anyone that tries to acquire data or assistance from another area or section. In the world of drug production it is a very dog-eat-dog-world.

Everything appears fine from the outside; nevertheless internally the corporation has had some problems in the past. These situations arising from clashes of policy between the doctors involved in the research and the administrators who govern the direction of the company. Although these clashes are yet to become too serious, it is only a matter of time before they reach boiling point. To make matters worse, in recent times MedAdmin, and more directly Norman Wing, have been accused of releasing untried and unproven drugs onto the black market. The rumor is that they are attempting to start demand for them. Again, there is no proof of these allegations, but rumblings are that it is only a matter of time before Sin City beings to have serious drug problems.

CORSA - MEDIA CORP

When Michael Georgio Corsa accepted the editor role of Spain's largest newspaper, little did he know that he would pass a media empire onto his children. In reality, since Michael Corsa retired late last decade, the corporation has continued to grow at an amazing rate. Under the guidance of his oldest daughter Angela, Corsa Corporation has continued to expand, and now has begun to branch out from its original focus of solely print media. Recent purchases include a large number of television and radio companies. It also holds shares in many other media corporations around the world, making Corsa now almost as powerful as the more established media corporations.

Angela is an ambitious person who, like her father, is the very public face of her corporation. Everything she does hits the newspapers and not only because she

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owns them. Angela is not actually based in Sin City yet she is counted amongst the Citadel's elite, using the city as her base of operations when she is "holidaying" at her resort further up the coastline.

The company runs at least one major paper in every country in the world, with the subsidiaries having offices in the most important cities. Sin City is no exception in this case with Corsa directly owning the New Centennial Daily, and the suburban rag mailer that is distributed weekly. Corsa also runs most of the television and radio stations in Sin City, operating many of the other corporation's Prole television channels.

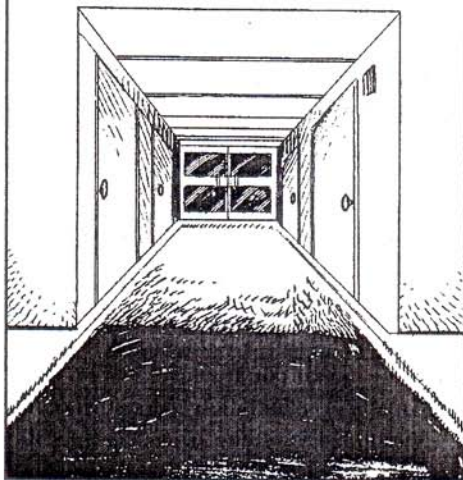
There is however one area of the print media that Corsa does not have any influence in, the tabloids. Michael Corsa always stated that tabloids were "the ruination of man" and vowed never to own one. He was so serious that he insisted his daughter do the same. There is a clause in the Corsa ownership contract that states if Angela ever purchases such a company then all ownership rights would revert back to Michael. If he should die, then everything would go to her younger sister, Natalie. Since learning of the clause, Angela has personally made sure that any new acquisition to the Corsa Empire has no holdings in tabloid media. Michael and Natalie would love a chance to dethrone Angela, but she seems to be one step ahead of them.

The Sky Tower, the name of Corsa tower in the Citadel, is easily recognizable from a distance. Because of its great height, the tower is used as a relay station for many of Corsa's TV and radio channels, with many people referring to it as the "Porcupine" tower because of the number of aeriels and antenna that stick out from it at odd angles.

Inside the tower, the corporation works like a well-oiled machine. One manager runs television and radio stations. This person is responsible to only one woman or man on the board and in turn that person reports directly to Angela. This means in theory that even the lowest of workers is just a few management steps away from the head of the organization.

However, what the system was first put in place to achieve in a practical sense, is now impossible. Especially since the corporation started to spread its influence into live media. Angela hates the loss of control that live shows bring. Sometimes, these live events go beyond her wildest

RECEPTION ROOM



imagination. For example, who could forget the live broadcast of the Calendite Cult Calamity? She privately enjoyed the ratings, but publicly denounced the violence. Normally, only the most important information ever reaches Angela, and she tends to have more to do with the print side of the empire, not because of any real preference, but rather because she feels most comfortable with this medium.

The Sky Tower is one of the most open to the public, with many of the Citadel's more popular shows being recorded live on one of its many sound stages. One of the most popular is "The Jerri Jesse Rivera Show" which has hosted some of the world's most popular superstars, actors and sports personalities. These shows are filmed in front of a canned audience bussed in from The Projects. In return for their proper behavior, small rations of food are given.

PEGASUS PRODUCTS – ELECTRONIC DESIGN COMPANY

Pegasus is a virtual clone of the computer companies of the 1980's and 90's. Unlike them, Pegasus learned to adapt and change with the demand of a Greater Depression world. With companies like Hewlett-Zenith, Pegasus has come to the forefront of technology, expanding into niches that only a decade ago never existed.

Pegasus is run by one man, Olsen Haast. From its inception, Pegasus should have ended up on in the Estates with all the other brightly led but under capitalized companies located there. That fortunately never happened due to the construction of the Trade Center Tower and the increasing need for some sort of security for its members. After the assassination of Tatum, many of the remaining business leaders refused to meet again in person, especially as one large group. What if they were killed? The answer was the SecureNet, a system of video communication devices which would allow all the Trade Council Representatives to meet while their actual location would not be revealed.

Haast was the man responsible for designing this system and started his fortune by selling it to the Council. The SecureNet didn't end there either, many other organizations and bureaucratic departments ordered the system and it soon became one of the preferred ways of doing business. Today, Haast takes on a different role, more than happy to meet with his fellow city leaders on a device he created himself, although these days he personally has little to do with the SecureNet.

SecureNet isn't the only piece of technology that Pegasus has created. It also designed the Ex Mail system, although another company built the device itself. Pegasus is now firmly entrenched in the world of the Citadel and it would take a disaster to see it topple from its perch. Not that Haast is capable of causing that kind of event happening inside his own business. Common knowledge has it, that Haast has the worst temper in the Citadel, and at various points throughout the company's history has almost let this rage make some very stupid mistakes that could have

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lead to its down fall. Plus, Haast is still the major shareholder in the company, retaining almost total control over its direction. This has lead to conflicts with many of the directors on the Pegasus board, forcing some to resign and sell up their interest in the corporation.

It is Haast's inability to get along with people that has really restricted Pegasus from becoming a dominant world power in the computing industry, with many ingenious projects discarded in mid-production because he has disagreed over some minor points or ideas. In reality, Pegasus is just another of the smaller corporations which reside in the city. With the presence of the SecureNet and the emergence of the Ex mail, it has created a niche in the Citadel's hierarchy all of it's own.

Pegasus Tower itself is quite old in terms of the Citadel, being the first big purchase Haast made all those years ago. Currently, it is in a strange state of disrepair, both on the inside and out, with renovations ceasing halfway through less than one month ago. When these repairs stopped, some believe that Pegasus had at last over-stretched itself financially. Yet, most were not surprised to hear that this was not the case. Actually, the renovations had stopped due to an argument between Haast and his contractor. Currently both parties are involved in legal proceedings surrounding the building's supposed renovation dates.

As a result, the interior of Pegasus tower is a complete mess with whole departments being relocated to other areas of the Citadel. To find a person or a product quickly has become impossible. Especially with people getting new temporary offices each day in the attempt to best utilize what useable space is available. To make things worse, between the mess and the legal proceedings, Haast has become even more hellishly angry than normal, and as a result no one is willing to spend too long with him and sort out the company's direction. As long as this legal wrangle continues, the more organized corporations of the Trade Council will effectively leave Pegasus behind. Pegasus might lose ground that can not ever be made back up, even by someone as resourceful as Olsen Haast.

MIRACLE - ROBOTICS/AERONAUTICS/MILITARY

Late in the 20th Century, Miracle was nothing more than a dummy corporation, kept afloat by a few government contracts. These contracts involved parts in missiles and aircraft, focusing mainly on their propulsion systems. This ended when the money from the government started to dry up. At first, Miracle made cutbacks and shuffled around its personnel to keep its head above water, until it found that the next cut would effectively be it's own neck. Desperate times meant desperate measures, and Miracle needed a little luck to reverse its fortunes.

A young man stepped forward from the R&D section with a radical plan to save both his job, and as it turned out, the jobs of his bosses. This man had discovered

a new conductor, not quite a superconductor, but one almost twice as efficient as those already used. The resources to make such a conductor would cost Miracle every last cent it owned, but would make robots and other technological advanced machinery a reality. It goes without saying that the conductor was a success and without it, companies like Ramtech and Kraus Maffei-Deere would never have become the world leaders in Robot technology they are today.

These days Miracle has expanded its horizons working on many different projects around the world, from making water pumps for the less fortunate souls in Africa, to building weapons for the newest Eastern European Dictators. But where Miracle really excels is with its research, always trying to find the next great breakthrough to match the near perfect conductor that was its first discovery.

What really worries people about companies like Miracle is their attitude. They have the idea that they are a law unto themselves, and without government supervision, acts with little responsibility or regard anyone. This is the price the world pays for Miracle's quest to make a new breakthrough. Add to this the fact that it is one of the most active corporations in the world, and the potential for the disaster is great indeed. Not that Miracle seems to care. They are the first to back a new project, and then the first to withdraw that backing when something goes wrong. A number of groups and other corporations oppose both Miracle and the ideals it holds, but in Sin City there is little of that. Perhaps that is the reason it has decided to base itself in the Citadel. In fact, Miracle is one of only a few corporations that can really call Sin City home.

Many people ask why Miracle does not invoke the outrage in the city that it has done in other areas of the world and the answer is simple. Miracle looks after its home. The Citadel and much of Sin City wouldn't have been constructed as fast or as well without Miracles cooperation. For that reason, most of the residents of the city seem to be willing to overlook their dubious involvement with some projects. Miracle is also the only corporation that seems to care about the people of New Centennial City, rich or poor. They are always at the forefront of community projects, and public assistance schemes, if only they would care as much about the rest of the world.

Miracle, if not the financial leader of the Citadel, is definitely the most active corporation in the city. It is always trying to get the other members of the Trade Council to assist it in joint ventures, some say this is because they are good at heart. Others say it because they aim to gain more control over their peers by taking the lead.

One thing is for sure about Miracle and that is their tower is a big, bright, and a happy place to work. Not many corporations can say that about their headquarters. Lit very efficiently and laid out well, Miracle's tower has everything you would expect from a head office. Not only are the offices large and spacious with convenient work locations, but the tower also boasts a research diversion and an active testing ground in the basement levels. What goes on at these locations is a

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secret that only the executives and lab workers know about, suffice to say that they are working constantly towards the next big piece of technology to change the world.

That is one of the best things about Miracle, the mix of talent and leadership. In their offices the scientists do research and administrators do the administration, each worker knows their place in the greater scheme. They also have their place within the corporate structure and know exactly what is expected of him or her. Perhaps this is why the corporation is so efficient.

With all the new developments at Miracle, security is a very important issue; Miracle has one of the largest and best-trained security forces of any of the corporations in the Citadel. Many wonder if they are used to keep the workers in, rather than prying eyes out. As a result, a Miracle security officer on duty is not some one you want to mess with.

WESTUNITY NATIONAL BANKING GROUP - (THE WESTERN UNITY BANK)

We all need someone to look after our money, from the small business owner all the way up to the Mega-corporations. Unfortunately, this has just led to the formation of yet another Multinational. Formed from two already large banks, WestUnity is a powerhouse financial institution owning many banks around the world.

When the First Western Bank and Unity Nation first proposed a merger in 2005 there was public outcry. Both banks were already two of the largest anywhere in the country, themselves made up of many smaller banks that had come together throughout the Twentieth Century, and the merger was seen as a monopoly on the banking system of over half of the world. For the companies, the merger was a good idea combining both the personal banking style of Unity National, "the individual's bank", with the financial power of First Western, home of "big business" banking needs. Both banks would complement each other bringing the best of both worlds to their customers.

The public didn't see it that way, instead they thought yet again they would miss out and that big business would just be better served. Unfortunately, they were right. Although initiated with the best intentions, the merger just showed how much more important commercial customers were than the private person. Once combined, the bank could not ignore the demands of the other corporations. Lending to these institutes paid their own bills, and the personal touch for the individual customer was soon to become a thing of the past.

Not much could be done by those that opposed the merge, with no court willing to make a ruling that might affect any other country, not that they would have the jurisdiction to enforce any ruling they made outside their own legal boundaries. So the merger went through.

Today, WestUnity National Banking Group (the actual corporation formed by the merger) and its major bank Western Unity, (the bank that is run by the group) are one of the main financial backers for all the corporations in the world. They have offices in all the major cities, and run a myriad of smaller investment companies and local banks.

WestUnity is perhaps the most powerful corporation in Sin City. Also, they are also the most unobtrusive, preferring to allow others to take the lead. The corporation is so large that it takes a long time for any decisions to be made. Like most bankers, the heads of WestUnity are loathed to rush into any new opportunities without know exactly what the future holds for them. Perhaps this is why they are so willing to take a back seat in the City.

The reason they have such a large office in the Citadel is fairly obvious, ten years ago Sin City was the fastest growing city in the world, outgrowing the massive cities like Bombay and Johannesburg. The Westfield Financial Tower in the Citadel is probably the oldest structure still standing, barring the Trade Center tower. It has been designed in a gothic sense with old-fashioned brickwork, gargoyles and overhangs at every available point. Inside, it is much the same with big open floor plans and furniture that looks like it was straight out of the 1920's. The overall effect is somewhat spooky and old-fashioned, but does have a special charm all of it's own.

To be a WestUnity executive is to be a life member of the biggest financial organization in the world. The money is good, the perks even better, but the responsibility looms even larger. Because all decisions made involve money above and beyond most citizen's wildest dreams, the pressures to make the correct decisions are enormous. WestUnity's head office has a whole division dedicated to internal affairs, to ensure each executive does "his or her best." Many an executive has been "investigated" by internal affairs, never to return to their desk; sometimes leaving work half-finished on it. To be "investigated" is the threat that hangs over all WestUnity employees.

WestUnity uses the Citadel Branch as a hub where it can keep an eye on the local financial community. Many think that WestUnity would be the first to jump ship if Sin City ever became too much of a investment risk, so their strong presence is by itself, a reassurance to the future of the city as a whole.

HIDDEN PLACES

The Citadel is made up of many locations other than the glistening towers of the Mega-Corporations. Much of the infrastructure required to keep it in tiptop condition is hidden from plain sight. Three areas of some importance could be classified in this category. The CMS, or the Centennial City Maintenance and

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Services Park is where the majority if not all the services needed to run the Citadel originate from. Also hidden from view of the casual passer-by is the Commercial Estates, these buildings house the small businesses of the City, and yet it is here that some of the most important breakthroughs in technology and thought occur. There are also a number of small parks and recreational areas dotted around the Citadel, one of the most significant being the Botanical gardens.

CENTENNIAL CITY MAINTENANCE AND SERVICES PARK (CMS)

"Just think about it... a whole world underground. That's what the CMS is you know, buried under the Citadel, and from what I heard it's almost as big. My question is... What the hell do they hide down there?"

-Anonymous

The Centennial City Maintenance and Services Park is entirely situated under the Citadel. Buried some twenty feet below the road and the towers, the CMS is a massive dungeon-like structure rivaling that of Cheyenne Mountain Military Base in North America. In truth, the CMS is so large that it requires it's own transport, communication and road systems. It is not uncommon for CMS workers to spend most of their working day without ever seeing the outside world.

From the outside the park reveals nothing of what it hides beneath the surface. Instead the CMS has been allocated a rather small area of the Citadel as an entranceway, which looks very unspectacular indeed. It is large open hanger with a roadway disappearing quite steeply into the darkness below. There are more secure and private entrances from the Trade Center Tower, and most of the corporation's towers, the main entrance is by far the most commonly used.

The park was originally proposed by Howard Tatum as a massive structure to be based on the Citadel site above ground. Support was slow to gain. After Tatum's assassination, a proposal was enacted to place it underground, an eyesore hidden from the view of the corporate giants. The CMS is also a joint operation paid for by all the member corporations of the Trade Council. By each paying part of the cost needed to maintain the CMS, they save substantially on the individual expense in running their own Citadel holdings.

The CMS employs almost as many people as any of the large corporations. These employees are divided up into a number of different sections responsible for specific maintenance in the Citadel. There are many different sections, Electrical Maintenance, Trash Collection, and Construction to name but a few. Public services such as ambulances, and a fire department, are located in the upper areas of the underground. Work in the Citadel for the CMS workers is done 24 hours a day, rain or shine. It is the CMS, not any technological marvel that gives the Citadel the image of a bright, clean neighborhood.

The size of the underground complex that is the CMS is a problem in itself, many of its workers focus their time on maintaining it alone. The employee's knowledge is limited to their area and they rarely venture from known stations. Because it is so large, and with still many of its storage areas yet to be used, it is quite conceivable that even the most experienced and knowledgeable worker could get themselves lost for days, just by taking the wrong turn. A wrong turn in the underground could be a dangerous mistake. The CMS really is the rotting underbelly of the Citadel, and who knows what lurks down below ready to strike at the heart of Sin City.

THE TATUM COMMERCIAL ESTATES

"I don't know why some of those guys stay there, they'll struggle and fight to do anything while they base themselves under the gaze of the Corporations. Sure, some of them are in bed with the big boys, but those that aren't will never produce anything worthwhile based there."

-Brenda Sasston (middle manager for WestUnity)

The Mega Corporations are not the only companies in Centennial City. There are many smaller companies fighting for the power and recognition necessary to join their bigger brethren. Many of these companies are well organized and powerful in their own rights, but lack the national or global outlook to be called Mega-corporations.

Tatum A is one of a number of estates. Designed by Howard Tatum, his vision was to build a large, economical working space for a number of smaller companies positioned close to the towers of major corporations, and therefore supporting their bigger brethren with their skills. Constructed around four large connected buildings reaching dozens of stories high, the idea was a success, but for the wrong reasons. With the competition grouped together, the corporations have been able to observe and control what these companies produce, so much so that now many of the companies that populate Tatum A and its sister Estates now work either directly with or for one or more of the larger corporations.

As the Estates are the only other place where other companies can site themselves, they have sadly become the most unsavory places in the entire Citadel. Of course, this means that they are still head and shoulders above anything else in the rest of the city. It just that the cops that get Estate beats are usually the slowest and least observant in the whole Citadel. Despite their disadvantaged surroundings, a number of bright scientists and industrialists do their best work in the Estates, not restrained by the larger corporations red tape and result driven edicts.

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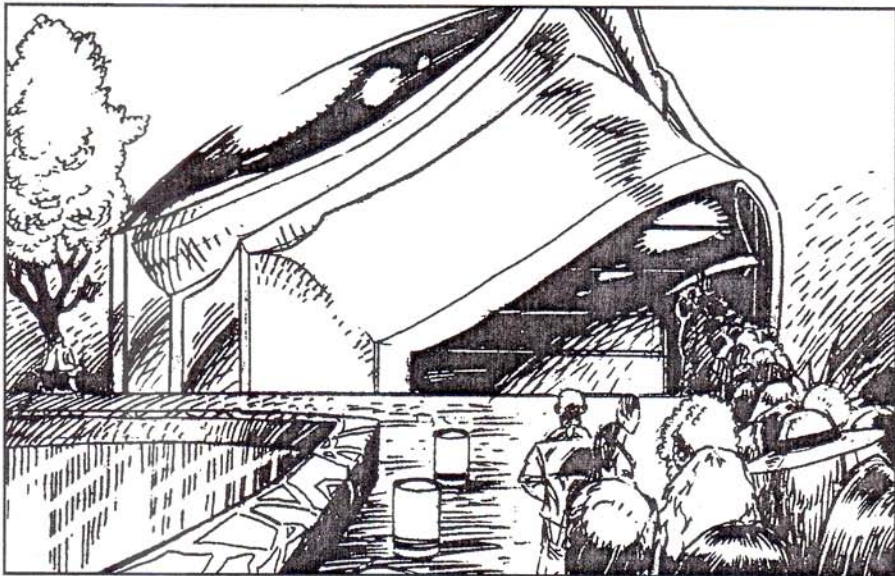
THE DREAMSCAPE

"I've been there I tell ya... and you can wipe that smirk of you face too. I really have. A beautiful shade of blue it was too. Seemed to just soothe the soul you know. I can tell you young 'en that I ain't ever seen anything like it before... and I bet never again. Everything was perfect... the women... the air... and the gadgets! I think... no in fact I know that you can get everythin' there...TVs the size of the wall... and 'puters that seemed to read you mind before you made it up. Yes sir... that place was like a dream... a real good dream."

