

**GURPS**

# the Prisoner

*Welcome to The Village. You won't be leaving . . .*

*By David Ladyman*



**STEVE JACKSON GAMES**

# GURPS<sup>®</sup>

# the Prisoner<sup>™</sup>

*Roleplaying in The Village*

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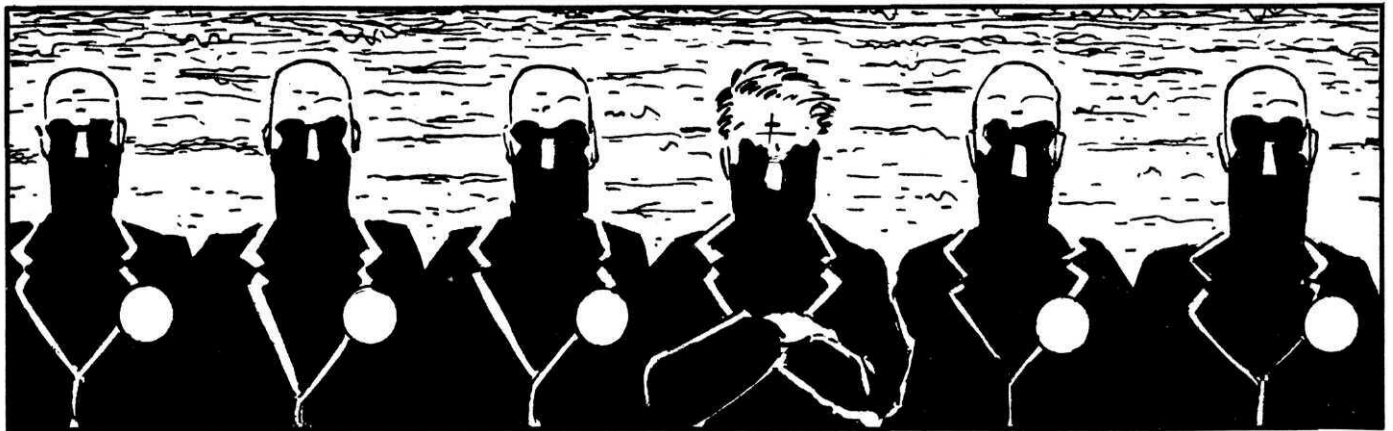
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Special thanks to Six of One, the Prisoner Appreciation Society, for their help and comments.  
The map on pp. 46-47 is based on one drawn by Steven Ricks, used by permission of Six of One.

*Writing this book has been a great deal of fun. It allowed me to combine two activities I enjoy, watching intelligent TV (each episode, multiple times!) and playing mind games with a party of roleplayers. As my Wrecking Crew players can tell you, I adhere to the policy that crooked is best; a straightforward solution is too easy. I want to thank them for the practice they've provided me, over the last several years. I also want to thank Graeme Cree for his list of numbers, his photographs and other assistance, Lynda Manning-Schwartz for additional source material, and Stephen Beeman for writing the original version of the material about television roleplaying. Thanks to SJG for buying the license and letting me play with it; I hope other roleplayers and Prisoner fans enjoy reading and playing what I've enjoyed writing. Most of all, and always, thank you, Martha, for putting up with a temperamental writer and intermittent checks.*

— David Ladyman



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ISBN 1-55634-161-X

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

# STEVE JACKSON GAMES

# CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .....	3
<b>1. CHARACTERS .....</b>	<b>6</b>
Advantages and Disadvantages .....	7
Advantages .....	7
Disadvantages .....	7
Who is Who? .....	7
Typical Prisoners .....	8
Warders as Player Characters .....	10
How Did You Get Here? .....	10
<b>2. THE VILLAGE .....</b>	<b>12</b>
Basics for the GM .....	13
Where Am I?; What Do You Want? .....	13
Aliens? .....	14
Whose Side Are You On? .....	15
We Want Information! .....	15
Who Is No. 1?; That Would Be Telling .....	16
Map of Your Village .....	16
Who Runs The Village? .....	16
Meeting No. 1 .....	16
Society .....	17
Slogans, Phrases and Signs .....	17
Currency .....	18
Jobs .....	19
Education .....	19
Numbers, Buttons and Names .....	19
Population; Clothing .....	20
Music .....	21
Special Occurrences .....	22
Government and Administration .....	23
Rules .....	25
Curfew .....	26
Information and Files .....	27
In Court .....	27
Surveillance .....	28
Alerts .....	29
Peer Pressure .....	29
Unmutual .....	29
People .....	30
Warders .....	30
No. 2 .....	30
No. 2: Character Template .....	31
The Butler .....	31
Supervisor .....	32
Technician/Scientist/Doctor .....	32
Observers .....	32
Observer Template .....	32
Guard/Observer Disadvantage Table .....	33
Guard Template .....	33
Village Voice .....	34
Villagers .....	34
No. 6 .....	35
Jammers .....	35
Places .....	36
Hospital; Town Hall .....	36
Is He John Drake? .....	36
Café .....	37
Bandstand, Chess Lawn, Free Sea, Address Platform .....	37
Green Dome .....	38
"A World On Its Own" .....	38
Labour Exchange; Palace of Fun; Recreation Hall .....	39
General Stores .....	39
Shop; Stone Boat; Graveyard; Beach .....	40
The Real Village .....	40
Citizens' Advice Bureau .....	41
Kiosks .....	41
Tally Ho .....	41
Village Residences .....	42
Kosho .....	42
Bell Tower; Nursery; Secret Caves .....	43
Mangrove Walk; Underground .....	43
Rover .....	43
Transportation .....	44

