

FATE™

ADVERSARY TOOLKIT



BRIAN ENGARD

ED TURNER

CALLING ALL ADVERSARIES!

Antagonists. Obstacles. Villains. Foils. Impediments. Call them what you will, but a great campaign needs opposition to create stirring conflict. The **Fate Adversary Toolkit** offers a variety of ideas, mechanics, and hacks to help you make the most out of every obstacle in your game. Explore what an adversary is in Fate terms, and always remember that everything is a character. Inhabit hostile worlds and situations that work against the players. Face down mooks and big bads built to provide high stakes drama and engage everyone at the table. Learn how to use high quality adversaries to drive your stories to completion.

The **Fate Adversary Toolkit** is a **Fate Core** supplement. This Toolkit includes:

- A general approach that gives you the tools to create quality adversaries regardless of setting or genre.
- New categories of adversaries (enemies, obstacles, and constraints), each with their own rules, functions, and samples.
- Ideas on how to use environments to create conflict and make the most of battlefield zones.
- A Rogue's Gallery, full of sample adversaries separated by genre, with ideas on how to use the characters and settings provided to create plot.

Fate Toolkits.

All the tools to build your stage.

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Fate Adversary Toolkit

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pits of boiling acid that we totally didn't put beneath the trap door under
your seat I mean what trap door I don't see any trap door here, bears of the
robotic or non-robotic variety, criminal organizations pursuing ludicrous goals,
corporations, vampires, or dragons is purely coincidental, but kinda hilarious.

No—wait—we weren't laughing at you—NO!—it's not like
how it was back at the UniversitAAAAAAAARGH!!!

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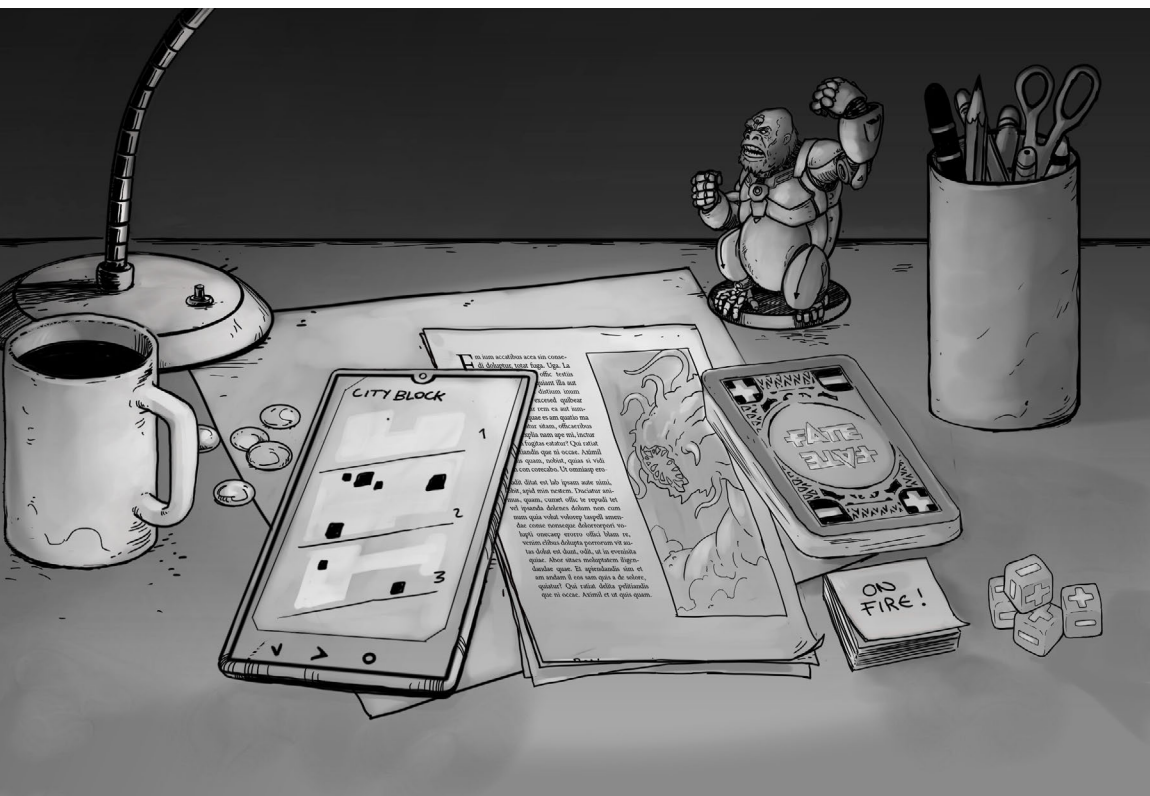
THE FATE TOOLKIT SERIES

Welcome to the *Fate Adversary Toolkit*, the first book in the new Fate Toolkit series. The Toolkits are exactly what they sound like—a collection of add-on tools to make things happen in your Fate games. As always, we encourage you to hack the rules to your liking, but sometimes it's nice to have a little help (or a little inspiration), and these Toolkits are designed to provide just that.

So how does this new series differ from the *Fate System Toolkit*? The *Fate System Toolkit* was like a buffet, but instead of serving a variety of foods, it was full of ideas for all different kinds of games. In this Toolkit series, though, each volume focuses on a specific theme. Some give help with a particular game element, such as creating effective adversaries and using them to drive the plot of your campaign, as in this volume here. Others are dedicated to a particular genre of game, like the *Fate Horror Toolkit*. Rather than taking a cookie-cutter approach, each volume is tailored to provide the most useful system hacks, samples, and story starters for the topic, so you'll find something new and different in every book.

We hope you'll check out our list of current and upcoming Toolkits on our website (www.evilhat.com/home/fate-toolkits).

Now, stand against your adversaries and face your Fate!



INTRODUCTION

This book follows in the footsteps of the *Fate System Toolkit*: it gives you rules you can use to challenge the players in your own Fate game, regardless of what setting or Fate iteration you're playing in, backing up those rules with many examples. Where this book differs from the *Fate System Toolkit* is that the *Fate Adversary Toolkit* focuses entirely, as its name suggests, on **adversaries**.

In Fate parlance, an adversary is anything that challenges the PCs or stands in their way. Crooks, soldiers, monsters, and villains are all adversaries, but so are locked doors, fire traps, collapsing buildings, and time bombs. Even things that are more abstract, like problematic relationships or issues you have to solve in indirect ways, can be adversaries.

In this book, you'll find rules for how to create various kinds of adversaries, as well as copious examples and advice on putting it all together. Here's what you'll read:

- *Types of Adversaries* gives you a brief overview of what “adversaries” means, what the different kinds of adversaries are, and how they can fit into your game.
- *Building Adversaries* provides you with all the rules you need to create your own adversaries.
- *Using Environments* gives you some tips and tricks on how to make your environments interesting and engaging, and how to tie some of the rules in this book directly to the zones that make up your battlefield.
- *Rogues Gallery* gives a series of spreads, each for a different setting or genre. Each spread contains a variety of adversaries for that genre, along with advice on running the spread as one scene or multiple.

Have fun using these rules to torment your players. Um, I mean “challenge.”



TYPES OF ADVERSARIES

As we talk about adversaries in this book, keep in mind the Fate Fractal: everything is a character (*Fate Core*, page 270). An adversary is not necessarily a person, monster, or other kind of creature you can punch. Rather, it's a thing that exists to hinder, challenge, or oppose the players.

There are three main types of adversaries: enemies, obstacles, and constraints.

Enemies

Enemies are the goons, super-villains, giant robots, and hyper-intelligent ape warriors. This is the enemy's defining characteristic: it can be fought directly, even if only under certain circumstances. Enemies have many of the same statistics as the PCs do: they have skills, they have at least one aspect, and the more important enemies have stunts, too. They can take stress, and some can take consequences.

There are four types of enemies: threats, hitters, bosses, and fillers.

- **Threats** exist to soak up hits. They look big and dangerous, they get in the PCs' faces, and they absorb both stress and attention. Threats have large stress tracks, and can usually absorb at least a mild consequence. Their skills tend to be defensive, and their stunts usually let them grab the PCs' attention and hold it.
- **Hitters** deal damage. They can't take much punishment, but they hit really hard. Their peak skill is usually Fight, Shoot, or a setting-specific equivalent. Their stress tracks are small, and they can rarely absorb consequences. Their stunts focus on hurting the PCs.
- **Bosses** are the lynchpins of an organization. You'll typically include one or two at most in a conflict, and they're often powerful. They have multiple high skills, can always absorb at least a mild consequence, and always have stunts. Their stunts' uses depend on their purpose in the fight. Some might be built to deal damage, others to avoid attention.
- **Fillers** are everyone else. These are paper people, enemies who exist as color, fragile minions who let the PCs look cool while taking them down. They never have consequences and rarely have a stress track with more than two boxes. They can act and be taken down as groups, don't have stunts, and typically are good at only one thing.



Obstacles

Unlike enemies, obstacles can't be attacked directly. Instead, they must be avoided, circumvented, or simply dealt with. They always have skills and aspects, and never have stunts, stress, or consequences. Obstacles can't be punched into submission; they have to be endured or avoided.

There are three types of enemies: hazards, blocks, and distractions.

- **Hazards** hurt the players or threaten to do so—fire jets, spinning fan blades, or bombs that might explode at any second. A hazard has a skill and an aspect that define its purpose.
- **Blocks** get in the PCs' way. They can do damage, but mostly they deny access. A steel door with a complex keypad, a sophisticated AI counterhacking measure, a magical force field: all of these are blocks. A block has a skill and an aspect that define its purpose.
- **Distractions** exist to make the PCs think about what they need to accomplish in a scene. Distractions give them a difficult choice: the villain is getting away, but there's a bus full of innocent civilians about to go off the cliff! Distractions don't always have stats. When they do, it's typically just an aspect and passive opposition to roll against. Distractions are more about narrative challenge than mechanical challenge.

Constraints

While enemies and obstacles are distinct types of adversaries, constraints are modifiers of enemies and obstacles. By adding a constraint to an enemy or an obstacle, you'll make it harder to deal with.

There are three types of constraints: countdowns, limitations, and resistances.

- **Countdowns** create urgency. The bomb will blow in thirty seconds! The stagecoach will go off the cliff in two exchanges! The ritual will finish in one hour! You decide what unit of time you'll use to create that urgency, but countdowns typically work in days, hours, minutes, or exchanges. The important thing is that there must be a consequence for the clock striking zero. It could be the arrival of more enemies or obstacles, someone's death or transformation, or some sort of dramatic change to the status quo, making a new aspect.
- **Limitations** prevent the PCs from taking certain actions. It's not an out-and-out restriction, though; a PC should always be free to take the limited action if she wants to deal with the consequences of doing so. Maybe the PCs are fighting in a nuclear reactor, and firing off gunshots could be disastrous. Maybe the monster is actually a PC's brother, transformed. Maybe the villain has a dead-man switch. Again, it's all about consequence: if you engage in this action, this will happen.
- **Resistances** make other adversaries hard to handle in a particular way. The dragon's scales are impervious to mortal weaponry. The mob boss is protected by dirty cops. The bomb is so complex that disarming it using conventional means will almost certainly detonate it. Resistances force the PCs to vary their tactics, to come up with a Plan B. A really good resistance fuels the bulk of the session: because the dragon's scales are immune to mortal weaponry, we must go on a quest to find the one sword that *will* hurt it.

BUILDING ADVERSARIES

Building adversaries is a lot like building anything else in Fate. All of the adversary types use the same building blocks as characters: aspects, skills, stunts, stress tracks, and consequences. Some adversaries have all of these components, while others just have one or two. Most fall somewhere in between.

When you're creating adversaries and you're faced with the choice of using rules in this book or another Fate book, use whichever feels better. Use whichever does the job the way you want it done. There's no need to stick with a choice, either. You might be playing *Shadow of the Century* and decide that throwing in some mooks and a lieutenant from that book is appropriate for one fight, while in the next you'll use some threats, hitters, and a boss from this book. That's fine. Heck, throw them into the same fight if you want to!

The bottom line is that everything in this book is Fate, and you can use it with—or instead of—other Fate books with little to no tweaking. If you're playing something like *Fate Accelerated* or *The Dystopian Universe RPG*, you might want to swap out skills for approaches or means, but that's easy enough and everything else should work just fine.

You can also combine the advice in this chapter with the rules in other Fate books. If you want to run a straight-up *Atomic Robo RPG* or *Dresden Files Accelerated Edition* game without any of the rules presented here, you can still use the advice in this book to help you use those rules more effectively.

Have fun.

Enemies

Enemies have one thing in common: you can punch them. Or more accurately, you can defeat them by attacking them. All enemies have aspects, skills, and stress tracks. Some have stunts, and some have consequences.

Enemies are the most familiar type of adversary because they are the most similar to player characters. The NPCs opposing the PCs are typically enemies, but enemies don't *have* to be people (or robots, or gorillas, or whatever). It might be an idol in a magic circle that pulses with malevolent energy—as long as you can defeat it by dealing it stress, it's an enemy. A fire raging out of control could be an enemy; it'll attack nearby PCs and take stress whenever they hose it down or combat it with other firefighting techniques.

Enemies are your bread and butter as a GM. They're the main course. They're the lion's share of the adversaries you'll use, because fighting things in Fate is dramatic and interesting, whether it's a fistfight or an argument on the floor of the Galactic Senate.

There are four types of enemies: threats (page 10), hitters (page 12), bosses (page 14), and fillers (page 16).

Threats

Threats exist to threaten: that is, they draw the PCs' attention, hold it, and soak up punishment. They're not necessarily the hardest hitters, but leaving them to their own devices is problematic. They get up in the PCs' faces and make the PCs want to get rid of them. Threats are your tanks; they're meat shields for the really important or nasty enemies in the fight.

ASPECTS

Threats have a high concept and a trouble. If a threat's particularly important, give her a third aspect. Emphasize her physical size, toughness, immovability, or stubbornness. Give her an Achilles' heel that the PCs can exploit.

SKILLS

Set the threat's apex skill to one step above the PCs' highest-rated skill or, if you want a particularly tough threat, two steps above. Then, give your threat two more skills rated one step below the apex skill. If you want to define the threat further, give her three more skills rated one step below that.

A physical threat prioritizes Physique, then Fight or Shoot. Skills like Athletics and Will are useful for getting out of the way or resisting mental or social attacks. A social threat prioritizes Will, then some combination of Empathy, Rapport, Provoke, and Deceive. Lore is useful for creating advantages.

STUNTS

Threats need at least one stunt that they can use to make the PCs want to deal with them. A really tough threat could also have a stunt that makes her tougher, giving her an Armor rating or extra stress boxes. Here are some examples of threatening stunts:

Grenadier: By spending a fate point, you can physically attack everyone in a zone.

Bodyguard: Designate a character, place, or object to guard. Whenever that thing is attacked and you are in the same zone, you can spend a fate point to redirect the attack to yourself. You gain Armor:1 against this attack.

Naysayer: +2 to create advantages with Provoke by fomenting arguments that undermine the PCs or make them look foolish.

QUICK-AND-DIRTY ENEMY STUNTS

If you need a stunt for an enemy quickly, pick one of these and call it a day. Some of these might be a touch powerful for a PC, but they're fine for an NPC who might not be around for more than one fight.

- When you attack with your apex skill, you get Weapon:2.
- When you defend with your apex skill, you get Armor:2.
- Twice per session, you can use your apex skill in place of any other skill.
- Once per session, you can attack everyone in a zone with your apex skill.



STRESS AND CONSEQUENCES

Physical threats have large physical stress tracks because of their high Physique, while social threats have similarly large mental stress tracks because of their high Will.

If you're using Fate rules that don't grant additional stress boxes for high skill ratings, consider giving the threat a stunt that does so. In addition, all threats have at least a mild consequence slot; particularly tough ones also have a moderate slot.

USING THREATS

Threats always get right up in the PCs' faces. They don't let up. They don't go easy. They attack constantly, relentlessly, making nuisances of themselves. When a threat gets taken out, the PCs should be relieved. Don't be cautious with your threats; they exist to soak up punishment, and they have the chops to do so.

Put at least one threat into most fights. An easy fight has one, a standard fight has two or three, and a climactic encounter probably has four or five. Any conflict with a boss should have at least two threats to take the heat off of the boss, and any fight with a hitter should have at least one threat to distract the PCs.

When you're describing threats, play up their menace. The bodyguards are big and tough, brandishing nasty-looking weapons. The king's chamberlain brooks no nonsense, does not tolerate fools, and is looking for an opportunity to get the rabble-rousing PCs tossed out of the palace. Threats get in the way of the PCs' plans; they exist to thwart and stymie. They're roadblocks.

Hitters

Hitters are often easily overlooked, but they're able to strike with devastating effect. They don't necessarily hit hard *every* time, but under optimal circumstances, they can really make the PCs hurt.

That said, hitters can dish it out but typically can't take it. Often, the PCs won't know that a hitter is a threat until it's done some damage, but once the PCs know about it, they should be able to take it down fairly quickly. Hitters are glass cannons.

ASPECTS

Hitters have a high concept and a trouble. If a hitter is particularly important, give her a third aspect. Emphasize how dangerous she is or why she's difficult to notice. Give her a weakness that points to some oversight, overconfidence, or other exploitable flaw.

SKILLS

Set the hitter's apex skill to one step above the PCs' highest-rated skill or, if you want a particularly dangerous hitter, two steps above. Then, give your hitter two more skills rated one step below the apex skill. If you want to define the hitter further, give her three more skills rated one step below that.

Prioritize skills that deal stress to the PCs. For physical hitters, Fight or Shoot are the most important. Other skills should focus on mobility or keeping attention elsewhere; Sneak, Deceive, and Athletics are all good choices. For social hitters, Provoke, Deceive, and Rapport could all be used to good effect. Other important skills are Empathy, Notice, and Contacts. Don't give hitters skills like Physique or Will. If an enemy is both tough *and* hits really hard, it's a boss, not a hitter.

STUNTS

A hitter always has, at the very least, a stunt that confers Weapon:2 on her primary attack. If you want to make her particularly dangerous, give her a stunt that makes her harder to spot too. Another excellent type of stunt to give a hitter is a way to hit really hard with a non-standard skill under the right circumstances; this way, the hitter can do her job, but becomes less effective when confronted directly. Here are some examples:

Sniper: When you attack with Shoot and invoke an aspect representing careful aim, you gain Weapon:2 on the attack.

Sneak Attack: Provided you haven't been spotted by your target yet, you can attack with Sneak instead of Fight.

Ninja Vanish: By spending a fate point, you can make yourself vanish from the scene entirely. Then, at the end of any later turn, you can spend another fate point to make yourself reappear anywhere in the scene and immediately attack.



STRESS AND CONSEQUENCES

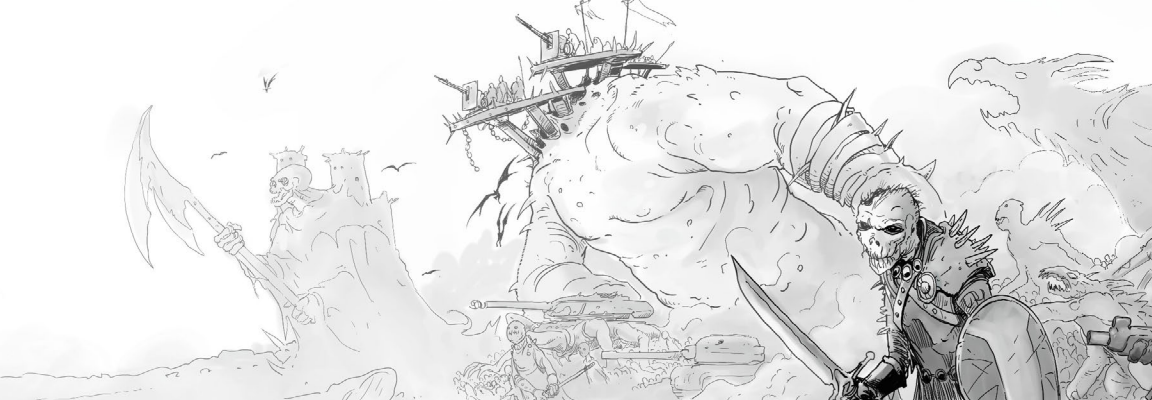
Most hitters will have the bare minimum stress track. If you want a hitter to be particularly important or nasty, give her a mild consequence slot. Otherwise, don't give her any consequence slots. Hitters show up, hit hard, and die off quickly.

USING HITTERS

Where threats are all about relentless assault, using a hitter effectively is a game of patience and opportunity. At first, the PCs might not even clearly see there *is* a hitter in the scene. Keep your hitter unseen or unnoticed, maneuver her into position, and then strike without remorse. Don't be afraid to spend a fate point or two to make a hitter's attack count; she may not get a second chance. Once the PCs start focusing on your hitter, don't spend a lot of resources trying to protect her. Let the PCs feel awesome. Hitters are meant to be fragile, and protecting them generally isn't worth it, especially once they've pulled their trick off.

Don't use hitters in every conflict. If you put a hitter in a conflict, a PC will likely take a consequence. Putting two in a fight means you might put down some serious hurt. Three could mean that a PC gets taken out.

When you do use hitters, put in other enemies to distract from the hitter. Threats are perfect for this, and fillers can be good too. As for obstacles, a distraction or a block can make for good camouflage, too.



Bosses

Where threats and hitters are specialized enemies, and fillers are generic bad guys, bosses are those special enemies who the PCs just can't wait to take down. Bosses are the focal point of a set-piece battle, the big personalities that drive the adventure, the antagonists that hound the PCs at every turn.

ASPECTS

Bosses have a full spread of five aspects. Give your boss a high concept that drives home what she's all about. Is she the **CORRUPT POLICE CAPTAIN**? The **NECROMANCER GENERAL**? Your boss's trouble should be a closely guarded secret that the PCs can exploit if they find out about it.

For the other three aspects, come up with some unique sh'ticks that your boss relies on, things that'll make her memorable. Maybe the corrupt police captain is an **EXPERT MARTIAL ARTIST**, or maybe the necromancer general carries the **ALL-SEEING STAFF**.

SKILLS

A good boss has highly rated skills, and lots of them. Bosses are far more versatile than either hitters or threats and, unlike those two types of enemies, it's entirely within your purview to make a boss who's both good at dealing damage *and* good at taking it.

First, look at the highest-rated PC skill. Either give your boss one skill rated at two steps higher, or two skills rated at one step higher. If your boss has one apex skill, give her two skills rated at one step lower, then three rated at one step below that, and so on until you've filled out every step of the ladder down to Fair (+2). If the boss has two apex skills, give her three rated at one step below, then four, and so on down until Fair (+2). All of her other skills are Average (+1).

Your boss should prioritize skills that support her personality. The corrupt police captain probably has high social skills, some good combat skills, and skills like Drive, Lore, and Crafts down toward the bottom of her pyramid. The necromancer general probably prioritizes Lore above all else, then goes on to prioritize things like Resources, Provoke, Contacts, and Crafts, then leaves more physically oriented skills for the bottom of her pyramid. Of course, you can always subvert these expectations.



STUNTS

A boss always has at least one stunt, and as many as three. Create stunts that make the boss memorable, stunts that bring in more bad guys to fight, stunts that make the boss hard to deal with, and stunts that represent her social status or allies. Here are some examples:

Connected: Once per session, you can draw on your contacts to bring in reinforcements. These reinforcements take the form of either one hitter with an apex skill rated equal to your Contacts, two threats with apex skills rated one step lower than your Contacts, or Fair (+2) fillers equal in number to your Contacts. When you use this stunt, you can spend one fate point to gain +2 to Contacts, to a maximum of Great (+4), for the purpose of bringing in these reinforcements.

Escape Plan: Once per session, if you would get taken out, you can spend a fate point to concede instead.

Mook Shield: Whenever you are attacked, you can spend a fate point to divert the attack to nearby filler enemies.

STRESS AND CONSEQUENCES

Bosses have stress tracks of varying lengths based on their skills, but all bosses have at least a mild and a moderate consequence slot, and a particularly nasty boss has a severe consequence slot too.

USING BOSSES

All bosses are memorable, with personalities and goals of their own. To that end, taking a boss down should always be a big deal, and probably shouldn't happen every session. You can let the PCs *fight* a boss frequently, but be careful with your bosses—don't be afraid to concede. They're not as disposable as other kinds of enemies are, so it's a viable tactic to concede, so the boss can threaten the PCs later. But don't rob the PCs of their victory, either. When the PCs *do* defeat a boss, make it a big deal, and reward them accordingly.

Most fights with a boss contain only one, though you could have two or even three in a really climactic encounter. That should be the exception rather than the rule, though, and it's often useful to call out which boss is a bigger deal than the others. In an encounter, use your boss's personality to inform how she behaves. An aggressive, combative boss will get right up in the PCs' faces, while a cautious, politically oriented boss will hide behind minions.