-Arne Kleinschmidt during happy hour at the "Folks and Jokes" inn.

The Dreamscape, or the 'Scape as the locals call it, is a shining example of what mankind can achieve when they put their collective minds to it. With fifteen full floors, it is a wondrous world of everything high-tech and beautiful, if the residents of the Citadel go to the Strip to forget, then they frequent the 'Scape to be amazed. In reality the 'Scape is a large mall built to accommodate the rich and powerful and their constant demands to have the biggest and best.

Not only does the 'Scape offer the most high-tech of commodities, it also is a technological marvel on it's own. Seen from a block away, lit up night and day in laser effects and holographic imaging, the halls and stores of the Dreamscape are by themselves a sight to behold. The 'Scape is also the location where many of the most advanced and amazing technologies in the world are displayed. Each August,



the 'Scape is the host of the world's second biggest car display, with all the latest models and concept cars. The Dreamscape's hall is regularly leased out to organizations and smaller corporations in order to meet and talk about the advances of technology, science and medicine.

The Dreamscape is home to a number of smaller companies whose main aim is to produce or distribute new technology. For the most part, these companies specialize in the little gadgets that are designed to make one's life easier. A few of the companies have the reputation for having some of the most technical and brilliant minds in the city. Yet, like most non-incorporated businesses in the city, they are both short on manpower and resources. These companies are always looking for new capital. It is suggested that if you want something bad enough, and you can produce both the time and the money, then you can find someone in the 'Scape who can make it.

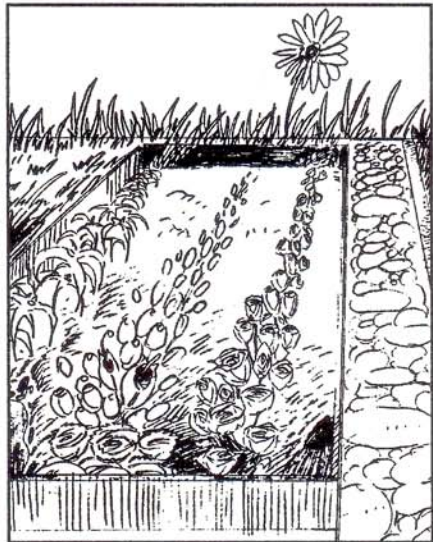
CENTENNIAL BOTANICAL GARDENS

"I don't go to the Trade Center much, but when I do, I always make sure I walk slowly through the Gardens. They are the most wondrous things I've ever seen, summer or winter something smells so sweet and blooms so bright, you could almost believe you weren't in the heart of Sin City."

-Sarah Buchilli (local hairdresser)

The Botanical Gardens surround the Trade Center Building and are technically open for all to enjoy. That is if you get past the security at the gate. Of all the parks in the city, the Botanical Gardens are the most beautiful and most secure. The Gardens are home to almost 100 different species of plants, a number of which are exotics, many endangered in their homelands. There has never been a problem with flowers being damaged or stolen. One main reason is that it is situated at the base of the Trade Center and under constant observation by security and the police. There are also a number of CMS workers who work specifically as gardeners who maintain and repair the whole Botanical Garden. This is, in many people's opinion, one of the most pleasant jobs in the whole Citadel.

The Gardens are also home to a number of impressive stone statues and foun-



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tains, some of which date back to the late 19th Century. These older statues have all been restored back to their original states. It is not uncommon during the summer months for the Trade Council to sponsor the displays of Sin Cities leading artists in the gardens or to allow foreign performance arts to take place here. The Botanical Gardens are another example of the lavish lifestyle of the Citadel.

LORDS AND LADIES ON HIGH – PERSONALITIES OF THE CITADEL

To know how people really live and think you must talk to them. In the Citadel this is usually harder than you would think. Most people are guarded in their opinions and are unwilling to talk openly with strangers. However, once you get to know them you soon find that even in the Citadel there is a dividing line between two social groups – the haves, and the have nots. Although everyone who frequents the Citadel is in a much better position than people who live and work in any other part of the city. Having access to the Citadel does not necessarily mean that you're successful. To be honest, only the executives of the corporations have truly succeeded. It is important that you hear from the people themselves before you make any assumptions to how well off the majority of the Citadel's population are.

CORPORATE SECURITY OFFICER

"In case you hadn't figured it out already, nothing happens in the Citadel without us knowing about it. We know where the people are all the time. We can see what they're doing. We know where they're going. This place is so wired, if you fart, we'll know that you did it, and what you ate!"

"This might seem like heaven to you, but it's damn boring, believe me. There's only so long you can stare at a bank of security monitors before your mind starts to wander. Knowing when John Doe is visiting the washroom really doesn't interest me all that much. I'd much rather be out walking the beat around the streets of the 'del. At least the scenery is better. Female office workers seem to be favoring mini-skirts again this year. I know I favor them."

"We take security in the Citadel seriously. We have to. The Trade Council and the major corporations all have big offices here and it's our job to make sure that nothing happens to them. Well, anything that wasn't supposed to happen. We get told about arrivals and departures of prominent people, so we can organize things so that they get to where they need to be with the minimum of fuss. But even if people live in the 'del, they like to feel comfortable in the knowledge that we're not going to let anything happen."

"You wouldn't believe some of the stunts people try to pull to get in here. I used to work down on one of the main gates into the Citadel. To get through, you need to slide your smart card into the reader, and then place your palm on the hand read-

er and look into the eye scanner. Unless the security computer is 100% convinced you are who you claim to be, you're not coming in here. Then you have to pass through the metal detectors and chemical sniffers to make sure you're not carrying any unauthorized weapons or other contraband. But some people just don't get it. They still try to smuggle things in. Things we don't want in. We catch them every time."

"If you can make it in, then don't try any funny business either. This is the richest area of New Centennial City and has the security to match. Response time is one of the major criteria for staff evaluations here. Any street crime will get some kind of security response within 5 minutes. If it's a serious crime, like assault or robbery, then you can expect several of us there within a minute or two. That doesn't give you long to make your getaway. I won an award once for the quickest response time to an incident within my patrol area. 15.65 seconds. Came damn close to setting the all-time record as well."

"But while we're everywhere, we also have to stay out of the way. The suits don't like to feel as though they're walking around in a police state. We have to be extremely crafty. All the surveillance equipment is discreet. We tend to wear subtle uniforms so we blend in with all the other people walking the streets of the 'del. You'd be surprised where you can hide a sub-machinegun so that no one even knows you're carrying it."

"We get better training than the beat cops out in the rest of the city. Target practice is at least a weekly activity. Gym work happens on a daily basis for all of us. You don't want to play by the rules up here, then you're watchin' bars in the Strip and some snot-nosed kid from out there with more drive is walking your beat in here. I don't know about you, but I live out there; I don't want to work out there."

"The work may be hard and boring, but let's face it. Hard and boring in a place as luxurious as the 'del is way better than hard and boring anywhere else in the city. I know where I'd rather be."

The Corporate Security Officer as an NPC

The Security Officer is typical of the men and women tasked with making sure that the Citadel is the safest place in New Centennial City. They might complain about their work, but they take it extremely seriously and are likely to deal with any problems quickly, efficiently and in some cases, brutally.

Level: Veteran

Initiative: 3

Skills: As per Veteran NPCs, plus Small Arms (Pistol) 5, Small Arms (Pistol) 6, Melee Combat (Armed) 5, Observation 6, Stealth 4 and Streetwise 6.

Normal Armament: Kevlar vest, a stun stick, a pistol or an SMG are standard. Other weapons are available if required.

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WIFE OF EXECUTIVE

Here in the Citadel, three words can be used to explain what life is really like at the top: "image is everything." Nobody who lives in the Citadel does anything without a reason. Everything that anyone does is has motives behind it. Charities or other good deeds are done not just to help the impoverished, but rather to be seen by their peers doing these altruistic deeds. Here is a candid description of the wife of an executive.

"Being the wife of a top corporate executive is much harder than you might think. I rarely get to see my husband. He's too busy working his way closer to the top of the corporate ladder. Even if he's home, there's a good chance that I'll be away from the apartment at some function or other. We're really like ships that pass in the night. Not that I'm complaining, mind you. Without his long hours, I wouldn't be where I am now."

"You would not believe how hectic life can really be. Everyday is filled with some sort of activity. On Mondays, I play tennis in the morning with Sylvia Richards, the wife of the Vice-President for research. In the afternoon, I get my hair and nails seen to at Olivia's. It's the only place to have a manicure in this town. Everyone else does inferior work. Tuesdays I normally spend time shopping at the Dreamscape, or possibly even New Centennial Mall, if I really feel like slumming it. Wednesdays are filled with my art classes down in the Botanical Gardens. I didn't realize just how spiritual painting could be until I enrolled in these classes. My instructor Octavio tells me that I really have a gift. Thursdays I go to the gym with Tanya Voskecki in the morning and the afternoons are filled with the business meetings of the spouses of the executives. Fridays I tend to relax at home, catching up on the reading I haven't had a chance to do during the week, although recently, I have taken to doing Tai Chi in the corporate gardens on the roof of the tower. Saturdays are always filled with the impossible task of getting everything ready for the inevitable social function that evening, and Sundays are spent recovering from the excesses of the night before."

"As a wife of a corporate executive, I'm expected to take my turn in organizing social functions. It's important that the proper care is taken, for if one fails to make a good impression, it can actually harm one's spouses chances in the future. Everything has to be perfect. Nothing at all must be out of place and the apartment must be impeccably clean. The food choices for the evening's meal must be exotic enough to be different and memorable, and yet you need to be exceptionally cautious not to offend anyone's palates. The same is true for wine. Getting exactly the right balance is an extremely difficult task and one that requires extensive thought and preparation."

"Keeping up the necessary image is an incredibly expensive task. To get ahead in the Citadel, you need to be noticed by the right people and getting their atten-

tion requires the most expensive of everything. Second best simply is not good enough. If I were to settle for second best, I would be dropped from the social scene quicker than yesterday's fashion. That in turn would further hurt my husband's career prospects and our very livelihood. He hasn't worked this hard to get where he is so I could ruin it for him. It's vital that I do my part to make sure that his journey through the corporation is constantly upwards."

"To some people, life in the Citadel might seem to be luxurious beyond their wildest imaginations. But it's far harder than they can even imagine. The pressures to conform and make one appear prosperous are sometimes enough to kill you."

The Executive's Wife as an NPC

Peer group pressure is a dangerous thing. The executive's wife suffers greatly from the need to appear to be doing better than everyone else does. Immense amounts of her time and energy are devoted to outdoing her neighbors. In some cases, the perceived failures to conform can lead to deep psychological problems which require the most expensive and elite forms of therapy that money can buy.

- Level:** Novice
- Initiative:** 1
- Skills:** As per Novice NPCs.

CMS WORKER

"Some people call us termites. We're the ones slaving away underground out of sight while they get to party on the surface and look good. In some respects, they could be right. We do resemble the termites in some ways. But the thing they forget is that without us, the Citadel would come grinding to a halt."

"The CMS park is a real labyrinth, buried right underneath the gloss and gardens of the 'del. Everything that the 'del needs is right down here. This is where all of work happens to make sure that the corporate executives get to have their lush gardens and their expensive satellite communications systems."

"I don't get to live in the 'del. They wouldn't have the likes of me, and I reckon I have better things to spend my money on if I could even afford it. No, I get to commute into the 'del on the ELB every day. I have to travel for nearly an hour to get to work, but at least the trip gives me a chance to get either take a bit of a nap, or to get a little bit of reading done."

"As for work, I'm an electrician by trade. With the amount of power that the 'del uses every day, there's always work for us to be doing. Sometimes, it's as simple as changing a light switch or installing a new power outlet so Joe Average can move his computer 3 feet closer to the window in order to see the water if he cranes his head around the side of the fat guy sitting next to him. Other times, we get called

into do more interesting stuff like rewiring a section of a building that is being refurbished, which seems to be happening all the time. The corps always feel the need to improve on what they've got."

"We work around the clock here. Everyone is on some sort of roster system, so you have to take your turns doing the lousy shifts. The corporations never seem to stop, so they insist on making sure that their support services work 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You get a bit more money for working the dogwatch, but it really doesn't matter. Down here in the dungeon, night and day are meaningless concepts."

"Someone once told me there is something like 50,000 miles of cabling in the Citadel, if you count all the power, phone, and fiberoptic cables. Me, I reckon that's an understatement. I don't know for sure, but there is tons of the stuff all over the place. Everywhere you go in the CMS, you'll see overhead cable trays carrying bits of wire or fiber someplace or other. I can't even say for certain that all of it's connected up, or if it is, what it's connected up to."

"The CMS is a multi-leveled maze. There's supposed to be a hundred miles of tunnels down here. I know I haven't seen them all. I haven't been down to the bottom couple of levels. I don't even know what's down there. I've been lost a couple of times when I was following a cable in a tray and forgot to pay attention to where I was going. All the tunnels look alike."

"For most of us, working down in the depths of the CMS is about as close as we'll ever come to working and living in the 'del. Most of us have similar sorts of stories. Out of work one day and thinking about either suicide or signing on as a ballotman so we can be paid to vote the correct way. Then bamm! The next day we're working down in the dungeon. My old man reckons I've sold out, working for the corporations, but I would rather be slaving away down here earning an honest living rather than rotting up in the Projects. Don't know about you, but I reckon I'd rather be dead than sitting there doing nothing."

"The corporations might treat us like termites, but without us, they wouldn't be able to play as hard as they do. I may not get paid a lot, but at least I can go home each day and think about all the poor bastards who are worse off than me. Sometimes you just have to be thankful for what you've got."

The CMS Worker as an NPC

The CMS worker is like the thousands of other who all work in support of the corporations in the Citadel. They come and go each day like worker ants, toiling away unnoticed by the people at the top, unless something goes wrong. It really doesn't matter what sort of trades person you're looking for, there's almost certainly going to be at least ten of them down there somewhere.

Level: Experienced
Initiative: 1
Skills: As per Experienced NPCs, with skills that are appropriate to the job they are doing.

THE CLERK

"When most people think of the Citadel and the people who work here, they think of the members of the Trade Council and the upper level executives. They're the ones that seem to get all the attention. They have the money and the power. But they only make the decisions. We get to do all the drudge work that gives them all the glory."

"I've been working for the corps now for about twelve years. I've swapped about in that time, but they're all the same really. The only real difference is whose flag your supposed to salute. Apart from that, it makes very little difference."

"I started out working as a naive eighteen-year-old in the fileroom. Since then, I've clawed my way up the corporate ladder to where I am now, a section head in the accounts department. I've done all sorts of meaningless jobs over the years. You'd be surprised by some of the stupid things that the senior management thinks it wants. To add insult to injury, once they find out that it is a stupid idea, I get blamed for it."

"People like me form the internal organs of the corporations. We make sure that the orders get filled and the accounts are settled. If the corps didn't have us, then eventually everything would grind to a screeching halt. Sometimes I wish that the executive branch would remember that instead of just taking us all for granted and thinking of us simply as a resource. I'm still a human being for God's sake."

"There are some real idiots upstairs in the executive branch. Every year or so, they play musical chairs, reorganizing everyone in the name of efficiency. I don't know what idiot they're getting their ideas from, but it doesn't help. The chaos caused by all the moving takes about a year to settle down so that we get the relationships in the staff working properly. Just as we're really starting to get things worked out properly, they swap us all about again, ruining all the hard work we have just done. I wish I could say I have given up caring, but it still bugs me."

"At least I get to work something resembling normal hours, unlike the poor bastards who work down in the dungeon beneath the Citadel. Theoretically, I work between about 8:30am and 5:30pm, but it's rarely that way at all. I usually end up having to start earlier, because I have too much work on my desk when I leave the night before. Then, after working a couple of hours overtime, which I never get paid for, some putz lands something else on my desk and claims that it needs to be done yesterday because the branch head needs to present a report to the board of directors, or some other crap. Why is that everyone seems to think that their work

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is more important than everyone else?

But the only way to even think about getting a promotion is to play the game by their rules. You need to brown nose a fair bit and look like you want to accept responsibility. In the past couple of years, the corps have become pretty ruthless and are willing to get rid of anyone who's not pulling their weight. I haven't got enough money as it is. The last thing I need for me and my family is for me to lose my job because some pencil pusher thinks that I'm "surplus to requirements."

"So in the end, I have to play politics like everyone else. Everything has to be done by the book, even when the way the book says to do it is plain stupid. Sometimes, if you go through the right channels, you can put forward a suggestion to change the way things are done, but by the time the approval comes back, they've reorganized everything again and you're no longer in a position where the suggestion can be used. So nothing ever changes really."

"I'm not going to rock the boat too much. I have a wife and family to support and a mortgage on a place the other side of the Square. It's not much, but at least I don't have to work ridiculous hours striving to get into an apartment that I will only get to see as I walk in to go to bed at night. I'll keep plodding along, doing solid dependable work like I always do. Sure as hell beats trying to scratch out an existence on the streets, or rotting away in the Projects."

The Clerk as an NPC

The Clerk is an unremarkable sort of person, who spends his working life greasing the wheels that drive the corporations forward. He complains about his working conditions a lot, but ultimately would prefer to stay there than be forced to struggle to survive.

Level: Experienced

Initiative: 1

Skills: As per Experienced NPCs, plus Business 3, Persuasion 1.

THE COURIER

"Information – it's probably the single most important thing to the corporations these days. Sure, they all might make things or supply certain services to certain areas of society. But the right information at the right time can mean the difference between massive profits and millions of dollars in lost revenue."

"But despite all the technological advances that the corps have made, sometimes there are people that just prefer to have things done the old-fashioned way, because then they can feel confident that the information has gotten through to the right people as quickly as possible."

"Dude, that's where I come in. I'm the guy who zooms around the Citadel taking stuff where it needs to go. People have come to trust me to get their stuff there

as quickly as possible. You'll never find me sitting behind a desk pushing papers. To me, that's a fate worse than death."

"The way I see it, I have one of the best jobs in the whole Citadel. I get to meet lots of people and I can get into most of the different buildings in the place with little or no effort. Working as a courier lets you see things that some people only dream about."

"How I get stuff around the place really depends on what big-wig it has to go to and how far away it is. The way I see it, the best fun is the short haul document runs. Most people don't need to have ultra-security, so I just throw the papers in the backpack, strap on the blades, and fang around the place. Don't even have to stop for stairs or nothing. Stairs are the most fun anyway, especially backwards. It's totally awesome, man! I mean, where else could you get paid for skating through public parks, weaving like a madman through traffic, or having security guards let you skate around inside their buildings? Before this job, I used to get in serious trouble for doing these same things."

"Bummer is, some people need more security than that. They have a package that's too big or heavy for me to carry on the blades, or it's too important. I gotta take the car then. We're not talking some little electric runabout either. We're talking a massive black Chrysler LeBoeuf here, with a few non-standard mods. Stuff like superchargers and armored panels. That sort of good gear. I can have almost as much fun in the car as I can on the skates. You'd be surprised how easy it is to get the hulk sideways round corners. The cops don't like me doin' it, but all you gotta do is drop the names of a couple of the clients and they tend to let you go pretty quick."

"You'd be surprised how much weird crap I get to carry. I've carried everything from single page letters to huge bunches of red roses. There was this one time I had to carry this box which I'm sure had some dude's head in it. It was sealed tighter than a fish's butt, and that's watertight, so I never knew for sure. But the box was the right size and it had some red shit leakin' out of it which sure as hell looked like blood. Guess you really could call that the personal touch."

"It's not all fun and games though. Sometimes, there are dudes who want to intercept the parcel and would do anything to get it. That's why I am required to pack heat all the time. I've had a special holster made that sits between my shoulders, so that it doesn't get in the way when I'm skating. I've only had to use it a couple of times, but they were the times when I came real close to getting geeked. I had to be taken to a hospital one time. I managed to plug the guy who was after the package, but he shot me in the guts. I dropped the package off at the destination and then collapsed. Next thing I know, I'm waking up in a hospital room. That run pissed me right off. The blood got into my bearings and totally wrecked 'em. Cost me a couple of hundred to replace them.