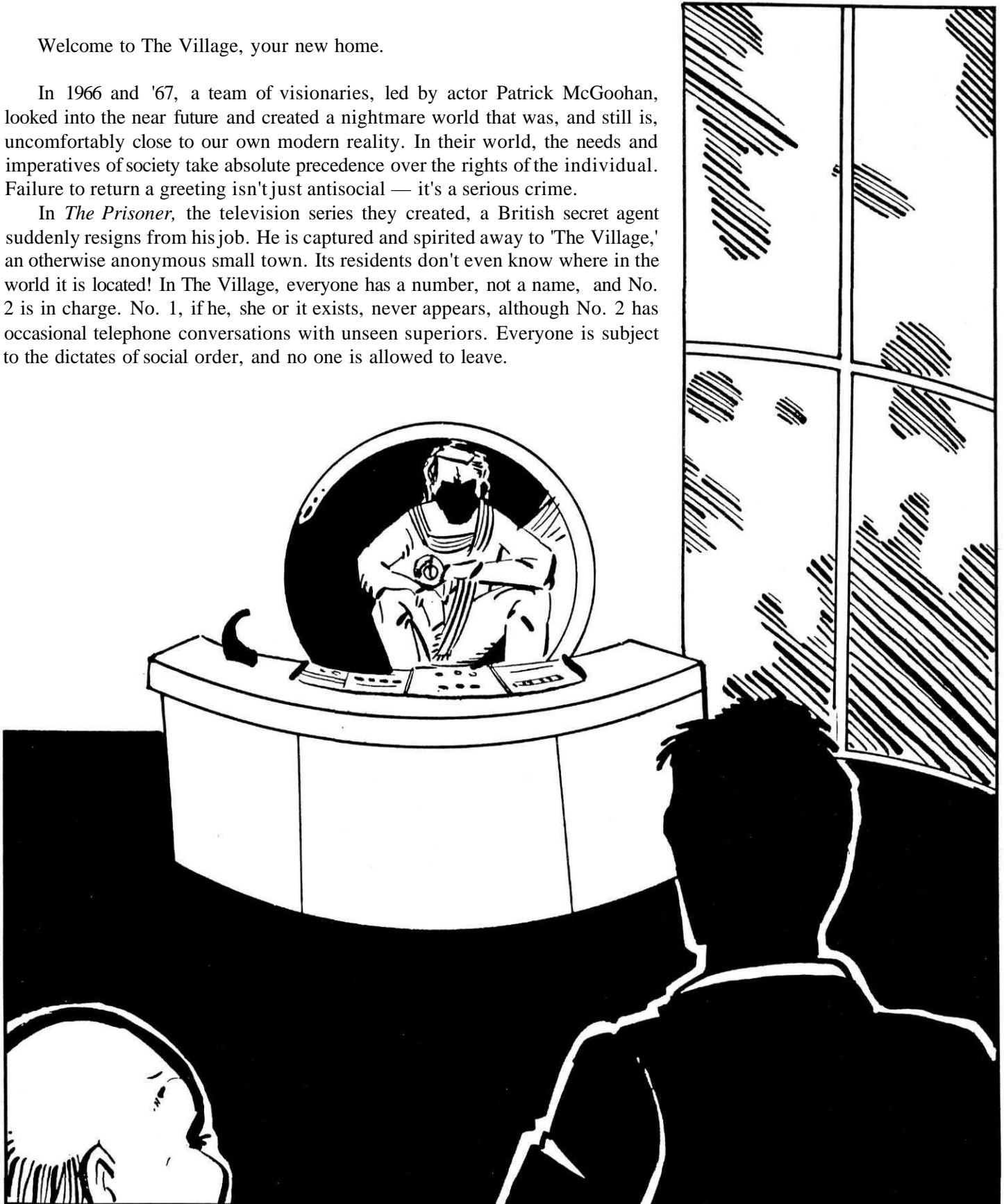
Termination Order .....	44
Map Of Your Village .....	46-47
<b>3. ALTERNATE REALITIES .....</b>	<b>48</b>
Mad Scientists .....	49
Fantasy .....	50
Horror .....	50
Dream Worlds .....	50
Outside Campaigns — Visiting The Village .....	51
Space .....	52
The Psi Village .....	52
Turning the Tables .....	52
Western .....	53
Medieval .....	53
<b>4. CAMPAIGNS .....</b>	<b>54</b>
PCs and NPCs .....	55
Playing Fair .....	55
Beginning the Campaign .....	55
Valuable Prisoners .....	55
Planning Adventures .....	56
Initial Motivation .....	56
The Adversary .....	56
Surrealism .....	57
Plot Developments .....	58
Producing a Television Series Campaign .....	59
The TV Series Format .....	59
The Bible .....	61
The Teleplay .....	61
Producing the Series .....	61
The Multi-GM Campaign .....	61
Power and its Abuses .....	62
I Am The New No. 2 .....	62
Distrust and Paranoia .....	62
The Ringer; Introducing a New PC .....	63
Other Methods .....	63
Atmosphere and Props .....	63
Escape; Death .....	64
Outside Reaction .....	65
Ending the Campaign .....	66
The Good Side of The Village .....	66
Cover-Up; Roleplaying One-On-One .....	66
The Penny-Farthing Bicycle Symbol .....	66
Character Points .....	67
<b>5. WEIRD SCIENCE .....</b>	<b>68</b>
Thoughts and Dreams .....	69
Truth Test .....	69
Super Science; Old Science .....	69
The Pulsator and Other Hypnotic Effects .....	70
Shock Treatment .....	70
Speed Learning/Sublimator .....	71
Mind-Switching .....	71
Mind-Wipe .....	71
Wonder Drugs .....	73
Harmony .....	73
Telepathy and Other Psionic Powers .....	73
Drug Treatment .....	73
Implants .....	74
Force Fields .....	74
Persistent Machinery .....	75
Computer Prediction of Behavior .....	76
SuperBeam .....	76
Degree Absolute .....	77
Laser/Sonar Surgery .....	77
Resurrection .....	77
Clones .....	78
Weapons .....	78
<b>6. ARRIVAL .....</b>	<b>79</b>
The Adventure's Objectives .....	80
The Current No. 2 .....	80
A Sudden Disappearance .....	81
If the Players Have Seen the Series .....	82
Getting the PCs to The Village .....	83
Welcome to The Village .....	84
The Fake MIA; Escape; Climax .....	85
Character Points .....	86
<b>PLOT SYNOPSES .....</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>INDEX .....</b>	<b>96</b>

# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to The Village, your new home.

In 1966 and '67, a team of visionaries, led by actor Patrick McGoohan, looked into the near future and created a nightmare world that was, and still is, uncomfortably close to our own modern reality. In their world, the needs and imperatives of society take absolute precedence over the rights of the individual. Failure to return a greeting isn't just antisocial — it's a serious crime.

In *The Prisoner*, the television series they created, a British secret agent suddenly resigns from his job. He is captured and spirited away to 'The Village,' an otherwise anonymous small town. Its residents don't even know where in the world it is located! In The Village, everyone has a number, not a name, and No. 2 is in charge. No. 1, if he, she or it exists, never appears, although No. 2 has occasional telephone conversations with unseen superiors. Everyone is subject to the dictates of social order, and no one is allowed to leave.