Fillers

When you want to fill your scene with enemies, but you don't want the complexity of adding more hitters, threats, or bosses, then fillers are what you need. Fillers are easy to run and keep track of, and they let the PCs feel like badasses as they take down hordes of bad guys.

ASPECTS

Give your filler enemy a name that encapsulates its function in the scene, like **MOB ENFORCER**, **CRAZED VELOCIRAPTOR**, or **FLAMETHROWER TURRET**. A filler's name is an aspect, and its only aspect.

SKILLS

First, decide on your filler's quality: Average, Fair, or Good:

- An Average filler has one Average (+1) skill.
- A Fair filler has one Fair (+2) skill.
- A Good filler has one Good (+3) skill and one Average (+1) skill.

You can use skills from *Fate Core* or whatever Fate game you're playing, or you can make up brand-new skills specific to your fillers. Those mob enforcers might have Fair (+2) Tommy Guns, while the crazed velociraptors might have Good (+3) Claws & Fangs and Average (+1) Dodge. If a filler enemy ever does something that isn't covered by its skills, it rolls at Mediocre (+0) or it automatically fails (if that would be simpler).

STUNTS

Fillers don't get stunts. They exist to be simple, and stunts make them more complex than they need to be. You can, at your option, make them **dangerous fillers**, giving them Weapon:1.

STRESS AND CONSEQUENCES

A filler has one 1-stress box per quality step—so a Good filler has three 1-stress boxes, for example. Unlike characters and other types of enemies, a filler can mark off as many of its stress boxes as it likes to absorb a single hit. So, if a filler takes a 2-stress hit, it can mark off two of its stress boxes.

Fillers never have consequence slots.



GROUPING FILLERS

To make fillers simpler and more effective, you can group a number of them into a single enemy. A filler group has all of the skills that its fillers have. For every two fillers with the same skill in the group, add a +1 bonus to that skill. A filler group's skills can never be rated higher than Great (+4), however.

A crazed velociraptor groups up with a mob enforcer, so the group has Good (+3) Claws & Fangs, Fair (+2) Tommy Gun, and Average (+1) Dodge. Later, when a second mob enforcer joins, the group's Tommy Gun increases to Good (+3).

To make the group's stress track, arrange the stress boxes of each filler in the group into a single track. Divide up the track so you can figure out when each filler in the group gets taken out, with weaker fillers on the left and stronger fillers on the right.

The group of two mob enforcers and a velociraptor would have a stress track that looks like this:

☐☐ | ☐☐ | ☐☐☐

When the group takes stress, start ticking off boxes on the left, and move to the right until all the stress has been absorbed, or the entire group has been taken out. Because the track is divided up by each filler, you'll be able to tell when each filler gets taken out, letting you reduce the group's skills appropriately. When fillers are grouped, it's entirely possible for PCs to take out multiple fillers in one go.

USING FILLERS

Fillers are there to be color. They fill out the ranks of the enemy team, but they're not particularly dangerous or durable. Don't be afraid to drop a bunch of them into a fight, grouping them up to keep things simple and make them a little more threatening. Fillers are easy come, easy go, so don't go out of your way to protect them. You can also put fillers in a support role, creating advantages that they pass to more powerful enemies. A group of goons laying down distracting covering fire can make the hitter sneaking up behind the PCs that much more dangerous by passing him a free invoke or two.

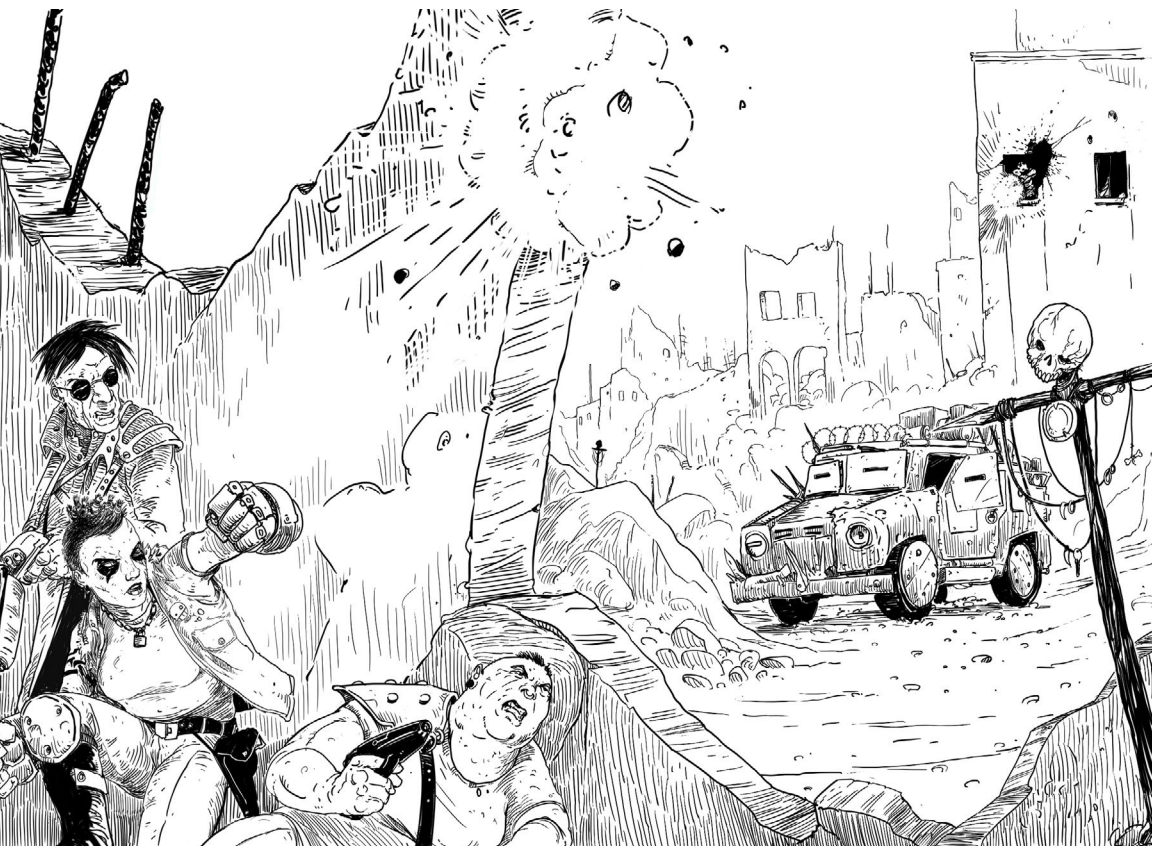
Obstacles

The defining quality of enemies is that they can be attacked and taken out. By contrast, the defining quality of obstacles is that they cannot. Obstacles make scenes demonstrably more difficult on the PCs, but the PCs cannot simply fight them. Obstacles must be circumvented, endured, or rendered irrelevant.

While most obstacles are features of the environment, some might be characters that can't be taken out using conventional methods. The dragon might be a boss, but it might just as easily be a hazard obstacle. The animate statue keeping you from getting to the evil wizard might be a threat, but it could also be a block or a distraction. It all depends on the adversary's function in the scene, and how PCs must deal with it.

In general, obstacles don't appear in every scene. They serve to accent enemies in the scene, to make them more threatening or memorable, but overuse of obstacles can be frustrating to the PCs, particularly those focused on combat. You *can* use them to give less combative PCs something to do during a fight, though.

There are three types of obstacles: hazards (page 19), blocks (page 21), and distractions (page 23).



Hazards

If an obstacle can attack the PCs, it's a hazard. Fire jets, rolling boulders, or a sniper too far away to be dealt with directly—they're all hazards. Every hazard has a name, a skill rating, and a Weapon rating of 1 to 4.

The hazard's name is both a skill and an aspect; that is, the name defines what the hazard can do, and its skill rating defines how good it is at doing that, but the name can also be invoked or compelled like any aspect. Generally speaking, a hazard's skill rating should be at least as high as the PCs' highest skill rating, if not a little bit higher.

Here are some examples:

Great (+4) **MACHINE-GUN TURRET**, Weapon:3

Fantastic (+6) **WHIRLING SPIKE APPARATUS**, Weapon:2

Superb (+5) **DISTANT SNIPER**, Weapon:4

A hazard acts in the initiative just like the PCs and their enemies do. If your rules require everyone to roll for initiative, hazards will roll with their rating.

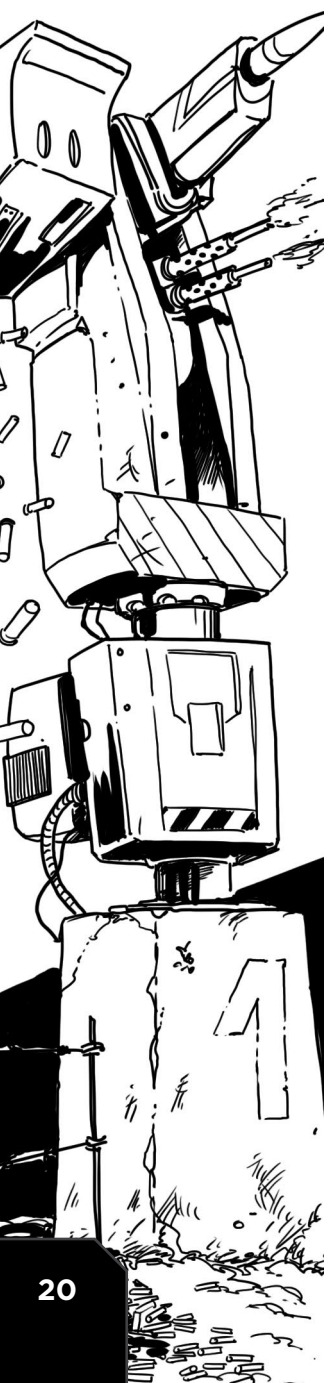
On its turn each exchange, a hazard acts as implied by its name, and rolls with its rating. If it attacks and succeeds, add its Weapon rating to its shifts. Hazards can attack or create advantages; they can't be attacked, and they don't overcome obstacles.

If a player wants to overcome or create an advantage against a hazard, they'll face passive opposition equal to the hazard's rating.

Joan is near the window, and there's a **DISTANT SNIPER** out there, a hazard with a Superb (+5) rating and Weapon:4. At the beginning of the conflict, the sniper used its Superb (+5) rating to determine its initiative. Now that it has a chance to act, it attacks Joan, rolling an Epic (+6) result! That's a tough attack to defend against, and if Joan can't, the sniper's Weapon:4 will deal a lot of stress to her.

WHICH WEAPON RATING?

Which Weapon rating you choose depends on how lethal you want to make your hazard. A hazard with a very high skill rating *and* a very high Weapon rating will likely take out a PC or two. You could also make a hazard with a lower skill rating but a high Weapon rating, making for something that doesn't hit often but hits hard when it does. Reversing that makes for a hazard that hits frequently but doesn't do much damage—more of a nuisance than a hazard, but that might be what you want.



USING HAZARDS

Hazards, like enemies, can attack the PCs, and they're very simple to run, so you might be tempted to use them often. This isn't necessarily a bad instinct, but keep this in mind: hazards can't be attacked or taken out like enemies can. This might mean that the hazard stays in play for the entire scene, continually causing the PCs stress that they can't mitigate effectively. There are a few ways you can offset this, should you wish to.

First, you could make a hazard situational. The **MACHINE-GUN TURRET** will attack, but only when the PCs are in the hallway. The **LONE SNIPER** will try to pick people off, but there's a lot of cover that can confound her sight lines. Giving the PCs actions they can take to avoid being attacked by hazards can make for interesting, complex tactical scenes, particularly when the PCs must *leave* their safe spots in order to accomplish their goals. Difficult decisions can be a lot of fun.

Second, you could let the PCs overcome a hazard. Maybe they can shut off the **MACHINE-GUN TURRET** by getting to the control panel. Perhaps that **WHIRLING SPIKE APPARATUS** will stop whirling if they jam a giant piece of metal in it. To disable a hazard, you must first take a risk, putting yourself (or someone else) in some kind of danger, and then roll an overcome action against passive opposition equal to the hazard's rating. So, you have to run down the hallway guarded by the machine guns in order to get to the control panel you can use to shut them off, or you have to get dangerously close to the whirling spikes in order to jam the hunk of metal into the apparatus.

Third, you could let the PCs turn a hazard into an enemy under the right circumstances. This requires a risk, and often requires time or an overcome roll. Maybe the PCs just really want to blow up that **MACHINE-GUN TURRET**, but the turret is behind a metal shield. Hacking a console to disable the shield—a console that's in the hallway it's firing on—could transform the machine gun from hazard into threat, letting the PCs attack it. If a PC is willing to run right at that **DISTANT SNIPER**, spending an exchange and drawing her fire, he could actually attack her in single combat, as a hitter rather than a hazard. This is similar to simply disabling a hazard, but requires the PCs to take an extra step. It can be more exciting, but it takes more time and effort on the PCs' part.

Blocks

Where hazards exist to hurt the PCs, blocks prevent them from doing things they want to do. Blocks *can* cause stress, though they don't always. The chief difference between blocks and hazards is that blocks don't take actions, while hazards do. Blocks provide passive opposition in certain circumstances, and can threaten or cause harm if not heeded.

Like hazards, blocks have a name and a skill rating, and the name is both a skill and an aspect. Unlike hazards, a block's skill rating shouldn't be much higher than one step above the PCs' highest skill rating; otherwise, things can get frustrating quickly. A block can have a Weapon rating as high as 4, but it doesn't need to have one. Here are some examples:

Fair (+2) **CHAIN LINK FENCE**

Good (+3) **VAT OF ACID**, Weapon:4

Great (+4) **ANIMATE STATUE**, Weapon:1

Blocks only come into play under specific circumstances. A **VAT OF ACID** only matters when someone tries to cross it or gets thrown into it. A **CHAIN LINK FENCE** only affects someone who tries to get past it. The **ANIMATE STATUE** only prevents entry into a specific room.

Blocks don't attack and don't have a turn in the initiative order. Instead, whenever a block would interfere with someone's action, they'll have to roll against the block's rating as passive opposition. If the block can't cause harm, like if it's a **CHAIN LINK FENCE**, it simply prevents the PC from taking the action they wanted to. If it can cause harm—like if it's a **VAT OF ACID**—and the PC fails to overcome the block, the PC takes a hit as if the block attacked the PC, and the PC failed to defend by the same margin by which it failed to overcome the block.

Also, characters can try to force someone into a block as an attack. If you do this, you'll roll to attack as normal, but add a Weapon rating equal to half the block's Weapon rating (rounded down, minimum 1). So, anyone trying to cross the **VAT OF ACID** would need to beat Good (+3) opposition. If someone tried to force you into the acid, they'd attack you with Physique and, if they succeeded, add Weapon:2.

Finally, some blocks can be used as cover or as armor. This is situational—for some blocks, it simply won't make sense. You can't hide behind a **VAT OF ACID**, and a **CHAIN LINK FENCE** won't stop a bullet. But that **CHAIN LINK FENCE** *is* effective protection against a baseball bat, probably preventing the attack altogether. And if the evil wizard is hiding behind the **ANIMATE STATUE**, it might soak up some damage.

When someone's using a block as cover, decide whether it mitigates or negates the attack. If it negates it, the attack simply isn't possible. If it mitigates it, the defender gets an Armor rating equal to half the block's skill rating (rounded down, minimum 1). So, if the evil wizard used the **ANIMATE STATUE** as cover, he'd get Armor:2.



USING BLOCKS

Blocks make it harder for PCs to take certain actions, so they can be frustrating if you overuse them. But they can also force the PCs to think creatively, or even to figure out how to use the blocks to their advantage.

Use blocks sparingly; in many cases, you'll want to use a threat or two instead. That said, sometimes a block is exactly what you want, and they're pretty simple to use. If your players are getting frustrated with a particular block, you can give them the option to disable it somehow.

To disable a block, removing it from the scene, you must take a risk, putting yourself (or someone else) in danger, and make an overcome roll. The overcome roll is against passive opposition rated two steps higher than the block's rating.

Hailey wants to remove the threat of falling into the Good (+3) **VAT OF ACID**, so she decides to try to drop the vat's lid down on it.

"You're going to have scramble over the vat to get to the lid," says the GM. "Give me a Superb (+5) Athletics roll. If you fail, you're going to fall in."

Josh is facing down a Great (+4) **ANIMATE STATUE**, an enemy he can't seem to damage but that has no problem attacking him. He needs to get rid of it. He knows that etching a rune in the statue's forehead might disable it, but to do that he needs to get pretty close.

"Okay," says the GM. "Give me a Fantastic (+6) Fight roll to get close enough to etch the rune without getting clobbered."

Distractions

Where hazards attack the PCs directly and blocks prevent them from taking certain actions, distractions force the PCs to figure out their priorities. Of the obstacles, distractions are often the least mechanically defined. They also don't necessarily make the scene mechanically harder. Rather, they present the PCs with difficult decisions.

Here are the distraction's parts:

- A distraction's **name** is a brief, punchy representation of what it is. It can be an aspect, if you need or want it to be.
- A distraction's **choice** is a simple question that codifies the decision it gives to the PCs.
- A distraction's **repercussion** is what happens to the PCs if they don't deal with the distraction. Some distractions might have multiple repercussions.
- A distraction's **opposition** is its passive opposition against PCs rolling to deal with it. Not every distraction needs to provide opposition.

Here are some examples:

SINISTER RITUAL

Choice: Do you deal with the enemies attacking you, or do you stop the ritual?

Repercussion: The cultists complete the ritual and summon the vile demon.

BUS FULL OF CIVILIANS

Opposition: Good (+3)

Choice: Will the bus plunge off the bridge?

Repercussion (leave them): All of the civilians on the bus die.

Repercussion (save them): The villain gets away!

THE GLITTERING GEM

Choice: Will you take the gem from the pedestal?

Repercussion (leave the gem): You don't get the gem, which is incredibly valuable.

Repercussion (take the gem): You activate the traps in the temple.

USING DISTRACTIONS

Distractions are a great way to put more pressure on a scene. If you're afraid the PCs will deal handily with a fight you've got in store, adding a distraction or two can force them to decide whether it's more important to trounce the bad guys or deal with the distractions.

Dealing with a distraction should always have a clear benefit or, failing that, not dealing with a distraction should always have a clear consequence. That said, you don't *have* to let them know about any negative outcomes of dealing with the distraction.

Constraints

Constraints aren't so much a type of adversary as they are a way to modify other adversaries. They make it more difficult or complex to deal with enemies or obstacles. You can use constraints to create urgency, to make particular adversaries more threatening, or to force the PCs to deal with an adversary in a way they otherwise wouldn't.

You don't have to use constraints at all, but they can add texture to an encounter or nuance to a villain. Note that adding constraints to an adversary can make that adversary a lot more difficult to deal with. There's advice on this in each constraint entry.

There are three types of constraints: countdowns (page 25), limitations (page 28), and resistances (page 29).



Countdowns

A countdown adds urgency to an adversary: deal with it now or things will get worse. Whether you're talking about a ticking bomb, a ritual near completion, a bus teetering on the edge of a suspension bridge, or a soldier with a radio who's about to call in reinforcements, countdowns force the PCs to act quickly or face a worse outcome.

Countdowns have three components: a countdown track, one or more triggers, and an outcome.

The **countdown track** looks a lot like a stress track: it's a row of boxes that you mark from left to right. Every time you check off a box, the countdown gets closer to being over.

A **trigger** is an event that marks a box on the countdown track. It can be as simple as "a minute/hour/day/exchange elapses" or as specific as "the evil villain takes a consequence or gets taken out."

When you mark the last box, the countdown ends and the **outcome** happens, whatever it is.

You can give your countdown more than one trigger if you want; perhaps the countdown proceeds at a predictable pace until something happens that accelerates it. You could also give a different trigger to each box on the countdown track, if you want a specific series of events to set off the outcome.

You can find some examples of countdowns attached to enemies and obstacles starting on page 26.

USING COUNTDOWNS

Countdowns are all about urgency. They force the PCs to deal with particular threats, or to escape them before things get worse. Use them sparingly; sometimes you want the PCs to be able to deal with threats at their own pace, so they can highlight their competence. But when you want to really put the screws to them, countdowns can help.

Countdowns are also useful for threatening PCs who are hard to threaten. If your PCs are incredibly efficient in every fight, give them a fight with a countdown or two that threatens to make their lives incredibly difficult. Or, better yet, give them two countdowns that are difficult to deal with simultaneously. Force them to choose.

You can also use countdowns to add verisimilitude to encounters, as with the forward scout (page 26). The scout's countdown might represent a flare gun or a radio that the scout uses to call his team for backup. Showing the PCs that their enemies also have people they can rely upon can make the world feel a bit more real.

You don't have to confine a countdown to a single scene. You could attach a countdown to your main villain, as with Baron von Darkness (page 27), that represents their master plan and its stages. Doing this adds both structure and urgency to your adventure or campaign, impressing upon the PCs that if they don't act, the villain will go ahead and realize his plans.

One word of caution: tracking many countdowns at once can be difficult, particularly if they all have different triggers. If your scene has three or four countdowns that all trigger at different times, you might find yourself forgetting to check off some of their boxes.

TICKING TIME BOMB

OBSTACLE

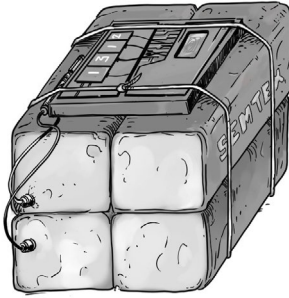
Opposition: Good (+3)

COUNTDOWN □□□□

Trigger: An exchange elapses.

Trigger: Someone tries to disarm the bomb, but fails by 2 or more shifts.

Outcome: The bomb explodes. (Depending on the needs and tone of your game, the explosion might kill everyone in the building, cause automatic stress to everyone in its zone, create a temporal anomaly, or have any number of other effects.)



Forward Scout

ASPECTS

LOYAL AGENT OF THE EMPIRE;
BETTER PART OF VALOR

SKILLS

Good (+3): Athletics
Fair (+2): Shoot, Sneak

STRESS

Physical [1][2]
Mental [1][2]

STUNTS

Scout Armor: The scout has Armor:1 against small-arms fire and melee weapons.

CONSEQUENCES

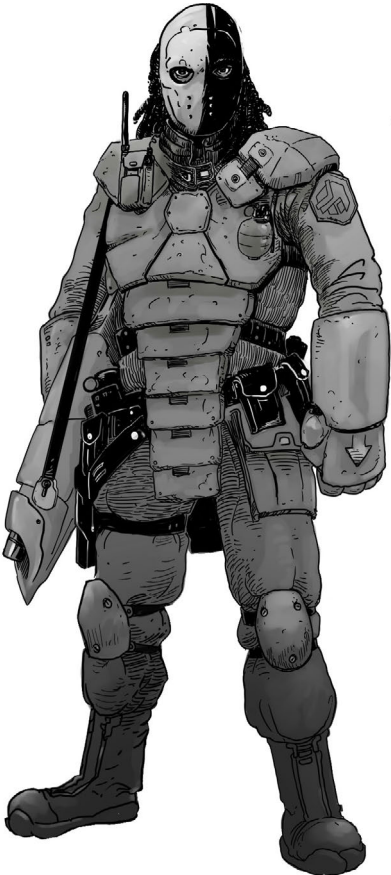
Mild:

COUNTDOWN □□□□□

Trigger (first box): The scout is attacked.

Trigger (remaining boxes): One minute elapses.

Outcome: Reinforcements arrive.



Baron von Darkness

ASPECTS

DARK LORD OF CRIME; “MY INTELLECT IS UNPARALLELED!”; **FEARSOME DEATH RAY;** **WANTED IN SIXTEEN COUNTRIES;** “I’LL RULE THIS CITY ONE DAY.”

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Contacts
Great (+4): Deceit, Will
Good (+3): Provoke, Rapport, Shoot
Fair (+2): Crafts, Fight, Lore, Physique
Average (+1): Everything else

STRESS

Physical
Mental

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

Moderate:

Severe:

STUNTS

Contingency Plan: Whenever Baron von Darkness takes a consequence, you can pay a fate point to remove him from the scene (in a puff of smoke), replacing him with two threats.