You can keep your desk job. Me, I'm real happy fanging around the place giving people what they got to get. Getting paid for it is a bonus. Hell, with all the fun and excitement this job brings, I'd almost do it for nothing.

The Courier as an NPC

The courier is one of the many wheels that help that Citadel run smoothly. Always on the go, he's the one weaving in and out of traffic, trying to get this parcel to its destination in the shortest time possible. Unlike most of the people in the Citadel, he really seems to enjoy his work. To him, getting the package to the destination quicker than ever before is a game he loves to play. But don't underestimate him. He may look like a street kid in the wrong place, but he more than knows how to look after himself and his cargo. That's why people trust him to get things there safely.

Level: Veteran

Initiative: 3

Skills: As per Veteran NPCs, plus Acrobatics 7, Small Arms (Pistol) 7, Observation 6, Streetwise 7, Act/Bluff 6, Vehicle Use (Wheeled) 7.

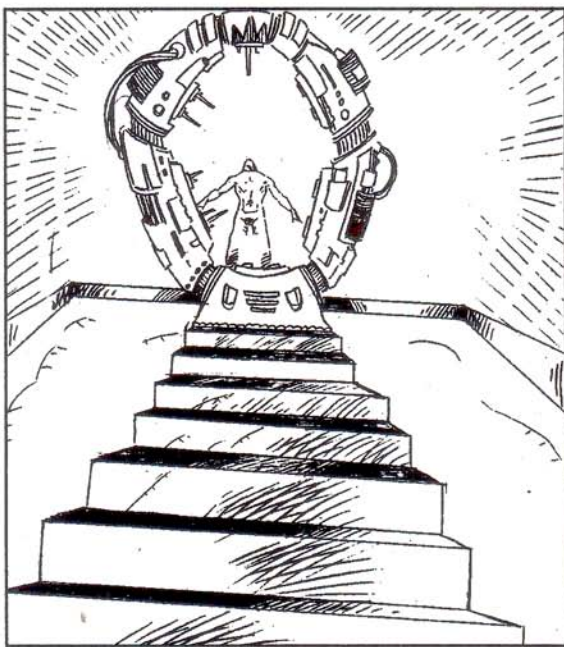
Normal Armament: Kevlar Vest, Pistol or SMG, Inline skates or a vehicle (usually a late model car).

OF GATES AND GODS

INTRODUCTION

A gateway is about to be opened. A gateway that could lead to the destruction of Earth as we know it. And yet those with the ability to prevent this disastrous event are incapable of doing so. The corporations fight their petty fights. The city council and the police force are so riddled with corruption and deception that they are unable to comprehend, let alone combat the threat that is about to be unleashed.

It is up to the Minion Hunters.



Yet again the last bastion of humanity must rise to face a menace that in a strange and perverse way could in fact be the savior of Mother Nature. But all is not that easy. The players must face the spirits and demons that many thought of just as religious myths, which have now become a stark and surreal reality.

PAVNS OF A MATERIAL WORLD

The adventure "Of Gates and Gods" should be played at a furious pace. In other words, everything in this adventure is happening at once, never is there a pause in the action, and never do the players really know what is going on. Throughout the adventure there will be hints and suggestions without definite facts to back them up. Like the real world, the player's actions will have to be based partly on assumption, partly on logic, and only partly on the information that they have access too. The players have not one, but many opponents and their attention must be juggled between them all. At times it will seem as if the source of the evil that threatens Sin City and the earth is close at hand, only for the target to be removed by actions beyond the Minion Hunters' control. Just like the real world, they will never know who is a friend and who is the enemy. Instead, they must be suspicious of every one they meet.

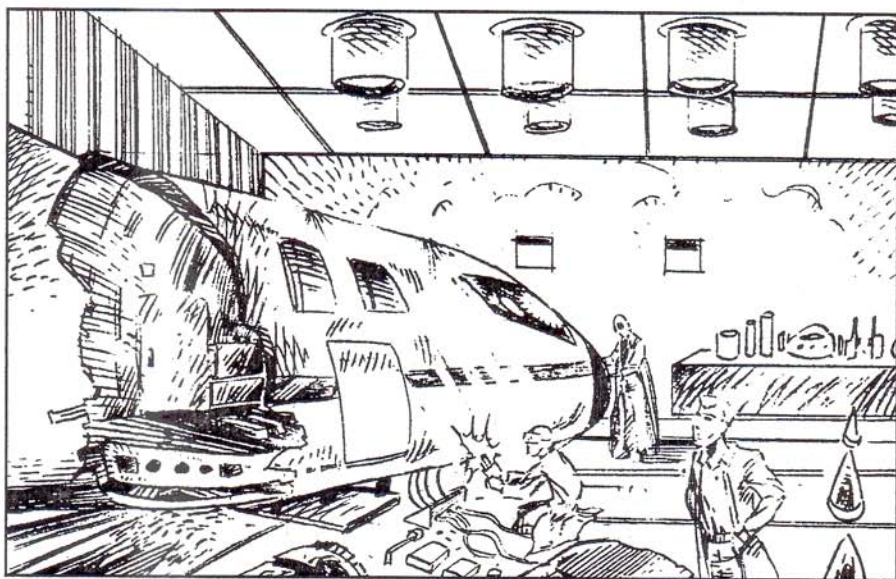
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PLOT SYNOPSIS – THE STORY SO FAR

The underlying story behind this adventure is the acquisition of technology and the use of it. It raises a number of points to how and where this technology should be used and to whose benefit. Unfortunately, in this world of Dark Conspiracy, many of the corporations believe that they are a divine power unto themselves, and think only in terms of money and power rather than the greater good of the entire community. It is when such selfish actions are enacted that trouble arises. Each action will lead into a more perilous situation than before. This story is not meant to be moralistic. It points out what we already know. Greater technology is not a means to an end, but instead another step towards our own destruction.

THE THERMAL HAMMER

The Thermal Hammer is the result of two years work by the combined talents of the best minds at the Miracle Corporation. They held the belief that Earth's finite resources would very soon be completely depleted. The Miracle Corporation deduced that the only hope for mankind belonged in the stars on a planet very much like our own. Instead of thinking of mankind as a whole, human beings were broken down in terms of what profit could be earned from such a venture. They began to build the "Thermal Hammer," a dual-purposed craft capable of traveling the vast distances of space required to find a new "Earth," and able to travel through the Earth's atmosphere at great, controllable speeds.



It was clear to the Miracle Corporation that discovering such a planet would take years. They engaged some of their most talented scientists to build an engine that could assist with traveling the vast distances quickly and efficiently. Their idea was an Instantaneous Transport Device (ITD), which using Einstein's theory could bend the walls of space to allow the ship to move between dimensions and effectively travel great distances in a very short time.

The Thermal Hammer was designed to house this dimension traveling device. The Thermal Hammer was comprised using the Earth's most advanced aircraft designs. Thanks to the breakdown of many national governments, technological secrets were available at a price. It was completed almost six months before the ITD was ready to be tested.

The testing of the ITD was met with great anticipation. The Thermal Hammer was considered to be a fine piece of machinery, but without the ITD, it was about as useful as a hula-hoop on the moon. Luckily, the initial tests of the device were successful, with the ITD creating what seemed to be a shimmering light around it. This light grew when more power was given to it, and decreased at the same rate. Everything appeared ready to go. However, one scientist, Theo Ruffin, introduced an unexpected wrinkle into the project. He discovered that when the ITD was activated, it was actually a gateway to another dimension. Late one night he was trying to collect data on the stress that was placed on the ITD during activation. The scientist stepped out for a moment to pour his fifth cup of coffee, only to discover that his mobile robot had disappeared. He was not completely alarmed, many times his mobile unit moved in and out of the laboratory performing routine tasks. He accessed the robot from the lab and ordered it to return to complete its tasks. To Theo's complete surprise, the robot emerged from the ITD rather than the hallway. He was shocked even further when the data from the time when the robot had disappeared was analyzed.

The results were to send shockwaves around the Miracle Corporation. On the other side of the light was a living, breathing world. Readouts indicated an atmosphere the same, if not more conducive to life than Earth's. It also suggested energy that seemed to radiate from an object like our Sun. High level discussions were held, and the only conclusion that the scientists at Miracle could come up with was the realization that the ITD opened some sort of link between Earth and another world.

Upon such a groundbreaking discovery, the heads at Miracle decided that this was an opportunity too good to pass up. If there was an easier and cheaper way of gaining new resources, then they were all for it. Traveling across dimensions was infinitely cheaper and faster than space travel. Two things had to be decided: was the Thermal Hammer Project going to continue, and while it would be easier to produce a smaller ITD built specifically for dimensional travel, would they?

They answered yes to both questions. The Hammer Project would continue. Miracle had invested a large amount of time and resources towards it. The Thermal

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Hammer would have to show a profit, and quick. Even if it was not necessary for space travel, its use as a high velocity aircraft could not be overlooked. In addition, they would build a smaller portable device that would allow just a man to pass through.

The second ITD was completed twice as quickly as the first. The next step was to test it. There were a number of individuals that were ready to take a leap of faith for the glory of Miracle. One such individual was Jason Wells, a Miracle technician. His test of loyalty occurred late one night in the ITD lab of Miracle. As he stepped through the gateway he was greeted by a veritable paradise. The sun shone bright, and the air was full of the scents of flowers and fresh grass. So amazed by this



New World, Wells stopped to watch and observe the strange and wonderful ways life in this place interacted. By the time he disengaged himself from total rapture, he turned around again only to see the rest of the Miracle technicians had vanished from view. Alone in this strange world, he decided that it would be in his best interest to return to the place of the gateway, and wait until it was reopened at the designated time. Of course, a little bit of exploring was on the menu first. Wells had already decided that if the world was going to be named after him, he had to take a few chances.

He did not journey long before coming upon a small community of buildings. Obviously, this world was occupied by sentient beings. In Well's mind, this was better than expected. He already imagined the headlines. Perhaps he would even get to meet Angela Corsa, his dream woman who was head of the Corsa Corporation. His delusional ideas were disturbed by an ambush. He was not physically attacked, but rather with disturbing mental images. Strange visions began to fill his head. Then he met the beings that had mentally attacked him. He was never the same.

These creatures called themselves Spirits, and their world Paradise. They were beautiful beings, both in looks and in their presence, not made of flesh and blood like man, but rather as clouds of light. These beings impressed upon Wells the images of their physical selves, which would return only when they returned to Earth. Wells felt compelled to listen as they told him their story. These spirits explained to Wells that they had once lived in harmony with the inhabitants of Earth, visiting them regularly through a permanent gateway. However, some three thousand years ago, one of the spirits by the name of Thomas had rebelled against them, going through to Earth and destroying the gateway behind. Since then, the

"Spirits of Paradise" had been stuck in their realm of existence, cut off from their spiritual home, Earth. They were excited about the opportunity to reopen the gateway between the two dimensions, and Wells was their key.

Wells was completely mesmerized by the spirits, and willing to obey any command. He had become increasingly crazed by his experiences. These creatures were offering him a chance to restore the Earth to all its lost splendor. With the Spirits help, Mother Nature would again rule the earth, the grass would grow, and the birds would once again sing. It was an opportunity too good to pass up. Wells was not in the state of mind to disagree with a utopian ideal.



To open a more permanent gate to allow the spirits to come through was a huge problem. There were only two devices capable of opening any sort of gateway between the two dimensions. The spirits persuaded Wells to hijack the ITD of the Thermal Hammer the next time it was transported from the Hammer Testing site outside of Sin City. Although the plan was neither sound, nor well thought out, Wells was hurried by the constant demands of the spirits. Wells returned to the gateway, and reentered the ITD lab. He told them that it was a beautiful world. Of course, he omitted the presence of the spirits and their plan.

Sin City has been host to a new resident for a number of months, Thomas. Thomas was the Spirit who had closed the last connection between Paradise and Earth all those years ago. Thomas had sensed that someone had again opened a passage between the two worlds, and realized that if it did not act soon, the other spirits would return to Earth and continue their plan of the total annihilation of mankind. He is unsure who or what had opened this gate but, with his followers, is in a race against time to find out.

Wells knew that he had to work fast. There was a scheduled test of the second ITD the next afternoon. He hastily put the finishing touches on his plan. Wells was scared that if Miracle found out about the Spirits plan to revert the Earth back to nature, they would close the gateway forever. His plan to hijack the Hammer would have worked, except that one man, Cheng Xun, working for Tashicorp Corporation, had caught wind of Miracle's travels to and from this new dimension. Being a very powerful empath, Xun had felt the dimensions being opened in the city and realized it was a danger to his company. Tashicorp and Xun believed it was the

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“Thermal Hammer” project that was responsible for the gateway, and set to sabotage it by planting a bomb on board. Miracle never suspected that anything was wrong. Wells was scheduled to be onboard, nervously waiting for a chance to steal the ITD when the plane landed. Between Cheng Xun and Wells, the Thermal Hammer never had a chance. On its way to its destination, the Hammer crashes.

PLOT SYNOPSIS

THE HAMMER COMES DOWN

It is at this point that the players get involved. They are hired to find out why the Thermal Hammer has crashed, and who perpetrated the crime. Henry Foreshaw, the head of security at Miracle, who is also in charge of the Thermal Hammer project, contacts the characters. He will explain that the characters have a reputation for getting things done, and that Miracle would like to hire them for this sensitive mission. There have been rumors that Wells acted very strange after exiting the ITD, and exploratory missions have been put on hold until the reasons for the crash can be explained. After searching Wells' apartment for answers, Foreshaw discovered scrawled notes describing his plan to hijack the plane. Henry will tell the characters that he was contacted via telephone and told that the Thermal Hammer was currently in flight, and that it would be destroyed. There was no way to stop the inevitable. With the appearance of Well's notes, along with the phone call, outside sources were to be hired. When the Hammer did come down, it came down like confetti at a ticket-tape parade. It was scattered across five blocks of the government-sponsored projects. Casualties were high due to the overcrowding that is prevalent in the Projects.

The players will also be introduced to Henry's man, Kelly Wilson. Wilson will become the party's guide in their investigation, helping with etiquette and contacts in the Citadel. He also will remain in contact with Foreshaw and keep him informed of the party's progress. In addition, the players will discover that someone is involved in acquiring what special technology was on board the plane.

THE INVESTIGATION

A few things will become clear from the outset of the investigation. A frustrating aspect is that no one is talking, either they know nothing, or someone is putting the pressure on for complete silence. There are a lot of allegations and hints given to the players as they visit the various corporations and executives, but no one can tell them the truth. There will be a lot of suspects, but no evidence, and the players will being to think that they are on a wild goose chase rather than a real event.

During this time two things will happen. The first will be that the characters will

encounter the followers of Thomas, the Spirit of Paradise who has been stuck on Earth for three millennia. Second, they will encounter another group looking for either the engine or the people who stole it. This group will be sponsored by an unknown source, which will remain a thorn in the sides of the players. By the time the players are ready to give up on a hopeless case, a young reporter, Stephen Young, will approach them from the New Centennial Daily. He will explain that he has heard that the party is investigating some sort of sabotage among the Trade Council members. He may have some information that may help, in exchange for protection from the repercussions and an exclusive when the story breaks.

THE MEETING

Eventually the players will meet Cheng Xun in a small Japanese antique shop in one of the malls around the Citadel. Cheng will explain that Tashicorp had little choice but to destroy the "Thermal Hammer" as it posed a threat to not only their company, but also to the security of the entire city. Although he wouldn't mind getting his hands on it, they did not take the engine or the body of the missing technician, however he believes he knows who did. Someone, he'll explain, is pulling the strings behind the scenes at Miracle, and that they will have been responsible of all the mystery that has been occurring. As if to back up his words the party is attacked in the shop by the ornamental dragons that line the wall.

MIRACLE

The players may act angry and frustrated after they have been lead around by their noses, the players will want to confront their employers at Miracle. This will lead to the discovery of the destruction at the lab, where the bodies of lab workers and a follower of Thomas remain. The players will also find that there was a second ITD that Miracle created, but that also is now missing. The only leads that they will be able to find in the lab is that the CEO of Miracle, Robert McFerson has disappeared without a trace. The party will also meet Thomas here who will explain that the gate has been opened somewhere offshore near the City.

AN EXPLANATION AND THE BOAT

The players will be expecting some sort of conclusion here, but they will be disappointed. When the players and Thomas get to the boat, they will find that indeed a gate has opened on board using the second ITD. On the way there, Thomas will explain what he knows of the story so far. He believes that Wells is in league with the spirits of paradise, and between them they are plotting to restore the Earth to its natural state. This action will mean the destruction of not only all the construction

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mankind holds dear, but also the destruction of mankind itself. On the brighter side, Mother Nature would again rule the world. Therefore the players are stuck with a conundrum to save mankind, or to save Earth, which is surely dying with the way humans have abused it.

Thomas must enter the gateway to face his fellow spirits. He will tell the players that they must close the gateway behind him and then track down and stop Wells before he can open a second gateway with the remains of the ITD from the Thermal Hammer.

THE FINALE

When the party arrives, Jason Wells is about to open the gateway, and the characters are almost blinded by the light that is emitted from the gateway. A free-for-all battle ensues, where there can be only one conclusion, the destruction of the gateway, and the death of Wells.

OF GODS AND GATES

GETTING THE PLAYERS INVOLVED

By far the easiest way to get the players involved in the plot is to have had them experience the first Sin City adventure, "The Shadow Falls." Not only does this give the characters a reason to be in Sin City, but it also gives them a reputation in the right areas of the city. Therefore, when Henry Foreshaw approaches them to undertake the investigation for Miracle he will have a legitimate reason for doing so: the character's discrete and effective way they handled the Calendite affair. If the characters have not experienced, "The Shadow Falls," there are a few ways that Henry could contact characters.

1. The characters may be an elite strike force that has an international reputation for these types of matters.
2. One of the characters already works for Miracle and finds the other characters through various contacts.
3. Henry scopes the bars on the Strip looking for mercenaries ready to use their craft.
4. A friend or relative of one of the character's lives in the area of the Projects that was destroyed in the crash. That friend or relative might have been injured or maimed and the character has a vendetta to find the person that perpetrated the crime.
5. One of the characters owes a debt to Henry and Miracle for a service that was rendered to them.
6. The characters just happened to be near the crash scene and are noticed for the way that they act at the crash scene and are summoned to Henry Foreshaw for further questioning, and perhaps a job.

THE HAMMER FALLS

The first thing the characters will hear or see is the crash. To most people in New Centennial City, the characters included, it is just another spring day. The weather varies throughout the day, sunny one moment, cloudy the next. Rain is threatening at times, but never seems to take place. The only thing that can be counted on is the cold. It is too early for summer wear, everyone is wearing long sleeves, jackets, and hats, making the city seem as if it has been invaded by 1940 detective movie rejects.

Regardless of the chills, no one is prepared for what comes next. For an instant all is silent, and then the earth rumbles. Fiery debris from the sky falls like sleet. For those in one particular block in the Projects, it seems as if the rest of the city has had enough with their sloth, and it is at last shelling them out of existence. In the thirty seconds after the first noise, ten large, and hundreds of smaller metal chunks rain down from the sky, starting fires, destroying power lines, and bursting sewage pipes in the ground. The noise is horrifying. In the furthestmost suburbs, people worry that a freight train is about to come through their walls. In the Citadel it is as if the Trade Tower itself is collapsing. In other words, to all in the city it seems as if the sky is really falling.

As suddenly as it started, the rubbish from the air stops, with only smaller, lighter pieces continuing to fall. For a split second no one moves, and then there is mass panic. People scatter in every direction, some heading home, others to the schools for their children, the rest are going to anywhere they think it's safe. But no more noise is heard except the distant sounds of emergency vehicles. There is no more fire from the skies, but rather smoke rising from the Projects, getting thicker and darker with every second.

The Hammer has come down in a spectacular fireball, spreading itself across a block and a half of the Projects. Other debris falls even further out, but thankfully, for the rest of the city, the damage is done to only that small area.

Within minutes, news crews will be at the scene with the emergency services. Confusion reigns, not a soul knows who is in charge or where to begin. Minutes pass by before anyone can comprehend the event that has just occurred.