## About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of the *GURPS* system. Our address is SJ Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! Resources now available include:

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### Page References

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set*, Third Edition. Any page reference that begins with a B refers to the *GURPS Basic Set* — e.g., p. B102 means p. 102 of the *GURPS Basic Set*, Third Edition.

## About the Author

At an early age, David Ladyman discovered science fiction, detective thrillers, and Saki; these instilled a taste for the slightly off-beat story that has lasted all his life. He is a voracious reader (he spent many childhood nights under a blanket with a flashlight, reading until he heard his mother's step in the hall) and avid book collector; this has stood him in good stead in his present occupation as a freelance game designer, editor, and writer.

He has worked with such companies as Steve Jackson Games (where he has served as *GURPS* System Developer, *Autoduel Quarterly* editor, and designer of *Star Traders*), Hero Games, and TSR. He also owns his own company, Texas Gaming Products, representing game manufacturers at conventions around the U.S.

Throughout the series, No. 2 and his warders are trying to discover why the former agent (known only as 'No. 6') resigned, and No. 6 is trying to escape. Neither succeeds until the final episode, in which No. 6's right to be an individual is acknowledged and he is released from The Village.

*The Prisoner* and *The Village* offer a game world very different from the fantasy realms with which most roleplayers are familiar. It is a world of conflict, but the emphasis is less on physical conflict than on mental and psychological hostilities. That isn't to say that adventures here are dry, cerebral affairs. There will be daring escape attempts, harrowing struggles, bold feats poised on the razor's edge between success and failure.

Because of its emphasis on roleplaying the mental and psychological features of a character, a *Prisoner* campaign can be difficult for some, especially less-experienced roleplayers. It requires more preparation by the Game Master before each adventure. And some gamers will decide *The Village* is a nice place to visit, but they won't want to live there. In this case, the best course is to bring them to *The Village* from another campaign, lead them through a few adventures, and then let them escape back to the real world. (But are they ever sure they have completely and finally escaped?)

This worldbook discusses how to run all sorts of *Prisoner* campaigns, including the 'just visiting' type, both within *The Village* and outside it. A short introductory adventure, "Arrival," in Chapter 6, outlines one good way to begin a campaign. The book closes with synopses of each episode and a bibliography of many of the sources available to you for example and inspiration, beginning with the videotapes themselves.

*The Prisoner* is a fascinating background, and one which grows more interesting with more study. The more familiar the GM can become with the series and the critical work that has grown up around it, the better the campaign will be. Certainly this is true of any game built around an existing world, but it is especially true for *The Prisoner*. This is not because slavish attention to detail is required . . . indeed, as we will see below, that is a very bad idea. The "feel" of *The Village*, and the attitudes that permeate it, is a subtle one. It's sometimes hard to catch, but it is worth the effort. It offers a genuinely unique roleplaying experience.

## On Consistency

To fully describe the world of *The Prisoner* would be to destroy it. It is a world of possibilities, not definite realities. Most of what you find between these covers will be options for the GM, not absolutes which must be obeyed. *GURPS* has always emphasized that the GM (not the rulebook) is the final authority when roleplaying; in a *Prisoner* campaign, he is the *only* authority.

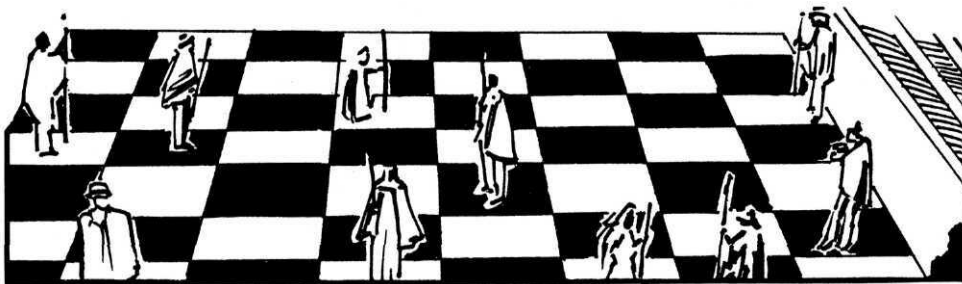
In many ways, the 17 episodes of the series do not form a consistent whole. Inconsistencies range from the trivial (the electrical repair cart is called at different times the repair cart, the electric's cart, and the electronics cart) to the major (in "Free for All," an election for the office of No. 2 is held; in "It's Your Funeral," the office is transferred by appointment, during Appreciation Day ceremonies). Indeed, the emphasis, if any, seems to be more on inconsistency, on keeping No. 6 off balance, than on consistency. Some of these inconsistencies are intended; others, no doubt, were just continuity errors.

Much of this can be attributed to the fact that the episodes were written by 11 different people, with 11 different views of *The Village*. It wasn't, and isn't, important that every detail of *The Village* match from episode to episode. In fact, it adds to the not-quite-rightness of the campaign if, for example, one day the

waiter serves only whiskey (non-alcoholic) and the next day "only beer is available here, sir," or if one day phones have dials and the next day all calls must be placed through an operator. For the purpose of this book and properly flavored *Prisoner* adventures, I assume that all inconsistencies are intended, the better to keep players off balance.

So we won't tell you that all phones must have dials, or that the cafe can only serve whiskey and vodka, or that a yearly election must be held to choose No. 2. All of these are possible, but none of them are necessary. We'll tell you how things are in the various episodes, but *don't* bind yourself to that. And *never* let a player say, "It has to be this way, because that's the way it was in "Checkmate" (or "Fall Out," or in this worldbook, or wherever)." That's not the way the series works, that's not the way The Village works, and that's not the way a *Prisoner* campaign should work. If it helps the plot, use it. *Any* inconsistency can be explained — *reasonably* explained — as another device of the masters to keep their prisoners off guard!

We've tried to touch on all of the series' best sequences in this book, but we've very likely omitted some favorites. (If you spot a really glaring omission, write an adventure that features it!) We have also very likely managed to contradict something you *know* to be true about The Village. Bear in mind that some things which are true in one episode are false (or don't even exist) in another. No. 6 rarely wears the same watch from episode to episode — is it just that he's hard on watches? The professor's name in "Do Not Forsake Me" is always spelled 'Seltzman,' except twice, when No. 6 is demonstrating his handwriting and spells it 'Saltzman.' Everyone who writes about *The Prisoner* is entitled to the benefit of the doubt — what you believe is surely right at some point, but is it always right? Not in The Village! The last episode, "Fall Out," certainly doesn't directly answer many of the questions the series raises, but it wasn't intended to. In fact, those still-unanswered questions provoke much of the series' continuing popularity. For our purposes, they allow you to devise the Village of your own choice, unconstrained by what "has to be."