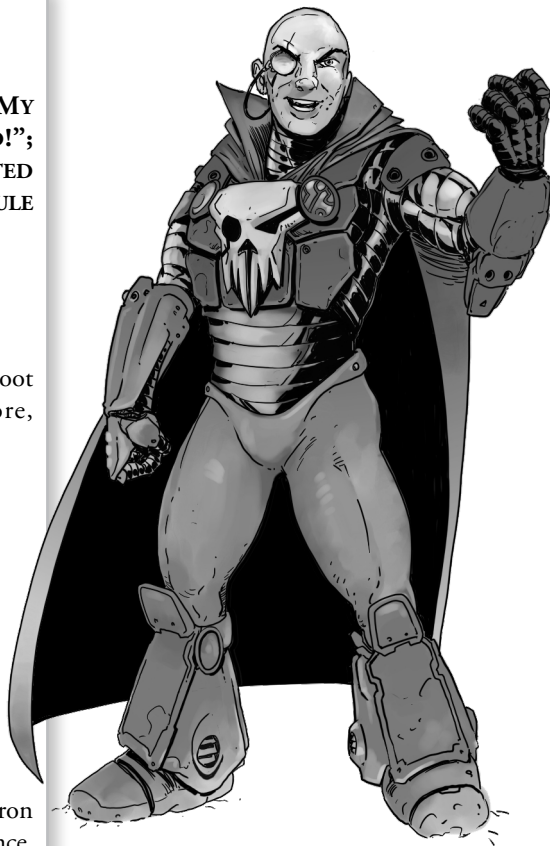
COUNTDOWN

Trigger (first box): The pathetic PCs fail to stop me from robbing the First National Bank.

Trigger (second box): Those fools don’t prevent the assassination of Mayor Roberts.

Trigger (third box): Those meddling heroes don’t stop me at my secret undersea base.

Outcome: My glorious mind-control device allows me to secretly control the city from beneath the waves!



Limitations

Limitations are fictional elements that alter how PCs must deal with a particular threat. Maybe they can't just kill the werewolf that's been terrorizing a small Pennsylvania town, because he's the son of one of the PCs and doesn't know what he's doing when he's a werewolf. Maybe the mob boss is protected from on high by powerful politicians, and the direct approach is untenable. Maybe the reactor that's in meltdown is nearly impossible to repair because it vaporizes any organic material that comes near.

When you create a limitation, give it either an aspect or a **fact**. A fact is a true thing: the reactor vaporizes organic material when it comes near. If you want to make a limitation more concrete and mechanical, use an aspect instead. Aspects are always true, just like facts, but you can invoke and compel them.

But be wary of giving something too many aspects. For most adversaries, you can just add the aspect and be fine. For adversaries that already have five aspects or are really complex, you may want to replace an existing aspect with the limitation aspect.

You can also give a limitation a Weapon rating. For example, if the PCs are battling on the edge of a pool filled with carnivorous fish, you might impose a limitation of **FILLED WITH PIRANHA** with Weapon:3. There's no roll involved with getting attacked by the piranha; instead, entering the pool of water acts as a special sort of compel. In this case, you'd offer the player a fate point, and if they accept it—piranha, damn your luck!—they'd take stress equal to the Weapon rating (in this case, 3). In this way, you can create situation aspects that have hard mechanical consequences attached to their compels.

USING LIMITATIONS

Limitations don't outright forbid actions; they simply discourage them. There's nothing saying that the PC *can't* kill her werewolf son to stop the threat to the town, but she's unlikely to because she cares deeply about him, and because he doesn't actually realize what he's doing.

When you add a limitation to an adversary, you're doing two things: First, you're creating an interesting wrinkle that the players have to deal with. Limitations are best when you reveal them unexpectedly; they work well as surprise twists. Second, you're making that adversary more important to the story. A limitation forces the players to deal with a threat in a way other than the most straightforward method. This means the players will likely have to spend more time dealing with the threat, making it more important in the fiction. They might spend a few extra exchanges taking out a particular bad guy, ensuring they remember that bad guy more. Or they might spend the entire adventure figuring out how to deal with something. Either way works.

Try not to use more than one or two limitations in an adventure. If too many issues need to be dealt with in atypical ways, you'll risk frustrating players with characters built for handling regular tasks. If you've got an engineer character, but every machine the PCs encounter is biomechanical and requires knowledge of advanced xenobiology knowledge to handle, the engineer is going to feel pretty useless. If only *one* such machine exists, though, the engineer gets to keep doing his thing, and that one machine becomes a focal point of the adventure.

Resistances

Resistances are similar to limitations, except that they *do* effectively forbid a particular course of action. The dragon is immune to the weapons of mortals, so you can't fight it in physical combat. The alien does not understand Earthly communication, so you cannot reason with it. The wall's surface is unnaturally smooth, so you cannot climb it. Where limitations encourage the PCs to deal with an adversary in a new way, resistances force such an approach. There is, however, always a chink in the armor, embodied in the resistance's two parts: its **lock** and **key**.

The resistance's **lock** is an aspect that states exactly what the adversary is immune to. Aspects are always true, so you don't have to spend fate points to make the lock affect the story. If the PCs attack the dragon with their swords, the fact that it's **IMMUNE TO MORTAL WEAPONRY** means they have no chance of hurting it.

The **key** is the one thing that can bypass the lock, allowing the PCs to deal with the adversary in the way they want to. The key can be an aspect, an extra, a character, another adversary, or just a fictional element. It varies by adversary and by resistance.

Here are some examples:

The Dragon

Lock: IMMUNE TO MORTAL WEAPONRY

Key: The Sword of Avelah, created by an immortal race long ago, can harm the dragon.

The Alien

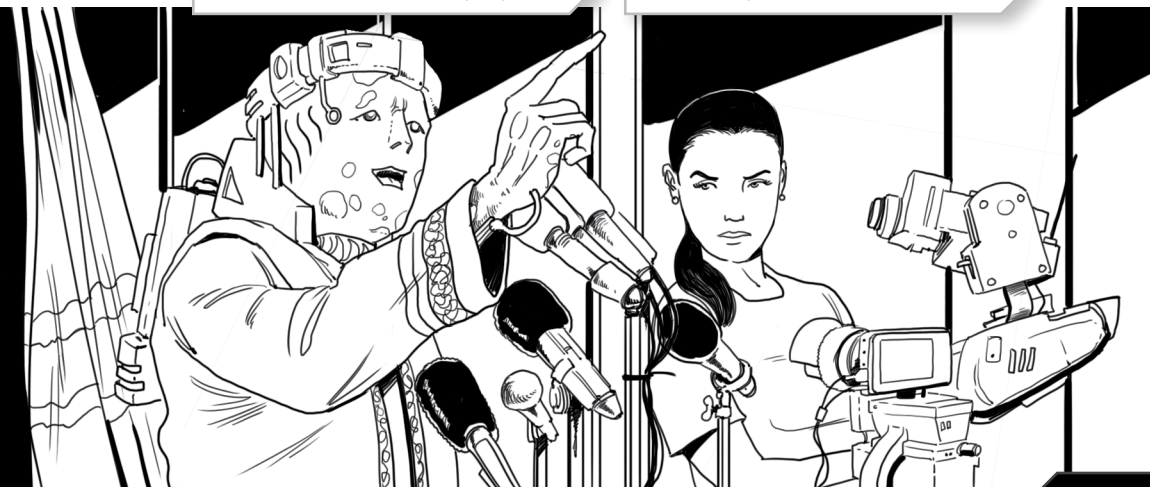
Lock: DOESN'T UNDERSTAND EARTHLY COMMUNICATION

Key: Emily Jace, the only survivor from a deep-space expedition, is the only human known to have learned the alien language.

The Wall

Lock: UNNATURALLY SMOOTH, CAN'T BE CLIMBED

Key: If you can get a device that'll vibrate at the right harmonic frequency, you can walk right through the wall.





USING RESISTANCES

One danger of using a resistance is that it is, effectively, a roadblock. A limitation encourages the players to think creatively, while a resistance forces them to find another way, or to find the one thing that lets them address the problem directly. This means two things:

First, never have more than one resistance in play at a time, unless you have a very good reason. Resistances have the potential to frustrate players even more than limitations do, so don't overuse them.

Second, unless the players decide to give up on addressing the adversary, they'll likely need to go on an adventure, or at least a series of scenes, to get the key to the adversary's lock.

Resistances can be good adventure hooks. A dragon threatening the village is an easy way to get the PCs to buy in, but if what you *actually* want them to deal with is over on the other side of the world, sending them off on an adventure there to get the key to the dragon's lock can be a sneaky way to do it, and can add some urgency to boot.

USING ENVIRONMENTS

In Fate, the environment can often play as big a role as the pack of werewolves or trio of gunmen you're fighting. The enemies in a scene are the most obvious, active opposition to your goals, but a conflict in a dark warehouse is different from a conflict on the median of a busy highway, and both are very different from a tense negotiation in the White House's Situation Room.

Spicing Up Zones

Many new Fate GMs—and even some experienced ones—have trouble using zones in a way that makes the environment come alive. Here are a few easy tricks you can use to give zones both mechanical and narrative importance and to make your players sit up and take notice of their environment.

Make Each Zone Count

When you're setting up a conflict, it's tempting to think of the physical space and divide up every bit of it into zones. If you're planning a fight in a darkened warehouse, it might seem obvious to make three or four zones on the first floor, another few on the upper floor, a zone or two to represent offices, and a couple of zones to represent streets and alleys outside, and leave it at that. That will divide the space up logically, but you'll find many zones won't get used, leaving the warehouse to feel a lot like the park the PCs fought in during the last session, just with slightly different window dressing.

Instead, consider something like this:

- One zone for the general floor space in the middle of the warehouse. This zone has lots of **CRATES** for cover.
- A zone for the area near some **INDUSTRIAL EQUIPMENT**. If it gets switched on, the equipment becomes a block: Great (+4) **MASHING GEARS** with Weapon:2.
- A zone near the windows, where the snipers surrounding the warehouse can see PCs. The snipers are a hazard: Superb (+5) **SNIPERS** with Weapon:3.
- A zone up on the **PRECARIOUS CATWALKS**. The fall off these catwalks is a limitation with Weapon:2.

And that's all you need. If people go outside, or into an office, that's fine; you can improvise a zone that doesn't have much special about it, or you can apply the effects of another zone to it—for example, the snipers would likely have a clear line of sight to anyone outside. The trick is to come up with three to five zones, each with narrative importance. If you can't think of something interesting about a particular zone, don't bother including it or even mentioning it in your description. It's not a place where the story's likely to go.



Tying Game Elements to Zones

The previous example illustrates how to do this, but it's important to realize that you've been doing it all along, simply by putting enemies in zones. The gang leader is over here, by the tables full of guns. His henchmen are spaced around the room, guarding the exits. So on and so forth. Now all you have to do is take that kind of thinking and apply it to all the *other* stuff you can put in a scene. Make sure that there's an aspect, an obstacle, or a constraint associated with each zone. Also make sure there's a reason to interact with or avoid each zone, that something interesting can happen in each one.

Offer Free Environmental Invokes

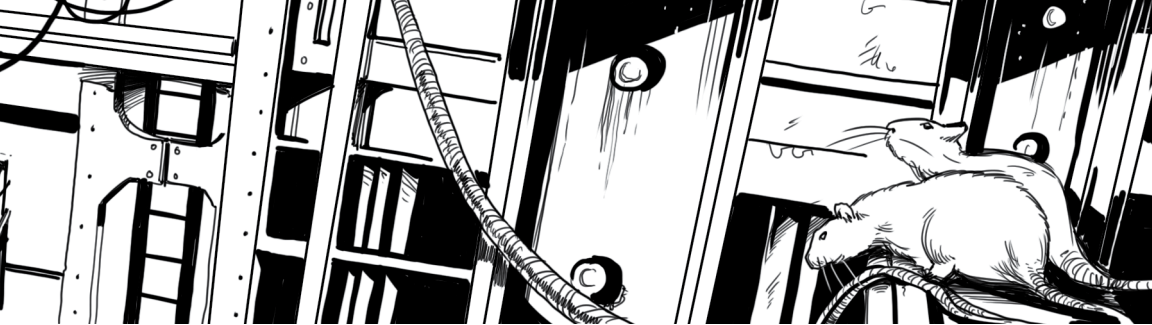
If you distribute aspects around your zones, you might give the players some free invokes on these aspects, encouraging them to interact with their environment. Here are a few ways to do it:

- Give the PCs, collectively, one free invoke on an environmental aspect in each zone. After using this free invoke, they can continue to invoke environmental aspects in that zone by spending fate points or advantages.
- Give each PC two free invokes on environmental aspects only.
- Give each PC one free invoke on each environmental aspect, after which they must invoke it by spending fate points or advantages.

Option one makes the PCs compete for the free invokes, which can create a sense of urgency. The PCs will rush to use those invokes, so the environment will get a lot of attention early in the conflict. By encouraging this kind of play early, you'll help the players to continue interacting with the environment throughout the fight.

Option two gives the PCs much more flexibility: they get to choose which elements of the environment they interact with. This method doesn't really add any urgency, though, and it effectively gives each PC two more fate points to play with, which can skew their power to the high side.

Option three is the most generous, will make for a significantly easier fight, and is best for groups that just aren't in the habit of paying attention to their environment. Once the PCs get used to interacting with their environment, consider scaling back to one of the other options.



Types of Zones

It's easy to think of zones as discrete physical spaces, but they don't have to be. They can be fluid, movable, or even conceptual in nature. A zone is, at its core, a mechanical way to represent fictional positioning. As long as you're accomplishing that, you can bend the nature of a zone in any number of directions.

Relative Zones

You might define zones relative to another zone or to each other, rather than tying them to specific places. This works well in something like a chase scene, where the characters are moving throughout the city constantly, never staying in one physical space for very long. In a case like this, you might have the following zones:

Near your quarry

Within sight of your quarry

Out of sight of your quarry

Above your quarry

Below your quarry

Falling behind

Moving from zone to zone might require rolls, with attacks representing trying to catch up with your quarry and stress representing becoming exhausted and being left behind.

OCCUPYING MULTIPLE ZONES AT ONCE

It might seem a little counterintuitive, but why *couldn't* you occupy more than one zone at the same time? In the chase scene mentioned earlier, you might be running on the rooftops while your quarry is in the streets below. This might mean you're both **above your quarry** and **within sight of your quarry**, gaining whatever benefits and disadvantages come with each zone.

Mobile Zones

You might have an environment made up primarily of static zones that represent physical spaces, but have one or two zones that can move around. Perhaps there's a crane moving around wildly, or you're navigating an arctic cavern while huddled around a handheld heater that radiates warmth—both the crane and heater could be mobile zones. Most importantly, you'll want to keep track of where the mobile zone is relative to the other zones. The easiest way to do this is to let the mobile zone occupy another zone at any given time, allowing people to occupy multiple zones at once.



Conceptual Zones

Zones don't have to represent physical space; some might represent conceptual states of being. In a darkened warehouse, you might have a zone that represents being in the shadows. Because the warehouse is dark, this zone can exist pretty much anywhere, provided you're sticking to pools of shadow and not calling attention to yourself. This trick can be an easy way to keep track of who's hidden and who's not, or who's in the emperor's good graces and who's not.

Conceptual zones work well during social conflicts, where physical positioning is less important. If your PCs are infiltrating a high-society party to steal some valuable jewelry, you might have zones that represent blending in with the party guests, pretending to be wait staff, out of sight of the general populace, or under scrutiny.

Keeping Track

Given all this, what's the best way to keep track of all these zones? Write them down! Index cards are great for this, but you could easily use a dry-erase board or battle map. Write the zones down and arrange them in relative positions that make fictional sense. If they have special effects, write those down in the spaces you designate for the zones. Then, players can track their characters with tokens of some sort: dice, colored beads, figurines, or anything else you have on hand.

ROGUES GALLERY

This chapter will give you examples of how to put the rules you've read into practice. Here you'll find ten spreads, each one in a different genre, from cyberpunk to spy thriller to Regency romance. You can use these spreads in a few different ways:

As mini-adventures. Each spread is a mini-adventure in its own right, containing everything you need for a single session of play. Make some characters and run the spreads right out of the book! Each spread will also tell you how to expand upon the material provided, in case you want to turn a spread into a series of adventures or a whole campaign. You'll also find ideas for getting your PCs involved and tailoring the spread to your needs.

As a monster catalog. This chapter is also a big list of adversaries you can throw at your players. You can grab any adversary for your game, and many of the enemies, obstacles, and constraints here can be reskinned to a different genre with minimal effort. If you're only interested in stats for bad guys in your existing campaign, this chapter has you covered.

As examples. Finally, you can use this chapter as inspiration to help you create your own adversaries. Every adversary here uses (and was constructed with) the rules provided in previous chapters. The encounters, too, make use of the advice in this book, and show you how to put everything together into an exciting fight or tense negotiation. If you're ever confused about how to use a specific mechanic, look at the adversaries in this chapter as examples. When in doubt, simply reskin something in this chapter to save time!



Fantasy

Dragons are massive, terrifying, and dangerously intelligent creatures, and we are lucky that they mostly ignore mortal affairs. The dragonfolk are the result of ancient unions between dragons and humans; they look like large humans with dragon's heads, and their culture is built around fervent worship of their draconic ancestors. Most often this means serving a dragon who spends most of its time slumbering on its hoard. Sometimes, however, it means going to war.

Barathe, perhaps the greatest of the Elder Dragons, has been roused from its sleep. The sounds of industry, the sharp scent of magic, and more than anything else the incessant chatter of dwarves, humans, and elves in the nearby city of Riverwall—all of this prevents the dragon from resting. So it's sending an army out to shut them all up. Permanently.

Adversaries

DARRA, PALADIN OF BARATHE (BOSS)

Equal parts high priestess and warlord, Darra has dedicated her life to the service of the Elder Dragon Barathe. When Barathe finds a city offensive, Darra sees that it gets razed to the ground.

Darra is dragonfolk, of course, with rich emerald scales and wild eyes. She wears armor made of the blood-red scales from the Elder Dragon itself, and carries a warhammer almost as large as she is. She's an inspirational leader to her people, but she's not much of a tactician: Darra very much believes in approaching from the front using overwhelming force. She'll occasionally create advantages that weaken her target, but she much prefers to bolster herself or her followers.

While she's a dangerous warrior, she is not cruel or mindlessly violent—she gives people a chance to flee before she burns their houses down, and is always willing to take time out of battle to discuss the value of serving an Elder Dragon.

DRACONIC LIEUTENANTS (THREATS)

Fire-Breather Lieutenants: Soldiers with a strong draconic bloodline quickly rise through the ranks to become Darra's trusted lieutenants. While they are armed with broadswords, they prefer to show off their ability to breathe fire on their enemies.

Kindlers: Those dragonfolk who don't have a breath weapon can hope to prove themselves by dedicated study of pyromancy.

THE DRAGONFOLK ARMY (FILLER)

Dragon-Headed Foot Soldiers, Pike Wielders, and Shield-Bearers: The rank-and-file of Darra's army, these dragon-headed soldiers haven't been gifted with power over fire, but have been trained to hold weapons and follow orders.

Darra

ASPECTS

High Concept: ARDENT FOLLOWER OF THE ELDER DRAGON

Trouble: EASILY FLUSTERED WHEN ANGRY

Other Aspects: MASSIVE, BONE-CRUNCHING WARHAMMER; DRAGONSCALE ARMOR; UNSHAKABLE FAITH IN HER CAUSE

SKILLS

Fantastic (+6): Fight

Superb (+5): Physique, Will

Great (+4): Rapport, Athletics, Provoke

Good (+3): Contacts, Resources, Sneak, Empathy

Fair (+2): Burglary, Crafts, Investigate, Lore, Notice

STUNTS

Charge!: By spending a fate point, Darra can move up to four zones, provided there is an unobstructed route, to attack a target using Fight. If she moved at least two zones, she gains +2 to Fight for this roll.

Hammer Blow: When Darra attacks with her warhammer and succeeds with style, she can push her target into an adjacent zone. To do this, she must forgo taking the boost and must reduce her attack shifts by one.

Silver Tongue: When Darra creates an advantage with Rapport to motivate her followers, this aspect gains another free invocation.

STRESS

Physical

Mental

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

Mild:

Moderate:

Severe:



Fire-Breather Lieutenant

ASPECTS

High Concept:

FIRE-BELCHING SOLDIERS

Trouble: **SLOW TO REACT**

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Physique

Great (+4): Shoot, Fight

STUNTS

Massive Fireball: By spending a fate point, the fire-breather lieutenant can attack everyone in a zone with a fireball.

STRESS

Physical **1 2 3 4**

Mental **1 2**

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

Mild:



Kindler

ASPECTS

High Concept: **DEDICATED FIRE-MAGE**

Trouble:

ONLY DANGEROUS AT A DISTANCE

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Physique

Great (+4): Shoot, Athletics

STUNTS

Wall of Flame: By spending a fate point, the kindler can create a Great (+4) **WALL OF FLAME** block between two zones. If the kindler is taken out, every **WALL OF FLAME** it created dissipates.

STRESS

Physical **1 2 3 4**

Mental **1 2**

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

Mild:



**DRAGON-HEADED
FOOT SOLDIER**

SKILLS

Average (+1): Swordplay

STRESS 1

**DRAGON-HEADED
PIKE-WIELDER**

SKILLS

Fair (+2): Pike-Wielding

STRESS 1 1

DRAGON-HEADED SHIELD-BEARER

SKILLS

Good (+3): Defend

Average (+1): Shield Bash

STRESS 1 1 1





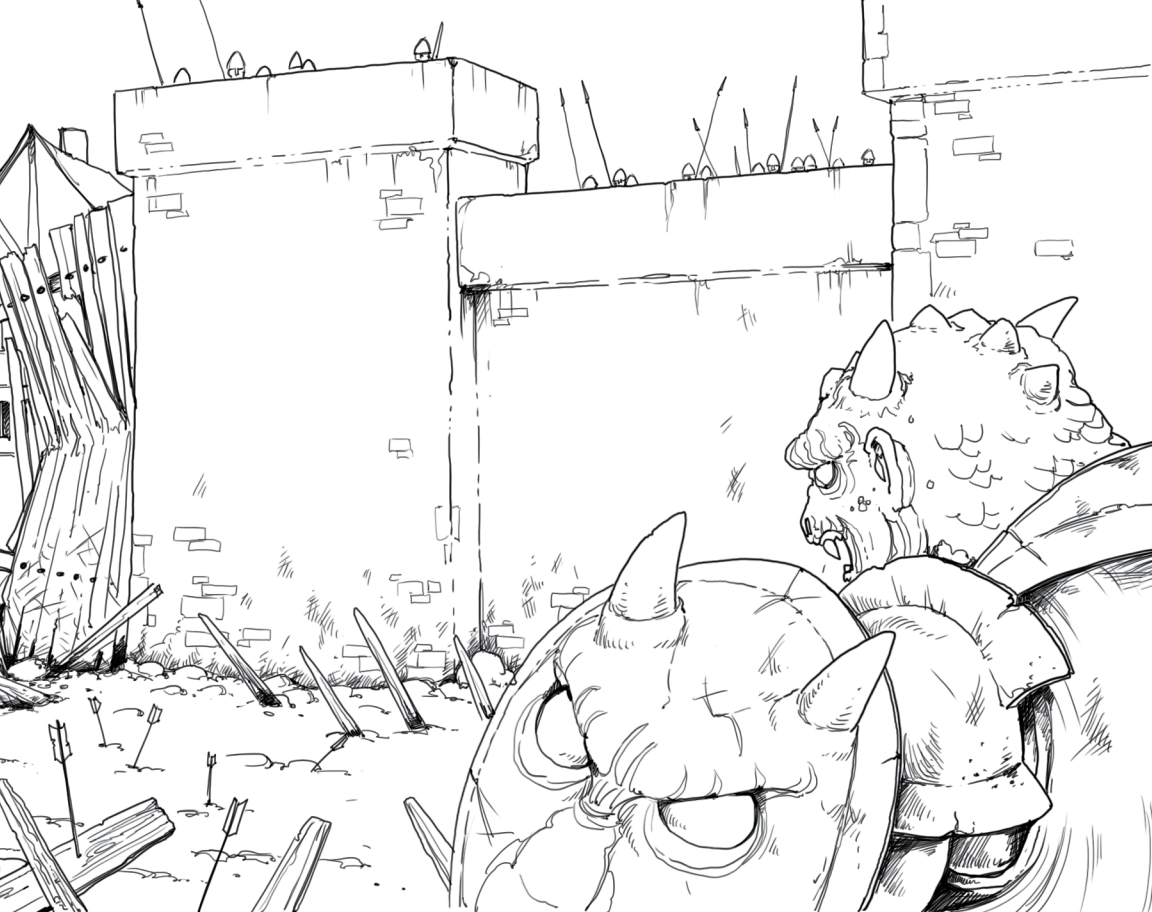
TOWNS IN CHAOS (HAZARD)

When the dragonfolk take a settlement, they don't just drive the people out of it—they make sure it'll never be used again. Not every encounter with the dragonfolk needs a hazard, but it's a clear indication that the PCs have arrived too late to save a town.

In the dwarven mines, the dragonfolk have burned the supports and overloaded the machinery, and the whole complex is threatening collapse. All the zones in town are connected by a huge cavern, and those traveling through it must contend with Good (+3) **FALLING ROCKS** with Weapon:2

The dragonfolk wouldn't burn down the elves' treetop village without risking the entire forest. However, they have set fire to all the books of magic in the library, releasing the magical energy pent up within. Unless someone can put out the bonfire, every zone adjacent to the library suffers from Fair (+2) **WILD MAGIC BACKLASH** with Weapon:4.