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Suddenly, a black van arrives displaying the words, "Miracle Department of Security and Internal Affairs." A dozen men and women in dark suits emerge from the van and begin to force back the growing crowd of onlookers. There is one man in particular that stands out from the rest, emitting a presence that tells everyone he's in control. He looks at the mess that was a block of the Projects for but a second, then turns and yells at one of the emergency workers, who stands stunned nearby. Momentarily, that woman just stares back at the newcomer, before realizing that she should be doing something more important than staring. As she moves to help it's as if a hand has been lifted amongst the emergency workers, and as one they all begin to act.

The Miracle man frowns at the mess around him and reaches deep into his jacket retrieving a cell phone. He then turns away, dialing as he raises the phone to his ear.

THE PHONE CALL

When Henry Foreshaw, the Director of Security and Internal Affairs at Miracle contacts the party, it is out of the blue. Even though something amazing and scary has just occurred in the Projects, the last thing the characters will expect is to be part of it. In fact, what could a group of Minion hunters do with ten tons of metal that others couldn't do better?

Henry will not take no for an answer. He will mention that there are substantial rewards and bonuses for their presence on the crash site. If the characters are still hesitant, he will reveal that he knows more about the character's past than they believe, and that he would be quite willing to use it to his advantage. When the characters agree, Henry will reveal to the characters that 10 minutes before the crash his company received a phone call from an anonymous source, explain-



HENRY FORESHAW

Henry is the head of Security at Miracle Corporation, and also of the Thermal Hammer Project. As the project is top secret and highly controversial, it also highly stressful. This pressure combined with the onset of late middle age is starting to take a toll on Henry's body and mind. Although he's ashamed to say it, his belly is a little rounder and his head a little baldier than he'd like. He is on the verge of a midlife crisis, and as such can be very erratic. Although he still gets the job done, sometimes, just for a second, he seems lost, stuck in his own little world. Starting from the bottom and working his way up through his profession, Henry has always had a knack for being in the right place at the right time, and has saved his various employers a great deal of money and time.

Motivation: Jack of Hearts: Henry is an experienced man at what he does, and would definitely be called wise in the ways of security and law enforcement. He always has a sound piece of advice to give anyone that will listen.6 of Clubs: Being a security officer for so long, Henry is not above using violence to get the information he wants out of people. Although now that he has a respectable position, he is not as physically aggressive as he once was. However, if the situation warrants it, beware.

center, men in dark suits carrying small arms will stop them. The players will be allowed to pass just by mentioning Henry's name. It's easy to see why Miracle is so concerned about finding the culprits behind the sabotage. For an entire block the wreckage can be seen, strewn in jumbled heaps here and there. Although it seems to just have destroyed only government sponsored housing, it is obvious that it will have repercussions throughout the entire city. It is almost impossible to think that these mounds of steel and plastic were once part of a craft. In fact, the area that has been struck looks like a war zone. Small fires are raging throughout the block with firefighters earnestly attempting to control them. Small groups of paramedics help the injured and stunned. The last group of people that catch the player's attention are armed individuals dressed in suits moving around the larger pieces of debris, obviously searching for something.

THE DISCLAIMER

As soon as the players leave their vehicle, they will be flanked by as many security guards as there are characters. These men are both armed and tense, so it may not be a good idea for the party to provoke them. Instead, they will lead them to an older, serious looking man standing by a black van, talking rapidly into a cell phone.

Seeing the characters approach he will quickly put down the phone and usher their escorts away to a safe distance. He will introduce himself as Henry Foreshaw.

ing that the company's aircraft was about to crash. Miracle neither knows whom or why this warning was given, but that is enough to believe the crash was an act of sabotage.

The players will know nothing or very little about the Miracle Corporation (unless one of the characters is an employee), except that it is a robotics firm that works closely with a number of government agencies. They have been known to run afoul of both eco-terrorists and foreign powers in the past, so working for them might not be the safest thing the characters could do, however, it seems they have little choice.

THE CRASH SITE

As they get closer to the crash site they see that small bits of debris still falls and will continue for hours to come. As they get near the epi-

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DARK CONSPIRACY
SECOND EDITION



KELLY WILSON

Kelly is an up-and-coming executive with Miracle, and has shown the knack in the past to get things done, no matter what the obstacle. He is extremely loyal to his corporation knowing full well that they support his lavish lifestyle. He will obey any command that the corporation gives him, even murder if necessary. To the characters he is a friendly, talkative young man, who will do his best to make sure that they don't make a fools of themselves when interacting with the executives and residents of the Citadel.

Motivations: 10 of Spades: Kelly is very ambitious and will stop at almost nothing to get ahead in Miracle. 9 of Diamonds: Kelly is also greedy, he desires the wealth and power that comes with his job.

Possibility of an inside job?

Not a chance, Henry is in charge of security. All the workers were screened intensely before the project began. Suspect employees were not accepted.

Time?

Time is of the essence. Henry would like this solved now... immediately if possible, but he suspects that whoever organized this clever plot has covered their tracks very well so it may not be simple at all. He will be patient with the characters, but not for long.

MEETING WITH KELLY

At some point during the party's conversation with Foreshaw on the crash site, he will usher a young executive over to join him. Henry will introduce this well-dressed man as Kelly Wilson, a promising executive with Miracle. Kelly's job will be to guide the characters through the checkpoints and social hoops that one needs in order to be successful in the Citadel. Henry speaks very highly of him, and you almost see Wilson's smile grow larger with each compliment paid to him by Henry. He will say that he is happy to be of assistance to the group and that he has a few friends that may be able to help solve this mystery.

When the characters observe Wilson, the first thing they will notice about him is his face, for some reason it reminds you of a weasel. Other than that he looks like he could pass for any other executive in the Citadel. Well dressed and groomed, he appears as if he could charm the pants off an Eskimo in the middle of winter.

Besides being of assistance to the party, Wilson is Miracle's leash on the party during the investigation. Henry will at some point, before the investigation starts in earnest, take Wilson aside and explain quite explicitly that he is to

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report back on any progress that the party makes. Nothing else that Kelly does is more important than keeping Henry up to speed with new developments. Wilson is also on thin ground and he knows it. Muck up this assignment and he'll never get anywhere in Miracle. Because of this, Kelly will never get himself into a dangerous position. During times of violence, he will always hide behind the characters. His personal goal is to make sure that he is not responsible for mistakes that the player's may make.

Actually, Wilson is not just a fifth wheel to the party. He does know the Citadel like the back of his hand. He has developed an extensive network of friends and acquaintances in high places, and has contacts with people he really shouldn't. Kelly also knows that this is an important investigation, which has implications throughout the entire Trade Council. What is best for both Wilson, and more importantly Miracle, is that this is solved as quickly and quietly as possible. This is a lot for Wilson to handle, and it's easy to see why so many corporate executives end up stressed out or in the loony bin.

THE OFFICIAL INVESTIGATORS

At some point the characters will meet Dr. Diana Powell. Powell is in charge of the ITD (Instantaneous Travel Device) Lab at Miracle. She will also be responsible for analyzing all the debris and data from the crash site. The characters will get her work number, and she will also program their number into her phone, just in case. She encourages them to keep in contact, as you never know what might come up.

THE MISSING ITD

Just before the characters are about to leave with Kelly, a security guard will come up to



DR DIANA POWELL

(Ph.D. Physics,
B.Sc. Aeronautics)

Powell is a genius, she has always been the smartest and brightest. Not surprisingly, she was hired straight out of University by Miracle Corporation to work on some highly secret military projects. Recently, she has been placed in charge of the ITD engine, and has seen the entire work through from inception to the finished product. She is a driven woman, who is held back by nothing personal or physical. Once she has a purpose, it is extremely difficult to get her attention, even for a second. This has led many people; including her colleagues, to believe that she is arrogant and somewhat stuck-up. In reality, it is just her drive to complete what she has started that makes it seem this way. Although she is quite attractive, she hides this side of her with plain clothes, hair, and makeup. As she

often says, "Good looks just get in the way of good work."

Motivations: Jack of Spades: Even though she is pompous, and it seems as though she believes that she is clearly superior to everyone else, this is just an impression. Diana is a highly ambitious woman who simply believes everyone else should be as well. 3 of Diamonds: Diana is somewhat greedy, both with her time and her desire for recognition.

Foreshaw and whisper in his ear. Immediately afterward Henry will speak to the characters in a tense tone. Henry will proceed to tell the guard to comb the crash site again to find the missing artifact. Henry will stop the characters and say that there has obviously been a breach of security on the grounds and that someone must have already stolen the ITD. He will tell the characters that this is very serious indeed, and wants to find this person as soon as possible. They are to return the ITD to him, and only him, as it is a dangerous piece of equipment. He won't explain what exactly the ITD is, but reiterates that it is imperative that it is found.

FURTHER INVESTIGATION

The characters are free to explore the crash site at any time during the adventure. There is not much to see but ruined buildings, wreckage and the security guards that constantly patrol the perimeter to ensure unwanted personnel do not come onto the site. The characters might also run into Dr. Powell or some of her investigation team collecting data, and can use these encounters to share some more information on the crash.

One thing an empathic character (with an Empathy rating above Zero) will pick up is the very strong empathic vibe from near the engine section of the wreckage. This is where the gateway to Paradise was opened for but a second at the moment of impact, and how Joseph was able to come through, not that the characters know this yet.

Talking to the security guards on the perimeter will reveal that a Miracle worker was on the site earlier on, part of what they thought was an onsite medical team. This man had the right identification and was sifting through the wreckage near the Hammer's fuselage. The guards are unsure what he discovered, but observed the man helping at least one dazed and confused victim near the remains of the plane. They helped the victim into a Miracle Van. What made the guards curious, was that it left in a different direction than the rest of the vans.

This was Wells coming to retrieve the ITD wreckage. He also discovered that the crash activated the ITD for a few seconds. During this time, one of the Spirits came through the ITD created gateway. The spirit was Joseph, a highly empathic

being, who was disoriented by the entry into Earth's dimension. If asked, the guards will be unable identify the two men, but will say that they didn't leave long ago.

OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

It is up to the characters on how to proceed with the investigation. Seeing that they are new to the Citadel and lack the contacts required to find a solution to their questions, it may be a good idea for Kelly to provide them with hints about where to look next.

THE INVESTIGATION

During the Investigation, there will be a lot of questions arising on why and how the Thermal Hammer came down. High up in the boardroom of the corporations and the Trade Council, fingering the blame on the different corporations will be the norm. No one is willing to trust anybody else, as they all know someone isn't telling the truth. Although the characters won't see this political game of "Whose telling the truth" personally, they will see the effect on what is effectively the ground floor of Big Business, the executives. Everyone will be hush-hush about what has occurred, and will not be the man or woman that gets the blame for any leaks that may occur.

The only corporation that is willing to talk straight to the players is Miracle, their employers, and even some of their workers are unwilling to speak freely. As a result of all this, the characters may quickly find themselves up against a wall, even with Kelly Wilson's help. This might culminate in a bit of internal party friction, but this is to be expected with this type of investigation.

As the players continue to delve into the questions that have been asked, they will come up with some inconclusive answers that may only serve to further confuse them. Lots of groups seem to have the proper motives. In the scramble that occurs as the corporations all try and cover their tracks, more red herrings and half-clues abound to frustrate the characters even more.

POLITICAL RAMIFICATIONS

Miracle has offered to rebuild the area destroyed by the crash of the Thermal Hammer. They plan to give free rent to those that will vote for them in the following election. Some optimistic executives view the crash as a blessing in disguise. With the destruction of such a concentrated area, Miracle could expand its political base in the upcoming elections. The other corporations were outraged by Miracle's proposed actions, and filed formal complaints to the Trade Council. Miracle's response was that the other corporations should spend the money to rebuild the projects as they see fit. This ended the petitions.

MIRACLE

While the characters are out trying to find some solid evidence to back up any hunches that they may have, Miracle is not remaining on it's haunches. They are just as pressured to find out what has occurred, if not more so, than the characters. It comes down to the simple reality that they alone were in charge of security, and regardless of whether they find those responsible, heads will roll within the corporation's hierarchy.

Slowly but surely the researchers and investigators based at Miracle's ITD lab will piece together some rather disturbing facts. How you get these facts to the characters is left for you to decide. Perhaps the characters could call Henry regularly, or Kelly could say that he has heard some new information, and there is always the possibility that some of the characters join the crash analysis crew, or just stumble across them during a line of inquiry. Regardless, the facts I present below will start to give the players some idea of what is going on, however confused and vague that idea might be.

THE OFFICIAL INVESTIGATION

As security and corporate investigators collect and search through the wreckage of the Thermal Hammer they begin to piece together the events that occurred just prior to the crash. They start to come up with some startling facts. These are presented in chronological order, and should all be introduced by the time the characters get to speak to Cheng Xun from Tashicorp (see insert scene).

THE AIRCRAFT WAS DESTROYED FROM AN INTERNAL EXPLOSION

The first report that the characters should hear early on in the investigation is that some sort of internal explosion was responsible for knocking the Thermal Hammer out of the skies. This explosion took place shortly after the plane entered Sin City airspace. This discovery is contrary to the original hypothesis that an external force was responsible for the crash. Obviously, someone is working from the inside. So far, they have no clues on who this person, (people) may be.

LATER...

The facts now point to someone who had the knowledge of where to precisely place the bomb. The location of the bomb insured that none of the Thermal Hammer's back-up systems could activate to divert the crash. The onboard flight recorder is missing, although whether it is still amongst the debris, or has been intentionally stolen is still in question.

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BODIES OF THE CREW IDENTIFIED

Within a few hours, all the bodies of the crew onboard the aircraft have been recovered. They have all been burnt and disfigured beyond physical recognition. Thanks to both the dental records and "Dog" tags, all but one body was identified. The one body that has not been positively identified is thought to belong to a technician by the name of Jason Wells. Sadly, his remains lack any way of making sure that this corpse is in fact his.

THE VAN

It will take only a short time for Miracle to track down and find the missing van that was used to get the ITD. It has been abandoned in the Suburbs and is empty. If the characters investigate, they will find nothing of interest except for the same empathic vibe they felt at the crash site (Empathy rating 1+).

THE MESSAGE

There was an anonymous tip left at the Miracle Inward Calls Center. This message, like all others received, is taped for both security and accuracy reasons. If the characters ask to hear the tape at some point Henry will arrange a time to have it played for them.

The voice is computer generated, and the place of origin is yet to be defined, it never is. The message is short and to the point. It explains that someone knows of Miracle's trickery, and that the Thermal Hammer will soon crash. The flight was not a matter of public knowledge. Therefore, Henry took the threat very seriously. He will deny that Miracle has been up to anything suspicious, and to suggest so is outrageous. This call will only further convince Henry that the explosion is the result of some form of sabotage by one of the rival corporations in the city.

THE SUSPECTS

There are a number of corporations that could be responsible for the crash and the subsequent theft of the ITD. It is up to the characters to investigate these powerhouses slowly but surely, finding that even with official backing and the help of Kelly, they will only receive the bare minimum of assistance. They will not get very far directly investigating the corporations in the Citadel. Most, if not all, clamping up security to ensure that no blame for the plane's crash is placed on them. Nor will the characters be able to talk to or see any of the Trade Council Members. By the time the party is ready to proceed with its investigation, the Trade Council will be in the midst of an emergency session.

The buzz around the Citadel and the city will all be about the plane that came crashing down from the skies. No media has any information that is solid enough to confirm or deny any rumours. Speculation ranges from the plane carrying livestock being shipped in for a petting zoo, to a shipment of sophisticated weaponry.

THE RED HERRINGS AND LEGITIMATE LEADS

There are lots of leads that the characters will gain that are nothing more than dead ends and confusing red herrings. It is up to the Referee to present this in some sort of way to induce a feeling that the investigation is going nowhere. There is no defined order to the leads, and how the characters first get the leads is again left up to the Referee.

SECURITY IN THE CITADEL

Even with the guidance of Kelly, the characters will still find travelling around the Citadel a difficult task. The security in the Citadel is extra observant since the Hammer's crash. At most, the characters will be detained and harassed at inconvenient times. For the most part, access can be gained by ringing Miracle for clearance, or having Wilson show his credentials. Another obstacle that the players will face is that the characters will get hassled and arrested for carrying weapons in the city. Somehow, the characters are going to have to arm themselves while not acting as if they own the City.

THE DETENTION

Kelly's first idea might well be to get hold of a Tashicorp officer. The most noteworthy of the officers is an old man by the name of Cheng Xun. Xun is the Citadel's resident spy, seeming to know everything that goes on in and around the Citadel. Kelly may suggest asking to see Xun, and seeing if he could shed any light on the ITD and the crash. If the characters approach the executives at Tashicorp, their secretary Scott Chow, deputy chief of Corporate Affairs, will grant them an interview. This appointment will be arranged for a time not too far in the future, probably after the characters have had time to investigate other avenues.

When the allotted time for the interview comes, the players will find that they are not welcome investigating Tashicorp affairs. The Tashicorp Corporation will not blatantly stop the characters, but rather make things quite difficult for them. The players will be given a little warning that to suspect Tashicorp may be a dangerous occupation.

On the way to the interview, whether they travel on foot or by vehicle they will be stopped. One half-dozen Japanese-American Tashicorp security guards will



approach and try to prevent them from going any closer towards the Tower. These guards are obviously well armed, and will use any excuse to detain the characters. The guards may use the subtle, "bomb threats in the building," and "Cheng not being well," to the more overt, "Tashicorp doesn't like snoopers." The Guards will not have an obvious leader and will use a "Good Cop, Bad Cop" routine on the party, constantly changing each guards role. Kelly must be

used to stop a brawl or gun battle, reminding the characters that it will be difficult to complete the investigation from jail.

When the characters are at a breaking point, all the attempts to stop the party will cease. However the party will be late for their appointment, and Kelly will explain that an executive will never see clientele that are late for an appointment. To make matters worse, that particular line of inquiry will no longer be open to them. Kelly is right. Under no circumstances will the characters at this time ever get to see Cheng for an interview. Unlike the rest of the red herrings, this one is more of an innocent mistake. The powers that be at Tashicorp are not prepared to allow one of their workers to talk about an event they officially know little about.

THE BATTLEGROUND

At various times, the characters will receive reports that there have been sites found where fighting has taken place, but no bodies have been found. Only the occasional bullet casing, drops of blood and broken rock or stone, give any indication of discord. These are results of the conflicts between the Followers of Thomas and some of the Spirits' animated creatures. One of the Spirits has the ability to animate statues into soldiers for their cause. These battles normally take place out of sight, i.e. in the sewers or at night. Security or police, who remember little, have always interrupted these conflicts. Their only recollection is that there were people and creatures fighting, which would scatter when approached. As of yet, these battles have been indecisive with neither side gaining the upper hand. Although out-classed by the Spirits, the Followers always outnumber their opposition.

The characters are unaware that some of these battles have resulted in the capture of at least one Follower by Miracle's security, and they now have him detained in their tower for "questioning."

THE OVERDOSE

Kelly's contact at Corsa is a recent ex-employee. With only one week of unemployment under his belt, he is willing to make a deal with the party in exchange for some cool, hard cash to support his habit. James



Halbrow is a junky. He has been so for the last year now, discovering an easier way to relieve the stresses of work. Of course that was before he stole from his employers to pay for his increasingly expensive habit.

Embezzling from a multinational corporation is never the smartest thing to do, and he was lucky to be relieved of his duties as section auditor with just a broken leg from an "unlucky" fall when leaving that afternoon. A week without work and James is a wreck, spending what remains of his money on more drugs. He is willing to reveal anything for another dose.

Kelly will explain working for a media company has its advantages, many times he has used Halbrow's habits to gain advantages in the corporate discussions over city resources. If anyone else knows anything about what has happened, Halbrow would.

Unfortunately, someone has visited James before the party. When the players arrive at Halbrow's new residence, a cheap hotel in the Projects, they find the door slightly ajar but no one answering. Once inside, they will find the reason for the silence. James Halbrow is lying naked in a warm bath, dead. By the time the police and ambulance services get there, the bath water has grown cold.

Any character with medical skills can diagnose the cause of death, a massive drug overdose. Drugs can also be found hidden among his personal possessions. Strangely, there were more drugs than a person in the position of Halbrow could afford.