Those options, the worlds of possibility that The Village offers, are part of what makes *The Prisoner* such fertile ground for campaigning. The premise of The Village is conflict, and conflict is what gaming is all about. (If there is nothing to be achieved, what is the goal of the game?) Bear in mind, though, that this is not the hack-and-slash conflict of man against dragon. The conflict here is mental and psychological, rarely physical. And much of the conflict rests in the basics of discovering who your friends are, and who are your enemies. The Village is a world of paranoia, of constantly guarding your back, of wondering whom you can trust, and for how long. In most other campaigns, you can assume your fellow party members are working with you, especially after several rigorous adventures together.

Not in The Village!

## Welcome to The Village

"Good morning. It's another lovely day, so rise and shine! Life is for the living!"

"Game of chess, m'dear?"

"I don't play."

"You should learn ... we're all pawns, m'dear. Your move."

"It depends which side you're on."

"I'm on my side."

"Aren't we all?"

"You must be new here. In time most of us join the enemy, against ourselves."

"Have you?"

"Let's talk about the game."

"All right, what if both sides look alike?"

"You mean, how do I know black from white?"

"Mm-hm?"

"You men always ask that."

"Well?"

"By their dispositions, by the moves they make, you soon know who's for you or against you."

"I don't follow you."

"It's simple psychology, the way it is in life. You judge by attitudes. People don't need uniforms."

"Why complicate it?"

"To keep your mind alert."

"What use is that to you here?"

"Now? From habit. Just to defy them. Too old."

"For what?"

"Escape."

"You had a plan?"

"Everybody has a plan, but they all fail."

"Why?"

"It's like the game. You have to learn to distinguish between the blacks and the whites."

"I love you madly . . . and I love the way the hair curls on the back of your neck. You'll make a beautiful corpse. I'm going to do you the honor of letting you die *superbly* . . . but not yet, darling. There's more fun to come!"

(Quotes above are from the card No. 6 finds on his desk when he first arrives; from No. 66 and No. 9, in "Arrival"; from No. 6 and the Count, in "Checkmate"; and from Sonia and No. 6, in "The Girl Who Was Death.")

# 1

## CHARACTERS

The people in The Village have few things in common. They can be scientists or servants, safe-crackers or sailors, spies or spiritualists. They are in The Village because the masters have a use for them, and this defines their new role in life. These might include:

He or she knows something (or can do something) that the masters want to know (or be able to do).

He or she knows something that the masters want to know.

He or she knows something that the masters don't want the world to know.



He or she can help, or can be used to help, coerce another prisoner (Dependents and loved ones are useful here).

He or she has been recruited as a worker to help the masters.

The masters need experimental stock (a catch-all category).

There must be a reason for each character to be in The Village, as part of his or her character story. It helps if each player develops the background of his character a bit more than usual for the beginning of a campaign. If he's a secret agent, where has he served? What were a few of his specific operations? Has he ever been to East Germany? To Pakistan? Is he usually a courier? Is he in counter-intelligence? With about a page of background information prepared before the campaign begins, the GM can more easily develop plots around The Village's uses and abuses of this particular resident.

## Advantages and Disadvantages

There are no new *GURPS* advantages or disadvantages among the residents of The Village. However, the masters do find some more useful than others, and thus the useful ones are more likely to appear in The Village. There are two recommendations for advantages and disadvantages in *Prisoner* campaigns:

(1) At least half the value of all disadvantages should be in mental disadvantages. *Prisoner* campaigns stress mental conflict, and social and physical disadvantages like Poverty or One Eye are not as disadvantageous in this context as Weak Will, Addiction, or Honesty. Many social advantages and disadvantages are meaningless in The Village.

(2) No one may take No. 2 or the masters as an Enemy. They are an inherent aspect of life in The Village. (Ofcourse, a warder might have No. 2 as a Patron.)

### Advantages

Advantages which tend to attract the attention of the masters include:

Absolute Direction, Absolute Timing, Animal Empathy, Empathy, Lightning Calculator, and high values in Clerical Investment, Eidetic Memory, Musical Ability or Strong Will — they'd like to know what makes their prisoner tick.

Acute Senses, Alertness, Danger Sense, or Intuition, if the prisoner used them to discover something which shouldn't have been discovered.

Characters with Attractive (or better) Appearance are likely to be recruited, willingly or unwillingly, to help persuade other characters.

Psionic powers, if they exist, will certainly draw the masters' attention. Use of these abilities in a *Prisoner* campaign is discussed on p. 73.

### Disadvantages

Think in terms of disadvantages that will make play more interesting in The Village? Don't force any of these disadvantages on players, but do encourage them to take at least one or two each.

Many mental disadvantages (e.g., Addiction, Alcoholism, and Lecherousness) can be used to force a character to do something against his will, as can Phobias. A Sense of Duty, if properly manipulated, can end up making someone choose between the lesser of two evils — will he compromise his duty to one individual, if it will help him fulfill his duty to all others he feels responsible for?

A Vow never to reveal a secret dramatically increases the possibilities for conflict between the one with the Vow and No. 2, thus improving the quality of the campaign (but probably not the quality of that prisoner's life). Codes of Honor and Honesty can be similarly used.

Anyone with Gullibility is a walking land-mine, especially to his friends — try to include one in the party! A Delusion can be a double-edged sword, helping

### Who is Who?

"I am not a number, I am a person." (laughter) "In some place, at some time, all of you held positions of a secret nature, and had knowledge that was invaluable to an enemy. Like me, you are here to have that knowledge protected or extracted. Unlike me, many of you have accepted the situation of your imprisonment and will die here like rotten cabbages. The rest of you have gone over to the side of our keepers. Which is which? How many of each? Who's standing beside you now? I intend to discover who are the prisoners, and who are the warders."

— No. 6 to assembled villagers  
"Free for All"





## People in The Village

### Intelligence Agent

"We're still the same people."

"Working for different sides."

"Sides don't matter — only success."

"In that case, we should still have a great deal in common."

"We do the same job."

"For different reasons, yes."

"I see you still venerate absolute truth."

Whatever way you look at it, we both want to conquer the world."

— *A and No. 6*

"A, Band C"

### Academic

"She may be a mere No. 58, but she used to work in records. She has a great variety of information, haven't you, my dear?"

— *No. 2 to No. 6*

"Free for All"

### Scientist

"Why were you brought here?"

"I invented a new electronic defense system."

"Goon."