In human towns, the dragonfolk are only too happy to burn everything to ashes, because it would please Barathe. Every indoor zone is engulfed in a Good (+3) **RAGING FIRE** with Weapon:1.



THE ENCOUNTER AT RIVERWALL (DISTRACTION, COUNTDOWN)

The confrontation at Riverwall's city gates is inevitable; if the PCs are quick, they might be inside the city, making important decisions using their authority as adventurers who have dealt with Darra before. If they're slow, they'll arrive at Riverwall to see the dragonfolk army already gathered at the gates. Either way, there's a choice to make.

DRAGONFOLK AT THE GATES

DISTRACTION

Choice: Do you start a showdown with Darra now, while she's among her army?

Repercussion (call her out now): Darra will have several soldiers backing her up as you fight.

Repercussion (wait): The dragonfolk will eventually break in, causing lots of collateral damage. However, Darra will have less backup when you fight her.

COUNTDOWN

Trigger: One minute passes.

Outcome: Darra's army breaks down the gates and storms the city, with Darra out in front.

Using This Spread

Darra is the focal point. Her soldiers are dangerous when they support her, but not nearly as dangerous on their own. Her Hammer Blow stunt lets her push PCs into walls of fire or knock them into one zone, while her Silver Tongue can beef up the fairly weak attacks of her soldiers.

The army's two threats have a dangerous synergy, with the Kindler hemming the PCs into one zone, and the Fire-Breathers attacking everything in a zone at once. This will eat through your fate points, so don't be afraid to let Darra take a few consequences before conceding. That way, you'll have a larger reserve to play with the next time the PCs run into her and her army.

While Darra is built for physical altercations, her mind is also extremely resilient because of her high Will. PCs interested in taking a non-violent approach will have their work cut out for them. That said, it's fun to show Darra to the players outside of battle, giving her a chance to preach the word of Barathe. After the PCs have established themselves as a thorn in her side, have Darra approach them, alone or with a single lieutenant by her side, somewhere the PCs feel safe, such as an inn or campsite.

While Darra is only too happy to crush everyone who gets in her way, she's ultimately working for a cause, and will leave a battle if it starts turning south for her, at least until she gets to Riverwall. Getting taken out or forced to concede at Riverwall, however, will be enough to shake her faith, at least in herself. And without her at Riverwall, the remaining dragonfolk will be leaderless—some of them might stick around to be picked off, but the bulk will turn and flee when they realize Darra is out of the picture.

BRINGING IN THE PCS

If the players are inclined to fight an army just because it's on the move, then so be it. There are a number of dwarven mines and elven forests between Barathe's lair and Riverwall, and news of dragonfolk storming in and forcing the occupants to flee will make its way across the land quickly. Darra is quick to anger, but not at all subtle.

If the PCs need a more personal motivation, Riverwall could just as easily be their hometown, or any settlement they have personal ties to.

And of course, there's always the promise of a reward if the PCs can save Riverwall. While the PCs could be solicited by a desperate monarch or other local ruler, a more interesting option might be to have the PCs approached by another dragon, who wants Riverwall saved for reasons it feels no need to disclose. After all, dragons are cunning and manipulative beings, prone to attacking one another's interests via catspaws, and utterly uninterested in how many mortals get killed in the process.

TWEAKING TO CAMPAIGN LENGTH

If you're planning to use Darra for just one session, you may want to make her a little less resilient by getting rid of her severe consequence. This will give the players a better shot at taking her out. There's not much time in a one-shot, so you'll want to make scenes fairly brisk by eliding much of the PCs' travels. A single session might involve learning about the dragonfolk, an encounter with the army in a ruined village on the road to Riverwall, a non-violent encounter with Darra at an inn later that night, and a final face-off at the city gates.

A longer scenario might have the players tracking Darra and her followers over the course of several sessions. Darra won't necessarily be with her army every step of the way; there are multiple detachments of dragonfolk on the march, taking care of smaller settlements on the road to Riverwall. Most of these are filler groups that the PCs can mop up without too much fuss. Darra shows up occasionally, sometimes charging in unexpectedly to keep the PCs on their toes. As you get closer to the Riverwall, the PCs are more likely to deal with dragonfolk in the middle of settlements, dealing with the hazards of towns in chaos.

If you want to start a long campaign with this spread, then note that even if the PCs defeat Darra, they will have made an enemy out of an Elder Dragon. This affair might lead to teams of dragonfolk assassins hunting down the PCs relentlessly, until the PCs appease or defeat the Great Dragon itself.

ADJUSTING THIS SPREAD

Maybe dragonfolk aren't a natural fit for your world. You can easily convert Darra's army by tweaking their high concepts. She might actually be Grun, the **POWERFUL ORCISH CONQUEROR**, leading an army filled with goblin foot soldiers, orcish pike-wielders, and troll shield-bearers. Meanwhile, those kindlers are goblin shamans, erecting walls of mysterious dark energy, and the fire-breathers are belching fire out of experimental weapons stolen from a nearby dwarven camp. Or perhaps she's actually Allatharius, the **MAD ELVEN ARTIFICER**, leading an army of clockwork golems on a quest to destroy the mage academy which kicked her out decades ago.

This could even be an entirely human force in a setting without fantasy species. Darra is a charismatic and single-minded leader, and her followers are most effective when she's directly overseeing them; this concept can be re-skinned for many worlds and genres.

Urban Fantasy

There are dark things hidden in the cracks of this city. Not just the crime and corruption, but the monsters—real monsters. Vampires, ghouls, and worse. Mostly, we've been trained to ignore it...people disappear, and it doesn't pay to think too hard about where they're actually going.

But sometimes it's hard to ignore. The city's fifth precinct is too clean. There's almost no graffiti or petty crime. Statistically, given the neighboring precincts, it's impossible. The police in the fifth precinct say they're just that good at their jobs, and the media seems to buy it.

But people in the know—the minor magic-users and monster-hunters of the city—can feel the tension in the precinct. Recently, a construction crew stumbled across a cache of desiccated corpses in an old warehouse. The medical examiner declared them to be a century old or more, even though they were wearing modern clothes. Something isn't right here, and you need to get to the bottom of it.

Adversaries

THE SHADOWKIN (HITTERS)

Poke around in the dark places of Precinct Five long enough, and you'll come face-to-face with these distant cousins to vampires. With their pale, flabby skin and grotesque faces, these ghouls resemble Nosferatu, but they don't drink blood. They drink life force. They must perform a ritual on a living but restrained target, which leaves it a withered, unrecognizable husk. Shadowkin are also adept at manipulating darkness, most commonly by wrapping it around themselves to become nearly invisible.

As the shadowkin age, they grow even more twisted and inhuman. **Elder shadowkin** need to suck more life out of their victims, but they also gain more control over the darkness.

They might lack physical prowess, but their eldritch abilities make them just as deadly as their younger kin.

Young Shadowkin

ASPECTS

High Concept: LIFE-SUCKING MONSTER

Trouble: BLINDED BY BRIGHT LIGHTS

Other Aspects: MASTER OF THE SHADOWS

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Stealth

Great (+4): Burglary, Athletics

Good (+3): Fight, Rapport, Notice

STUNTS

Out of the Shadows: When in darkness or low light, young shadowkin can attack using Stealth.

Master of Shadows: +2 to Stealth when creating advantages related to being hidden.

STRESS

Physical 1 2

Mental 1 2

Elder Shadowkin

ASPECTS

High Concept: TWISTED LIFE-SUCKING MONSTER

Trouble: FRAIL AND AGED

ASPECTS

Other Aspects: "I AM ONE WITH THE SHADOWS."

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Stealth

Great (+4): Will, Shoot

Good (+3): Burglary, Investigate, Notice

STUNTS

Out of the Shadows: When in darkness or low light, elder shadowkin can attack using Stealth.

Blades of Darkness: Elder shadowkin can hurl bolts of darkness as a weapon, attacking with Shoot. When the elder shadowkin is in a dark environment, this attack becomes even more powerful, gaining Weapon:2.

STRESS

Physical 1 2

Mental 1 2 3 4

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:



THE RITUAL (DISTRACTION)

Skulk around the precinct long enough and you might just find something major happening in the boiler room of an abandoned elementary school. It's a cramped space: one large zone full of **DEEP SHADOWS**, and within it a smaller zone dominated by **A GRISLY ALTAR** lit by torches. There, two police officers are holding down a human victim for shadowkin to feed on.

SHADOWKIN FEEDING RITUAL

DISTRACTION

Choice: Do you interrupt the ritual in progress?

Repercussion (interrupt them): You'll have to face some shadowkin *and* these cops.

Repercussion (let them feed): Some poor innocent gets turned into a lifeless husk, and you'll always know you had a chance to prevent it.

OFFICERS GILLETTE AND ROSENBERG (THREATS)

Two of the lieutenants in the fifth precinct, Gillette and Rosenberg are lapdogs of the local police captain, Alice Pulaski, and she's the one who introduced them to the shadowkin. Their job is to round up "undesirables" and let the shadowkin feed off them. They don't know what, exactly, Pulaski's getting out of this deal, but it does mean punks and vagrants are getting off the streets, which is good enough for them.

Both Gillette and Rosenberg are overblown mooks. One is tall and wiry while the other is stout and burly, but in terms of personality, they're identical. Come to think of it, most people aren't sure which one is which.

CAPTAIN ALICE PULASKI (BOSS)

Captain of the fifth precinct. Pulaski is good at her job, but she's clearly letting her political aspirations guide her—you're much more likely to find her dressed up nicely and schmoozing at some city-council event than getting her hands dirty with actual policing. If you talk to the officers in her department, they'll universally describe Pulaski as a good, fair manager, but frustratingly closed-door when it comes to how things are run.

SHADOW MATRON (BOSS)

Getting information out of Pulaski isn't easy, but it is possible. It's a little more efficient to just raid her office or home, though, and find evidence pointing to the shadow matron, the mother to this district's brood of shadowkin. She lives in the relative luxury of a rusted-out train car on a disused subway line, all of which is **ALMOST PITCH BLACK** at all times.



Officer Gillette or Officer Rosenberg

ASPECTS

High Concept: COP WHO HANDLES DIRTY JOBS

Trouble: “I DON’T MAKE DECISIONS, I FOLLOW ORDERS.”

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Physique

Great (+4): Fight, Provoke

STUNTS

Dirty Fighting: When Gillette or Rosenberg successfully creates an advantage with Fight representing hampering someone with an underhanded technique—for instance, tossing sand in someone’s eyes to make them **BLINDED**—that target also takes 1 physical stress.

STRESS

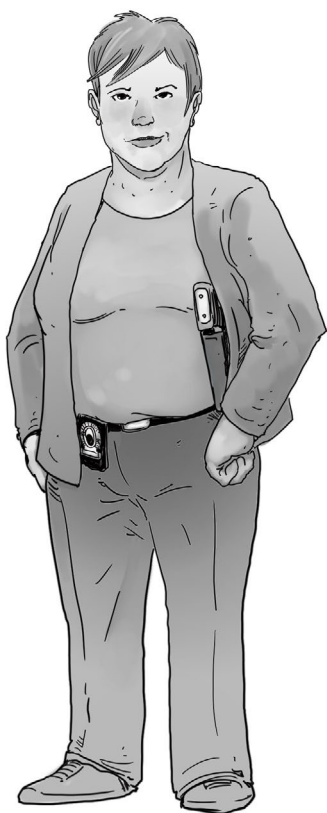
Physical 1 2 3 4

Mental 1 2

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

Mild:



Captain Pulaski

ASPECTS

High Concept: POLITICALLY MINDED POLICE CAPTAIN

Trouble: “I’VE GOT A REPUTATION TO MAINTAIN.”

Other Aspects: TEN THOUSAND HOURS AT THE GUN RANGE; KNOWS EVERYONE WHO MATTERS IN THE CITY; IN THE PUBLIC EYE

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Shoot, Resources

Great (+4): Physique, Will, Rapport

Good (+3): Fight, Deceive, Contacts, Stealth

Fair (+2): Athletics, Burglary, Notice, Drive, Investigate

STUNTS

Pact with the Shadowkin: By spending a fate point, Captain Pulaski can cover herself with shadows. Doing this gives her the situation aspect **ONE WITH THE SHADOWS** with one free invocation. As long as **ONE WITH THE SHADOWS** has any free invocations remaining, she gains +2 to Stealth.

STRESS

Physical 1 2 3 4

Mental 1 2 3 4

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

Moderate:

THE PACT (DISTRACTION)

Pulaski and her officers aren’t chasing the shadowkin out of the precinct, and are making it easy for them to feed. In return, the victims aren’t random—they’re loners and undesirables. But that’s only part of the pact Pulaski has made. She is also using the shadowkin as a network of nearly invisible informants. She’s been climbing the ladder because she knows everybody’s business.

You can put an end to the pact, probably, but should you?

PULASKI’S IN LEAGUE WITH THE SHADOW MATRON

DISTRACTION

Choice: Put a stop to this deal, or ignore it?

Repercussion (ignore it): People keep dying, and Pulaski gains more and more political power.

Repercussion (stop it): You make an enemy of Pulaski, and now the shadowkin are back to targeting victims unpredictably.

Shadow Matron

ASPECTS

High Concept: MOTHER TO THE SHADOWKIN

Trouble: CAN'T BEAR TO SEE HER CHILDREN SUFFER

Other Aspects: PATIENCE OF THE AGELESS; WISDOM OF THE ANCIENT; INVISIBLE IN DARKNESS

SKILLS

Fantastic (+6): Stealth

Superb (+5): Physique, Will

Great (+4): Empathy, Deceive, Rapport

Good (+3): Fight, Provoke, Burglary, Athletics

Fair (+2): Investigate, Notice, Lore, Contacts, Crafts

STUNTS

Loving Brood: The shadow matron gives +1 to Stealth to all shadowkin in her zone.

STRESS

Physical 1 2 3 4

Mental 1 2 3 4

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

Mild:

Moderate:



Using This Spread

This spread is all about investigating the dark corners of the city's fifth precinct, and dark places are where shadowkin are most dangerous. Like all hitters, they can't stand up to a fair fight, but they tend to congregate in small clusters, stalking the PCs and leaping out when they think they have an advantage. Shadowkin are intelligent, and like to whisper threatening things to frighten their prey—which could indicate to the players that one of these monsters could be tied up and questioned.

The PCs could investigate in plenty of other ways, as well. They could search shadowkin nesting sites for clues, try to divine patterns in the sequence of attacks, or seek information from their local contacts. If they ever succeed at a cost, the cost might be they stumble across shadowkin who've already started a feeding ritual, meaning they start the scene with a **WELL-FED** situation aspect.

Gillette and Rosenberg are standard threats, meant to liven up a battle with the shadowkin. They're also useful tools if the players are uncertain about what to do next. They're loud and incredibly easy to track, if the players are of a mind. They might try to arrest the PCs or use them in the shadowkin ritual. They've got a knack for showing up and making trouble the very instant the players seem aimless. In a fight, they like to stay in zones adjacent to each other, so that one is always ready to run in and take advantage of the other's underhanded fighting techniques.

Pulaski and the shadow matron are similar in that they have aspects that act as limitations against direct physical confrontations. Pulaski is **IN THE PUBLIC EYE**, so there will definitely be repercussions if the players lay hands on her. The matron is **INVISIBLE IN DARKNESS**, so the players will either have to talk things out or do some work to erase that advantage. And of course, both characters have allies in the form of yet more shadowkin hitters. Luckily, both of them are willing to talk to the PCs and will even reveal their plans if pressed.

The players are ultimately pushed into a hard decision—not just whether they'll put an end to Pulaski's pact with the shadowkin, but how they intend to do it. Certainly taking out Pulaski or the matron will get the job done, but either will be difficult.

BRINGING IN THE PCS

The best way to make the PCs care about the fifth precinct is if one of the missing persons is someone they know. This person doesn't have to be someone extremely close—killing off a PC's family is a very dark way to start an adventure—but a favorite barista, former client, or underworld contact can help personify the danger. If you're feeling kind, the victim is in shadowkin captivity, and the PCs still have a chance to interrupt the ritual.

TWEAKING TO CAMPAIGN LENGTH

In a one-shot session, the important question is “who is behind all this?” There won’t be enough time to tackle a high-profile or powerful boss, so the climax will simply be meeting Pulaski or the matron and finally discovering the extent of the pact. For urban fantasy, it’s okay to wrap up the game with big loose ends like “how do we deal with Pulaski?” still hanging. Urban fantasy can be a downer.

For a longer scenario, give the players lots of opportunities to investigate. They’ll need to figure out where in the precinct to look. After their first encounter with the shadowkin, they may even need to research what these creatures are, which gives academic PCs time to shine, even if they aren’t good at taking out the monsters. The police might not show up for a few sessions. Give the players lots of decisions about where to go next and how to do it—stealthy or direct, social or physical, deal with Pulaski or the matron, and so on.

If you’re planning to kick off a longer campaign, then Pulaski is a ready-made recurring villain. Her political aspirations certainly won’t end here, and there’s no telling what underhanded things she’ll try next. Furthermore, how did she make a deal with the shadowkin in the first place? Even if she gets taken out, she probably has a powerful supernatural ally or mentor out in the shadows, who might take revenge on the PCs.

ADJUSTING THIS SPREAD

If “investigating corruption” doesn’t resonate with your players, there are plenty of other ways to use these elements. If the PCs have an enemy already, the shadowkin make for terrific assassins. They can also be pure monsters acting on their own, in which case you may want to re-skin Gillette and Rosenberg into shadowkin.

Or you can strip the “fantasy” out of urban fantasy entirely. Pulaski is a dangerous political opportunist even without monsters on her payroll. The shadow matron might just be a local gang leader, with her army made just of teenagers willing to throw themselves headlong into the fray; get rid of their Out of the Shadows stunt and just give them Superb (+5) Fight.



Cyberpunk

I had a meeting with our new client, whose name, as far as we are concerned, is Mr. Smith. It seems that Mr. Smith has taken some interest in advanced cybernetics, specifically in top-tier bionic eyes. Trouble is, while our local AriTech facility has the bionic eye our client craves, they aren't selling it yet.

This eye is evidently a big deal for AriTech. Good news: according to Mr. Smith, the eye's been taken out of their main research building, for security purposes. AriTech doesn't want their golden goose in such an obvious place, so they've stashed it, of all places, in the penthouse of one of their low-security high-rises. Public shopping on the first floor, employee housing above that. Means it's going to be easy to get close. There'll be corporate security, but only as much as they have room to house on that floor.

Bad news? Can't be sure what to expect when we get there. Yeah, kids, if we take this job it means going in half-blind. That's why the pay's as good as it is. Me? I'm not worried. We've got muscle, we've got guns, we've got the best damn hacker in the city—it should be a cakewalk. So what are we going to tell Mr. Smith? Are we in?

Adversaries

ARITECH SECURITY MEASURES (LIMITATION, RESTRICTIONS)

The eye might be in a low-security facility, but that doesn't mean it's readily accessible. We might not know exactly what's waiting for us in the penthouse, but after a few minutes poring over the blueprints we know a few of the hoops we're going to have to jump through.

Public Access Areas: The ground floor of the facility is open to the public. It's basically a mall, and while it's designed for AriTech employees, the doors are open. Its hub is a food court, a large zone with **LOTS AND LOTS OF PEOPLE** coming and going. Branching off that are a couple corridors lined with shops. And everywhere you look, security cameras and personnel. AriTech does not trust the public.

Limitation: YOUR ACTIONS ARE BEING MONITORED

Employee-Monitoring Sensors: The upper floors have traded the expensive security cameras for simple passive sensors. They're more for marking employees who bring uninvited guests than for catching trespassers, but you can be sure that corporate security will be watching.

Lock: INTERNAL SENSORS FLAG NON-EMPLOYEES

Key: Get an ID card, and the system will assume you're an employee.

High Security Elevators: The penthouse has been securely shuttered and sealed. Only one elevator goes up to the top floor, and it's got biometric security. Top of the line—you might be able to trick it, but you can't get around it.

Lock: BIOMETRIC LOCKS ON THE ELEVATOR

Key: Get the thumbprint and retina scan of someone authorized to visit the penthouse.



The Eye's Security System: When it's not being actively worked on, the eye is kept in a safe. AriTech went to an outside contractor to install the thing, and Mr. Smith was lucky enough to get information on it. It's a tough one—not only does it need two keys and a code, but it's time-delayed and made of a virtually impenetrable carbon weave.

Lock: IMPENETRABLE SAFE

Key: The safe *can* be hacked. Find an open terminal and hack into the safe's BIOS, and you can force it open.

ARITECH EMPLOYEES (FILLER, THREAT)

Office Drones and Middle Managers: Wage slaves, selling their lives to AriTech for a little stability and a place to sleep at night. You're about to make life more exciting for some of them. Low-security employees can be found all over the place, even in the public areas. They aren't threatening in the least, except in the sense that they can get corporate security to pay attention to you.

Cybertechnicians: The sorts of employees who actually get access to the pent-house are a little more intimidating. Not because they know how to fight—they don't—but because the company cares more about them, and they're better able to summon help. Worse, they're smart and savvy enough to talk down their assailants while they wait for help to arrive.

CORPORATE SECURITY (THREAT, HITTER, FILLER)

AriTech, like any megacorp, has invested in security forces. They don't train their own, though; they hire out from PitBull. It's an affordable security outfit, but that doesn't mean you don't have to take them seriously—PitBull might not be the strongest fighters in the game, but they've built their reputation on the fact that they do not let people go. You can't shake them.

PitBull Pugilists: The Pugilist (or Pug) is PitBull's close-combat unit. Their old-fashioned cyber-accessories are part of their signature look: bulky chrome cybernetic arms that don't have the speed or dexterity of a newer model, but appear unbreakable.

PitBull Terriers: Pugs are always accompanied by a Terrier, who is armed with one of PitBull's proprietary antipersonnel devices—that is to say, a big-ass shotgun, with built-in gyrosopic stabilization and aim correction.

PitBull Trainees: Of course, while Pugs and Terriers make great teams, not everyone PitBull sends is as impressive. Most of the security teams you'll run across are undertrained, there to bulk up the numbers.

ARITECH OFFICE DRONE

SKILLS

Average (+1): Office Work

STRESS 1

ARITECH MIDDLE MANAGER

SKILLS

Good (+3): Make a Deal

Average (+1): Supervise

STRESS 111



AriTech Cybertechnician

ASPECTS

High Concept:

CYBERNETIC TECHNOLOGY RESEARCHER

Trouble:

DESPERATE TO GET RECOGNIZED FOR MY WORK

Other Aspects: PENTHOUSE SECURITY CLEARANCE

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Rapport

Great (+4): Provoke, Deceive

Good (+3): Lore, Crafts, Will

STUNTS

Bioweave Armor: This employee has invested in subdermal grafts to protect themselves from harm, giving them Armor:2 against physical attacks.

Secure Personnel: As an action, the technician can call for security on their datapad. The countdown can only be stopped if the technician calls in an “all clear.”

COUNTDOWN □□□

Trigger (first box): The scientist, believing themselves in danger, calls for security.

Trigger (remaining boxes): One exchange goes by.

Outcome: A security team arrives.

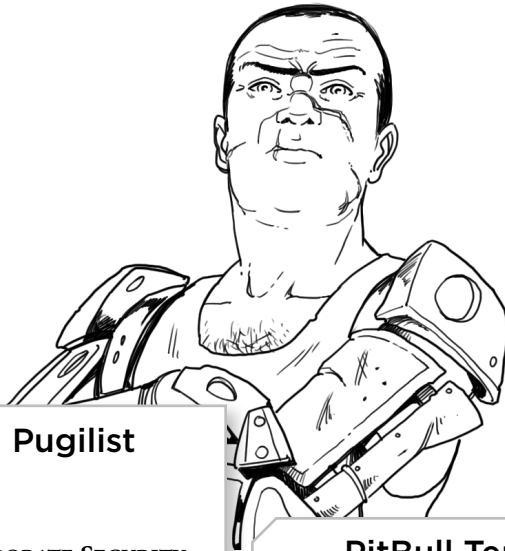
STRESS

Physical 1 2

Mental 1 2 3

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:



PitBull Pugilist

ASPECTS

High Concept:

BEEFY CORPORATE SECURITY

Trouble: OUTDATED CYBERNETICS

Other Aspects: UNBREAKABLE GRIP

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Physique

Great (+4): Fight, Athletics

STUNTS

Cybernetic Grip: When a PitBull Pugilist uses Physique to create the advantage **GRAPPLED** on a character, the **GRAPPLED** character must overcome a Great (+4) obstacle to break from the Pug's grip.