The death is a result of Dark Watch. The Dark Watch is an organization hired to protect the interests of their client. Kelly had reported Halbrow and the information he might have to his superiors. The Dark Watch took care of their man before the characters could pry information from them. They killed him with an injection of Heroin 10 times the amount one would normally take. Not only is Halbrow dead, but his body has been blasted to pieces internally from the massive overdose.

THE ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT

The sole purpose of the assassination is to remind the characters of the danger that Sin City represents. When they are travelling from one location to another, a volley of shots will ring out. These will miss the characters, (but roll some dice anyway to get them nervous), and will extensively damage the area around them. Once the characters compose themselves they will be able to notice (Average Observation), that opposite them in a building across the way, a gun barrel can be seen. By the time the characters get there, the room is empty bar the gun and a pair of gloves with a note inside. The note stated simply –

Stop the Investigation before it's too late!

The characters are the only witnesses to the attempt. None of the other street-walkers saw anything, and none of them will remain after the shooting, fearing of course for their own lives. To the Dark Watch the attempt was a success even if no one was shot, however the characters should now have the idea that someone doesn't want them involved.

THE TREFT

During the investigation the characters will become intrigued with the appearance of some of the animated creatures that seem to be obstructing them. One idea they might have is to investigate this angle.

The characters should be able to find out about the theft of statues and ornamental hounds and dogs from one of the Citadel's most reputable traders in outdoor art. This is something that he finds most distressing because the statues cost anywhere for \$1000 upwards. To make matters worse, there are no clues into who stole them. It's as if they walked out by themselves.

THE GARGOYLES

Joseph, the Spirit that was able to enter through the gateway, is animating gargoyles around the city to act as eyes and ears to try and track down Thomas. Besides the gargoyles, there is another group of creatures that pose as statues in the city, the Watchers (see The Shadow Falls). These creatures will have no love lost for their brethren and at some point the characters may come across a battle between these two different types of gargoyles. The Watchers will escape at the first sign of the characters, but the animated gargoyles will attack the group sensing that the characters oppose the beliefs of Joseph's gargoyles. It appears that all statues have a mysterious quality to them.

THE BREAK-IN

Jim Bright is a technical designer at Miracle and an old friend of Kelly Wilson. They attended the same university and roomed together for a year. Both can count on each other for favors, but are sometimes loathed to use the other friendship to their own advantage. In this case, Bright will contact Wilson explaining that one of Miracle's Warehouses down at the docks has been broken into and although nothing seems missing, it is highly suspicious. He will know that Kelly and the characters are involved with some sort of investigation surrounding the Hammer's crash. Jim dreams that if this pans out, a nice promotion could be in store for him. He invites the party down to the docks to see the video camera tapes for themselves. This invitation may well seem a little far-fetched to be of any assistance to party, but lacking any other solid leads could be attractive.

Bright will meet the characters at the Warehouse, an older building on the docks. The building is a mess with guards everywhere. It appears as if an army of soldiers has attacked the warehouse. Bullet holes and wreckage seem to be found in every location.

The outside of the dock is unimpressive, but inside is another story. Equipped with the latest of security and insulation technology, it seems more like a space station than a lab. The characters will be led to the main storage area, a massive area full with crates and containers ready for shipment locally and abroad. Each of these are sealed and carefully packed together in rows.

When the characters view the videotape, they get to see an amazing sequence of events. Starting at 9:30 the night before, two men dressed in Miracle uniforms enter the Warehouse and approach one of the security guards. One of the Miracle men, a large brutish man, and the guard start a very heated conversation. The man not involved in the conversation starts to point at the boxes around them. Suddenly creatures resembling hounds crash through the walls attacking the guards. The men dressed in Miracle uniforms start to appear on other cameras as they move around the Warehouse slowly and deliberately destroying all the cameras they find. One of the figures inspects the boxes and crates that are stacked around the warehouse. The after effects of





the attack are obvious, mess is everywhere, and blood and stone can be seen on the floors and walls.

The characters will not be allowed to talk to the security guards as they are either in the hospital or quite insane after their encounters with the animated objects. The characters will be present when his workers approach the warehouse manager. These men have at last tracked down what was taken.

Container CJ17 was small and quite portable by one person. Not that the size matters, but what was in it. CJ17 held the second and third generation electronics used on the ITD, and was about to be shipped to

the airforce base where the Thermal Hammer was to be tested. No one thought that these electronics would be of any use to anyone, but now with the ITD missing, perhaps someone is trying to rebuild it. No one at the warehouse can help explain what the ITD is, but Bright will reveal that it is Miracle's most important project.

The characters should deduce that the person who stole the components might be the one attempting to rebuild it. Once examined, the tapes do indeed reveal who the person was that entered the warehouse the night before, no other than Jason Wells, the missing Miracle technician from the Hammer. The other man is not as easily identified. If the characters have met Joseph they will recognize him, otherwise he will just look like a beautiful man.

THE MEETING

As the character's investigation continues, they are sure to come up against walls of silence. Regardless of Kelly's contacts, or the depth of investigation the characters have so far involved themselves in, the answers always seem to be just out of reach. This is about to change, and at last the party will have some information from which they can base the rest of the investigation.

At this point of the adventure the characters should be getting at least a few ideas on what is going on. Basically, they should know that Wells is somehow involved and that someone is trying to stop them from continuing the investigation.



STEPHEN YOUNG

Steve is a respected reporter for the New Centennial Daily, and his department at the newspaper specializes in reporting the latest from the corporations and the Trade Council. He is a well-liked young man, and has contacts in many of the higher echelons of the major corporations. If he does have a weakness, it is his drive to tell the public the truth, in fact it is integrity that ends up killing him. Stephen is of Asian decent and still has ties with his homeland, China. His big smile and his openness to talk to anyone about anything are definitely the first things people notice about him.

Motivations: King of Hearts: Stephen is perhaps the most honorable and honest man you will ever meet, a rare quality in Sin City. 6 of Spades: He is moderately ambitious, aiming to tell the truth to the world, while not attracting too much attention to himself.

YOUNG

Stephen Young is a reporter for the New Centennial Daily, and has for a time now suspected that all is not right within Miracle. Since voicing these opinions, he has become a target of the Dark Watch. The Dark Watch will attempt to silence Young the same way they are trying to stop the characters, with any means available. Young is starting to feel the pressure, and has heard, through his connections, that the party is involved in the investigation into the Thermal Hammer's crash. He feels as though the characters should know at least a little about what is going on inside Miracle, and will contact one of the characters on the street.

Young will introduce himself very carefully. He will claim that he "accidentally" ran into the characters at some point, mentioning that he is a reporter and might have some information for them. At first the characters will probably be a little suspicious of a man offering assistance on the street, but Young will be persistent, trying to get them to listen. Eventually, the characters will give Young a chance to explain. What choice do they have?

WHAT YOUNG KNOWS

Over the last year he has been part of the New Centennial Daily corporate reporting team. During that time he has been suspicious that the corporations have been working together on some ultra secret project, but he was unsure of what it was. Early last week, he began hearing rumors of friction between the participants of this combined project. There have been accusations of sabotage and corporate undermining, but as yet nothing has been proven.

Young took it on to himself to investigate the

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rumors himself. Through his contacts and friends in the various corporations, he made his way into the Miracle offices in the Citadel. While he was there, he overheard a conversation between Robert McFerson (Miracle's CEO), and someone else, identified only as Darnell. Darnell's voice seemed familiar, but Young can't remember where he has heard it before. As the conversation continued there was talk about dimensions and the actions of Miracle. Darnell suggested that Miracle continue its investigations in this other dimension, when McFerson seemed unsure, Darnell made it clear that Miracle was to keep its current policy in regards to the gateway.

At this point Young was discovered by a patrolling security guard. Fortunately, he was able to make up a quick excuse. Since that time, Young has felt like he is being followed. His paranoia has grown to the point that he sent his family away for a fortnight's vacation to the south. Young will then explain that this is why he has waited so long before approaching the characters. From what he has heard, they are already deep in the investigation, and are probably the only people who could offer him protection against the people who are after him.

This all may seem a little farfetched, and the characters may wonder what it has to do with the rest of the investigation. In reality, this is their first insight into the fact that something sinister lies behind the motives and business practices of Miracle.

THE RAID

The proof that there is some truth to Young's story comes soon after the characters finish their conversation with the young reporter. Dark Watch, Darnell's personal hit squad, has had enough of Young's interference. Contacting the characters is the last straw. Prior to this, Darnell has considered Young and the characters as two separate opponents that needed to be watched. Now that they appear to have joined forces, they are becoming too powerful for his liking. The Dark Watch is under orders from their boss to kill Young and as many of the characters as they can if they should ever come together. He also wants Dark Watch to kidnap Kelly Wilson, for without their guide to the Citadel, he knows the characters will be lost.

The Dark Watch will pick an appropriate moment to attack, and will achieve at least some of their goals. The Watch is comprised of intelligent soldiers. They fully understand that the characters pose the most threat. Therefore, they will try and divide their targets by occupying the characters attention



while they kill Young and acquire Wilson.

By the end of the battle, they will have succeeded in at least two thirds of their objectives. Young will be dead, and Kelly Wilson will have been kidnapped. Kelly was picked up hiding behind a dumpster in an alleyway. As soon as these tasks have been accomplished, the surviving Dark Watch will evacuate the area. If one or more of the Dark Watch are killed, they will have no identification on them. The only form of I.D. will be a small tattoo of a black triangle located at the base of the neck. On the body of Young, the characters will find another note, obviously addressed to them.

This is what happens to those that interfere with the plans of others. You have had you final warning. Next time you will not be so lucky.

THE LOCATION

If the Referee desires, the characters could track down the location of the Dark Watch, an old house in the Suburbs.

There is nothing unusual about the house. It is located on a quiet street surrounded by other equally run-down houses. The Dark Watch use this as a secondary safe house, free from the eyes of the Citadel. It is here that they have taken Kelly Wilson, and interrogated him so that Darnell can learn what the characters have discovered about his operation.

The unfortunate truth, is that Kelly and the characters know very little, certainly nothing to be too concerned with. Satisfied, the members of Dark Watch take sadistic pleasure beating Kelly to the point of death. When the characters eventually get to him, he is tied to a chair in an empty bedroom. He is but a shell of a man, beaten to a bloody pulp and left for dead by his captors. Kelly Wilson is barely alive and will be of no assistance to the characters for the rest of the adventure.

The Dark Watch have four members of the unit present at the house at all times. These mercenaries will not expect the characters because the house is used more for R&R than any operation. It will take them a little time to organize themselves to repel any attackers, and will only be able to call in support if they characters take their time in clearing the house. If support is called, then it takes ten minutes for a van with four more operatives to arrive. Regardless of the Dark Watch's response, the local police will arrive in force within a half-hour of any loud firefight.

Inside the house there is not much to find other than Kelly Wilson. The house contains standard amenities. There is no information or documents linking the Watch to any organization in the city, nor any weaponry or equipment the characters would find interesting. After the loss of the house, the Dark Watch will be extra careful, finding new radio equipment and frequencies, and treating the characters with a new respect.

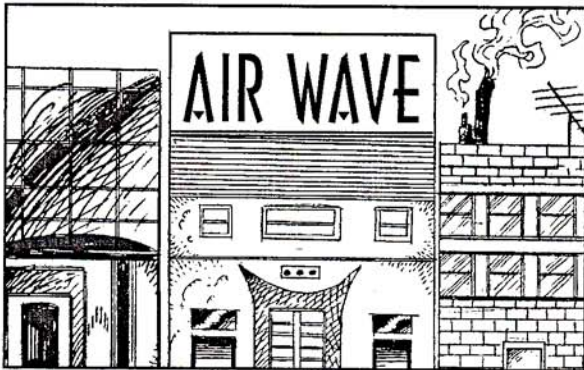
TRACKING DOWN WELLS

It seems obvious that Wells is still in the city, and has something to do with the crash and the missing ITD. All the players have to do is track him down.

Miracle has a list of family members that could be contacted, but all of these live outside the city. If phoned, Well's parents will act concerned, knowing only that the aircraft he was supposed to be on crashed, and as of yet his body has not been positively identified. They still hold out a little hope that he wasn't on board. Now it seems as if he is still alive, and has the ITD in his possession. Well's parents will be able to give the characters the name and address of the only friend they know Jason has, one Jeffery Fowler, the proprietor of a small electronics company called "Air Waves."

Finding Fowler isn't that easy, in fact his store in the Dreamscape (the local mall of the Citadel), is locked up with a small sign stating simply that the store will be closed until further notice. The neighboring storeowners will have no further information saying that they haven't seen or heard anything of Fowler since before the Hammer crashed.

If the characters decide to break into "Air Waves", they will have only a few minutes before security comes to investigate. But they will find that the store is a mess, especially in the repair room. Equipment and parts have been ripped down off the walls and shelves as if someone or something was looking for an item in a hurry. The only other bit of interesting information is a small disposable coaster pinned to the wall near one of the worktables. The bar it comes from is printed in bold letters, "Chance's Bar and Grill - 101 Division Street, on the Strip." Underneath in scribbled handwriting is a small note...



Meet again 10pm

...but there is no date for the meeting.



JEFFERY FOWLER

Fowler is the owner of "Air Waves," a small electronic design studio in the Dreamscape in the heart of the Citadel. He is also a good friend of Jason Wells and is helping Wells develop and recreate the ITD from the remains of the Thermal Hammer and from the bits he has acquired from Miracle's research Lab. Fowler doesn't really believe that Wells can travel through dimensions, but is too scared to stand up to the fanatical man. Jeffery is the most likely way that the players will be able to track down Wells, and stop him before he destroys, not only Sin City, but perhaps the world!

Motivations: Jack of Diamonds: Fowler is a coward. He is afraid that the corporations will take his company away, that he could be hurt in a fight, or especially that Wells might actu-

CHANCES BAR AND GRILL

Jeffery Fowler has arranged to meet his friend, Jason Wells at Chance's Bar and Grill every night to give him an update on the situation of the media in the case of the Hammer's crash. Fowler would rather he never had to see his friend again. Fowler is terrified that Wells could and would hurt him if he refused to help him with something he calls "the gate." The situation has become so bad that Fowler wants nothing more than to flee. He has even taken the drastic step of closing his store to lessen the chances of Wells visiting unannounced, instead spending his days and nights in this seedy bar on the Strip.

When and if the characters turn up at the bar, the number of patrons depends on the time of day: a few in the morning, more in the afternoon and packed in the evening. Whatever the time, the music is always loud, and the lights shining bright. Identifying Fowler is easy, even if the players haven't tracked down a photograph of him. He is the inebriated man sitting alone in a dark booth on the far side of the Bar. If asked, the Bartender will say that he's been in here for days now, but since he's still got money, and there haven't been any complaints, he doesn't care.

Fowler stinks of booze and sweat and is only semi-coherent. For a few bucks or a beer, he will tell the characters all he knows, which is very little. He will be able to add that Jason seems to have a maniac grin about him and keeps on mentioning a time of redemption. He reminds Fowler of those Calendite Fanatics from a couple months back. Jeffery will say that Wells has fairy folk talking to him, and that it was they who broke up his store. However, he is so drunk it is hard to believe he is telling the truth.

Fowler's demeanor will remain the same throughout the day. He will happily admit that he is meeting Wells at 10 p.m. again that night. In

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return for this information, the characters must promise him that they won't tell Jason that he doesn't really watch the news anymore. He finds that making up the stories is much easier, and it means that Wells won't get angry again and tell his pixies to do bad things. As 10 o'clock approaches, Fowler becomes more and more nervous until he is shaking so badly that he can't hold his beer anymore.

MEETING WELLS

Wells arrives just before ten and will swagger into the bar as though he is the king of the world. Fowler will squeal when he sees him, and try to hide under the table. This won't stop Wells who will walk up to the table and start taunting Fowler, as if he enjoys making the man squirm. If the characters do nothing to stop Wells, then he will get a quick sentence or two out of Fowler and then will leave seemingly satisfied.

If the characters attempt to confront him, then Wells will flee outside the back of the bar and down an alleyway to where Joseph is waiting for him. The spirit will be surprised to find the characters following Wells. Quickly, he will quickly recover and proceed to gain time for their escape with some animated gargoyles that are perched from an overhang.

Before leaving Jason will call out to the characters that they should not get in their way. Well's task is too important to be stopped by any mortals.

PAPER, SCISSORS, ROCK

The Rock is a sculpture located in the Botanical Gardens at the base of the Trade Center tower. Designed and sculpted in 2001 by resident eccentric artist, John Gregory Norris. It has proudly stood for the last decade in its place of

ally be telling the truth. If there is an easy way around it, then Fowler will do it. 4 of Hearts: Jeffery is somewhat sociable, he is a businessman after all, if not an overly successful one. He is willing to talk to most people, even if it's only to promote his work, so information can come easily from him at the best of times.



JASON WELLS

Jason was the son of a priest, and his early life has always influenced him. However, since he has met the Spirits of Paradise, he has lost that shy and quiet exterior and instead has been driven to bring the creatures back to Earth. He will stop at nothing to do this. He has already proved that killing and destruction mean little to him in this crazed state. Being a technician on some of the most advanced technology in the modern world, Jason is an extremely bright and adaptable person, who will find a way around any



obstacle to reach his goal. Even though he is quite insane by the time the players interact with him, he will still be capable of having an intelligent conversation. He will do just that, trying to convince anyone and everyone who will listen, that he is right in helping the Spirits to return to Earth.

Motivations: These motivations that Wells has now have always been present, but have only come to the forefront after the encounter with the Spirits. Queen of Spades – Wells is ruthless; nothing will stand in his way in bringing the Spirits back to earth. 7 of Clubs – He is also moderately violent, although again this is a new side to his personality. He will always try first to convince his opposition that his way is right, but if this fails, he has neither the patience nor the time to talk it out.

honor in the Garden. Norris was famous for his fascination with the changing human form and most of his sculptures and drawings dealt exclusively with the subject. His goal was to produce an entire display showing each phase of mankind's physical life on Earth. Oddly,

Norris never finished his grand design, rather becoming disillusioned with New Centennial's art scene. He packed up his belongings and commenced what he called his life's journey, traveling the frozen wastes of Alaska.

The Rock is a typical example of Norris' work. It is supposed to symbolize the awaking of Man's spirit as it broke free of its mental boundaries. Physically, it resembles a man trying to push himself free from a great rock. The effect this towering sculpture has on observers is something between morbid fascination and horror.

It is horror that it will become for the characters. Sometime during the adventure, Joseph will animate the Rock. It will be assigned a specific task, to track down and kill the "traitor" Spirit, Thomas. Thomas is still unknown to the characters. Joseph has continued to increase his control over more and more animated forms here on Earth.

How the characters come across this monstrosity is left up to the Referee. Keep in mind, it is a vital link between the Spirits' presence on Earth and Thomas' location in the city. The best time for the encounter would be at night when the characters least expect it, having a ten-foot-tall Rock statue come around the corner will alarm even the calmest of players.

Regardless of the actual location where they

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first meet the Rock, it is going to attract some attention, bringing out security, police and brave onlookers. Most of these people will be willing to just follow the oddity to the limit of their authority, rather than continuing the chase. Most just alert the patrols ahead that something big is coming their way. At most, the occasional shot will be fired at the Rock, with little effect. Remember the Spirit cares little about humans, focusing instead on the task of killing Thomas.

ROCK'S ACTION

No matter what happens, the Rock will continue its journey. Its first task is to find an accessway to the sewer that is big enough to fit the animation. Secondly, once down inside, to track down Thomas and his followers. Thirdly, to maim and destroy Thomas and his followers.

Finding an accessway big enough for the Rock is difficult, but it will eventually find a CMS service entrance down a side alley. This will be closed tight with a steel hatch, but the Rock will easily rip the hatch off its hinges and lower itself down into the sewer. Local authorities will not pursue the creature into the sewers. The next part is easy, even if it is constrained to travelling the major pipes in the sewer. Given enough time, it will track down Thomas and destroy him. Somehow the characters must stop this from happening.

The Rock will ignore the characters unless they pose a serious threat to its well-being. It will treat small arms fire the same way one takes mosquito bites, like an irritation. It is up to the Referee to keep the Rock intact until the characters get to face the followers in the Sewer. If it starts to look like the players might actually defeat the Rock, bring in Thomas' followers!