"What's the point, I've confessed it all before!"

"Try again."

"I thought all nations should have it — it would have insured world peace."

— *No. 6 and Rook*

"Checkmate"

### Dependent

"Why did you slash your wrists, No. 73? Aren't you happy here? You're not being very cooperative."

"There's nothing I can tell you."

"You must know where your husband is."

"He's still over there."

"Where?"

"Oh, somewhere there. He had some work to finish."

— *No. 2 and No. 73*

"Hammer Into Anvil"

*Continued on next page . . .*

or hindering No. 2 as he labors to convince a prisoner that the world isn't what it seems to be. Compulsive Lying and Stubbornness can actually be useful when fighting back against No. 2, although they have their drawbacks. Dependents are a convenient lever against a prisoner, and Paranoia is an amusingly redundant disadvantage — a paranoid might actually feel more at home in The Village than out of it, since he *knows* that everyone is out to get him.

## Typical Prisoners

Although absolutely anyone might be unlucky enough to wind up in The Village, there are a few types who are most prone to waking up there! Their possible allegiances and nationalities are limited only by the GM.

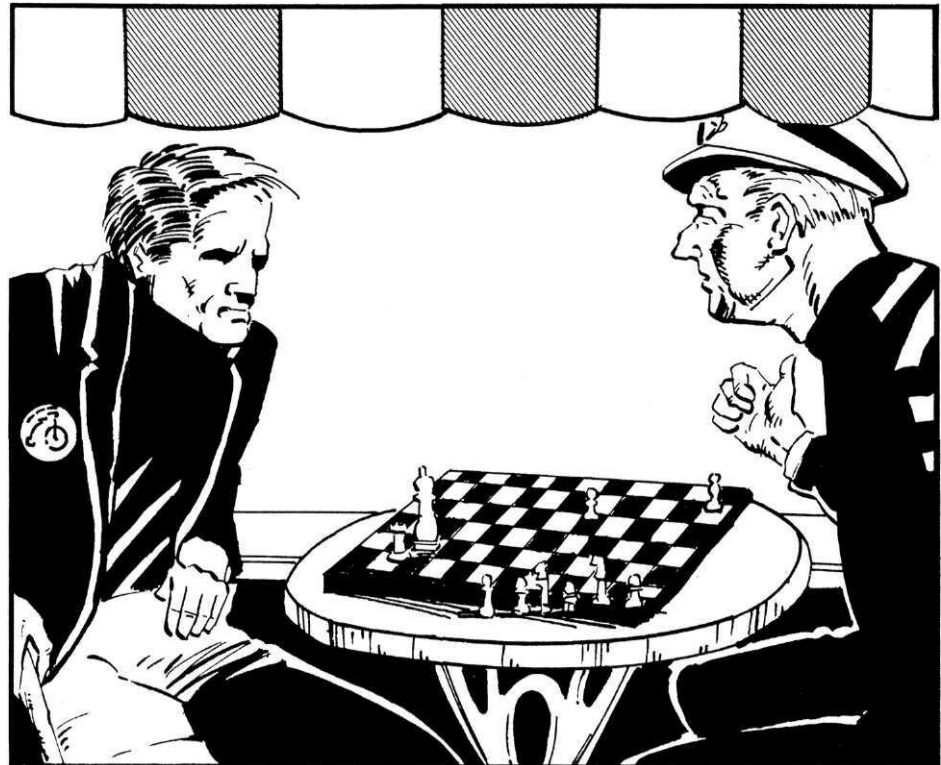
### Intelligence Agent

A spy is a likely Village resident for either of two reasons. He might know too much, or he might know something the masters don't. His job is to pry into other people's secrets, and he tends to learn things he shouldn't. No. 6 fits this category, although he had retired when he was collected.

A spy could have any of the advantages and skills listed for Military Personnel, Mercenaries, or Diplomats (see below).

### Military Personnel / Mercenary

The armed forces are at the front lines of international conflict, and a sudden breakthrough can reveal secrets the other side never intended anyone to discover. Lower echelon officers can receive battlefield promotions that unintentionally make them privy to information available only to the top brass. And any soldier serving as an embassy guard or in any other protective capacity (including mercenary bodyguard) might stumble across documents left open at the wrong time. One might even find himself recruited by the locals, either by officials asking him to defect, or by not-so-official rebels asking for aid in their revolution. A higher level officer might be kidnapped or recruited for the secret information which has crossed his desk.



Combat Reflexes and Danger Sense are appropriate for military or mercenary characters, as is Military Rank (although rank isn't all that useful in The Village). Leadership, Fast-Draw, First Aid, combat skills, Intelligence Analysis, Strategy, Tactics, and the various Survival skills are all likely skills for such characters.

High-ranking military officers are sometimes permitted to retain their uniforms in The Village; this sets them apart from most of the citizens in their bright-colored costumes.

### ***Diplomat***

Diplomats get involved in the comings and goings of all sorts of people and information, both overt and covert. The embassy might be the first place a traveller would turn if he were involved in something strange or frightening, and the diplomat who helps him could become just as involved. Foreigners seeking asylum can also involve a diplomat in matters which the masters deem important. In fact, the primary purpose of The Village might be to contain *political* prisoners.

A diplomat might have Charisma, as well as Detect Lies, Diplomacy (naturally!), Politics and Savoir-Faire skills. Leadership and Public Speaking are also possibilities.

### ***Journalist / Photographer***

Scoops are a journalist's dream, and an enterprising journalist will strive to be present at any possibly newsworthy occasion, especially if he's not invited. Even if invited, a journalist's obligation is to protect his sources, no matter what the cost, no matter what inducements or threats the masters might make (giving him a Sense of Duty). Such newshounds often find themselves in possession of other people's secrets, and often know where hidden people and other sources can be found. Photographers are just as likely to draw the masters' attention, especially since they might have hard evidence of what they've seen.

Newsmen tend to have Research, Savoir-Faire, Shadowing, Fast-Talk and either Writing or Photography skills.

### ***Academic / Scientist / Doctor***

It's often not so much *who* academicians know, as it is *what* they know. By his research into mind transfers, Professor Seltzman ("Do Not Forsake Me") became a wanted man. Because of his advances in subliminal education, the professor in "The General" was recruited into The Village. But sometimes the Who is important as well, when a wanted scientist has disappeared, telling only a colleague where he has gone.