STRESS

Physical [1][2][3][4]

Mental [1][2]

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

Mild:

PitBull Terrier

ASPECTS

High Concept:

TWITCHY CORPORATE SECURITY

Trouble: REALLY HEAVY WEAPON

Other Aspects: COMPUTER-GUIDED
SHOTGUN

SKILLS

Great (+4): Shoot

Good (+3): Investigate, Athletics

STUNTS

Computer Guidance: The Terrier's shotgun has Weapon:2. Also, the Terrier gets +1 to Shoot when attacking a target in an adjacent zone.

STRESS

Physical [1][2]

Mental [1][2]

TRAINEE PITBULL PUGILIST

SKILLS

Average (+2): Fight

STRESS [1][2]

TRAINEE PITBULL TERRIER

SKILLS

Average (+2): Shoot

STRESS [1][1]

INFECTED NODE LOCKER

BLOCK

Average (+1): Prevent Movement Between Nodes

STRESS 1

ANTI-INTRUDER PROGRAM

SKILLS

Average (+1): Attack Intruders

STRESS 1

HACKING

In this setting, we're treating hacking as a conflict. The hacker moves around from one computer node to next (represented by zones), encounters automatic security measures (enemies), and pushes their way past firewalls (blocks) to hit control centers.

Security measures and failed attempts to break firewalls deal mental stress to the hacker. In turn, the hacker can attack the security measures using an appropriate skill—it could be Will, although if hacking is going to have a large role in your game, you might put in a new skill called Hacking.

HACKING THE MAINFRAME (BLOCK, FILLER)

The hardest part of hacking the safe will be getting to it—it's got a built-in computer, but it's not networked, so you'll have to plug a data-jack into it. Once you get there, though, it's a simple matter of bypassing its security measures.

The main firewall you're looking for is a block, a Great (+4) **DOOR CONTROL MECHANISM** with Weapon:2. Access that, and the eye is yours. But while you're hopping computer nodes, you might stumble across the Fantastic (+6) **SILENT ALARM SUBSYSTEM**. If you can access that node and disable the alarm, corporate security on lower floors won't be informed that the safe was breached, and your exit will be much easier. In your way: a handful of cheap security programs.

Using This Spread

The series of restrictions in this spread pushes the players along a somewhat narrow path—it's meant to emulate the heist structure of cyberpunk adventures. It's not a straight railroad, however. The PCs have multiple ways of acquiring the keys they need: the employee ID can be bought, borrowed, stolen, retrieved from an unconscious guard, faked, or even acquired legitimately if a PC manages to get an entry-level job at AriTech, for instance. Let the players explore their environment and plan how they'll tackle the next hurdle.

PitBull teams always consist of a Pug and a Terrier. They wander around the building semi-predictably, and mostly exist to force the players to be slow and observant—PCs who take the time to study the enemy can tell whether they're easily dispatched filler or one of the better-avoided teams. It's only when they reach the penthouse itself that a fight with security becomes nearly unavoidable, because that floor has several teams making the rounds. If

players are getting a little too trigger-happy, beef up the PitBull teams on the upper floor by increasing all of their skills by one step.

If hacking is something your group is interested in, it's easy to make it more relevant by adding blocks that hide away useful things—information to sell, control over turrets, things of that nature. This does put special attention on the hacker, though, so make sure that the rest of the PCs aren't twiddling their thumbs; when someone plugs into the computer, corporate security will hear alarms and come running.

BRINGING IN THE PCS

If your PCs are mercenaries who take on corporations, then all they need is the promise of a paycheck at the end of this gig. Otherwise, they might need a little extra encouragement. Perhaps Mr. Smith has collected blackmail material on the mostly law-abiding PCs, and is forcing them to take this job because he doesn't trust professional megacorp-infiltrators.

TWEAKING TO CAMPAIGN LENGTH

This spread works well as a one-shot because its restrictions keep it very focused—the PCs know where they need to go from moment to moment, which keeps the game moving quickly. Unless you have a player who is really into hacking, you can minimize its importance so the players can spend more time moving around the building. Rather than an entire conflict, just make the safe a single block: a Superb (+5) **MAGNETICALLY SEALED SAFE**.

A longer scenario can make each restriction into the focus of a session. You can force the PCs to approach situations more thoughtfully by putting in lots of PitBull filler teams they'll want to avoid. If your players are good at violence and not afraid enough of the filler, then make the filler teams a little more powerful: boost their skills to Good (+3), and give them Average (+1) Defense.

If you're going to play an extended campaign, this spread can pull the PCs into a chain of corporate espionage. An AriTech representative could come to them and politely ask them to find more information about that mysterious Mr. Smith, so that AriTech can take revenge on the actual company which stole the cybernetic eye.

ADJUSTING THIS SPREAD

It's easy to tweak the basic structure of this spread: the eye is a MacGuffin that could be any object or piece of information, and the various corporations will have slightly changed corporate security. In some cities, the hitters will have swords rather than shotguns, and the threats in medical facilities will be genetically enhanced rather than cyber-augmented, but they'll all be generally the same. PitBull's forces can even be re-themed as automated defenses, if the players happen to break into an otherwise abandoned facility.

While “breaking into the megacorp” is a traditional cyberpunk plot, you can use this spread to emulate any kind of heist story by using a different set of restrictions, as long as there's a place the PCs shouldn't be able to get to and someone or something to stand in their way. For instance, a military base overrun with the undead, or a Las Vegas casino in the late 1960s.



Pulp Adventure

A few miles off the coast of the Baja Peninsula, and several fathoms below the surface of the Pacific, lies a great stone temple built centuries ago by a civilization which we know almost nothing about. Scientists have half-jokingly dubbed it “Atlantis,” and rumors have circulated about what exactly an exploration party might discover there. Most rumors center on a jeweled idol that is described, in what limited writing exists about it, as “The Heart.” It’s of some archaeological interest, but nobody has bothered to explore the temple yet.

Or at least that was the case before a very lost diver wound up inside Atlantis and discovered that, despite all the water overhead, the building itself was airtight. Atlantis was breathable! He didn’t go far in, but he came back with extensive descriptions of immense rooms, tile mosaics, and the general sense of grandeur. Needless to say, that got the public’s interest up, enough that the university decided it was worth chartering a bathysphere and sending its best team to discover what there is to be seen and, if they can find it, return with the Heart of Atlantis.

Adversaries

SIR RODNEY AND HIS GOONS (BOSS, THREAT, AND FILLER)

As the bathysphere reaches the entrance to the temple, the PCs will no doubt notice the submarine nearby—big, gaudy, and clearly owned by everyone’s hated rival, Sir Rodney von Tark. He’s grown rich from his work raiding tombs and selling the valuables within to the highest bidder, and undoubtedly he knows someone who thinks the Heart of Atlantis will look good on their mantle.

Sir Rodney von Tark: Rodney himself is short, portly, and entirely craven—not a natural adventurer by any means. But he’s clever and he surrounds himself with mercenaries to take care of all the hard work.

Elsa Vogel: Sir Rodney has brought a seemingly infinite supply of mercenary goons with him on this trip. Their captain, Elsa Vogel, will always be by Rodney’s side, acting as his personal bodyguard.

Mercenary Gunners and Brutes: Elsa’s goons are, well, goons. They’re pretty good at what they do, but they aren’t particularly impressive.

Sir Rodney von Tark

ASPECTS

High Concept: WEALTHY GENTLEMAN ADVENTURER

Trouble: “DON’T HURT ME!”

Other Aspects: ETHICS ARE FOR OTHER PEOPLE;
GIFTED WITH LINGUISTICS;
LEARNED MARKSMANSHIP IN COLLEGE

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Resources, Contacts

Great (+4): Will, Stealth, Lore

Good (+3): Rapport, Deceive, Burglary, Empathy

Fair (+2): Athletics, Physique, Drive, Fight, Shoot

STUNTS

Mook Shield: If Sir Rodney is attacked and there is a filler enemy in his zone, you can spend a fate point to have the enemy take the hit. The filler gets taken out, and Rodney takes no damage.

STRESS

Physical 1 2 3

Mental 1 2 3 4

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

Moderate:





Elsa Vogel

ASPECTS

High Concept: BRUTALLY EFFECTIVE MERCENARY CAPTAIN

Trouble: "YES, BUT WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?"

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Fight

Great (+4): Physique, Shoot

STUNTS

Get Out of Here!: When Elsa attacks with Fight and succeeds, she can force the defender to move into an adjacent, unobstructed zone of her choice. She can follow the defender or stay in her zone.

STRESS

Physical

Mental

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

Moderate:

MERCENARY GUNNER

SKILLS

Average (+1): Shoot

STRESS

HULKING BRUTE

SKILLS

Fair (+2): Fight

STRESS



EXPLORING THE TEMPLE (HAZARDS)

Atlantis is a ziggurat made of a brown stone that blends into the ocean floor. Its one entrance is an open portal on the western wall. Immediately beyond the door there is a stairway, leading up out of the water and into the pocket of air that fills the temple.

Inside, Atlantis is a maze of narrow corridors interrupted by huge rooms. The walls are blue-tinted stone, dotted with torches and occasional carved runes. The stone ceiling is broken up by skylights, through which you can see whatever dim light is making it through the water. It's not worth thinking about how much pressure is pushing on the glass. The floors of the large rooms have tile mosaics, with repeated shell and nautilus motifs, that depict aquatic creatures—some familiar, many not.

The large rooms are easy to get around in, and may be represented by one or two zones depending on how much stuff the room holds. The corridors, which are tighter and less navigable, should be broken into many small zones, reflecting the difficulty of moving and lining up clear shots in the twisting paths.

Sprinkled liberally across the map are many points of interest, including signs of decay such as **COLLAPSED PILLARS**, **GLOWING MOSS**, and **FALLEN RUBBLE**, as well as hints at the temple's original purpose, like **ROWS OF DESKS**, a **SHALLOW REFLECTING POOL**, or even a **PIT FULL OF BONES**.

And of course there are traps. Because what's a temple without traps? Several rooms will force the adventurers to work around deadly hazards.

Dart Trap: A classic temple hazard. The series of holes in the wall emits a steady stream of Great (+4) **POISON DARTS** with Weapon:3. The darts generally stay confined to one zone, so the adventurers can either avoid that path or try to speed through.

Swinging Blade: A narrow bridge or passageway, crossed by Superb (+5) **SWINGING BLADES** with Weapon:2. It's possible to dodge the blades with decent Athletics and some luck, but a clever adventurer could probably figure out a way to disable the mechanism.

Shocking Idol: There's a grotesque golden mask set above the door, connected to some sort of ancient battery somewhere in the temple. Every so often, Good (+3) **ARCS OF ELECTRICITY** with Weapon:3 jump out of the mask and into anyone who hasn't taken cover behind the pillars in the room.

Carnivorous Fish: It's not clear whether this trap was purposeful or just the result of the temple's slow decay. The room is full of knee-deep water, and the water full of Fair (+2) **TINY BITING FISH** with Weapon:4.

Rising Water: A particularly deadly hazard, though at least this one comes with some warning before it strikes.

RISING WATER

COUNTDOWN □□□

Trigger (first box): Someone messes with an altar.

Trigger (remaining boxes): One exchange passes.

Outcome: The room gains this hazard—Legendary (+8)

LACK OF AIR with Weapon:4.

THE HEART CHAMBER (RESTRICTION, COUNTDOWN)

There is a large, sealed chamber in what must be the exact center of the ziggurat. Its huge stone door has no visible knob or hinges, but there are three large holes in the wall adjacent to the door. Someone skilled at translation can read the ideograms on the wall above. The ideograms explain that, as one might expect, the Heart is behind the wall, and that the only way to get it open is to track down the three stone gears—hidden at the north, east, and south altars of the temple—and slot them into the holes.

The Heart's Door

Lock: The door to the Heart chamber cannot be passed.

Key: The door will open if you find and slot in the three gears.

COUNTDOWN □□□

Trigger: Sir Rodney gets away with a gear.

Outcome: Rodney gets the Heart!

ALTAR TRAPS (BLOCKS)

There are three golden gears in the temple, each tucked into a slot atop a carved stone altar. These altars can be found in large rooms filled with complex mosaics and what appear to be pews.

Removing a gear from an altar will cause the chamber's doors to come crashing down, blocking every exit with Fantastic (+6) **SEALED DOORS**, and set off one or more of the temple's hazards.

CLOCKWORK GUARDIANS (THREAT)

At first, these appear to be old statues, whose crumbling plaster barely conceals the wire frames they were built on. In actuality, they are clockwork automata, whose limbs are encased in armor of white marble. Their very existence raises many questions about the builders of this temple, but it's clear the automata were designed to keep it safe.

Clockwork Guardian

ASPECTS

High Concept: AUTOMATED TEMPLE PROTECTOR

Trouble: CAN ONLY MOVE IN JERKS AND STARTS

Other Aspects: ROCK-HARD ARMOR

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Physique

Great (+4): Notice, Fight

STUNTS

Guardian: Clockwork guardians are determined to stop people from getting where they shouldn't go. If a character tries to leave a zone with a clockwork guardian, that character must overcome opposition equal to the guardian's Physique (if trying to push past it using Physique or Athletics) or Notice (if trying to evade it using Stealth).

STRESS

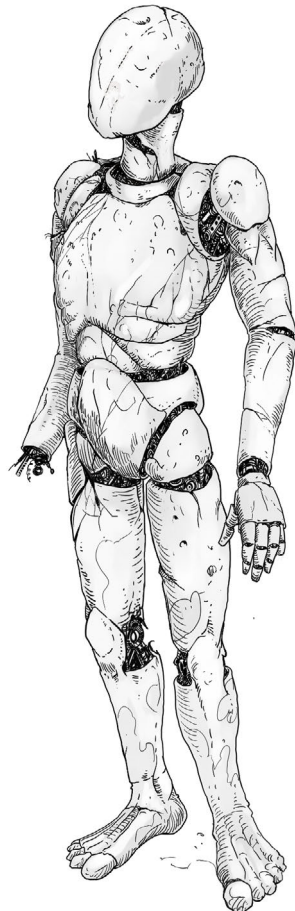
Physical 1 2 3 4

Mental 1 2

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

Mild:





Using This Spread

Atlantis is a dangerous place—not because of Sir Rodney, but because of those hazards. Everything else in the temple serves to slow the players down and force them to deal with hazards, instead of rushing through them. Not all rooms contain hazards, but every room contains the *threat* of hazards.

Keep the players on their toes! Mix and match environmental aspects and hazards liberally. Vary the hazards' triggers—in one room, crossing the doorway might activate the poison darts, while in another they'll only start firing when someone makes a noise, for instance. As the PCs get closer to the Heart, consider putting them in the dangerous position of dealing with multiple hazards at once; the water-filled room and carnivorous fish work very well together.

Sir Rodney will occasionally pop in to demoralize the PCs, but he isn't inclined to confront them directly; as soon as he or Elsa starts to get hurt, he'll try to flee. If he ever has any gears, but the players have the remainder, he will reluctantly propose that they work together to get the chamber door open. He is, of course, planning to snatch the Heart and run.

Rodney's goons are primarily complications to prevent the players from moving through the temple easily. They can force players to spend time where there are hazards and Elsa can throw PCs right into zones with hazards. That being said, the mercenaries are as likely to be targeted by the temple's defenses as the PCs, which can mitigate how frustrating the hazards are. If a trap is proving particularly dangerous, bringing some mercenaries onto the scene can actually give the PCs some breathing room to escape or disable the hazard as it targets the newcomers.

The clockwork guardians act a bit like blocks. They are usually inert, but if someone is trying to move a gear or damage the temple, they'll wake up. Usually they prefer to hold troublemakers in place so that temple hazards can take them out, but if a clockwork guardian is attacked, it will fight back.

BRINGING IN THE PCS

There's a giant jewel in the heart of the temple. What pulp adventurer needs more motivation than that? The Heart of Atlantis has both scientific and financial value, so everybody wants it. You can also make a little history between the PCs and Sir Rodney—it can be as simple as asking what priceless artifact he once snuck out from under their noses—so they have good reason to want that snide, unlikable prig to come in second place on this particular expedition.



TWEAKING TO CAMPAIGN LENGTH

For short campaigns, you can speed up the exploration of the temple by trimming away one of the gears and making travel through the temple relatively straightforward. The PCs will easily navigate the corridors of the temple, stopping only to encounter Sir Rodney at the entrance to the Heart chamber, and to face his goons and the traps in the altar rooms. Cap things off by opening the chamber and revealing the Heart of Atlantis itself; if you haven't used it yet, this is a great time to spring the water-filled room hazard.

A longer scenario allows more time for exploring the temple. The corridors are maze-like and in some places half-collapsed, providing plenty of obstacles. In addition, it could be fun to spend time dealing with preparations before even going to the temple. Sir Rodney is at his most dangerous on the surface—the PCs can easily spend a session or more attempting to pick up a map to Atlantis and the proper equipment, while Rodney throws social obstacles in their way.

If you're looking to kick off a long campaign, then the Heart of Atlantis can be a stepping stone to even larger treasures: perhaps instead of a jewel, the PCs discover a scepter with slots for three jewels and a promise that whoever completes the scepter will discover power eternal. Accomplishing this will require lots of research and journeys to even more dangerous locales, with Sir Rodney always at their heels.

ADJUSTING THIS SPREAD

Sir Rodney is more annoyance than direct threat, and he can be removed entirely without dramatically changing the tone of the temple. If there's already a villain hounding your PCs, then the mercenaries might be soldiers in the villain's employ. Or they can be re-skinned as inhabitants of the temple: dangerous animals or, if you want to introduce some supernatural elements, actual semi-aquatic Atlanteans, in which case the clockwork guardians can simply be burlier Atlantean peacekeepers in armor.

If Atlantis isn't interesting, the temple can be airlifted anywhere in the world, of course. Most traps would stay the same; just replace the carnivorous fish with a more appropriate local hazard, and change out the water-filled room for something more universally dangerous—a giant rolling boulder is a pretty iconic temple hazard.

80s Action

The UN Secretary-General has been kidnapped by a cabal of bad guys known only as SERPENT!

You are an elite squad of international mercenaries, assembled by the UN for the express purpose of defeating SERPENT and bringing the Secretary-General back safely!

Your first stop is the Secretary-General's residence in Manhattan!

Get to it!

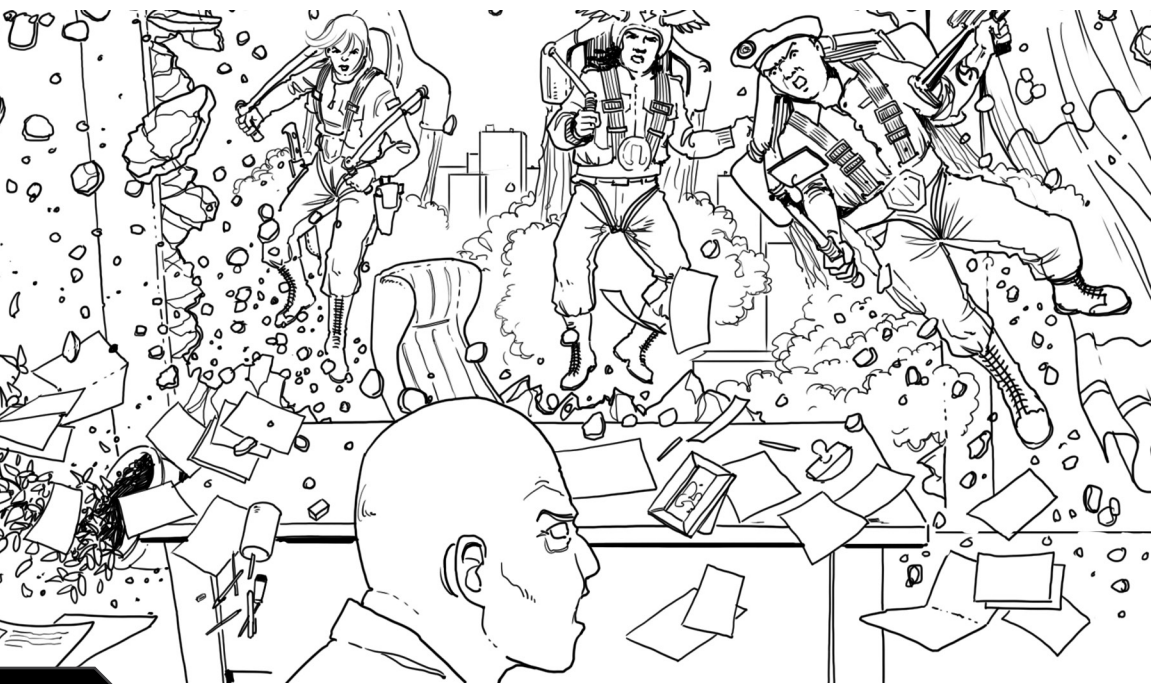
Adversaries

MANHATTAN: COMMANDER DARKNESS AND HIS SERPENT GOONS

(FILLER, THREAT)

SERPENT has left a group of goons at the Secretary-General's residence, to make sure that nobody can comb it for clues. Of course, they didn't count on an elite squad of mercenaries, who will have little trouble taking out these goons. The residence is a lovely townhouse in Sutton Place; downstairs you'll find **OVERTURNED FURNITURE** and **BLIND CORNERS** for SERPENT agents to pop out of. Upstairs, look out for the **BIG PICTURE WINDOWS** that jet-packers could burst through.

When you finally reach the Secretary-General's office, you'll find Commander Darkness, one of SERPENT's most dangerous soldiers, waiting behind an **OVERTURNED DESK**. He'll sarcastically commend the mercs for getting to him, and then go on the attack.



Commander Darkness

ASPECTS

High Concept:

COMMANDER OF SERPENT'S
MILITARY

Trouble:

INCREDIBLY OVERCONFIDENT

Other Aspects:

STATE-OF-THE-ART LASER RIFLE

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Physique

Great (+4): Notice, Shoot

Good (+3): Fight, Will, Athletics

STUNTS

Lasers!: Before rolling an attack with his laser rifle, Commander Darkness can reduce his roll by 2 shifts to attack every target in a zone.

STRESS

Physical

Mental

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

Mild:

SERPENT LASER-GUNNER

SKILLS

Average (+1): Shoot

STRESS

SERPENT JET-PACKER

SKILLS

Average (+1): Flight

STRESS



THE SIBERIAN TUNDRA: LA CAZADORA AND HER ANIMAL SOLDIERS

(HAZARD, FILLER, HITTER)

Among the Secretary-General's effects is a clue: a latitude and longitude, scrawled on the desk in dark ink. Those coordinates will lead to a little town in the Siberian Tundra that doesn't appear on any map—a hidden SERPENT training facility! The weather is going to be a challenge: as long as you are outside, you'll have to deal with the hazard of Fair (+2) **FRIGID TEMPERATURE** with Weapon:2.

There are several small one-room buildings in this town. Poking through them will reveal the SERPENT personnel staying there, including some of their experimental animal soldiers!

Hiding in one building, a training facility with **ROWS OF EMPTY CAGES**, is the woman known only as La Cazadora: the world's greatest hunter! She's the one who trapped and trained all of the animals SERPENT is using, and does not take kindly to a bunch of mercenaries wandering around in her town.

SERPENT

ARMORED BEAR

SKILLS

Good (+3): Claw and Bite

Average (+1): Physique

STRESS [1][1][1]

SERPENT

WOLF SOLDIER

SKILLS

Fair (+2): Investigate

STRESS [1][1]

La Cazadora

ASPECTS

High Concept: THE WORLD'S GREATEST HUNTER

Trouble: "I DON'T TRUST TECHNOLOGY."

Other Aspects: MY HANDY TRANQUILIZER DART GUN, CANSADA

SKILLS

Great (+4): Shoot

Good (+3): Stealth, Athletics

STUNTS

Duermes: La Cazadora's tranquilizer gun has Weapon:2.

Yo Me Embosco: La Cazadora gets +2 to attack with Cansada if her target doesn't know where she is.

STRESS

Physical [1][2]

Mental [1][2]

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

PARIS: DOCTOR BLOOD'S ROBO-WORKS (FILLER, THREAT)

Among La Cazadora's belongings—in her office or on her body, depending on how the encounter goes—you will find a requisition form from SERPENT second-in-command Doctor Blood. It seems some of these animals are due to be delivered to Paris today! The address is for an unassuming warehouse, not far from the Eiffel Tower, defended by SERPENT soldiers...including high-tech robots!

Doctor Blood is SERPENT's resident mad scientist. His lab is one huge manufacturing plant, crisscrossed with **CONVEYOR BELTS** and littered with **DISCARDED WEAPON PROTOTYPES**. Blood himself cuts an unassuming figure—a small, bald man in a lab coat—but he's augmented himself with his own cybernetic prototypes.