THE CHARACTER'S REACTION

The characters might not know what the Rock is, or at this point comprehend how it fits in the plot as a whole. Yet they will suspect that it has something to with the plot. Normally, they would try and destroy such a monstrosity but as they will quickly find out there is little they can do to actually harm the Rock. It is in their best interest to follow it (a pretty simple task) and tackle it later with the help of Thomas' followers.

If the characters insist on annoying the Rock, a simple game of "slap" should be an effective deterrent. Just have the Rock turn quickly and slap the closest character with its hand, not only will it hurt, but it should also serve notice that the creature isn't in the mood for any funny business.

IN THE SEWER

Once the characters get into the sewer, it isn't long before they will encounter a group of five of Thomas' followers undertaking a minor errand for their Master. The followers are a small, lightly armed group. In their minds, danger lurks above ground, not in the sewer. They are neither equipped nor prepared for anything like the Rock to pounce on them. Upon seeing the Rock plod down the pipes, the Thomas' followers will attempt to converse with the Rock, knowing full well that this creature is a threat to them all. The Rock speaks, or seems to. With no animation a voice rumbles forth from inside its massive frame asking the followers to lead it to Thomas. The followers will stand firm against the Rock, and will attack the creature if it does not leave. It doesn't leave.

Regardless of whether or not the characters help the followers, the battle ends up as a one-sided brawl. Most of the followers are armed with just close combat weapons, knives, or pipes. The leader of the group is an exception. He is armed with a small explosive, the package of their present mission. This bomb (or another like it) is the only way to destroy the Rock. This explosive is the only one the followers have. After the followers find that their weapons have little effect, and start to be taken out, the leader will try to destroy the Rock with the explosive device.

Unfortunately the device is a timed one, and has a minimum of one minute on its timer. If the characters are helping the followers, they will soon get the idea that the explosive is the only chance they have. They must somehow organize getting the explosive on or very near the Rock as it goes off. If the characters are not helping, the follower's leader will try the direct route, attaching it to the Rock's back. He will probably die in the attempt, but will be successful.

AFTER THE EXPLOSION

The explosion will bring down the roof, effectively dividing the party into groups. Those that are with the surviving followers will be thanked and told that their help will not go unrewarded. The followers however can not risk being questioned or captured and will do anything to lose the characters. One benefit to this encounter is that the followers and Thomas now know that the party's intentions are good, and will mean further meetings between them will be amicable.

THE AFTERMATH

It isn't too hard for the characters to return to surface and get back together. If Kelly Wilson is still with them, he will disappear for a short time to report back to Foreshaw.

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No matter what occurs during the encounter in the city, surprisingly little is spoken of the incident in public. Thanks to the censorship by the Trade Council, none of the mainstream serious papers will run any articles on the event. At most, they will mention the unexplained theft of Norris' sculpture, and that police are tightening security around the city's CMS access points. The tabloids will have a field day on the subject, devoting full pages and artist renditions of the 'Beast from Below'.

RETURNING TO THE SEWERS

Although nothing stops the characters from returning to the sewers at any time, it is important that they do not find anything of importance until the incident at the Miracle Lab later in the adventure. If the characters insist in searching the sewer, have them become lost time and time again. After enough times becoming lost, the characters will pursue other possibilities.

THE KEEPER OF SECRETS

After the excitement of the Dark Watch raid, the assassination of Stephen Young, and the kidnapping of Kelly, the characters are more than likely feeling the pressure. Paranoia should be setting in, not knowing who are their friends and who are their enemies. Still there are a large number of questions to be answered. What is happening at Miracle? Who is really in charge? Furthermore, the original riddles of the investigation still hound the characters. They still are unsure what has happened to the ITD. Plus, who was responsible for the Thermal Hammer's crash? Henry Foreshaw should exert some pressure every now and then to keep the character's attention on their original mission.

Some of these questions are finally about to

CHENG XUN

The Citadel's

Keeper of Secrets

Xun has been a mystery since he has been with Tashicorp, and that is a long time. He is older than any executive the company employs is, and his actual job function is unknown. What is known about him is that he seems to know everything that is going in the Citadel. If it involves Tashicorp in even the slightest way, Cheng will know all about it.

What people don't know is that Cheng Xun is an empathic sorcerer of great skill. For this adventure there is no need to know Xun's abilities except to say that he is able to achieve most empathic skill attempts with relative ease. His true motivations for his actions are still a subject for many debates. Suffice to say that first and foremost, Xun does what is best for Tashicorp, considering what is best for the City only after his first priority has been satisfied.

be answered in a meeting with Cheng Xun, the head of house security at Tashicorp. This old man is commonly referred to as the Citadel's "Keeper of Secrets", and is known for the array of delicate information he has access to. Although his sources are unknown, it is rare for Tashicorp not to know what is really going on. There have been suggestions that he has powers derived from some mystical source, but for now, this is just a rumour. Xun is an old man, well past his prime at the age of 65, so how he survives as an authority figure in the dangerous and corrupted world of the Citadel is unknown. Yet somehow he has resisted every attempt to topple him from power.

When the players do meet him, they will immediately notice that he seems physically weak. He is unable to walk long distances without assistance, and constantly stops and wheezes. Any empath in the party will immediately recognise a man with a strong spirit, in stark contrast to his physical body. Cheng will also notice any empaths in the party, paying particular attention to them.

Cheng is quite old-fashioned and confusing with his mannerisms. He never tells the facts straight, instead mixing the information in with some sort of life experience or moral. Cheng believes in educating his guests as much informing them.

Cheng has two bodyguards, Japanese-Americans dressed in fine suits, and obviously carrying handguns. Normally, one of these will never leave Cheng's side, while the other will remain a few meters back, keeping an eye on the people around them. In contrast to the norm, during the meeting the bodyguards will remain at the threshold of the store, watching both the events happening inside and out. At first, they will be suspicious of the characters, and will tense up at any sudden movements, however they will relax after it is made clear that Cheng is waiting for them.

THE MEETING

Soon after the party's various encounters with the Dark Watch, a courier will arrive with a message saying that they have been asked to attend a meeting with Cheng Xun, the head of Tashicorp House Security. The courier will also tell them that Cheng will be at the "Old Tokyo" antique store in the TriPier Mall at 3 o'clock the next afternoon. The courier advises the party that Cheng is a very important man, and he would not waste either his own time or theirs, on something unimportant. If the characters visit Kelly in the hospital, or talk to any of their Miracle contacts about the proposed meeting, they will be told that the "Keeper of Secrets" is likely to be their key to solving the mystery.

THE OLD TOKYO

The shop itself is full of antiques dating over the last two hundred years. They fill every space in the small shop, crowding the aisles and all the shelves. If there

is an order to it all, then it is not obvious to the characters. The clutter makes it difficult to travel around the store with Cheng. He is constantly on the move. His bobbing and weaving throughout the store makes it difficult for all the characters to participate in the conversation. In order to pass all the information down the line, characters must keep their lines of communication open. As he waddles around the store, he regularly calls in Japanese to one of the shop assistants, speaking to them quickly, and pointing to various items. If any of the players speak fluent Japanese they will learn that he is just inquiring about the price, and has either asked to have an item placed on his tab or admonishing the man about his prices.

THE TRUTH REVEALED

With a little prompting from the characters, the conversation should come around to why the meeting was arranged. The characters should be interested in this, as they have yet to find the purpose for the appointment. When Cheng begins to relate the following story to the characters, his distracted, haphazard movement will stop, and his tone will become serious.

"I believe that you have wondered why you needed to meet, yes? There is a story that must be told and for too long now it has been covered up. Regrettable actions have taken place, and good men have died. I fear that more may also return to their ancestors before it is all stopped."

"You have been hired by people who no longer know where their heads lie. Part of them says that the road that lies ahead is too dangerous to take, and yet their feet still walk the path. You my friends, have found yourselves caught amongst those ever marching feet, and now are so lost between them that you can not find your way out. There is only one way to break free, and that is to march to the end of the road."

Cheng of course is telling the characters that they are tied up in a plot that is above their heads, and now there is only one way to escape, and that is by riding the investigation to the end.

"You are like a child who plays blind mans bluff... groping for one target, one source. But like that child's game there is more than one player, some of which could be allies as readily as they are already enemies."

While the characters have likely been searching for one culprit in the crash and theft, there are in fact many groups involved, each using the situation to their own advantage and all readily using the characters as pawns.

"But you have to look no further to find the men that have orchestrated the fall of the Hammer, you now look at one of them."

"Don't be so shocked, I have done many worse things in my life, and most were far more regrettable than this."

THE ENCOUNTER WITH DRAGONS

At this moment all the characters should attempt an observation (at Average difficulty level). Those that succeed will notice that the small ornamental dragons that lie and stand next to Cheng and the characters seem to be moving. Yes, they are moving!

Joseph, who is observing the characters, curious as to how this meeting fits in with their search, has animated the Dragons. These particular creatures have been sent to keep the party from interfering with Wells' raid on the Miracle ITD lab, back in the Citadel. Not supposed to be a serious threat, they are just a ploy to distract them long enough so Wells can acquire what he needs from the Lab. Those that succeed the observation roll are not required to make a Panic roll, but all the others must do so.

During the battle, Cheng will use his empathic skills to Dimension Walk away. His bodyguards will join in the battle against the Dragons, they have worked for Cheng long enough to know strange things occur around him all the time, and don't seem too surprised at the events that are taking place.

If the characters haven't succeeded in destroying all the dragons by the tenth turn, the remainder of the dragons will stop their animation and fall to the ground, shattering in piles of stone shards. This is because the characters have been delayed long enough. Cheng will return after the battle, appearing outside the store, muttering something about being too



old for the rough-and-tumble of street brawls. Cheng pauses next to a man who stands just outside of the store entrance. After exchanging a few words, Xun enters the store and walks up to characters, saying to them that the man he just spoke to is the being they are looking for. But when the characters look around Joseph is gone. If the party inquires why Cheng didn't alert them earlier to his presence, Cheng will just shrug and say that it wasn't his place to do so. He will then turn to the very terrified and angry shopkeeper of the "Old Tokyo" and state in Japanese that he will pay for all the damage

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done. The storeowner smiles happily at such an arrangement.

Cheng says he is happy to have been of assistance to the characters on their investigation and that after all the messy negotiations are over, Tashicorp will recompense Miracle for what damage they have done. Cheng will then summon his bodyguards and wishing the characters luck, leave the mall. This may leave the characters a little dismayed, here hundreds of people may have died, many more are without homes, and one of the men responsible talks about recompensing just the corporation. Although this doesn't seem right in any moral sense, there is little that the characters can do. They can feel as if great wrongs have happened but they are neither powerful enough nor have influence enough to do any thing to fix the tragedy. Still the characters have other things on their minds and the adventure isn't over yet.

THE LAB

After the discussion with Xun, it seems pretty obvious that Miracle has been leading the party on a sort of wild goose chase. While the corporation really did wish to find out who has caused the crash, and then stole the ITD, it seems that they are in possession of facts that they were unwilling to share with the characters. Now the characters have solved at least one part of the puzzle: who was responsible for the crash. They may or may not be happy with Miracle. Either way, they will want to talk to Henry and clear a few things up.

GETTING TO SEE HENRY

When the party turns up at Miracle's tower to confront Henry and to find out the real story, they are in for a bit of a surprise. Outside, most of the employees of the tower are milling around like lost sheep. If any of the characters ask what has happened they will have their attention directed to the front glass doors, one of which has been shattered. The woman will explain that there was some sort of raid on the building barely an hour ago and although she didn't see or hear anything at that time, she has since heard a rumor that security guards were killed.

It's true. Wells' and Joseph's animates have attacked the tower to get into the ITD Lab and acquire some of the vital components necessary to completely repair the Thermal Hammer's ITD. This was not done subtly. In fact it was the most violent battle the Citadel has seen for decades. Wells didn't waste any time. While the battle raged, he went straight to the lab, gaining the items he needed and executed the follower of Thomas that was detained there.

Henry will meet the characters at the door and state that he is quite disturbed at the ease with which the offender accessed their target. The hallways and the actual ITD Lab are in the same sorry shape as the front lobby, evidence of the running



gun battle that ranged from door to lab, and back again. A number of guards were taken down by the animated gargoyles and hounds, but the security was also able to destroy many of these animates. The characters will probably want to talk to Henry about the facts Cheng revealed, but he is too busy with the situation at hand. To make matters worse, he reveals that McFerson, the company's CEO is missing, and that he hasn't been heard from since before the raid.

The best thing for the characters to do is to help in finding out what has occurred here and what the ramifications will be for the corporation and the investigation. They may be pleasantly surprised by what they learn even before getting to speak with Henry in private.

INSIDE THE LAB

The ITD lab is in worse condition than the rest of the Tower. Two guards stand at either side of the entrance, but will step aside when Henry and the characters approach. To be honest, it looks as if a hurricane has hit, with glass and equipment strewn around the room. That's not all. In the room, the bodies of two lab workers and Dr. Powell can be found, all having been crushed as if hit by heavy weights, (the effects of having an animated hound hit you at full tilt). The other surprising discovery for the characters at least, is a mortality-injured follower of Thomas. He is in a bad way, coughing up blood and holding his arms at angles they weren't ever designed to go.

The characters might not recognize the man, but he recognizes them as the people who helped his group against the Rock. While he is propped up by a security guard attempting first aid, he ushers the character to him. When they come close,

he will remind the characters in a cracked and strained voice that he remembers them from the battle against the giant statue in the sewers.

This should jolt their memory, and they will probably ask why he is there. He will answer that he was captured by Miracle during a battle against the animates. They thought that he was responsible for the Hammer's crash and the theft of the ITD. He was in the Lab being questioned by Dr. Powell when the animates and the man called Wells attacked. The animates attacked him on sight and he was unable to defend himself.

He says that the party must go back to the sewers and warn his master. If they take the entrance near Smith Park and look hard enough, Thomas will find them. The characters will probably have a million questions and he will answer them as well as he can, but will mostly respond that Thomas can tell them more than he ever could. The security guards will refrain from moving him more than they have to because of the risk of damaging his internal organs with his broken ribs. Despite their good intentions, the follower will be dead within the hour.

THE VIDEO EVIDENCE

If the characters ask to see the video evidence they will be shown the tape. The tape will just back up the follower's story. The raid by Wells is fast and efficient. The Miracle guards reacted too slowly to create any effective defense. The most interesting section of the video will be the sequence in the lab in which Wells confronts the workers and the follower. After a brief conversation, the animates attack the people trapped in the lab as Wells goes to one of the large storage cupboards and removes an item that is identified by Henry Foreshaw as a power circuit designed specifically for the Hammer project. The fight between the humans in the lab and the animates is brief and brutal, with only the follower left alive. Before Wells leaves, he stops above the mortally injured man and seems to taunt him once more. Very little was done as Wells and his combatants left. The Miracle security was too shell-shocked after the raid to provide resistance.

CONFRONTING THE TRUE STORY

At some point the characters will get Henry alone and confront him about the whole incident. At first, Foreshaw will be amused that the characters think that there is a plan to undermine them, and then a little angry. Eventually as the characters push, he will give in and explain the whole story. He will finish the story and remind the characters about the part of their contract that prohibits them from ever mentioning this conversation again.

Henry will explain all that has happened, the conspiracy against the other corporations and the way that Miracle went about it. He will admit that after all that

has happened the characters deserve some sort of explanation even if they can never reveal it to the public. He did not even know of this information when he first sent for the characters but as the situation progressed, he became privy to more information.

Miracle was one of the lead figures involved in presenting the idea of a faster than light engine to the Trade Council almost a year ago. Most on the Council thought them crazy and that such an experiment was a fool's errand fraught with disaster. Miracle and their backers proved them wrong with Dr. Powell's Theory of instantaneous travel, and soon all the major corporations in the city had joined the project, with Miracle at it's head.

The experiments and the theory all seemed sound in the lab, but once the first prototype was turned on, it became obvious that faster than light speed was not going to be a reality. One result of the tests was that the engines did emit strange side effects. The most serious effect was the opening of some sort of "dimension door" to another world. A new, untapped world was suddenly the unexpected prize of the whole ITD project. Just imagine, exploring a New World without having to go to all the expense of sending a ship into space. Of course this new discovery brought up a serious question, whether to tell the other corporations or not? In the end, McFerson and his mysterious partner, decided that the rewards were enough to risk the wrath of the other corporations and that Miracle would produce a second ITD machine designed specifically to just allow them to exploit this New World. So the other corporations were told that the test results were still inconclusive, and they needed more resources to complete the project. They diverted the new funds into the second device, using the prototype as a dummy to distract them.

Someone must have suspected the truth, mistakenly concluding that it was Thermal Hammer's ITD that they were using to travel between worlds. They obviously decided to destroy it once and for all. If they couldn't have it, no one could. Henry doesn't know what Wells is doing, or why he has animated creatures helping him. But he sure would like to find out.

The party may participate in an exchange of information. If the party reveals to Henry who destroyed the Hammer's ITD he won't be surprised. He suspected all along that it was only a matter of time before one of the major backers found out what Miracle was up to, and turned on them (although he can think of many, easier ways they could have ended the deception). If they also reveal their hunches about who the silent partner is at Miracle (recall the meeting between McFerson and someone named Darnell in "What Young Knows"), Henry will just shrug and say that it's none of his concern, especially if they have no real evidence.

The last question they will ask is why they weren't told all this earlier? Henry will just shake his head in response, stating that not only was it easier at the time. He had his own ideas, but did not want to lead the characters down the wrong path in case he was mistaken. He will remind them that the less they knew the less they would be seen as a threat to the other corporations. Once the question and answer

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session is over, Henry will show them the door, stating quite simply that they still have an ITD to find and he has work to do.

SPIRIT OF EARTH

With the follower's information about Thomas' location in the sewers, he should be a little easier to find. But finding and seeing are two different things. Remember that there are still the last of Thomas' followers remaining and guarding their ward. The characters are on the right track with all the bits coming together nicely and the story is at last making some sense. The party should be encouraged by this and should find the new challenges and tasks less confusing from here on.

TRACKING DOWN THOMAS

Although they know to look around the sewers to find Thomas, it isn't quite as easy as that. There are miles of sewers under the Citadel, not to mention all the rooms that make up the CMS. But it is after nightfall, and after hours of stomping around in some of the worst garbage man has ever created, they will at last be discovered by a follower patrol.

THE ENCOUNTER IN THE SEWERS

The followers are laying in wait for any attack from the animated creatures. They are unsure what to do when they spot the characters. They will confront the players, carefully waiting for some sort of ambush or attack. There are three followers in the group that intercepts them and none of these have any weapons beyond spears and knives. The followers have taken a battering from the encounters with Joseph's animated creatures, and there are only a few of the original number still able to take an active part in the running battles. The follower's checkpoint is based around a T-junction in the Sewer system, with a number of small niches in which people can hide.

The first thing the characters will notice, unless they are being very careful, is two figures appearing in front of them and one behind. One of the figures in front will shout defiantly that the characters should drop their weapons and stand still with their hands up. If they refuse to comply, then the same figure will state loudly that they are surrounded by more than twenty men, and that they will be run through unless they surrender. It will be obvious to the characters that there are definitely not that many people hiding in wait.

The followers will not want to attack, and at the same time are worried that these people threaten Thomas. Eventually, the characters will realize that it is they,

not the guards, which have the choices. The party must make the first move towards ending this encounter without conflict. Although the followers will be quietly thankful that the characters didn't press any advantage, they will only lead the characters on if they give up their weapons to them.

This might seem a bit harsh to the characters. Especially with them holding the upper hand. It is by far easier to placate them. As they speak to the followers, the followers will begin to open up to the characters in a friendly manner.

On the journey back to the follower's camp they will talk about the conflicts they have had with the Spirits, saying that they cannot last much longer against them. Any questions about Thomas will be politely ignored or dismissed with a simple answer such as, "He will explain himself."