Scholars often have such skills as Computer Operations (and possibly Programming), Electronics Operations, Research, and of course their academic specialty (or specialties). Scientists tend to specialize in the life sciences and study of the mind, so Physiology and Physician are also possibilities. Any of the subjects discussed in Chapter 5, *Weird Science*, might lead to a scientist's recruitment, voluntary or otherwise.

### ***Technician / Bureaucrat / Clerical Worker / Laborer***

The emphasis in The Village is on the outstanding and the unusual, but someone's got to perform the mundane, day-by-day work that keeps The Village running. Scientists and doctors need assistants, the computers need operators, and the various weird gadgets have to be maintained. Even unskilled help is necessary. The floors must be swept, and the lawns must be mowed.

Some of these workers might be highly skilled prisoners, demoted to menial work as part of their punishment; others might be prisoners whose mental



### ***People in The Village (Continued)***

#### ***Dependent or Actor***

"I know what you must think of me. Put yourself into my position. They offered me my freedom in exchange."

"Exchange for what?"

"To get into your confidence. Make you trust me. And tell them everything about you."

"Then they'd let you go. You believed that? With that knowledge in your head, you really believed that they'd let you go?"

"I hadn't thought about that."

"Obviously not."

"They might. They might let me go! If you'd give me some sort of information. Oh, please help me! Please help me!"

"Your services will not be required tomorrow."

— No. 6 and personal maid  
"Arrival"

## ***How Did You Get Here?***

The manner in which each person arrived in the Village is an important part of the character story, too.

### ***Kidnapping***

One of the simplest approaches is simply to kidnap the victim. No. 6 was gassed and taken from his home. Less professionally suspicious people, or those with whom there was less urgency, might be given drugged food or drink. Young, infirm or meek people might just be told to "come along" by fake (or real!) police officers.

### ***Trickery***

After one of his escapes, No. 6 found himself returned to The Village via parachute. Once again, he had trusted the wrong person! This time he wasn't drugged — he was just fooled. Many people might simply have boarded a plane, bus or helicopter and found it led to a place they had not expected.

### ***Penetration***

Whoever the masters are, they have foes. An intelligence agent or journalist might ferret out the secret of The Village and manage to enter it — only to be discovered. At that point, the inquisitive one will learn much more about The Village than he wanted to.

### ***Accident***

Although The Village is isolated, people must happen onto it from time to time. No doubt some of these unfortunates are simply killed and their bodies found far away. But the masters don't kill unnecessarily. If their agents can create a plausible disappearance from the real world, the visitor will live out his life in The Village.

### ***Voluntarily, Without Knowledge***

This would apply mostly to low-level workers. Such people might have been recruited for their jobs, knowing that they would be moving far away from their homes for a long time. They might or might not have realized that they would never leave the new job.

### ***Voluntarily, With Knowledge***

This covers high-level warders, like the various No. 2s and their chief assistants. It also covers specialists such as the Professor. Such people are so much in the masters' confidence that they can leave the Village and re-enter it. Of course, someone with this much secret knowledge might find, at any time, that he had been re-classified from warder to prisoner . . .

capacities have been so damaged that they can only perform rote tasks. And a few will be warders, watching and observing while disguised as drudges. But most will be workers recruited (or raised!) to fulfill these less-skilled jobs. Their humbler backgrounds don't necessarily mean they will be satisfied to stay imprisoned, though!

Any of the less-visible advantages are easily possible, especially Common Sense. Skills are mostly job-specific: Accounting, Administration, Carpentry, Computer Operations, Cooking, Driving, Electronics Operation, Engineer, First Aid, Mechanic, Merchant, Piloting, Powerboat, Research, Teaching, other Professional skills, and so forth.

## ***Dependent***

Dependents can be used to coerce information from more important characters. Alternatively, a Dependent might be the only one who knows a particular thing about the character on whom he depends (such as his current location). Some Dependents may have even been born in The Village, if a prisoner is there long enough. Be creative. (Note that "Dependent," in this context, is a character type, not necessarily an NPC. A PC could be a dependent of a living or dead NPC.)

When a Dependent's purpose has been served, he or she exists at the sufferance of the masters ... the lucky ones will have some talent that is useful in The Village.

## ***Innocent Bystander***

Innocent bystanders were at the wrong place at the wrong time. They learned something they weren't intended to know and must be kept silent. (Infrequently, they learned something no one else knows and have decided to keep that information to themselves.)

Innocent bystanders, like dependents, are usually very ordinary people. They're not in The Village for what they can do, but because of a relationship or accidental circumstance.

## ***Actor***

Actors aren't all that common in The Village, but if a role needs filling, an acting warder is often the best person to fill it. Nadia (in "The Chimes of Big Ben") does a good acting job, whether she's been professionally trained or not, and the duplicate No. 6 ("The Schizoid Man") is required to be a better No. 6 than No. 6 is himself.

Actors may also be prisoners. Very occasionally, a wanted person realizes his danger and hires a stand-in to temporarily replace him; when a stand-in is then accidentally kidnapped into The Village, he faces the difficult, if not impossible, job of convincing No. 2 that he isn't who he's been pretending to be and doesn't know what he's been pretending to know!

Actors would have Acting, Disguise, Fast-Talk, and Sex Appeal skills; Performance is also a possibility.

## **Warders as Player Characters**

Not all warders are the evil tools of No. 2 which they seem to be (though most of them are). A necessary aspect of a *Prisoner* campaign is that players not know which of their fellow players are working for them and against them in any particular adventure. A natural spin-off of this aspect is that some PCs will come into the campaign as warders rather than prisoners! They will work overtly or covertly for No. 2, and might be the key to spoiling a prisoner plot or two.

Eventually, though, a warder PC must either become a prisoner or leave the

campaign. (Of course, the *player* can stay in the campaign, with a new character.) If he's been working covertly, he'll be uncovered, and other characters will no longer include him in their schemes, leaving him little to do during a play session. Once-covert PC warders who start openly working against the good of the rest of the party have become Adversaries. Yes, there is constant distrust inherent in a well-run *Prisoner* adventure, but ongoing animosity and rivalry between two halves of a party will usually spell the messy end of a campaign. Only a very talented GM can keep everyone happy in this situation.

Player characters who have been working openly as warders, possibly as scholars or observers, *must* begin to develop some degree of sympathy for the prisoners, so that they might be swayed to the prisoners' cause. Perhaps these warders were only aware of the positive aspects of The Village when they were recruited — its concern for the welfare of society, its willingness to sponsor experimentation that has been banned elsewhere, its egalitarian nature. Others might be warders not by choice, yet enjoying a few privileges that most villagers don't have. A warder's gradual conversion to the prisoner point of view can be a fascinating addition to a campaign. Of course, prisoners must be careful not to trust such a convert too soon! "The General" features two examples of warder conversion: the Professor and No. 12 both fight against No. 2 in this episode.