**SERPENT
DEFENSE-BOT**

SKILLS

Fair (+2): Projected Energy Shield

STRESS [1][1]

**SERPENT
ATTACK-BOT**

SKILLS

Average (+1): Fight

STRESS [1]

Doctor Melvin Blood

ASPECTS

High Concept: THE MADDEST MAD SCIENTIST IN SERPENT

Trouble: "LAUGH AT ME, WILL THEY? WE'LL SEE WHO'S LAUGHING WHEN I BLOW UP THEIR CONTINENT!"

Other Aspects: MORE MACHINE THAN MAN

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Crafts

Great (+4): Physique, Shoot

Good (+3): Athletics, Lore, Fight

STUNTS

Built-in Armor: Doctor Blood's cybernetically enhanced systems give him Armor:2.

I Made It Myself!: Doctor Blood gets +2 to create an advantage with Crafts while cobbling together a weapon out of random parts.

STRESS

Physical [1][2][3][4]

Mental [1][2]

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

MOONBASE: AGENT VIPER AND HER ELITE GUARDS (FILLER, BOSS, HAZARD)

Exploring Blood's lab will reveal his greatest invention: the teleportation chamber! Stepping into the chamber will immediately send you to the other teleportation chamber on the moon. The base is safe to walk around in without a spacesuit, but there's **REDUCED GRAVITY** everywhere.

SERPENT's moonbase is all gleaming white plastic and chrome, full of huge windows looking out over the Sea of Tranquility, and decked out with computer terminals, where scientists monitor transmissions from Earth. The scientists pose absolutely no threat to anyone, and in fact won't even notice that heroes have arrived in their midst, at least until the fighting starts. Unfortunately, the moonbase is also home to SERPENT's most elite foot soldiers, adept at doing intense gymnastics in the reduced gravity.

SERPENT ELITE MOON SOLDIER

SKILLS

Good (+3): Reduced-Gravity Acrobatics

Average (+1): Fight

STRESS

Journeying through the moonbase will eventually take the heroes to the central dome, where Agent Viper herself is putting the finishing touches on the giant laser she has pointed at Earth. She'll happily explain her plan to the UN Secretary-General, who is tied to a chair: she's going to hold the entire planet hostage, and the Secretary-General's job is to let the world leaders know that she means business.

As soon as the heroes make their presence known, Agent Viper will throw a switch to activate the laser, starting a countdown.

The Serpent's Final Bite

COUNTDOWN

Trigger: One exchange passes without the laser being turned off.

Outcome: A city on earth is completely obliterated!

Little is known about Agent Viper's past prior to starting the freelance terrorist organization that bears her name. She wears a bronze mask depicting, of course, a vicious snakelike face, and her weapon of choice is a fencer's foil dripping with poison.

THE ESCAPE

If Agent Viper is forced to concede, she'll run to her escape pod and the moonbase will start to collapse, because that's just how Agent Viper likes it. Now it's time to fight your way back to the teleportation chamber, with the Secretary-General in tow.

There isn't a countdown for this, because the physics of this particular universe means that the base will always explode the exact second after the heroes teleport away, but there is one last hazard getting in the way as the heroes flee past a few more rooms full of SERPENT goons: a Superb (+5) **COLLAPSING MOONBASE** with Weapon:3.

Agent Viper

ASPECTS

High Concept:

THE TRUE LEADER OF SERPENT

Trouble:

NO ONE CAN KNOW MY SECRET IDENTITY

Other Aspects: MY SWORD, THE VIPER'S TOOTH; ALWAYS HAVE AN ESCAPE PLAN; THE WORLD SHALL KNOW AND FEAR ME!

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Fight, Notice

Great (+4): Physique, Will, Provoke

Good (+3): Athletics, Rapport, Resources, Contacts

Fair (+2): Empathy, Deceive, Stealth, Investigate, Lore

STUNTS

Poisoned Blade: Agent Viper's blade has Weapon:2.

Collateral Damage: If Agent Viper is attacked and there is a SERPENT soldier in her zone, Agent Viper can gain +2 to defend by ducking behind that soldier. If the attack succeeds, the soldier she ducked behind gets taken out.

STRESS

Physical

1	2	3	4
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Mental

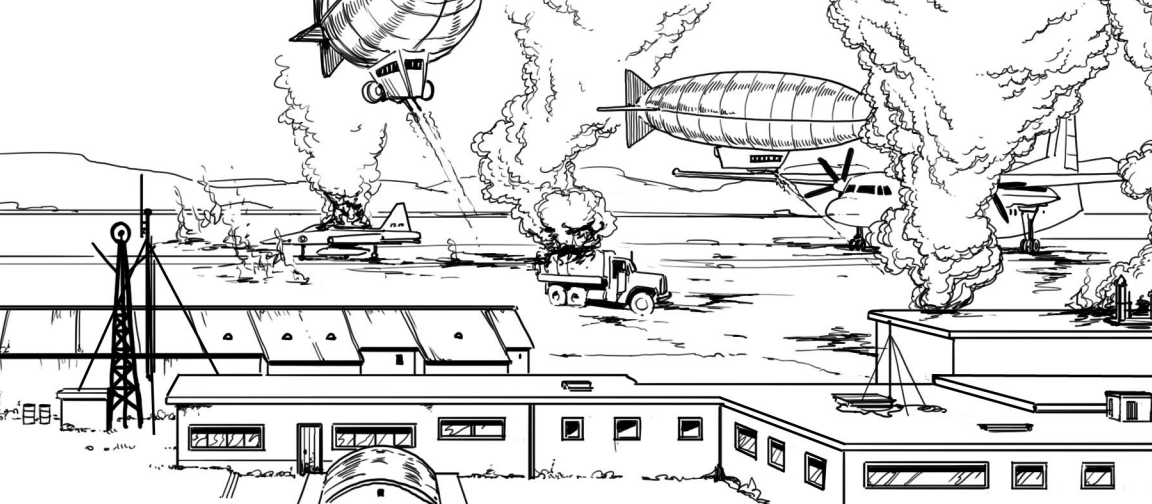
1	2	3	4
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CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

Moderate:





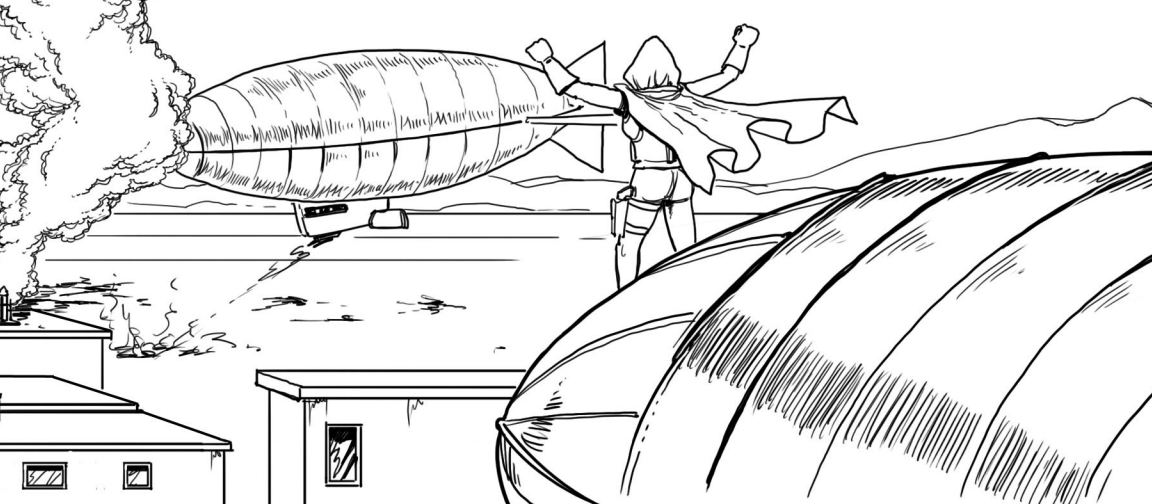
Using This Spread

This is a very silly scenario. You may have noticed that. It isn't really built for serious tactical considerations and hard decisions—it's a spread that throws a whole bunch of filler at the PCs and generally expects the fillers to be mowed down quickly and efficiently. That doesn't mean the fights shouldn't be exciting, however! While SERPENT's forces are predominantly filler, they are plentiful, and in certain combinations they can be dangerous.

The trick is in the ways mobs synergize: SERPENT Jet-Packers might each only have one stress box, but as long as they're with the mob, the mob can do awesome aerial maneuvers. The Defense-Bots might not have any offensive capabilities, but they can defend the entire mob they're part of. If there's a wolf in the mob, then it's suddenly an anti-infiltration unit, sniffing out the sneaky PCs. SERPENT likes to mix and match its squads; while new filler gets introduced at every location, they are not meant to replace the previous types. Instead, the mobs just develop more complex combinations, forcing the PCs to deal with them in more interesting ways.

If a particular type of SERPENT filler is proving particularly fun for your players—either because it's challenging them in interesting ways, or they're just really digging the experience of punching out this particular bad guy—then keep bringing it back. Even if that means there are armored bears in Paris. Especially if that means there are armored bears in Paris.

The PCs will travel across the globe on this adventure, so be sure to give them a little time to experience the flavor of the locales before they have to move in. Commander Darkness, La Cazadora, Doctor Blood, and Agent Viper herself are all cartoonish villains, so be sure to sell that. Don't rush them into a fight—they'll sit on the side, shouting disparaging things while their minions get mowed down by the heroes. Chew some scenery.



BRINGING IN THE PCs

This spread assumes the PCs are mercenaries hired for this specific purpose, but they can of course be an independent team of day-savers. Make SERPENT kidnap someone they care about—it could be the president or monarch, but it could just as readily be a mentor or a leader of their organization.

TWEAKING TO CAMPAIGN LENGTH

Because this an incredibly episodic spread, you can easily trim it or expand it. For a short or one-shot campaign, you can either skip one of the middle stops, or combine them, and have the players face La Cazadora and Doctor Blood together.

For a longer campaign, you can use each location for an entire session's worth of activity, so you'll need to give the players more to do in each place. They might need to do some investigation to figure out where SERPENT's base of operations is and how, exactly, they're going to make it there. You might also add distractions and side objectives to complicate their mission. No doubt some of the SERPENT goons running around are causing trouble for the local civilians.

As long as Agent Viper is able to concede and escape from the moonbase, you can be sure that she'll remain a thorn in your PCs' sides. You can build an extended campaign out of continually thwarting her plans for world domination.

ADJUSTING THIS SPREAD

SERPENT is an international organization, so they can have a base of operations anywhere it's possible to do evil. Add a SERPENT base to any monument you want to see the PCs run around—Mount Rushmore, the Taj Mahal, the Great Pyramid at Giza, it's all good.

As written, this spread is very silly, but it doesn't have to be! The fillers are easily tweaked—just replace the animals and robots with human soldiers that have a more traditional theme. For the more dangerous villains, just give them less bombastic names and treat them as serious threats. Additionally, adding a low-level threat or hitter to encounters with SERPENT soldiers will make them a little less toothless; the PCs can still defeat them, but they'll have to work a little harder and take a few more hits to do so.

Space Opera

Attention, this is Raxis Wai of the Allied Starbase Petronas, sending an urgent call for help. Something's wrong with our station. Systems are failing. Our commander is dead. We're holding onto life support, for the moment. Everything else though... station AI, translation matrices, even the artificial gravity...it's all failing!

There aren't enough shuttles docked here to get even half of the crew or civilian employees to safety, and even if there were, we can't trust that these technical malfunctions haven't infected the shuttles too. Please, send help!

Petronas is one of the Alliance's furthest outposts, and the last stop on the route toward the Rosal Cluster, a wealthy group of planets which aren't part of the Alliance, but with which we have a strong relationship. Four years out of every six, Petronas is a bustling thoroughfare, as travelers to and from Rosal rest and resupply. The other two years, as the Rosalites enter their hibernation phase, Petronas dries up. Most of the occupants of the city-sized space station take off, and it's left running on a skeleton crew to accommodate miners, traveling merchants, and the rare exploratory vessel headed out into the uncharted regions past Rosal.

Your ship wasn't planning to stop at the starbase at all, but you happened to be the only Allied ship in the sector when the call went out. It's your duty to help.

Adversaries

PETRONAS STATION TRAP (RESTRICTION)

As soon as your ship enters communication range of the station, you are hailed by Raxis Wai, who directs you to docking bay four—the only one that is operational at the moment. The station is immense, but it's clear even as you approach it that most of it is unoccupied; there are no lights on half the decks, and sensors report no life signs across much of the structure.

When you dock, Wai will greet you personally. She's actually a Rosal, identifiable by her pink skin and horns, who runs on an alternate hibernation schedule. She works as a political liaison with the station, but after an elevator accident took out most of the Alliance officers, she's taken on the role of acting commander. Her offer to take you to the systems currently causing the most problems is cut short by an ominous metallic *thunk* coming from the docking clamps.

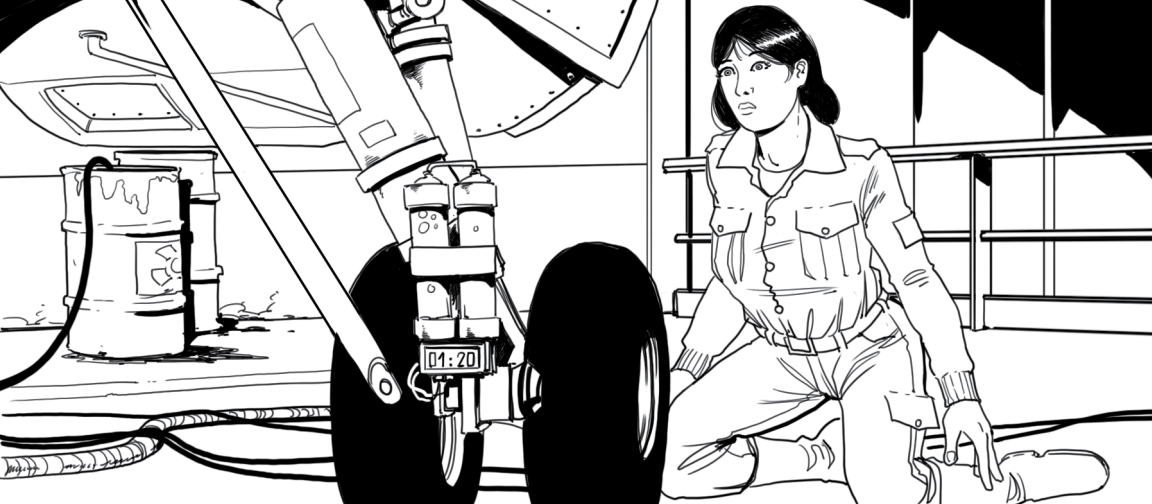
A closer look at the docking clamps holding your ship to the starbase reveals a bomb, presumably set to go off if you attempt to undock. Trying to scan the device causes it to beep in an especially threatening way.

Lockdown

RESTRICTION

Lock: Your ship cannot take off without being destroyed.

Key: Convince whoever set the bomb to release it.



ACTS OF SABOTAGE (DISTRACTIONS)

The presence of a bomb clearly indicates that the station is being sabotaged, rather than merely failing. Soon enough, even more problems will crop up from further acts of sabotage.

VIRUS PLANTED IN THE PRIMARY DOOR CONTROL CIRCUITS

DISTRACTION

Opposition: Superb (+5)

Choice: Will you take the time to purge the system?

Repercussion: The station's door systems become compromised, throwing up Good (+3) **SEALED DOOR** blocks in front of many important rooms.

EXCESSIVE POWER CONSUMPTION IN HALLWAY 4F

DISTRACTION

Opposition: Great (+4)

Choice: Do you track down what's causing the problem?

Repercussion: A panel overloads, and a hazard appears in a main hallway: Superb (+5) **ARCS OF PLASMA** with Weapon:2.

GLITCHES IN THE ARTIFICIAL GRAVITY MATRIX

DISTRACTION

Choice: Do you trudge through the dark, cramped maintenance tunnels to repair them?

Repercussion (do nothing): The artificial gravity on the ship stops functioning effectively. The entire station gains the situation aspect **MALFUNCTIONING GRAVITY**.

Repercussion (fix the problem): You run into a group of Nyal, including a Nyal saboteur.

THE NYAL (FILLER, THREAT, BOSS)

The saboteurs turn out to be a species called the Nyal. There are a few dozen of them, sneaking around the station and hiding in empty rooms. The Nyal are humanoid, but only about a meter tall and covered in fine gray hair. They usually wear hooded brown robes and carry an esoteric assortment of supplies. Individually, Nyal are not that scary. They can't fight well, but they are naturally gifted at building, repairing, and disabling devices.

The ship's computers have only the most basic information on the Nyal: they come from somewhere in the sector, the few documented encounters between Nyal and Alliance ships have always seen the Nyal run away as soon as they are hailed, and evidence suggests that the ships they've been using are either stolen or scavenged from somewhere in the Rosal Cluster.

Nyal Saboteurs: Some Nyal obviously hold an advanced rank over the others—they wear a sort of bandolier over their robes that's filled with bits of wire and badly scuffed tools. These Nyal are those engineering the most dangerous parts of the sabotage.

Commander Xalit: The leader of this group of Nyal is named Xalit. She wears a black robe of slightly nicer material than her compatriots' and a bandolier of well-maintained tools.



Nyal Saboteur

ASPECTS

High Concept: NYAL ENGINEERING GENIUS

Trouble: WEIGHED DOWN BY EQUIPMENT

Other Aspects: DEMOLITIONS EXPERT

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Crafts

Great (+4): Stealth, Investigate

Good (+3): Fight, Shoot, Notice

STUNTS

Cunning Trap: If the Nyal saboteur has created an advantage representing a trap—for instance, **IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVES** or **FLOOR RIGGED TO COLLAPSE**—he can attack using Crafts. This attack targets one person in the trap's zone; if you spend a fate point, it instead targets everyone in the trap's zone. Using a trap removes its aspect.

Be Prepared: The saboteur has laid many, many traps around the station. By spending a fate point, the Saboteur can reveal a trap in any zone on the station. The saboteur can do this whenever he's in a scene, and it does not require an action, allowing the saboteur to reveal and then immediately spring a trap.

STRESS

Physical **1** **2**

Mental **1** **2**



NYAL FIGHTER

SKILLS

Average (+1): Fight

STRESS **1**

NYAL WORKER

SKILLS

Good (+3): Crafts

Average (+1): Stealth

STRESS **1** **1** **1**



Commander Xalit

ASPECTS

High Concept:

LEADER OF THE NYAL RAIDING PARTY

Trouble: VERY NEARSIGHTED

Other Aspects: HEALTHY PARANOIA;

“MY PEOPLE MUST BE SAFE!”;

INTUITIVE APTITUDE FOR MACHINES

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Crafts, Notice

Great (+4): Investigate, Lore, Shoot

Good (+3): Drive, Rapport, Provoke, Empathy

Fair (+2): Athletics, Stealth, Burglary, Fight,
Physique

Average (+1): Everything else

STUNTS

Flinchy: Because she’s so on edge, Xalit is extremely adept at flinching away from danger. She can use Notice to defend against any physical attack, as long as she is aware of the attacker’s presence.

STRESS

Physical

1	2	3
---	---	---

Mental

1	2	3
---	---	---

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

Moderate:

Severe:



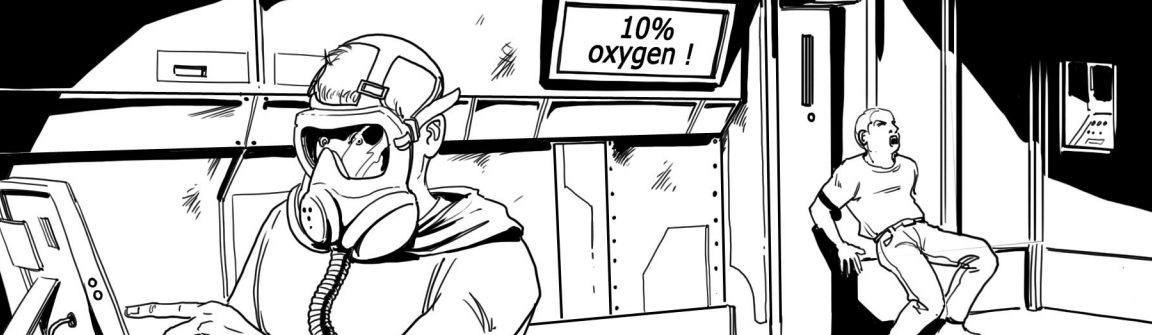
NYAL PLANS (BLOCK)

The Nyal are planning to disable the station without destroying it. They hope to make the station inhospitable enough that the occupants will be forced to leave, after which the Nyal will claim it as their own. Their end goal is probably easy to figure out, but why they're doing this is unclear.

Commander Wai, however, has an idea—Rosals don't like to admit it, but they are closely related to the Nyal. But she's unwilling to talk about it, which is a block: Great (+4) **WE DON'T TALK ABOUT OUR COUSINS**.

If you can push through or circumvent that block, you will discover that both species come from the Rosal Cluster, but the Rosals are, as a culture, deeply ashamed of their relatives. Rosals consider themselves to be an advanced species, and are working to become full members of the Alliance, respected on a galactic stage. The Nyal are scavengers, thieves, pests—once you get Wai started, she'll have no problem listing off all of her problems with the Nyal.

It turns out that for the last century or so, the Rosal Hierarchy has been attempting to exterminate the Nyal, who haven't had the resources to fight back. The best they could do is hold out under the assault, and use the two-year Rosal hibernation to scrounge together enough resources to survive the next four years. Starbase Petronas was just a fortifiable location the Nyal could call their own.



Using This Spread

While the Nyal are the main adversaries, they aren't powerful enemies, and they know it. They avoid combat unless they have a decided upper hand or are absolutely desperate; even Xalit is not much of a fighter. The saboteur is the most dangerous foe, but it's difficult to attack with him directly. His traps are powerful, but the players will often know where they are, though this does mean you can use them to create chokepoints and guard important zones. He *can* create a trap with *Be Prepared* and then immediately attack with it; this makes for a dramatic and painful entrance, but can feel unfair, so do this sparingly.

The distractions are what the PCs should be most scared of. Make them scary by giving the repercussions real teeth: If the station gets a new situation aspect, then invoke and compel the heck out of it. If it introduces a block, then put things the PCs need on the other side of it.

That being said, too many distractions can be frustrating. Don't throw more than one at the PCs in a scene, and don't feel the need to give every scene a distraction. Capitalize on the threat of something going wrong: give your players a moment of terror by having the lights flicker or the walls creak but nothing actually come of it.

Defeating the Nyal can be as simple as taking out Xalit, although that will be extremely difficult because she'll quickly concede and run. A more appropriate approach for a space opera is to figure out what these aliens actually want and come up with a diplomatic solution. Make it clear that Wai knows more about the Nyal than she is letting on, so the players will know to either try to pull info out of her or to seek out an alternate route to understanding the Nyal. While Wai is the obvious source of information, don't make her the only source! You might let the players interrogate a Nyal or somehow arrange a peaceful meeting with Xalit.

Because the Nyal have so little, it's very easy to come up with a deal that will satisfy them. Ideally, the players can pull off a political victory, bringing peace to the region and exposing the plight of the Nyal to the universe. If not, well—the Nyal can be cowed into submission eventually.

BRINGING IN THE PCS

If the PCs are a part of the Alliance's military or science division, then heading to Petronas is mandated—the ship's computer won't allow them to navigate away from the source of a priority-one distress call. The PCs may be the entire crew of a smaller research vessel, though if their ship is a large exploration craft, they might just be the first away team to step onto the station; in this case, the bomb on the docking clamp can also prevent any reinforcements from coming.



If the PCs are independent space-explorers, rather than part of the Alliance government, switch up the order of events a little. Have the PCs dock at Petronas to refuel and resupply, then introduce the failing systems that force Wai to call for help. If and when the PCs try to leave, reveal that their ship is trapped.

TWEAKING TO CAMPAIGN LENGTH

This spread can easily be used for a one-shot, since the PCs are stuck in an enclosed area—there are only so many places to go, and all of them have problems. If you worry that your players will spend too much time putting out the Nyal’s fires, preventing them from actually taking the Nyal on, then you can motivate the players by attaching a countdown to the station:

Who Needs Oxygen, Anyway?

COUNTDOWN

Trigger: A scene passes without the players confronting the Nyal threat head-on.

Repercussion: The Nyal shut down the station’s life support!

For a longer scenario, make tracking the Nyal and finding areas they’ve sabotaged more of an issue. The starbase is large and mostly empty, and the internal sensors probably can’t be trusted. The Nyal are most dangerous when leaving traps, so leave plenty of those around. For inspiration, you may want to check out the Atlantean temple traps in the pulp adventure spread (page 58).

This region is also rich for an extended campaign. The Nyal’s guerrilla tactics cause lots of trouble for miners and independent travelers. Meanwhile, when their hibernation ends, the Rosals’ refusal to acknowledge their cousins will make for complex political situations: the Alliance won’t allow the Rosals in as long as they’re oppressing the Nyal, but forging peace between the two species would go against centuries of tradition and entrenched ideology.