MEETING THE SPIRIT AMONGST MEN

When they get to the follower's camp they see what bad shape they really are in. Lots of the followers at the camp are injured and bedridden. It appears that for every fit follower, there are at least two incapacitated. The conditions in the camp are horrendous, with little in the way of medical supplies and no doctors. Many of the injured are undoubtedly disabled purely because of poor treatment. Any medical treatment given by the characters will be greatly appreciated. In return for the medical attention, one of the followers may give the characters a locket that several of the followers wear around their necks. The follower will explain that he has been searching for the answers to life and death for years now and the best answer he can come up with is that the true answer to life is to help others. He tells the character to wear the locket to remember Thomas and his teachings. (If the players have run "The Shadow Falls", they will recognize the locket as one of the kind worn by the Calendites. The locket is empty.)

The majority of the followers are happy to see new faces in their camp, and many have heard of the character's exploits against the Rock. One of the followers will come up and start to talk to the group about the events surrounding the final assault of the Rock. The spokesman for the followers points out that the bomb that was used to destroy the Rock, was actually meant to be used to destroy Wells' device. Now, without that bomb, they feel they are powerless to stop Wells.

About this time, a hush will fall over the room, as a white cloaked figure enters. In this figure's arms, it carries a body of a young woman. The figure lowers the body to the ground, and pushes back its cloak. With the face revealed, the man is the most beautiful being any of the characters have ever seen in their lives. This is Thomas the Spirit on Earth. He looks up at the characters and with a tear in his eye, ushers them to follow him back out the door he had just come from.



THE HISTORY LESSON

Thomas leads them into a small room no larger than a normal sized bedroom. It has the appearance of a type of store, with half-empty bags of grain and potatoes lying in the corner. There are also a few canned goods on shelves, and a large barrel of water near the entrance. It seems as if the followers are almost out of supplies as well as personnel.

Thomas looks at you all smiling, but with a hint of sadness beneath the grin. "That girl had followed me for many years now, and all I gave her in return was death... There is a time for all of this to finish, and I feel it may be soon."

Thomas will listen to the characters, as they undoubtedly have many questions they want to ask. He will do what he can to fill in the gaps in their knowledge.

The story Thomas tells is one of horror and woe. It tells of the coming of the Apocalypse at the hands of the Spirits of Paradise, laying waste to the world constructed by man. They have convinced a man to help them, one skilled in the production of such gates to allow them to return to Earth. He will also tell his history of how he came to earth and tried to save man from the threat, and how he has grown to love mankind regardless of its faults and cruelty.

He will impress on the characters the importance of stopping the man and his Spirit guide before they can get the device they have stolen working again. He believes that it is only a matter of time before the Earth will be at the Spirit's mercy.

THE OPENING OF A PORTAL

Thomas will stand before his followers and announce that he is to leave them. He thanks them for their help, but the time has come that he must go alone and stop the other Spirits from coming forth onto Earth and destroying mankind. Of course, the followers will be distraught. Many of these people have accompanied Thomas in his search for the elusive keys to life for years, believing that this Spirit held the key. Now he is to leave them, it is like losing ones own father.

There is much crying and pleading from the surviving followers that they be allowed to join him and the party in the conclusion of his journey. But Thomas will

have none of it. This task is for him alone to attend to. He does however, spend a few minutes going from follower to follower, gently touching each on the forehead, immediately putting them into a deep sleep. The Spirit will explain that when they awaken, they will remember nothing of their past lives with Thomas, and hopefully will be able to live out the rest of their lives pleasantly.

CONFRONTATION WITH JOSEPH

Just like Thomas, Joseph has felt a gate open somewhere in the city. He also is unsure of its location, but knows that he must ensure that it remains open for his fellow Spirits to come through. Thinking that Wells is no longer needed; he has left him to his own devices and has gone to discover the location of this open gateway for himself.

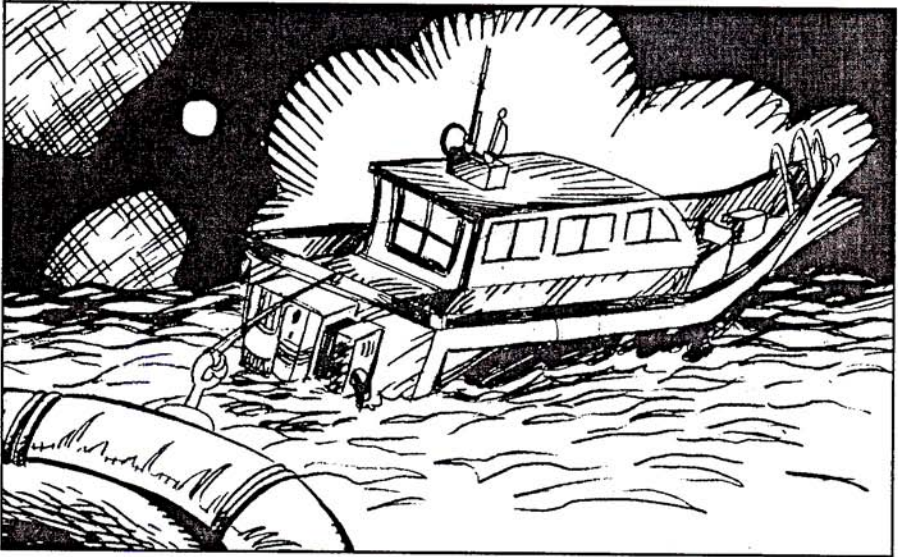
The characters are probably unsure of what exactly is going on as Thomas leads them in a mad dash into the heart of the Citadel, as it is now night there are few people around to pay attention to the characters and their Empathic tracker. Most security and police aren't too alarmed with this group of people, charging around like a dog off a leash, because hell, they haven't done anything wrong... yet.

Once on the surface and in the open air, Thomas can sense the gate offshore, out over the water somewhere, and will implore the characters to follow him and stop the gate from remaining open for too much longer. The players will undoubtedly follow the increasingly fanatical Spirit and they will make their way rapidly down to the yacht club.

Joseph's location gives him an advantage in the situation. Being based in the Dreamscape with Wells, he doesn't have nearly as far to go before reaching the docks and acquiring a vessel. He is aware that Thomas will also want to get to the gate and so has spent a few seconds animating a number of the Citadel's gargoyles to stall the pursuit even longer. These should not number any more than a half-dozen and will, singly or in pairs, attempt to track down and delay the party. The conflicts should be fleeting ones. Compared to the Rock, the gargoyles will prove to be quite weak opponents,

Once they are at the docks, obtaining a boat should not be very hard, with both the Yacht Club as well as a number of other recreational vessels being stored around the port. Sailing or driving a boat should not be too hard for a character with the appropriate Vessel Use skill. If the party is without such a skilled character, there will be delays as they get the boat under control. The seas are rough tonight with the wind rising with the returning tide, but it is not enough to stop the vessel from sailing.





REDEMPTION

As the characters battle their way across the water, Thomas will direct them towards a dot of light on the horizon. When they get closer to this light source they can make out not only one boat, but three, each moored together. The largest by far is the "Miracle on the Water," a huge luxury launch that docks in the New Centennial Marina. It is also the source of the bright light that radiates out across the water. The two smaller boats are attached around the far side of this launch and can just be seen bobbling up and down in the water.

All three boats seem empty of any signs of life, and the only impression one gets that anyone ever was on board is the bright light that continues to shine ferociously. Thomas will say that someone is on board and that he can feel the presence of another Spirit there as well. The silence of the night is broken when the characters bring up their boat to moor alongside the "Miracle on the Water."

Shots ring out from a submachine gun, splintering the boat panels, and cutting ropes and guides. Unless they do something fast, their boat is about to crash. All actions to control the boat should be at one difficulty higher due to damage and maneuvering at night.

THE DARK WATCH

Dark Watch are onboard the boat, but they are severely down on numbers. There should be the same number of members on the boat as there are characters

left in the party. The Watch was hoping to avoid the characters, as they have been responsible for slowly whittling down their mercenary unit to the pitiful band that remains here.

The Dark Watch have come to the "Miracle on the Water" to find McFerson and return him to Darnell (not that the characters will ever learn this). They have already been interrupted once by a man in white who they took down easily enough, but it is starting to get a little hot on the boat and there is still no sign of Miracle's CEO.

The battle shouldn't take too much out of the characters and again they should come out triumphant over the Dark Watch. The boat is large so having the characters and their opponents move around is not a problem. Keep in mind that the Watch members are trained soldiers, so they will use all the tactics they can to take down the players.

Once Dark Watch is taken care of, the characters will learn at least a little about what has happened on the boat. They will find Miracle's second ITD, a box the size of a large briefcase, which is generating a gateway (the source of the bright light). The characters will also find Joseph, the other Spirit, and a message from McFerson explaining what he was doing.

THE GATEWAY

By far the most prominent object in the boat is the gate; its bright light can be seen from miles away. This is not a constant beam, but rather a flickering circle of light that seems to slip in and out of reality. It is quite an awe-inspiring effect. Especially when it is added to the scene that greets the characters on the other side.

The other side is not that easy to make out at first. The intensity of the light takes some time to get used too. But when at last the characters have adjusted to the light, they are able to make out the fantastic world that is a "Paradise" beyond our own. "Paradise" can be described as verdant fields and thick forests, sunny and bright. The animals run free and there are even species of wildlife visible that are alien to life on earth, or perhaps these are forms that have become extinct in our polluted and corrupted modern world. Thomas will tell the characters that they should not enter the other world as it holds dangers even for him, a native. He also is worried that too many people entering "Paradise" will alert the other Spirits to their presence.

MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

Beside the gateway is a small ship in a bottle, with its stopper uncorked and a note placed within. This note is McFerson's suicide note and reads:

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I am gone to paradise fleeing the evil that I have wrought on the workers and families of Miracle. Some will curse me, and some will call me a coward, but I can no longer stand the lies and corruption that take place in the Citadel. My partner demands too much, and it is he who is to blame for the actions of the company. He should be stopped before it is too late. The only advice I can give is... No one is safe, not even the CEO of a worldwide corporation.

McFerson has run from Darnell, and although he doesn't name his business partner he is quite scared of what he could do to him. Poor McFerson, little does he know that the Paradise he has entered offers no salvation.

THE REDEMPTION

Joseph is dying; his near immortal soul is not strong enough to keep his mortal body alive. He is a mess of blood. The Dark Watch have ambushed him while they looked for McFerson. The members of Dark Watch have riddled his body with bullet holes. For such a beautiful being to die is almost a crime, but dying he is. However, with his sudden realization of mortality, he now understands what destroying mankind would do. To destroy in the name of any cause is nothing but murder. As immortals, the Spirits understand little about what death really entails, but Joseph is learning fast.

When the characters come across him, a weak smile will play across his lips. *"It is for the best"*, he will say. *"Man and Spirit should never mix. Both societies hold different morals and ideals, and the common ground between the two races would never be large enough to allow both to exist in harmony."* The Spirits, he'll explain are not evil. They simply want to restore Earth to its rightful, natural state. *"Wells must be stopped,"* he goes on to say, and the characters are the only ones who can do it. Joseph will explain that tonight Wells plans to test his device and there is no time for delay. Wells will by now already have returned to "Air Waves" for the last of the parts he will need. Joseph believes that Wells will attempt to use the electronic shop's equipment to power his ITD device.

During this entire exchange, Thomas just stands before the gateway to Paradise and stares into the glowing rift. If the party asks what Thomas will be doing, Joseph will simply replay, *"He already knows what is needed."*

THOMAS' SACRIFICE

Thomas nods at Joseph's comments. Although the characters may stop Wells and the other machine from opening a gate today, who will be there if someone tries again tomorrow, or next week, or even in 100 years time.

Thomas must return home and try to stop the Spirits from ever contemplating

return to Earth. With two cultures holding such different values, conflict will always arise. He advises that once he goes back through the gate, the characters must deactivate the ITD and take it with them for safekeeping. No one must ever be able to use the gateway again.

Thomas shakes each character's hand, thanking them for the help they have given and wishing them luck in stopping Wells. He regrets that they will never meet again, but that he will always hold them dear. If asked about Joseph, both Spirits will just smile knowing full well that once death releases his spirit, his body will return to nature, in the same way it came to him when he first entered Earth's domain.

STOPPING WELLS

When Thomas goes through the gateway, there is an even brighter flash of light, and then he can be seen walking away from the gate in Paradise, his body then slowly fades in the bright sunlight of that dimension. When the characters turn back to Joseph, his body has vanished as well, reentering the cycle of nature.

Turning the gate off is as easy as unplugging the power cord to the ship generator. The characters will then head back to the Citadel as quickly as possible to stop Wells before he can make an even bigger mistake than McFerson.

THE FINALE

Locating Wells has now become the top priority. The information that Joseph provided is correct. Wells is currently at the Dreamscape. He has broken into "Air Waves" and has jury-rigged a number of power cables, which now run up through the mall from the electronics shop to the roof of the Dreamscape. The cables spit and crackle with electrical energy. Getting anywhere near the power leads is a bad idea. The Referee should impress upon the players the amount of damage that even one jolt of power from those cables could do to a person. It is possible that the players will try disconnecting the power source at this end, despite the danger of electrocution. However, doing so will not end the threat, as you will see below.

The party can easily follow the wires up to Wells and his stolen ITD. This is the scene that meets them:

The Gate is being opened. Ahead of you, Wells stands next to a small jumble of electronics and machinery. As you approach he looks up, grinning maniacally, he has already activated the device.

"There's no point fighting it", Jason shouts at you. Behind him a circle of light appears in the air; as if the small wind eddies were somehow growing luminescent and intertwining. With it a vibration seems to rise from the device, getting louder as the circle of air behind Wells solidifies. As the vibration rises, it starts to shake

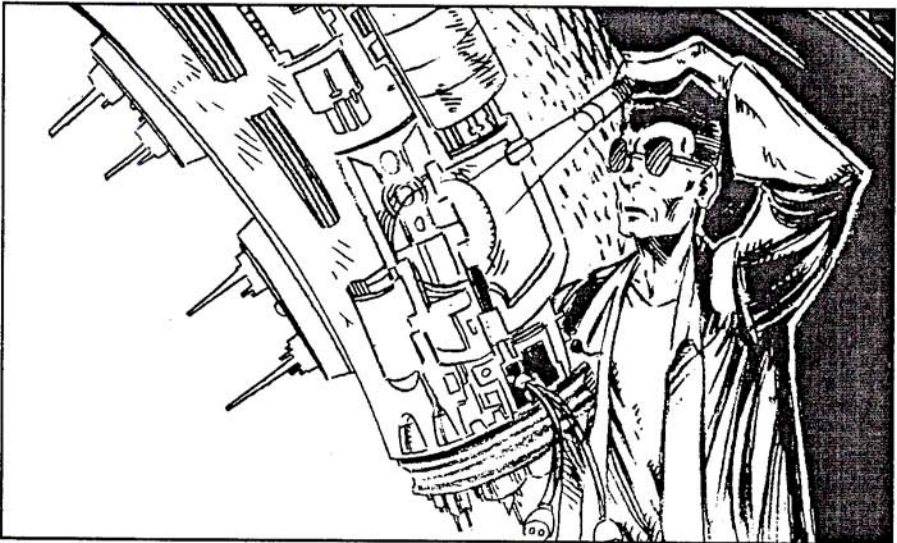
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the air around you, rattling both bones and brain, making it increasingly harder to think.

"Why... why do you try to stop me?" Wells is shouting loud now to make himself heard. "All I am doing is trying to bring life back to our decimated Earth." With that the circle of wind explodes outwards bathing the entire roof in an unearthly bright light. Wells smiles broadly and raises his arms to the skies. Behind him, shapes can be seen moving inside the circle of light. They are humanoid in appearance and appear to have a look of determination in their task of restoring the world. Wells is laughing now with glee and repeatedly yelling "You can not stop them now... you can not stop them now."

But stop them you must, the entire fate of the city, and indeed the World relies on you!

The Characters have at last come to the finale of their journey. They have tracked down Wells in the nick of time, just as he is to open the portal to Paradise. Very shortly, the first of the Spirits of Paradise will come through the gateway in their true form and begin the destruction of first the Citadel, then the city, and will continue to destroy the rest of the world. This is the last chance anyone will have to stop the threat. In addition, the air pressure from the gate combined with the bright light that it emits, is very distracting during a firefight. This is intensified by the fact that the character's opponents all originate from where the light and pressure emanate from. Therefore, any combat maneuvers during this battle are at one difficulty level higher than normal due to the atmospheric distractions, this also effects Wells, but the Spirits will be unaffected by it (they are more concerned in attempting to control their new bodies). Most other skill use can avoid this minus by concentrating, i.e. using two actions to attempt any given task.



All is not lost, as the Spirits pass through the gate to our world their bodies solidify, and the beings of light from their home world become creatures of flesh and blood. It has been ages since the Spirits last set foot on Earth. The Spirits cannot truly remember what being solid is like, and are therefore confused and disoriented by the transformation. This is the last chance the players will get to attack, and disengage the gateway, before the Spirits are ready to start the restoration of Earth back to the bosom of Mother Nature.

The battle is to be fast paced with the Spirits coming through the gateway at the beginning of each combat turn. On the first turn, one Spirit will come through. On each subsequent turn, as the gate grows wider, an additional Spirit can fit through. Thus two come through on turn 2, three on turn 3, etc. When the Spirits pass through, they spend one full turn trying to shake off the effects of becoming solid. Thus each wave of Spirits becomes active as the next one arrives. In their solid state, the Spirits should be fairly easy to take out as they are not yet fully in control of their bodies, however they are still formidable opponents, with their speed alone forcing the characters to be vigilant. Once a Spirit is taken down to zero hits, its physical body then deteriorates rapidly melting away to nothingness in a combat turn. It is left to the Referee's discretion how much of a threat to make the Spirits. The first few Spirits coming through will likely get destroyed relatively quickly, but will reach a point where there are more of them than the players can kill in one turn. Once some of the Spirits actually survive, you can have them start animating objects to attack the party. Just be careful not to overwhelm them!

Remember that the number of Spirits that can come through the gateway is basically unlimited, and that if the characters attempt to just stand and destroy them, they will soon run short on ammunition and personnel. The key to stopping the Spirits is to turn off the gateway, although this is easier said than done. The Gateway device, made from the ITD from the Thermal Hammer and other pieces of electronics, is no longer powering the gateway, but rather it just provided the impetus to originally open the gate. Now the gateway is being kept open by the presence of the dimension "Paradise" (this is why destroying the power leads wouldn't have worked). This other dimension is attempting to force its way into our own and it is spreading apart the walls of the gateway as it attempts to do so. As the gateway between Earth and Paradise is only a fragile one, it threatens to burst asunder, and spread further across the entropic sphere that normal connects (and separates) the two dimensions. If it is allowed to continue, the gateway will become so large that Paradise will actually become connected permanently to Earth, and then there would be no stopping the Spirits from roaming free.

The only way that the gateway can theoretically be closed is by pushing the dimension of Paradise away from the other side of the gate, even for a second, and then at the same time, turning Wells' gateway machine off. There are two ways that the party can do this. The first is the use of a large, shape-charged explosive, that would for an instant when exploded, force the dimension walls of Paradise to back

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away from the rip created by Wells gate, allowing his machine to be disconnected. However, the chances of the party having immediate access to such a warhead are slim indeed.

The other option would be to activate the second ITD, from the Miracle CEO's boat (which they were conveniently told to take with them). This fully intact ITD needs a relative small amount of power to run, and can quite simply be connected to one of Wells many power leads on the roof (An Average verses Electronics – but add any modifiers for the amount of interference that is going on around the character). The hard part comes when the players attempt to focus its dimensional powers against the already open gateway. This can be overcome by connecting it to Wells' machine, not so easy a task, as Wells will inevitably try and stop anyone from getting near his device. If they do get close enough to connect the two devices, (A Difficult verses Electronics) and successfully join them, the activation of the second ITD will have the same effect as the explosive. This action will push the perimeter of "Paradise's" dimension back for just a few seconds to enable them to disengaged both ITDs, thus effectively closing the gateway.

This is a huge leap in logic and most of the players and their respective characters will be tied up trying to stop the flow of Spirits through the gateway. However, if they have brought Fowler with them, or in fact have a scientist amongst the party, you could conceivably drop a few hints about the ways in which the gateway could be closed. Another possibility would be to have Henry Foreshaw appear with a team of scientists and make the suggestion (security would have alerted Foreshaw that the players had entered the Citadel again.)