Thus, in The Village, overt warder PCs can participate for a while with the rest of the party. But again, if they persist in working against the rest of the



party's interests, animosity and rivalry will develop. A little warder participation in a campaign is just another excuse for mistrust among the players. Prisoners will no doubt argue bitterly among themselves about what that sympathetic warder might really have in mind and whether he (or she!) can be trusted ... and how far. In the series, No. 6 was betrayed almost every time he gave any trust at all. The GM should probably *not* do this. If the PCs find that they can never trust anyone, the campaign will soon collapse. But if they can *sometimes* trust others, they will remain hopeful ... and open to further betrayal.

On the other hand, a persistent, loyal warder PC *doesn't* create doubt and mistrust. The other players have no questions about who he's working for; they *know* he's a foe, and will probably refuse to have anything to do with him.

## Playing a Warder

A warder PC can be intelligent or stupid, honest or venal, sadistic or earnestly concerned with the welfare of his charges. A warder *player*, unless he or she is acting as an Adversary, should make every effort to seem to be another prisoner.

The GM should reward in-character behavior with character points. Although warders may become sympathetic to the prisoners' cause, they should not do so without a good reason, and the reason will vary according to the original conception of the warder's personality! Once the other PCs identify a warder PC, they should try to convince him or her — *in character* — to change sides, or at least to turn a blind eye to their escape attempts.

"I'd appreciate knowing my duties as soon as possible."

"You've no idea why you're here?"

"All I know is I was sent here by the highest authority."

"You were indeed. You should feel very proud."

— *The Colonel and No. 2*

"Do Not Forsake Me"

"You still confident of your cover? Any sign of penetration?"

"No, they still think of me as just another prisoner."

"Getting along with your subject all right?"

"Oh, we're kindred spirits — comrades. There'll be no trouble from him."

— *Interim No. 2 and No. 100*

"It's Your Funeral"

"How long have you been in this place?"

"I don't have to answer your questions. Kindly leave."

"The whole house is most elegant; books, paintings, and a very beautiful garden."

"The professor and I have certain privileges."

"As prisoners or as warders?"

"We came here voluntarily. We have everything we need. We're perfectly happy."

— *No. 6 and Professor's wife*

"The General"

# 2

# THE VILLAGE

The Village is a gilded jail. Its purpose is not just to confine the prisoners, but to convince them to cooperate and conform. This chapter describes The Village as a roleplaying environment.

"The Basics" deals with the foundations of The Village — where it is, what it is, why it is. The GM must address most of these questions even if the campaign is set outside The Village, and this section is specifically addressed to the GM. "Society" describes the way the Villagers interrelate socially. Again, in or out of The Village, this section helps decide how society in the new campaign will function. "Places" describes the physical layout of The Village. No interior maps are included; when drawing such maps for a campaign, use a pencil. Things will change from adventure to adventure!



## Basics for the GM

Before making a study of The Village proper, the GM must resolve a few basic questions ... the same ones that No. 6 asks at the beginning of nearly every episode. It would be possible to simply say that the official roleplaying Village will be identical to the Village in the series, but it shouldn't be that easy. Several of No. 6's questions were never answered, and some were answered more than once, with different answers each time. The GM may be just as definite and just as consistent, leaving some questions unanswered and changing the answer to others from adventure to adventure, but should be aware of the decisions that have or haven't been made. So . . .

Is the campaign set in The Village? (If not, Chapter 3 discusses alternative types of *Prisoner* campaign.) Where is The Village? And why was it built — what do its masters want? For that matter, who are these masters anyway — whose side *are* they on? And who is No. 1? The following discussion will help each GM develop an authentic, yet individual, version of The Village.

### Where Am I?

*In the Village.*

*Where is The Village?*

At one point, No. 6 was told it was on the Baltic coast of Lithuania. After leaving by sea, he thought he had located it on the northwest coast of Morocco. When he exited triumphantly in "Fall Out," he was within a few miles of London.

So place The Village anywhere. Morocco. Lithuania. Southeastern Britain. Cape Kennedy, falsely reported to have been destroyed by an explosion of nuclear fuel. The Bermuda Triangle (for the traditionalist). Disney World, which closed for repairs and never reopened. An island between Russia and Japan, claimed by both but occupied by neither. The Land That Time Forgot, a tropical pocket in Antarctica, secretly developed into a new home away from home. An orbiting space station. Bear in mind, though, that the further removed The Village is from present times, the harder it is to maintain a sense of immediacy and grim reality while roleplaying.

The Village can even move around, especially if the campaign uses the weirder sciences. Or perhaps there is more than one Village. If so, are they run by the same masters? Does each know that the other(s) exist?

If logistics (such things as short travel times and easy resupply) are going to be a concern, it should probably be near the PCs' home bases.

And what lies outside The Village? The map (pp. 46-47) shows mountains, the sea, and three roads leading away. In "Many Happy Returns," No. 6 climbs a peak to find lofty, cloud-covered mountains in all directions. In "Living in Harmony," the western town of Harmony has been constructed just down the road, within earshot of The Village band. And in "Fall Out," the London turnpike is just around the corner. Pick surroundings (preferably inaccessible) to fit the geographic location selected for this particular Village.

### What Do You Want?

"Information" is always No. 2's reply, and that is one of the common reasons for bringing a prisoner to The Village. The masters want to know what their prisoner knows, and they feel that The Village is the best environment for extracting that information without outside interference. Once someone is in The Village, his knowledge can be surrendered voluntarily or taken by force.

A few prisoners are too important to be forcibly cracked open for what they have inside their heads. No. 6 is in this category, as are most player characters

### *In The Village*

"Pretty spot — mixture of architectures — Italianate — a little — certainly has a Mediterranean flavor. What do you think, Thorpe?"

"I think I wouldn't mind a fortnight's leave there. Prison for life, eh? A far cry from Sing-Sing."

— *The Colonel and Thorpe*  
"Many Happy Returns"

"What's the name of this place?"

"You're new here, aren't you?"

"Where?"

"Do you want breakfast?"

"Where is this?"

"The Village."

"Yes."

"I'll see if coffee's ready."

"Where's the police station?"

"There isn't one!"

"Can I use your phone?"

"Why, we haven't got one."

"Where can I make a call?"

"Well, there's a phone box around the corner."