ADJUSTING THIS SPREAD

The nature of the Nyal–Rosal conflict is broad and largely unexplained, so you can easily change these peoples to make them more interesting to you. Perhaps while the Rosal are humanoid, the Nyal are more obviously alien? Or maybe the Rosal are a culture of robots who overthrew their creators centuries ago, and those creators’ descendants are the Nyal? Playing with the differences between the two cultures will make this spread much more vibrant.

Spy Thriller

Your agency doesn't have an official name or even a place in the national budget. Instead, a dozen different government bureaus shuffle a little extra money into a fund which is only ever referred to as "General Clean-Up"—that's you. When a problem is too big, too dangerous, or too illegal for a legitimate agency to cover, it gets sent to GCU, who'll make the problem go away by any means necessary.

Today's problem? Some stolen information. Specifically, weapon schematics. A single operative, working for an unknown power, broke into nearby Haddon Base, obtained schematics for experimental non-lethal artillery, and evaded capture on their way out. The military managed to track the thief as they fled the base, but rather than create a PR nightmare by following the agent openly, they've asked us to return the schematics and figure out just who the operative is working for.

The operative is currently in a room on the top floor of the Hotel Alexie on 35th Avenue. Get there, get in, and get the information.

Adversaries

HOTEL SECURITY (FILLER, BLOCK, LIMITATION)

The Alexie is a luxury hotel, catering mostly to wealthy international travelers. While it's not a truly secure facility, management does take basic precautions to ensure that their guests are not disturbed.

Security Measures: Hotel security are watching the hallways, and will show up if they see people acting suspiciously.

The hotel's passive security measures are a little more formidable; there's nothing stopping you from getting to the top floor, but there are four suites up there, each blocked by a Good (+3) **LOCKED DOOR**. Unfortunately, going into the mission, you don't know which suite your target has taken—you'll have to figure that out, or break through every door.

Finally, there's a limitation in play that's just as limiting to you as it is to the hotel staff: **TOO MUCH NOISE WILL ATTRACT POLICE ATTENTION**. You won't want to deal with police for obvious reasons, and the Alexie has a reputation to maintain.

THE OPERATIVES (THREAT, HITTER)

Upon breaking into the room, the GCU team will discover that not only is the operative expecting them, but she has backup! Her squad wastes no time in trying to take out the GCU team, and they aren't afraid of making a lot of noise.

Cat-Burglar: The operative who broke into Haddon Base is a cat-burglar type, dressed in dark clothes and a ski mask. She carries a submachine gun, which she fires the instant the door opens.

Hitman: Joining the cat burglar is another operative, this one a burly, bald man in fatigues. He's armed with a large, expensive rifle, and stays away from the action as much as possible.

There is a third occupant of the room: a corpse. Getting a closer look at it will reveal it as the bullet-riddled body of the person known only as Control: the head of General Clean-Up, someone who has absolutely no business being here.

HOTEL ALEXIE SECURITY PERSONNEL

SKILLS

Fair (+2): Fight

STRESS **1 1**

The Cat-Burglar

ASPECTS

High Concept: DEADLY COVERT OPERATIVE

Trouble: GLASS JAW

Other Aspects: SLIPPERY AS AN EEL

SKILLS

Fantastic (+6): Burglary

Superb (+5): Athletics, Stealth

Great (+4): Shoot, Physique, Will

STUNTS

Slip Away: When the cat burglar defends with Athletics and succeeds with style, she can immediately move to an adjacent zone if there's no obstacle in her way.

Spray and Pray: When the cat burglar attacks with her submachine gun and succeeds with style, every other target in that zone takes a one-shift hit.

STRESS

Physical **1 2 3 4**

Mental **1 2 3 4**

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:





The Hitman

ASPECTS

High Concept: WELL-PAID INTERNATIONAL ASSASSIN

Trouble: NO UNDERSTANDING OF OTHERS' EMOTIONS

Other Aspects: THE BEST RIFLE MONEY CAN BUY

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Shoot

Great (+4): Fight, Notice

Good (+3): Investigate, Drive, Athletics

STUNTS

Sniper's Eye: When the Hitman uses Shoot to create an advantage representing his taking careful aim on a target, the resulting aspect gains another free invocation.

Large Caliber: The hitman's rifle has Weapon:2.

STRESS

Physical

1	2
---	---

Mental

1	2
---	---

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

AFTERMATH (THREAT, FILLER)

In the aftermath of the disaster, two things will occur rapidly. First, once the GCU finds out about Control's death, Nathan Chandler will be appointed the new Control. Chandler is a politically minded bureaucrat, the sort of person who cares a great deal about the image of an organization that's not meant to be seen.

Second, Chandler will declare that the team sent to the Hotel Alexie are clearly responsible for Control's death, and must therefore be traitors. The rest of GCU's forces will be pulled from their regular duties to instead focus on recapturing the "rogue agents." These forces will be a thorn in your side for a while. These agents are often accompanied by several junior-grade agents.

GCU Agent

ASPECTS

High Concept: AGENT FOR THE GENERAL CLEAN-UP ORGANIZATION

Trouble: STILL TRUSTS THE SO-CALLED ROGUE AGENTS

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Fight

Great (+4): Physique, Athletics

Good (+3): Shoot, Investigate, Notice

STUNTS

Call for Backup: By spending a fate point, the GCU agent can summon another GCU agent or three junior-grade GCU agents into the scene. This can be done at any time and does not use the GCU agent's action, but these reinforcements will take a few moments, or one full exchange in a conflict, to arrive.

STRESS

Physical 1 2 3 4

Mental 1 2



JUNIOR-GRADE GCU AGENT

SKILLS

Good (+3): Apprehend Targets

Average (+1): Chase Targets

STRESS 1 1 1

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS (BLOCKS)

If you so-called rogue agents are going to clear your names, you'll have to figure out what actually happened to Control. There are lots of ways to go about that, although each task is only going to get part of the story.

Control's Office: If the rogue agents can get into GCU headquarters, all the way to the top floor where the executive offices are, they can use—or, if it's more convenient, steal—Control's computer. The problems in getting there should be obvious. In addition, simply getting to the computer won't be enough to access the information on it: Control has invested in Superb (+5) **COMPUTER ENCRYPTION**.

Breaking through the encryption grants access to Control's files. There's no clear answers there, but shortly before his death he had a long and angry conversation with Kaitlyn Moore in Logistics about a budget disparity. It seems tens of thousands of dollars have been going unaccounted for over the past decade.

The Operatives: The two operatives who participated in the ambush at the hotel must be on the payroll of whoever killed Control. Tracking their comings and goings will lead to a house in the countryside. The innards of the house have been gutted, and a high-security vault has been built on the first floor—getting into the vault will require navigating through a Superb (+5) **LASER SECURITY GRID** with Weapon:4.

The vault is filled with computers that are recording cell-phone calls, seemingly at random, from all around the country. Ownership of the house is almost impossible to trace, although if someone can crack a Legendary (+8) **NETWORK OF COMPLEX ACCOUNTING TRICKS**, they'll discover that Nathan Chandler ultimately owns the place.

Hotel Security: The Hotel Alexie will be crawling with GCU agents, as well as extra-cautious hotel security, but there's a chance that the security cameras caught something incriminating. Unfortunately, while getting into the security office is as easy as knocking down a Fair (+2) **LOCKED DOOR**, the footage from the top floor has all been deleted by a clever hacker...but footage from the elevators hasn't, which features an incriminating clip of Control riding to the top floor next to a very agitated-looking Nathan Chandler.

NATHAN CHANDLER (BOSS)

Nathan Chandler is the man who killed Control and framed you for it. Chandler had been leeching money from GCU for years, not even for personal gain but to support a side project: a surveillance network, which theoretically could tap into any cell-phone conversation in the country—impressive but illegal. Control found out about it, and was going to force Chandler to dismantle it.

Nathan Chandler

ASPECTS

High Concept: ACTING HEAD OF GENERAL CLEAN-UP

Trouble: EGO TO SPARE

Other Aspects: RETIRED FIELD AGENT; TRAINED IN FORENSIC ACCOUNTING; SURPRISINGLY RUTHLESS

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Fight, Investigate

Great (+4): Notice, Rapport, Contacts

Good (+3): Physique, Will, Shoot, Athletics

Fair (+2): Stealth, Drive, Burglary, Provoke, Empathy

Average (+1): Everything else

STUNTS

Riposte: Once per exchange, when Chandler defends and succeeds with style, he can immediately counterattack his attacker, using the skill that his attacker used, regardless of whether the attack was physical or mental.

STRESS

Physical

1	2	3
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Mental

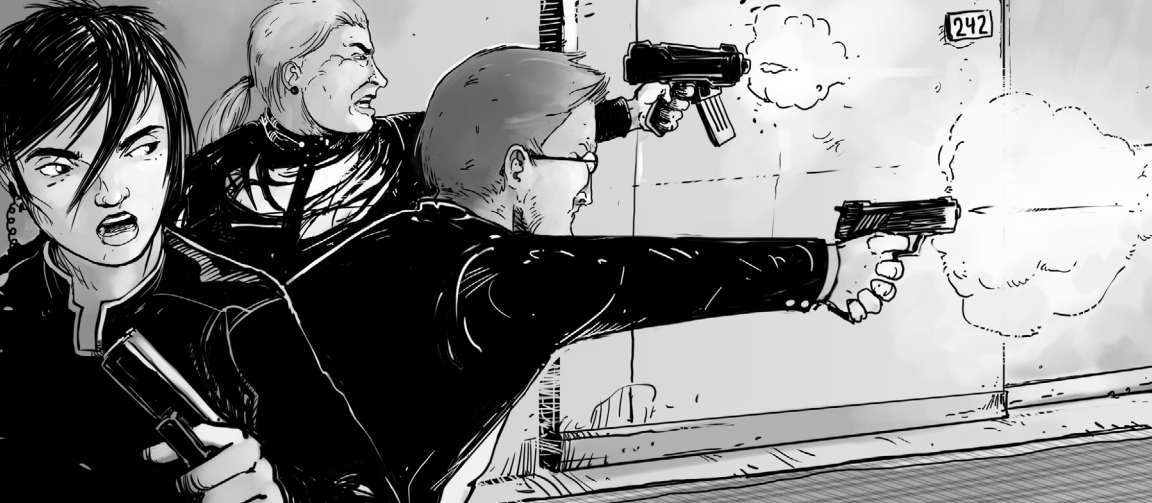
1	2	3
---	---	---

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

Moderate:





Using This Spread

This spread starts out very directed, giving the PCs a particular starting point, then opens right up. Once they've been declared "rogue agents," the PCs have a number of problems to solve, and not much in the way of guidance on how to go about solving them. Expressing these problems as blocks does two things: it tells the players that there is a direct way to get these things done, and it encourages them to seek out indirect solutions.

This spread plays around with what a block can be. Some of them are physical obstacles that the PCs must surpass or circumvent, but others are more abstract. Disabling a non-physical block, like the encryption on Control's computer, still requires the players to take a risk, but that risk can be similarly abstract: for instance, risking the goodwill of one's contacts, or burning through limited resources.

The GCU agents are there to cause trouble for the players, and are a ready danger to bring out whenever the moment looks right. That said, if you build every agent from the exact same template, fighting them can get dull very quickly. If the PCs are running into lots of agents, mix up their templates a bit—you could diversify their ranks by re-skinning the Pugilist and Terrier (page 55). In addition, you can always bring the hotel operatives back, or tweak them slightly to represent especially dangerous GCU agents on Chandler's payroll.

Chandler himself is not the most threatening boss, but he has the skills to handle himself both in a physical fight and in a social environment, if that's how the PCs opt to take him out. The players don't need to uncover every aspect of his plan in order to take him out, although the more they find out, the more justification they'll have to go after him. He's not hard to find, but because he's got a secret surveillance network at his disposal, he will be very hard to surprise.



BRINGING IN THE PCS

Getting the PCs to walk into the ambush is easy: it's the mission, so it's what they have to do. What's harder is making sure they have things to do once they've been declared rogue agents. There are several loose threads and no immediately obvious bad guy, and some groups will feel adrift if they don't have a clear objective to follow. If your players need a little more direction, add a mole to the GCU: a GCU member who doesn't trust Chandler and is slipping encrypted messages to the PCs.

TWEAKING TO CAMPAIGN LENGTH

For a one-shot, you'll want to spring the ambush early, so the players will get enough time as rogue agents. It'll help to start in medias res, with the PCs on the hotel's top floor, so that by the time the first scene is over, they'll have already stumbled across Control's body. Furthermore, whatever blocks the PCs take on first, make sure that the payoff incriminates Chandler—put his name in Control's e-mails, or have an employee at the secret vault who can be interrogated. That way, the players can feel justified in taking him on, even if they only get part of Chandler's plan.

For a longer scenario, do just the opposite: give the players a little less information to go on, forcing them to do more espionage and bump into more agents while they do it. Also, Control's computer and Chandler's secret base will likely be difficult to get into; this spread elides those troubles, but you don't have to.

If Chandler escapes the confrontation, the PCs can still get their names cleared, but Chandler will still have the resources to come back as a recurring villain in a longer campaign.

ADJUSTING THIS SPREAD

This spread is rather politically neutral: it can easily be set in any country, and in virtually any time. Replace Control's computer encryption with letters written in a complex cypher, and Chandler's attempted surveillance network with some sort of nuclear super-weapon, and General Clean-Up could be operating in the swinging sixties. Say that Chandler is simply taking the money, and he could be a war profiteer during the forties.

Supers

Bay City might be a wealthy metropolis—the shining jewel of the Gold Coast—but crime and corruption lurk not far below the surface. Mayor Robbins is a particularly grim example of this: he basically purchased his position, a fact which he denies with a smile whenever it's brought up. It's bad enough that Robbins has ties with mundane organized crime throughout Bay City, but he's also been seen associating with the Bay City Paladins.

The Paladins are a gang of superhuman supremacists, mostly sporting low-level powers, if any at all. A proper supervillain like Doctor Blight wouldn't associate with these jokers, so they mostly just participate in petty crime justified by their self-serving ideology. But Robbins is clever, powerful, and has a way of telling the police just where not to look, so for the past few weeks, the Paladins have been committing more and more flagrant and daring break-ins across the city.

Clearly something is up, and it's time for the local heroes to figure it out. What is Robbins getting the Paladins to do? Why are these human-haters listening to someone without superpowers?

Adversaries

MAYOR ROBBINS'S PLAN (COUNTDOWN)

Robbins has a dastardly plan up his sleeve. He's using the Bay City Paladins to engineer a mass-empowering event (MEE) in Bay City's Waterside District. Most of the Bay City Paladins gained their powers from an MEE back at the turn of the millennium, when a hydroelectric plant not far from Bay City overloaded. But if Robbins's plan works, it will be the first artificial MEE in the world.

The Mayor's Dastardly Plan

COUNTDOWN □□□□

Trigger: You fail to stop one of the Paladins' heists.

Trigger: A week passes, giving the mayor time to get what he needs through alternative means.

Result: Mayor Robbins's plan succeeds, and a mass-empowering event occurs in Waterside.

High-energy radiation of a very specific frequency will spread across the Waterside District, tweaking the DNA of its residents. Lots of people will die, and many more will be granted superpowers that they cannot control, to fatal effect. But the survivors will almost all be new superpowered citizens of Bay City.

LAMB (BOSS)

One of the leaders of the Bay City Paladins, "Lamb" may have started out as a reference to her hair, which is bone-white and curly, but now it's the only name she goes by. She's younger and smaller than most of her gang, but her attitude and powerful teleportation ability mean her leadership is never in doubt.

Lamb

ASPECTS

High Concept:

LEADER OF THE BAY CITY PALADINS

Trouble: A RUNNER, NOT A FIGHTER

Other Aspects: WHY WALK WHEN YOU CAN TELEPORT?; FORMER GYMNAST; SUPERHUMANS ARE THE FUTURE

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Rapport, Athletics

Great (+4): Deceive, Investigate, Fight

Good (+3): Physique, Drive, Will, Empathy

Fair (+2): Stealth, Burglary, Contacts, Resources, Crafts

Average (+1): Everything else

STUNTS

Teleportation: As her free movement during an exchange, Lamb can teleport up to three zones, ignoring any obstacles in her way.

Escape 'Port: By spending a fate point, Lamb can teleport out of the scene, leaving a pair of Paladin fillers in her place. If Lamb took any physical consequences during this scene, she can use this stunt without spending a fate point.

STRESS

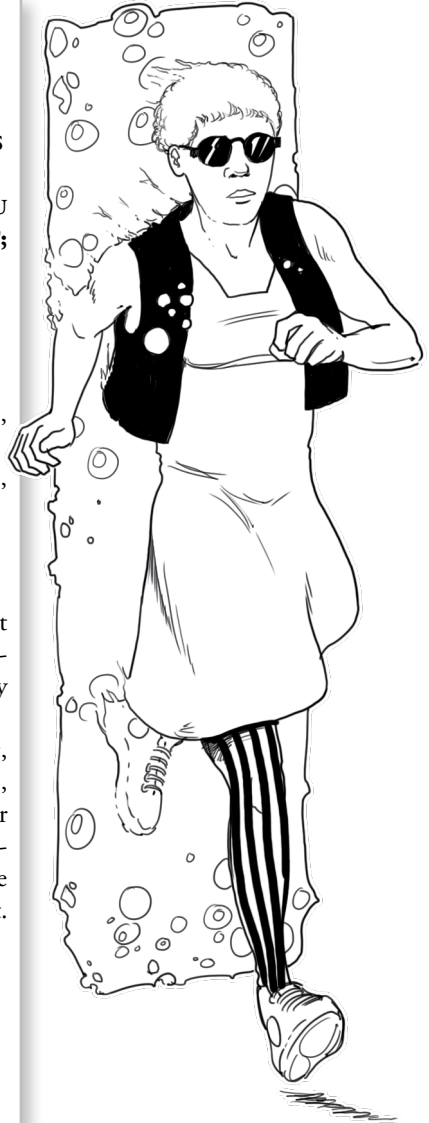
Physical

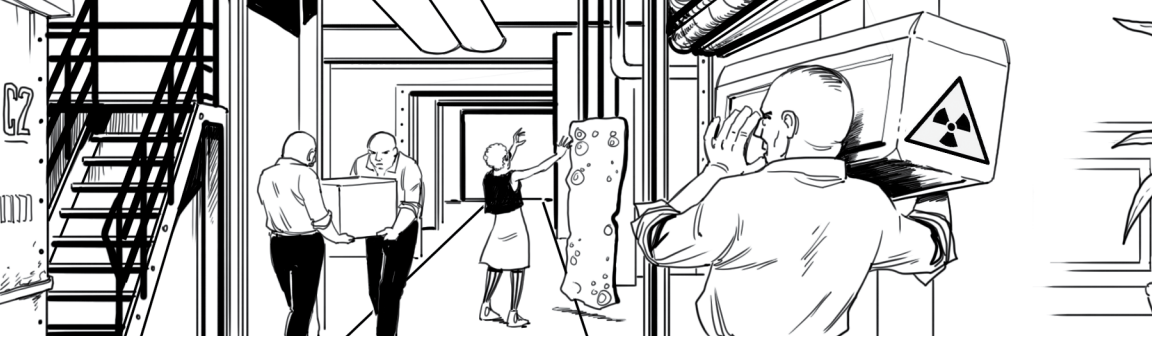
Mental

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

Moderate:





THE BIG HEISTS (COUNTDOWNS)

Robbins is using the Bay City Paladins to pick up the equipment he needs for his mad experiment. They're a bunch of goons, and about the only strategy they display is making use of their strength of numbers. That makes them very useful for Robbins: as a gang, they're easy to influence, and even if a few members get taken out in a job, there are plenty more ready to take on the next.

The Kidnapping: Professor Joshua Pierce is *the* authority on superhumans. His expertise will be invaluable in properly calibrating the MEE, so the Paladins are going to break into his office at the university late at night and abduct him. The zones on either side of the office, the hallway and the area outside the window, are loaded with Paladin goons trying to keep people from getting in.

Locking on to Professor Pierce's Location

COUNTDOWN □□□□

Trigger: Pierce is held in place by a Paladin for an exchange.

Result: Lamb teleports in, grabs the professor, and teleports out.

Nuclear Material: The MEE is going to need a lot of radiation, and that's going to come from nuclear material liberated from the power plant just outside town. There are some easily overpowered security forces there, along with a **LOUD, BLARING ALARM** as soon as the Paladins are discovered.

Paladins Fleeing with Stolen Nuclear Material

COUNTDOWN □□□

Trigger: A Paladin manages to get out of the plant and evade any pursuers without being taken out or forced to abandon a heavy box of uranium-235.

Result: Between all the Paladins who got away, the mayor will have more than enough material to accomplish his goals.



The Radiographic Telemetry Device: The Bay City Paladins certainly doesn't know what this important science thing is, but they've been told that they need it. It's being kept in a Bauza Technologies building on the outskirts of Bay City, where some Good (+3) **HIGH SECURITY DOORS** stand between the entrance and labs full of **COMPLEX, INSCRUTABLE EQUIPMENT**.

Searching for the Important Gizmo

COUNTDOWN □□□

Trigger: A Paladin breaks into one of the building's locked labs.

Result: They find the specific gizmo they're looking for, grab it, and fly out the window.

THE BAY CITY PALADINS (FILLER)

They're all super-powered, but they aren't all that impressive. Paladins are goons who think their powers make them better than "normal" people. They rely on their superpowers for almost everything, which means they never develop real skills.

There are many varieties of Paladin, but they're all constructed the same way.

The only difference among members of the Bay City Paladins is their skill: you'll replace Superpower with Super Strength, or Flight, or Heat Vision, or another superpower. Paladins like to gang up to diversity their power-sets, creating a mob with lots of Fair (+2) powers, rather than focusing in order to increase their skill ratings.

There are some more powerful Paladin goons, but they will still have varied powers. An easy way to generate them is to look at the other threats and hitters in this book—such as the SERPENT lieutenants (page 66)—and reskin their abilities, replacing laser rifles with laser eye-beams and so on. Because of the way the Bay City Paladins is run, the heroes are unlikely to run into the same hitter or threat more than once.

PALADIN GOON

SKILLS

Fair (+2): Superpower

STRESS 1|1



MAYOR ROBBINS (BOSS)

Robbins looks like a caricature of a mobster, all expensive suits and cigars, but beneath his brash exterior is one of the most brilliant minds in the world. He owns the papers, he owns the police, he practically owns the city, and if his crazy experiment goes according to plan, he'll also be the guy who owns the world's first method of artificially generating superpowers.

Robbins also has a very unpleasant limitation: **MAYOR ROBBINS IS THE MAYOR OF BAY CITY**. Deal him any physical harm, or use any extra-legal methods to confront him, and you will be in for a world of hurt.

Mayor Zachary Robbins

ASPECTS

High Concept: BRILLIANT MAD SCIENTIST

Trouble: EGO BIGGER THAN MOST PLANETS

Other Aspects: I RUN THIS TOWN; PEOPLE WHO STAND IN MY WAY TEND TO DIE; IVORY-HANDLED SWORD CANE

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Resources

Great (+4): Rapport, Crafts

Good (+3): Will, Physique, Fight

Fair (+2): Notice, Deceive, Sneak, Drive

Average (+1): Everything else

STUNTS

Cops in My Pocket: Mayor Robbins can call officers to his aid. Once per scene for free, and each further time by spending a fate point, he can bring a cop onto the scene. For these cops, use the stats for Officers Gillette and Rosenberg (page 47).

Genius Mad Scientist: Mayor Robbins gets +2 to Crafts when crafting inventions that push the very boundaries of what is possible with science.

Fast-Talker: Robbins is an extremely smooth talker. When someone makes a social attack against him that doesn't present verifiable evidence of his wrongdoing, Robbins can defend using Rapport with a +2 bonus.

STRESS

Physical 1 2 3 4

Mental 1 2 3 4

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

Moderate:

Severe:



Using This Spread

Creating adversaries for superheroes can be especially challenging because, well, they're super. They've got the powers to plow through most enemies, and more importantly they *should* plow through most enemies—if every bad guy is as powerful as you are, you don't feel all that super. That's why the biggest threat here is the countdown. This time pressure will challenge the players, no matter how strong the PCs are.

A heist's countdown starts when the heroes show up, because part of superheroics is getting into the fight right when the action is at its most exciting. If the players have dilly-dallied, or succeeded at a cost on a roll to get to the heist, then it makes sense to mark a countdown box right away, costing them valuable time. On the other hand, if they've done something to gain a powerful advantage, add another box to the countdown track. If the countdown ends, the PCs have failed, but the fight isn't over: the most important Paladins take off, but many are still around, attacking the players and causing mayhem.