Ultimately, it is up to the Referee to determine valid ways of forcing "Paradise's" dimensional edges back for a second. For example, a Sorcerer channeling an explosion on the gate would have the same effect.

WHEN THE GATE IS AT LAST CLOSED READ THE FOLLOWING –

With a bang of pressure the gateway snaps shut. A silent explosion follows that knocks you and the rest of the combatants clean off their feet. For a moment, all is dark as your mind tries to clear itself in the sudden absence of pressure, and your eyes adjust to the loss of the glowing portal. Looking around, you see that you have been triumphant, the remaining Spirits have all collapsed to the ground, as did their brethren before them, quickly and without noise they seem to melt, or evaporate into thin air. Soon it's as if nothing was ever there, and all that remains are you, your fellow Minion Hunters, and the jumble of cables that made up Wells' machine.

The Spirits are definitely gone, where they went, one can only speculate. There is barely enough time for the characters to compose themselves before the authorities arrive.

AFTER THE BATTLE

As the players wind down after the intense battle, security and police will begin to arrive, attracted by the reports of bright lights and the sounds of a gun battle. By now of course, the gateway is closed and the physical bodies of the Spirits have disappeared. Wells is either dead or in a catatonic state after seeing his plan thwarted, and is little help to anyone. All that is left are the ITDs, the characters that survived, and the rounds that they have discharged over the course of the battle. No one will believe the character's stories, (Spirits indeed... that's a new one) and they will be detained for questioning.

Miracle will confiscate both ITDs, and they will be locked away safely in some warehouse, never to see the light of day again. Wells, if he is still alive, will be taken away to a local hospital, one second crying, the next laughing like a maniac. Eventually, after thorough questioning, the lawyers at Miracle will get the characters freed from custody and will pay handsomely for their silence in the future.

As a result of this little misadventure, Miracle will lose its standing with the other corporations in the Trade Council, charged with trying to undermine its authority and breaking the agreement they had in place when the Thermal Hammer project was first proposed. In the end, the whole incident has not only destroyed Miracle's connections among the other corporations, but has also lessened the Darnell's influence in the Trade Council. Something he is not happy about, and something that he will very shortly rectify.

In the meantime, the characters are a little richer and a lot wiser about the world of the Citadel, and hopefully will be a bit more careful when taking on new adventures. There is also a lot that can be done before the next installment of Sin City is released.

Here are some suggestions:

THE ANIMATOR SPIRITS

Like Joseph, maybe more of the Spirits were released through the dimensional rip, and rather than join their brethren in reverting Earth to Mother Nature, instead wander free to cause havoc wherever they go. Perhaps in other parts of the city, commonplace items could start to take on a life of their own; and who better to stop them, than the characters.

THOMAS' RETURN

The Characters never do find out what happened to Thomas and must just assume that he was unsuccessful with attempts to sway his fellow Spirits. Possibly, he was not destroyed in Paradise as his followers fear, but rather is now trapped in



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that Dimension wanting to return to Earth. Some of the more highly empathic followers can hear him calling out, trying to return, but are unable to help him. Now the characters could help, by somehow reopening the portal between the two dimensions just long enough to complete the rescue. But that opens a whole new can of worms.

Conversely, it may be up to them to stop the followers from reopening the gateway, knowing full well the danger that awaits Earth should the Spirits of Paradise be allowed access once again to Earth.

CHARACTERS

One area that wasn't explored deeply in this adventure: who is the mysterious Darnell, and what is he up to? The players never even got a chance to see his face. All they really know is that for some reason he is trying to expand his influence over the Trade Council, and yet is not powerful enough to confront them face to face. Why is this so? How else could he do it?

These questions and more will be answered in Sin City 3. Just remember that no matter how hard the players try, they will not be able to locate a person named Darnell...almost as if he doesn't really exist. Suffice to say that he plays a major part in the plot still surrounding the city, so he must live at least until the next installment so that he may threaten the characters yet again.

PARTING WORDS

Hopefully this adventure has given both you and your characters a little insight into the world of the Citadel. Its sparkling towers and high walls hide a group of individual organizations that are willing to rip the heart and soul out of any being to get what they want. In the world of high business not a soul can be trusted, and no one is your friend. There are always new plots and plans being acted out, new resources to exploit and new avenues to explore. For the right people, the Citadel is a paradise of luxury and opportunity, yet to others it offers nothing more than an early grave. To play with the corporations in their little games of one-upmanship is a risky and dangerous business, which only the very brave or very foolish would knowingly join.

In the Citadel the characters must always be aware that as they use someone or something to their advantage, somebody in turn is using them tenfold.

**THE CITADEL MAY NOT BE AS DARK AS THE REST
OF THE CITY BUT IT IS JUST AS EVIL.**

DARK MINIONS

THE DARK WATCH

The Dark Watch is one of the new age mercenary units that have recently sprung up around the world, taking on assignments usually handled by corporate security or local law enforcement. Instead, these mercenary groups offer their prospective employers skills that cannot be passed up, real life combat experience.

With the collapse of the central governments around the world, many highly trained and dedicated soldiers found themselves out of work. The only employment coming in the form of low profile corporate bush wars and small national uprisings. However, not many employers could offer their mercenaries anything other than short-term work in high-risk situations. So slowly but surely many of these paid fighters banded together in small highly specialized units aimed at acquiring more regular and safer work. The most obvious source for such employment opportunities was the corporations, acting as security and bodyguards. This was an obvious advantage to many companies; highly trained and efficient soldiers that could replace the expensive and not so disposable security that worked in their plants and buildings. These units also offered skills that normal security could not, both in covert and overt operations. They also came fully equipped and nobody really cared if one or two of them disappeared off the face of the earth. A compromise was met, permanent and relatively safe work for the mercenaries, and a relatively cheap and effective group of killers for the corporations. Both sides were content with the arrangement.

The Dark Watch is one such group who have given up the jungles and squalors of Central America and Africa for the warm cozy work in the metroplexes. Its particular specialty as urban operatives, the Dark Watch has found employment with Miracle, one of the largest robotics and aeronautics corporations in the known world. Plus, they have also been assigned to Miracle's headquarters at New Centennial City.

The group has been active in New Centennial for only a few weeks by the time of this adventure, working mostly on small escort and acquisition duty. Well-armed with light, well-concealed weaponry, and dressed in their typical urban uniform, dark suits and even darker sunglasses, they blend in well with the Citadel's surroundings. In fact, it would be very difficult for an untrained eye to distinguish any of the Dark Watch members from the rest of the city's high paid executives.

Recently, the Dark Watch's main task has been to act as a special detachment for the man known to the Miracle CEO as Darnell, and also as covert operatives on the Thermal Hammer project inside Miracle. They have also been assigned the task of insuring that a small group of investigators do not find out the truth behind the project. Even more importantly, they are to cover up any information relating Darnell and his interests at Miracle.

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The soldiers that make up Dark Watch are all experienced warriors, with many years of wars and rebellions all across the world. They are completely loyal to their current employer, knowing that to change sides now would ruin any prospects of future employment. In fact, they take little interest in what is going on around them, concerning themselves purely with the task at hand, and the security of their surroundings. Therefore, they know little if anything of the events that have occurred surrounding the Thermal Hammer.

TYPICAL DARK WATCH OPERATIVE –

Level: Elite
Initiative: 4
Skills: As per Elite NPC's.

Normal Armament: M9 Berretta only when undercover, MP-7 Submachinegun (when on overt missions), Kevlar vest (lightweight and concealable under normal clothing), tactical earpiece radio, and various personal weapons. Also note that these operatives carry no identification, if they are captured alive, no one will claim to know them.

THE FOLLOWERS OF THOMAS

Thomas is the last of the Spirits of Paradise to come through the portal that connected Earth to his home world. Driven by a love for mankind, he would give up everything to save the poor few souls that lived near the portal when it was about to be destroyed. In the end, he was trapped for eternity in our world.

This selfless act was lost on the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, but it did influence a number of other people whom he met along the journey of life. Each of his followers has flocked to him to learn more of the universe outside our own, and to become disciples in the ways of Thomas. Although he asks for none of it, there is little he can do to stop these people from joining him. So he tries to support them in any way he knows how. In return, these people will sacrifice anything for him, from the leaving of their families to death itself. And even death is not a great enough barrier to stop them from following Thomas. Many of his followers have aged beyond that of normal men and women. For some reason there are those



out there that have some sort of bond to Thomas and are driven to find him and learn from him. Even Thomas himself is unsure why this is so. But in his retinue, he has men and woman who were born as far back as the First World War, and although these followers now approach a hundred years old, their bodies seem as young as forty or fifty.

The followers of Thomas are fanatics, however they are not violent ones. They are driven to follow and obey the words of Thomas. Until the opening of the new gate between his dimension of Paradise and Earth, Thomas was always loath to use his followers' loyalty to any great extent. However, in Sin City he has found that things happen so fast and so many events happen at once, that it impossible for him to do everything he needs to in time to stop the second gate from opening. Therefore, his followers have been asked to investigate the locations that Thomas cannot, and to report their findings back to him. This task has placed a great strain on the bodies of his followers who work night and day trying to fulfill his commands. They will not rest until they have completed their quest, and although their minds are strong, their bodies are weak from the constant activity.

The followers come from all walks of life, old and new. There are those that fought through two World Wars and some that have been nothing but homeless their entire lives. They're clothing and language can differ as much as their appearance. Some of the followers are armed, but most remain with out weapons undertaking Thomas' wishes of pacifism unless there is no other choice.

THE SPIRITS OF PARADISE

The most important thing to know about the Spirits is that they are not evil. Far from it, they love Earth, Mother Nature and the environment. They cry to see it being raped and destroyed for its resources. Now at long last they are about to fix all that is wrong, by destroying the plague that crawls the surface of the Earth they love. They are going to rid the Earth of all humans to insure that it can survive another billion years.

Long ago they lived here, on Earth, with mankind by their side, using them like one uses a pet to love and be entertained by. However, some three thousand years ago, they discovered that man was not the innocent puppet they thought they were. This creature called man, used and abused the environment to better only themselves, making themselves happy and rich while the Earth bled. So the Spirits came together and decided that mankind must be destroyed and the environment saved. They devised a plan that used their combined power at the same time to destroy all life on Earth. "The Reckoning" would allow only nature to thrive. The key to this idea would be to use the combined empathic strength of all the Spirits. The downside to their plan was that it would take time to bring to fruition, and they were worried that mankind would treat a weakened Spirit like they did their Earth. They

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decided to return to their own ancient home, a dimension known as Paradise.

At last the day of "The Reckoning" was upon them. But a number of Spirits led by a powerful elder called Thomas rebelled against the idea of destroying mankind. They believed that the humans were the recipients of the Earth, and their actions were for the evolution of the species. Thomas devised a risky plan that involved himself and one other Spirit to travel to Earth and destroy the last gateway connecting it to Paradise. This saved man from apocalypse, but at the same time trapped Thomas on Earth.

The other Spirits were furious, declaring Thomas a rebel to be killed on sight. Yet there was little they could do, now that they were trapped in Paradise. Time passed and those that had been in favor of saving mankind were tracked down and killed, until only those that wanted an end to mankind remained.

Now in the spring of 2013, the Spirits have a chance to complete the plan they set in motion all those years ago, only this time there would be no savior for mankind... only death.

ON PARADISE

The Spirits have no physical form when on their home dimension of Paradise. Rather they look and feel like bright lights of heat and power. In this form, the Spirits can still communicate freely with others in their dimension and they project their emotions and ideas in a combination of verbal language and Empathic Thought Projection. The Spirits rely heavy on their advanced Empathic skills to achieve any task, unable to physically interact with their environment their thoughts are the only way they get anything done.

IN PHYSICAL FORM

Strength: 5
Agility: 6
Constitution: 4
Intelligence: 8
Education: 5
Charisma: 15
Empathy: 6
Initiative: 5
Movement: 2/8/15/30
Skill/Dam: 6/1d6*
Hits: 34/48
Appearing: 1 per party member

* *The Spirits can also use empathy to animate things in their surroundings.*

Consult the chart below to see the extent of this ability:

Stage One: Nothing animated.

Stage Two: Small objects such as loose stones and gravel can be hurled empathically at the characters. Any successful hits (using the spirits stats) will mean the targeted character is distracted for one phase.

Stage Three: As above but the objects are big enough now to do 1d6/2 damage, instead of distracting the character.

Stage Four: As Stage Three but objects do 1d6.

Stage 5 and 6: The Spirit has succeeded in animating a nearby object i.e. chimney, wall or statue and this will alter shape and attack the characters. These creatures, regardless of source have the following stats.

ANIMATED OBJECTS

Strength: 10

Agility: 4

Constitution 10

Intelligence: 2

Education: 1

Charisma: 0

Empathy: 0

Initiative: 4

Movement: 8/15

Skill/Dam: 8/2d6

Hits: 25/50

Appearing: As many as are animated

Physically, all the Spirits are very similar. All are male and look as if they are in their thirties, yet are all much older. They are perfect specimens, with their physical bodies a wonder to behold. However unlike earth, in their home dimension of Paradise they possess no corporeal form at all. Instead, they appear as ghostly white apparitions that change shape at will. Their physical bodies are only present while on Earth.

Their physical bodies are their downfall, because as they enter Earth's domain their physical body appears around them, and to most it is a most unpleasant experience. It can take minutes for the Spirit to adjust to his new fleshy cell; it is then that they are most vulnerable.

SPIRIT OF EARTH - JOSEPH

At the moment the gate opened after the crash of the Thermal Hammer, Joseph was the only Spirit able to pass through before the gateway slammed shut behind him. Joseph is an empathically strong being whose goals on Earth are two-fold; one to make sure Wells opens the gate, and two to track down and kill Thomas. The first part is easy enough if he can keep the investigators off Jason's back long enough to for him to complete the repairs on the Hammer's ITD. The second is a little harder, and although he feels Thomas' presence in the city he does not know exactly where the traitor hides.

Physically Joseph looks very similar to Thomas in that he is tall and beautiful. What he lacks however is the pure being that makes Thomas stand out in a crowd. Although he lacks the presence of the traitor, his empathic skills more than make up for it. Joseph has the ability to animate the elements of nature, be they rock, wood or stone. This empathic skill is best used when he brings to life an already sculptured or created ornament and uses it to do his bidding. Throughout the adventure the characters will encounter his creations in many different guises, each radiating an aura that is unmistakably one of empathic origin.

THE ANIMATES

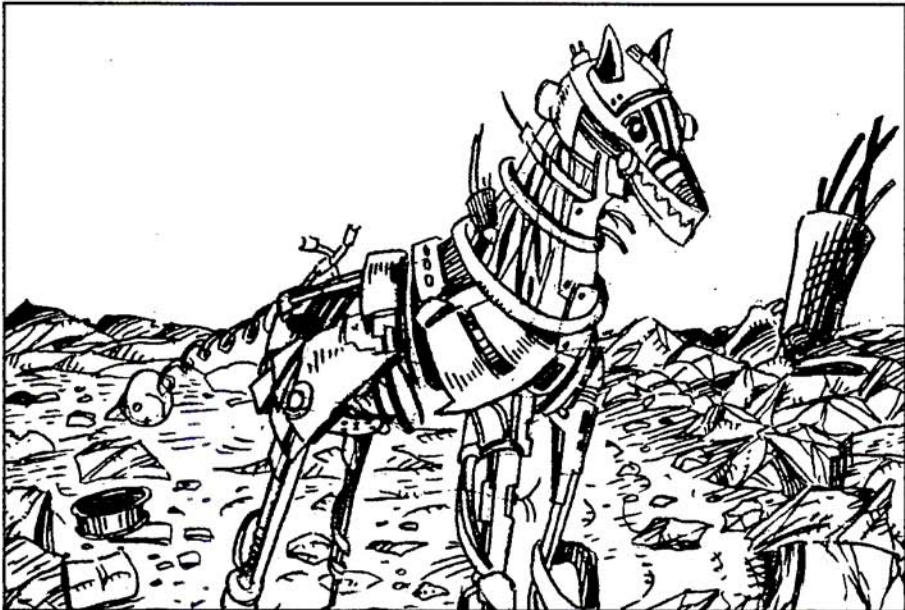
Joseph's empathic powers are impressive when they are used to animate various elements of Earth. He does find it easier to control objects that have already been sculptured and changed, rather than raw elements that take energy and time to alter into usable shapes. Therefore, most of what the characters will encounter are animated versions of objects they might see everyday, ornamental dragons, garden gnomes and gargoyles. It can be quite frightening to see normally inanimate objects become animated, and should perhaps keep the characters on their toes in the future, taking nothing for granted. Hopefully, the characters will be so nervous about these animated objects, that they will be on constant lookout for things that may spring to life.

THE HOUNDS

Strength:	6
Agility:	6
Constitution:	7
Intelligence:	3
Education:	1
Charisma:	1
Empathy:	0
Initiative:	5
Movement:	9/18/36*
Skill/Dam:	7/2d6
Hits:	20/40
# Appearing:	1 to 5

** Hounds have no crawling speed.
Hounds have an overall armor rating of 1.*

The Hounds are stone statues that many people use as good fenchú around their homes and gardens. Joseph has discovered that these are an abundant source of objects, even in the Citadel where many dealers in this sort of art reside. Normally about two or three feet tall, these rock objects can be deadly, moving at great speed and being able to hide in places most people would not expect.



THE DRAGONS

- Strength: 3
- Agility: 8
- Constitution: 3
- Intelligence: 4
- Education: 1
- Charisma: 1
- Empathy: 0
- Initiative: 4
- Movement: 15/30/45*
- Skill/Dam: 5/1d4+1
- Hits: 10/20
- # Appearing: Up to 10

** The Dragons only fly and never land.*

The Chinese dragons are just a special gift for the characters and have been chosen because they are the closest usable materials at the time. Not as strong or robust as the hounds, they are used as nothing more than a distraction to the characters, to insure that they aren't able to interrupt Wells as he makes a smash and grab raid on the ITD lab at Miracle. The Dragons are a novelty to Joseph and are treated as such, very beautiful and well crafted, the extra attention to detail is an added bonus and he will use it to full effect, with eyes flashing red, and forked tongue darting back and forth.



THE ROCK

Strength: 23
Agility: 4
Constitution: 18
Intelligence: 2
Education: 1
Charisma: 0
Empathy: 0
Initiative: 4
Movement: 4/8/15*
Skill/Dam: 8/3d10**
Hits: 50/100
Appearing: 1

The Rock has an overall armor rating of 1, except on the Chest and Abdomen which is 2.

** The Rock never runs.*

*** The Rock also can slap its target, sending it back half the damage distance in meters i.e. if The Rock hits a character for 15 damage, that character is propelled 7 meters by the force of the blow. This can be dangerous in a Sewer system.*

Perhaps Joseph's finest animate; it is constructed out from Norris' statue from the Gardens. The massive structure known as the Rock is a sight to behold, at least ten feet tall and almost as wide, it resembles little of it's original form as a sculpture. This creature is an imposing sight, which will quickly pass into local legend even after it is long gone. Rumors will abound about the creatures in the sewer, and the animated statues in the park.

Joseph has an added bonus for the Rock, and that is the ability for him to use it's eyes as if they were his own and project his voice from the Rock's mouth. These added skills come at a price with the Spirit being empathically drained for some time afterwards.

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THE GARGOYLES

Strength: 4
Agility: 5
Constitution: 6
Intelligence: 4
Education: 1
Charisma: 1
Empathy: 0
Initiative: 4
Movement: 12/25/40*
Skill/Dam: 6/1d6
Hits: 16/32
Appearing: 1 to 4

** movement is while the gargoyle is in the air. Normally they do not move when grounded.*

Gargoyles also have an overall armor rating of 1.

Joseph will call the gargoyles to him at the final confrontation between Thomas and himself. These are quite abundant in the Citadel perched abnormally in overhangs at strange corners. Most people in the Citadel no longer notice these additions to individual building architecture, and won't miss them once they are gone. There is also the problem with the Watchers, the creatures that observe the city (see The Shadow Falls), these creatures also pose as gargoyles, and as such have no love for the animated kind. Fights might erupt between the two.

Most of the gargoyles are ugly and chipped, having seen better days. This will not bother Joseph as their extra sharp edges and ability to fly will be an added bonus in keeping the characters occupied.

DEMONGROUND

The Electronic Fanzine of Dark Conspiracy



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