Even if the PCs stop a heist, the mayor's plan won't be foiled; in a few days, the Paladins will either try the same heist again or start a different heist to achieve a similar end—kidnapping a different expert or stealing some other important scientific gizmo. If the PCs want to stop the mayor's plan, they'll have to do more than merely hamper the Paladins. They'll have to take out Lamb, meaning the gang dissolves, or solve things more permanently by taking out Robbins himself.

Neither Robbins nor Lamb is challenging in a physical fight, but the mayor has a powerful limitation, while Lamb's teleportation lets her get away easily. Because of their advantages, these bosses can make appearances early and often: Lamb showing up on heists, and Robbins confronting the heroes, directly or via messenger, when they start to annoy him.

Taking out Lamb means hitting her whenever the opportunity strikes and trying to catch her unawares. Taking out the mayor will require exposing his plans; this might be as simple as convincing Lamb to reveal the plot to the public, but this could also become an extended social conflict. Conceptual zones can be useful here, representing where Robbins and the PCs stand in the public eye, with areas that represent being trusted, under public scrutiny, all the way to being wanted by the police.



BRINGING IN THE PCS

Thwarting the machinations of megalomaniacs is a superhero's job. If that's not quite enough incentive, throw in some hints about the scope of the mayor's plan. Perhaps the PCs know he's slipped something into the water supply at Waterside, and a few kids have gotten very sick from it. It doesn't affect the countdown; it just tells the players that Robbins is up to something big.

TWEAKING TO CAMPAIGN LENGTH

In a one-shot, there might not be enough time for the PCs to really investigate what the mayor is up to, so simplify the plan's countdown: give it two boxes and remove the "one week passes" trigger. If the players stop two heists, then his plan fails, and he responds by confronting the PCs in a rage with Lamb and the Paladins by his side. It's not a smart move on his part, but makes for a climactic ending.

In a longer campaign, a heist can be the climax of each session. This gives the players lots of time to investigate, but also leaves open many opportunities for distractions to show up. After all, just because there's one maniac out there doesn't mean other criminals are taking the week off. Crucially, make it important for the PCs to find out which places will be heist targets, giving the players a chance to flex their Resources and Contacts.

One way or another, this spread will end with Bay City in chaos: either Waterside has filled with supers with unpredictable powers, or the mayor has been ruined and the city is politically unstable, or the Bay City Paladins have been defeated, leaving a power vacuum in the criminal element and an angry mayor at the heroes' throats. Any of these situations can be the starting point for an interesting campaign.

ADJUSTING THIS SPREAD

This evil scheme is aimed at superheroes of a moderate power level—not the cosmic heroes who solve problems across the galaxy, but those do-gooders slightly more powerful than street-level heroes whose power-set can best be summed up as "good at punching." That said, the spread is pretty flexible, especially since the Paladins are primarily filler.

Since the Paladins' only skills are their superpowers, you can change those to better fit your PCs. If the PCs are low-powered, then replace some of the more impressive Paladin powers, like Flight, with useful but more mundane things like Super Toughness. On the other hand, if your heroes are very powerful, then make the Paladins follow suit; a skill like Energy Shielding or Time Manipulation will make a mob of Paladins very flexible and feel more powerful without fundamentally changing their status as filler.

Post-Apocalyptic

There's just one road that cuts across the salt flats between your little community, a place called Res, and the great city of Moa. Moa's a trade hub. Back before the bombs dropped, it was a shopping center of some sort. Now it's one of the biggest islands of civilization in the wasteland. *The* biggest independent settlement—both the New Chicago Federation and the Dukes down south have been trying to convince Moa to join up peacefully, with no luck. Moa prides itself on being a safe place for anyone to come and barter whatever they have for whatever they need. Mutants are welcome, but politics aren't.

What Res has is water—a whole tanker truck full of it—and just about enough fuel to make it to Moa. What Res needs is pretty much everything else, but that shouldn't be a problem. You'll get enough food, gas, and weapons to serve the city for a year, and that's assuming you get the worse end of every deal you make. The only problem is, there's just one road across the salt flats to get there, and there's no such thing as a safe road these days.

Adversaries

THE WATER TANKER (COUNTDOWN)

You're going for this ride on a massive water tanker, which you'll need to keep safe. Luckily, it's pretty tough.

The biggest danger you'll face is the limited amount of fuel at your disposal. Res needs gasoline, and you've basically taken the last of it to fuel the water tanker. There's a little extra just in case of emergencies, but only a little.

The Water Tanker

ASPECTS

High Concept: HUGE TANKER TRUCK

Trouble: PONDEROUS

STRESS

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

Moderate:

Severe:

Nearly Empty

COUNTDOWN

Trigger: You go off the road to take an indirect path toward Moa.

Result: The tanker runs out of fuel, leaving you stranded out in the salt flats.



Front-Seater Mutant

ASPECTS

High Concept: MUTANT TRAPPED IN A CAR

Trouble: LIMITED FUEL RESERVES

Other Aspects: SPEED DEMON

SKILLS

Fantastic (+6): Drive

Superb (+5): Physique, Provoke

STUNTS

Armored: The front-seater's car surrounds it, giving it Armor:1 against physical attacks.

Stunt Driving: If the front-seater has moved at least one zone this exchange, it can attack using Drive.

STRESS

Physical 1 2 3 4

Mental 1 2

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

Mild:

Moderate:

Back-Seater Mutant

ASPECTS

High Concept: MUTANT GUNNER

Trouble: FREQUENTLY NEEDS TO RELOAD

Other Aspects: CHAINED TO THE VEHICLE

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Shoot

Great (+4): Physique, Athletics

STUNTS

Disabling Shot: The back-seater gets +2 to Shoot when using its gun to create an advantage on a vehicle.

STRESS

Physical 1 2 3 4

Mental 1 2

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

Moderate:

THE MUTANT CLANS (THREATS)

One omnipresent danger on the roads around here are the mutant clans. A decade back, the mutants came down from the north, from an irradiated area most people considered totally unlivable. Evidently, some people were able to survive. Mutants are big, hulking humanoids with ash-gray skin and an extra set of weak little arms sprouting below their big beefy ones. Some clans have mutations which are even more grotesque, and some look a little closer to human, but they're all big and dangerous.

Mutants aren't necessarily violent, but the clan operating in this area is. They can be found riding up and down the roads, raiding what they need from settlements and attacking travelers indiscriminately.

Front-Seaters: Sometimes, a mutant child gets strapped into the driver's seat of a car and isn't allowed to leave. These "front-seaters" grow to fill most of the cab, and sometimes holes get cut in the roof to make room for the mutant's expanding bulk. By human standards, it's a horrifying process, but the mutant doesn't seem to mind. It's the best driver in the wasteland.

Back-Seaters: Standing up behind the front-seater is the back-seater; it's just chained in, not a permanent fixture of the car. Its job is to operate the truly massive gun bolted to the roof of the vehicle.

THE OVERRUN TOWN (DISTRACTION, FILLER, THREAT)

Wherever you find pre-war buildings still standing, you'll find desperate people trying to call them home. And wherever you find desperate people, you'll find raiders all too ready to take advantage of them.

Along the road there's a six-story office building, a settlement too ramshackle to deserve a name. You can see the fires burning in the upper windows from miles away, but as you get closer you notice that some of that fire is being tossed down to the ground—people are firing flaming arrows dangerously near the base of their own building. Get close enough and you'll find out why: a clan of mutants is trying to get through the door.

MUTANTS ATTACKING A HUMAN BUILDING

DISTRACTION

Choice: Do you detour to help the humans, or pass on by?

Repercussion (help them): You spend a little fuel and get into a fight with some mutants, but you'll make allies of the survivors.

Brawlers and Scouts: This little clan of mutants isn't related to the ones tearing up and down the road, which is probably why they want the safety of a building. But though they're weedy by mutant standards, they can still be formidable.

Shield-Basher: The largest of this lesser mutant clan, presumably their leader, is armed with a pair of car doors, strapped onto its larger set of arms.



Shield-Basher

ASPECTS

High Concept: LEADER OF A SMALL MUTANT CLAN

Trouble: TERRIFIED OF OTHER MUTANT CLANS

Other Aspects: CAR-DOOR SHIELDS

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Physique

Great (+4): Fight, Rapport

STUNTS

Shielded: Whenever the Shield-Basher defends with its shields against a melee attack, it gains a boost against its attacker. If it succeeds with style on this defense, you can spend a fate point to put a situation aspect with two free invocations on the attacker.

Protective: Any mobs of mutants in the Shield-Basher's zone gain Armor:1.

STRESS

Physical [1][2][3][4]

Mental [1][2]

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

Mild:

MUTANT BRAWLER

SKILLS

Fair (+2): Fight

STRESS [1][1]

MUTANT SCOUT

SKILLS

Fair (+2): Athletics

STRESS [1][1]

NCF ROADBLOCK (BLOCK, HITTER)

The New Chicago Federation is the biggest empire in the area. Chicago itself was bombed to cinders, but the survivors in the suburbs have managed to pull a lot of useful pre-war tech out of the rubble. Mostly that means weapons—if you're looking for guns, whether ballistic or photonic, you can head to NCF territory. They won't sell their wares, but you can find out what it's like to get shot at by really nice guns.

For some reason, the NCF have set up a Legendary (+8) **ROAD BLOCK** along the sole path to Moa. A whole bunch of cars, blocking every inch of the road. Accompanying the roadblock is a small chapter of the NCF military. If you ask nicely, they'll explain that General Siddig, an NCF higher-up, is coming to Moa, and they want to make sure the visit isn't interrupted by mutants, raiders, or other undesirables. A bunch of travelers from a little settlement nobody's ever heard of, even if they have water with them, still count as undesirable.

Because of their group tactics, treat these NCF goons as a single, powerful hitter, if they feel the need to fight.

New Chicago Federation Army

ASPECTS

High Concept: WE LIVE AND DIE FOR NEW CHICAGO

Trouble: WE NEED TO WORK TOGETHER

Other Aspects: EXTREMELY WELL-ARMED

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Shoot

Great (+4): Fight, Provoke

STUNTS

Fire at Will: Once per exchange, after any character's turn, you can spend a fate point to allow the NCF Army to attack or create an advantage using Shoot.

Grouping Up: If the NCF Army has not moved during this exchange, they get Weapon:2 when attacking with Fight.

STRESS

Physical

Mental

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:



Using This Spread

The PCs are on a journey to Moa, and your job is to make that trip difficult. The adversaries in this spread exist to tempt the players into leaving the road. Either they plow through something difficult and risk taking some damage along the way, or they face some easy Drive obstacles but risk running out of fuel. Don't spring this decision on the players too suddenly: the mutants and roadblocks are visible for miles, giving the players plenty of time to figure out what they're going to do.

The front- and back-seater mutants will target the PCs' truck relentlessly. They don't even care about the water; they just want to kill some humans and collect some scrap. The worst thing about this clan of mutants is that they are bizarrely hardy: even if the PCs outright kill one of the mutants, it's going to heal up and come back even angrier. Whenever they come back—and bring them back often!—give them a new situation aspect that explains why they're so mad at the PCs now, such as **THE PUNY HUMAN SHOT ME IN THE FACE!**

The lesser mutant clan and the roadblock give the PCs an excuse to step out of the tanker for a little while. It's certainly possible to get rid of the mutants peacefully, although they'll have to try to convince the shield-basher while it and its clan are in the middle of attacking the PCs. The PCs talking their way through a block will be more difficult, and since it's a block, even attempting to overcome it will put the PCs at risk, with the obvious risk being that the NCF troops decide to just fire on these annoying interlopers.

Fighting on the road introduces lots of opportunities to play with zones. The road's likely to be large and empty, but the areas just off-road will have more interesting options, like **THE RUINS OF AN OLD CITY** or **PILES OF WRECKED CARS**, or simple blocks, like Fair (+2) **ROUGH TERRAIN** with Weapon:1. The tanker and other vehicles make sense as mobile zones, overlapping with zones on the road. Alternately, if everyone's in motion, as the cars are, relational zones make sense; the cars are all barreling down the long road toward Moa, what's most important is who is close to whom. This is a great way to make a race crop up.

BRINGING IN THE PCS

This spread is all about covering the distance between point A and point B, regardless of what those points are. Your PCs can certainly be residents of Res hoping to save their town, or mercenaries hired to guard the shipment of water, but all you really need is an endpoint that they want to get to: a well-armed military facility, a space shuttle about to take off from this crummy wasteland,



a patch of fertile land, or something like that. If your players are truly resistant to embarking on quests, you can flip the script: rather than trying to get to Moa, they are trying to escape from some massive danger, like a radioactive storm. If the fuel countdown fails, they don't just get stranded; they get irradiated by the storm.

TWEAKING TO CAMPAIGN LENGTH

You can control the length of this spread by changing how many obstructions appear on the road; a trip which only goes through the one town, the roadblock, and two or three encounters with the mutants will go by quickly. For a one-shot event, trim a box away from the fuel countdown, to make things a little more urgent.

For a longer campaign, add more problems on the road: towns in danger, mutants camping on the road, and ambushes by NCF forces or random filler raiders. If you're planning to make the trip last more than three sessions, add another box or two to the fuel countdown, or provide an opportunity partway through the drive for the PCs to refuel and clear the fuel countdown.

Moa is a great starting point for kicking off an extended campaign; not only are there many, many people who could use help there, but it's also a large and relatively secure facility which could be assaulted by mutants or other forces who've been following the PCs in secret. And of course, there's always the trip back to Res, which will fill the road up with all-new troubles.

ADJUSTING THIS SPREAD

One way to quickly change the tone of this spread is to get rid of the cars—instead, the PCs are walking to Moa with something smaller but no less valuable, like a functional pre-apocalyptic computer. The mutants can remain the same, although you'll want to replace the front-seater's Drive with Fight, and treat its Armor rating as literal armor, possibly hammered out from the cab of an old car. This gets rid of the fuel countdown, but at the same time the players will have fewer ways to evade the problems along the road.

While you're tweaking, you can also change the locations to make more sense for you and your players. This spread puts the post-apocalypse in a post-nuclear American Midwest—Moa, by the way, is the former Mall of America—but post-apocalyptic settings can be even more fun when they're set in the ruins of your own hometown.

Regency Romance

Colonel Edmund Morrison is madly in love with Elizabeth Wieland, and she is madly in love with him. He is handsome and clever, and she is beautiful and even more clever. They make a perfect couple. The engagement party will be in the spring, the wedding in the fall, and come the new year there will be the first of many children on the way. The problem, of course, is that Colonel Morrison and Eliza have never met, and while the perfection of their love story is beyond doubt to any who know them, it remains, alas, purely theoretical in our reality.

However, the duchess is throwing a ball to celebrate the new year, as she does every new year. It's the grandest soirée of them all, the one against which all the parties of the following year will be judged and found wanting. If the colonel and Eliza meet one another and share a dance at the ball, they will, you are certain, fall in love.

Which means you have just a few weeks to take care of all the other suitors waiting in the wings, who might interfere with this love story.

Adversaries

SOCIETY AND SOCIAL MORES (LIMITATION)

A hallmark of Regency-era romance is the ever-present threat of scandal—ramifications not for doing something that is inherently bad, but which violates the social mores hard-coded into the minds of all those around you. Society itself is the greatest adversary you will face, and it's one which you cannot possibly defeat. In effect, this puts a limitation on the entire adventure: **YOU MUSTN'T CREATE A SCANDAL**, which deals social stress with Weapon:2.

SOCIAL STRESS

The biggest threats in this world are those who would undermine you socially, rather than endanger you physically. While *Fate Core* usually tracks social attacks as mental stress, characters in this spread have a particularly intense focus on their social standing. For this reason, the major enemies have a social stress track, which absorbs stress incurred when one is made to look foolish or becomes embroiled in scandal. Mental stress, meanwhile, is used to absorb attacks meant to terrify, frighten, or otherwise influence someone's mental health alone.

The social stress track works just like the mental and physical tracks. Characters with high Resources gain more boxes on their social stress track, exactly as characters with high Physique gain more physical stress boxes.

Most social attacks use *Provoke*, attempting to get the target to take a foolish action, or *Rapport*, to convince witnesses that the defender is doing something scandalous. These attacks may be defended against using *Will*, to keep one's cool, or *Rapport*, to counter accusations.

ALPHONSE, THE VICAR'S SON (THREAT, LIMITATION)

Alphonse Crosstwick has made no secret of the fact that he is putting himself first in line for Eliza Wieland's affections. He has also made no secret of the fact that he's not at all interested in this in terms of romance—he is much more interested in scholastic pursuits, but Eliza's family has money, which will enable him to pursue his studies more purposefully.

Eliza is too proud to allow for such a marriage to take place. But at the same time, Alphonse has just enough social sway that his interest will keep any other suitors, including the fine young colonel, at bay. To that end, you will have to see that he recognizes the error of his ways before the Grand Ball.

Alphonse spends the bulk of his time holed up in the vicar's library, reading old books and writing monographs about insects and rocks. It is rare to encounter him at a social event. The Grand Ball is an obvious exception, but to catch him in time you will be better off seeing him at one of the vicar's regular dinner parties. He throws them every week, and always insists that Alphonse make a showing. Because the vicar's dinner parties are ludicrously dull and sparsely attended affairs, it will be no problem at all to secure an invitation—it is much harder to avoid having to attend.

However, while the Vicar is as milquetoast as one might expect, he is still a vicar, which throws a particular limitation on any get-together he attends: **CONFRONTATION WILL NOT BE TOLERATED** with Weapon:4. The dinner party is a time for polite chit-chat and friendly banter. Any hint of aggression will draw not only the ire of the Vicar, but will be a subject of gossip for weeks to come.

HYACINTH, THE JOURNALIST (HITTER, LIMITATION)

The *Blankshire Register* is the local newspaper, and the author of the society column is one Miss Hyacinth Piper. She has set her eyes upon Colonel Morrison as a potential beau, primarily because being on his arm would allow her to cozy up to the various military spouses in the area, allowing her to access new heights of reportable gossip.

Hyacinth will eventually tire of the colonel and move on, but he will probably be unable to resist her silver-tongued charms at the Grand Ball. You must ensure that she is too busy putting out scandalous fires to actually attend.

While Hyacinth can be difficult to track down, luck would have it that she is throwing a party herself, on the week before the Grand Ball. One might suspect that people would be unwilling to attend—her profession is well known, and there's no doubt that she throws social events for mercenary purposes, to gather dirt on the attendants. However, Hyacinth always throws masquerades, allowing her guests a measure of anonymity. So while this might be your best opportunity to catch up to Miss Piper, **HYACINTH COULD BE ANYWHERE**.



Alphonse Crosstwick

ASPECTS

High Concept: THE VICAR'S STUDIOUS SON
Trouble: I CAN'T STAND UP TO MY FATHER

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Rapport
Great (+4): Deceive, Contacts
Good (+3): Resources, Lore, Notice

STUNT

Studious and Distant: Even in public, a part of Alphonse is always in the library focused on his learning. This distraction gives Armor:2 to Alphonse against mental and social attacks.

STRESS

Physical 1 2
Mental 1 2
Social 1 2 3 4

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:

Hyacinth Piper

ASPECTS

High Concept: PROFESSIONAL GOSSIP
Trouble: EVERYBODY KNOWS WHO I AM

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Provoke
Great (+4): Contacts, Rapport
Good (+3): Notice, Investigate, Empathy

STUNTS

Sharp Tongue: Hyacinth is especially good at dropping infuriating barbs. She can attack using Provoke with Weapon:2.

STRESS

Physical 1 2
Mental 1 2
Social 1 2

CONSEQUENCES

Mild:





THE GRAND BALL (FILLER, LIMITATION)

At last! The day of the Duchess's Grand Ball, and the day when Colonel Morrison and Elizabeth Wieland will finally meet and fall in love and go on to live their perfect lives. If only it were so simple as putting them on opposite ends of a room and trusting that their eyes will meet just as the music hits a crescendo!

No, there are too many others here. Not *proper* suitors who might actually attract the attention of Eliza or the Colonel, but young hopefuls, aware that the Duchess's Grand Ball is the place where young people traditionally arrive unattached and leave affianced. Keep them out of this love story!

YOUNG HOPEFUL

SKILLS

Good (+3): Dancing

Average (+1): Dueling

STRESS 1 1 1

ATTRACTIVE YOUTH

SKILLS

Fair (+2): Seductiveness

STRESS 1 1

The duchess's mansion is filled to overflowing with these potential suitors, but you should be able to take them out of the picture with a well-placed bon mot or, if you feel the need, threat. Honestly, the place is crowded enough that you could probably elbow some of them in the neck without being noticed. However, there is a complication—because this is the Grand Ball, most zones contain a block: Great (+4) **IMPASSIBLY DENSE CROWD**, which has Weapon:2 against your social standing if you gracelessly try to shove through it. The only exception is the dance floor itself, which instead has the limitation **ON THE DANCE FLOOR, YOU MUST DANCE** with Weapon:2.

Your final challenge is to get the Colonel and Eliza together; for simplicity's sake, you can represent each member of the couple-to-be as a block which must be overcome. The colonel is Great (+4) **NERVOUS ABOUT DANCING**, while Eliza is Superb (+5) **UNWILLING TO BE MANIPULATED**.



Using This Spread

The PCs' objective is clear and simple: get rid of the suitors who stand between the colonel and Eliza. In a genre where they'd be free to punch enemies until they fall down, this would be a very simple task! But here, the many limitations keep their goal interesting: the overwhelming need to avoid scandalous actions, and the constraints at each social event.

Limitations are only effective if there are repercussions for defying them. To that end, your most essential job is to make sure that the limitations have teeth. What this means is necessarily situational: A PC who is slightly too aggressive at the vicar's tea might get hit with a little social stress or even take a mild social consequence that they cannot defend against. A PC who refuses to dance at the Grand Ball will be politely asked to leave, which will greatly complicate the mission!

Combat in this spread is almost exclusively social and mental. You can lay these fights out with physical zones, which makes sense while trying to navigate the dance. A final puzzle might involve attempting to push the colonel and Eliza next to one another, while the movement on the dance floor drags them apart.

Elsewhere, more abstract zones may come in handy, especially at the vicar's party. Here, the zones may be topics of conversation: the weather, the dinner, Blankshire politics, et cetera. As it would be uncouth to barge into a discussion, the PCs must overcome with Rapport to segue into new topics.

With the exception of the minor suitors at the Grand Ball, the PCs don't have to deal with the problem suitors at the suggested parties; each party is the easy way to get close to a particular suitor, but each event carries obvious problems in their limitations. Make sure the players know who they need to track down and what the simple method would be, but if they come up with alternate plans, run with them.

And of course, while Alphonse and Hyacinth default to social combat, the PCs don't have to; if they find an excuse to challenge these suitors to a duel, the suitors will be honor-bound to accept. That being said, duels probably shouldn't be "to the death"; Alphonse and Hyacinth are smart enough to concede, drop their pursuits, and skip the Grand Ball.

BRINGING IN THE PCS

It is a truth universally acknowledged that setting up a perfect love story is a quest every bit as noble as saving the world or slaying the dragon. However, if this truth isn't enough to motivate your players, you may need to give them



some personal stakes in the colonel and Eliza's romance. If any PCs are related to one of the couple, for instance, that's a more personal connection to build from. And of course, there are many ways to benefit when a couple marries: perhaps Eliza's younger sister is discouraged from marrying until her sister does, or the colonel's family is in dire need of the money which will come in when the wedding happens.

TWEAKING TO CAMPAIGN LENGTH

For a one-shot adventure, every scene can be a different party, eliding the time between. While this makes for only three scenes, the complexities of social combat and time spent lavishly describing the hors d'oeuvres being served will make them fairly long, full scenes.

In a longer scenario, you can spend more time working up to the various events. You might complicate the matter of getting an invitation: perhaps the PCs will need to actually track down the vicar in order to get invited to his tea, and perhaps the tickets to Hyacinth's masquerade have all been given out, so the PCs will need to take them from someone she actually invited. Running into the suitor becomes the capstone for the session. Finally, you may wish to flesh out the colonel and Eliza into a pair of bosses, giving them some additional agency and interest.

Kicking off an extended campaign will probably mean leaving the colonel and Eliza behind—the alternative is that they don't fall in love at first sight, which is just unthinkable. However, there are many opportunities for freelance matchmakers in and around Blankshire, a region where somebody is throwing an elaborate party virtually every week.

ADJUSTING THIS SPREAD

The most important tweak to keep in mind is this: while this is a Regency-themed spread, there's absolutely no reason to feel beholden to all of the social mores of the actual British Regency, many of which are regressive and best forgotten. Ages, professions, social roles, and genders can and should be altered as you see fit.

Indeed, you can use this spread in any place or time dominated by social concerns. It's just as applicable in the present, and will even hold up in the sort of futuristic dystopia where the uber-rich throw extravagant parties while the commoners in the wasteland are killing each other as entertainment for those in the great domed cities.

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