— *No. 6 and waitress*  
"Arrival"

"I'd like a map of this area."

"Map. Color or black and white?"

"Just a map."

"Mmm . . . Ah! Black and white. Here we are, sir; I think you'll find that shows everything."

... "I meant a larger map."

"Only in color, sir. Much more expensive."

. . . "That's not what I meant. I meant a larger area."

"No, we only have local maps, sir; there's no demand for any others. You're new here, aren't you?"

— *No. 6 and shopkeeper*  
"Arrival"

## Aliens?

The original *Prisoner* series is about the human condition, and about man's struggle to free himself from the chains created by his fellow man. Although it seems science-fictional, it would be more correct to call it an allegorical science fantasy.

But a roleplaying game can explore strange variations. So . . . Perhaps humanity is not to blame at all. Perhaps extraterrestrial aliens, intent on investigating earth life to the fullest, have established The Village as a laboratory and testing ground for the most interesting cases. That would reasonably explain many of the weird science effects — they are imported from beyond. That would also explain why a rocket ship departs The Village in "Fall Out," returning to wherever it came from.

For an alien, a human No. 2 is a useful facade, and human illogic might be even more baffling to an alien than to a computer. If No. 1 is an alien, then perhaps No. 2 and many of the other warders are alien too. If so, how are they different? Do they understand human emotion? Are they human-looking, can they shapeshift, or do they wear a great deal of makeup? Do they have psionic powers? Do they misunderstand common idioms?

And what do they really want?

(see "PCs and NPCs," p. 55). However, PCs should never feel secure in this importance. Some No. 2s can become overzealous in pursuit of their responsibilities, risking important minds in experimental procedures (e.g. No. 2 in "A, B and C"). And frustration can drive others to normally forbidden extremes (as with Degree Absolute in "Once Upon a Time"). Just because a prisoner *should* be safe doesn't mean he always *will* be.

An interesting variation on 'the prisoner who knows something the masters want' is 'the prisoner whom the masters think knows something they want, but actually doesn't.' Dutton ("Dance of the Dead") is in that predicament.

A second reason for bringing someone to The Village is that he knows too much. Someone who finds out about The Village while in the outside world could find himself on the inside very quickly. The masters (at least some of them, some of the time) are paternalistic, and would rather imprison someone than eliminate him.

A third reason for arrival in The Village is to help coerce an otherwise unwilling prisoner into cooperation. Dependents are a common example of Villagers who arrived for this reason. Some Dependents turn out to have been recruited by the masters.

Some Villagers arrive to actively work with the masters. They might be motivated by greed, misplaced ideals, or even basic sadism. Their minds could be so damaged that they don't really know where they are, but just keep doing their job. Whatever their reasons, they are the jailers, or "warders."

A final reason is that The Village is a research facility, always in need of experimental stock for its continuing social and psychological programs. Few prisoners are kidnapped specifically for this purpose, but it is always an additional reason for bringing a prisoner to The Village.

Some prisoners will fit into more than one category. An agent might both know too much and know things the masters want. Some children and spouses are there because it's easier for an entire family to disappear, rather than just the mother or father, and they might as well be used as a handle on the important

prisoner. The masters would never allow a family to become a support group, though. Remember that the warders trade on isolation, paranoia and disorientation; they want their wards to learn that any loyalty other than to their society is dangerous!

Keep in mind that few people are allowed to leave The Village — even warders are often there for life. Many residents of The Village might have served their purpose 30 years ago. Now they're only there because they mustn't be allowed to leave. Almost anyone brought in unwillingly can now be kept in because he knows too much. Workers who arrived voluntarily but later decide against further cooperation might still be held because they have valuable information in their heads or can be forced to continue working.



## Whose Side Are You On?

There are many possible identities for the masters of The Village.

### *Us or Them*

No. 6 was a spy, an intelligence agent; the most obvious masters of The Village, to him, are the agencies he worked for, with, or against. Therefore, the first four possibilities deal with an expanding circle of intelligence organizations: the Brits, the West, the East, Everybody. No. 6 was a British agent; perhaps the British wish to know why he resigned, badly enough to sequester him in The Village. British intelligence is certainly involved with The Village to some extent — when No. 6 returns to his agency in "The Chimes of Big Ben," Colonel J. and Fotheringay are part of the scheme against him. Of course, they might be double agents; there have been double agents in British Intelligence before. (They might even be physical doubles of the real Colonel J. and Fotheringay!)

Then again, the British and the Americans often work together on intelligence efforts; perhaps they are working together on The Village, as well. When amazement at the technology of mind-switching is expressed in "Do Not Forsake Me," the reply mentions that "we" have flown a rocket around the moon (in 1967). It sounds like the United States has a part in running The Village. And then again, "we" might simply refer to humanity as a whole.

If it's not the West, might it be the East? In "Arrival," Cobb, who worked with No. 6 in British Intelligence, remarks that he mustn't keep his new masters waiting. He appears to have changed sides — perhaps over to the Iron Curtain? But his new masters might simply be another branch of British Intelligence, that secret branch which is responsible for such nefarious activities as The Village.

Even if this Village isn't run by the East, is there another which is? If so, how different is it from No. 6's Village? A great deal? Not at all? What's the primary language? Do they make a pretense of practicing democracy? Do they run prisoner exchange programs, trading their hardest cases to give the other side a shot at them?

Perhaps West and East are working together, cooperation which presages a coming world government. The Village might be the international community which No. 2 dreams of in "The Chimes of Big Ben"; it certainly has an international range to its inhabitants. Yet if The Village is run by a world network of agencies, why do they care why No. 6 resigned? Who might they be afraid that he would work for, other than another of their own number?

### *Multinational Corporations and Conspiracies*

All of the above presupposes a governmental hand in The Village, and that might not be correct. There are multinational corporations, extra-governmental bodies which are spreading their network into all corners of the world and which owe allegiance to no flag. There are the Illuminati. There are Scientists for a Better Tomorrow. There are archvillains, the descendants of Professor Moriarty and Fu Manchu. Perhaps they (or just one or two of them) are the masters of The Village. They would certainly have an interest in No. 6's knowledge and expertise. And they would have just as much of a reason to silence those who learned too much as would governments.

### *Welcome To Your Village*

There are many reasons why each of the above suggestions is both reasonable and impossible, but this is not the place to argue for or against any of them. The GM should pick the one which best suits his campaign. If none of these suit, there are yet other possibilities.

### *We Want Information!*

"I suppose you're wondering what you're doing here?"

"It had crossed my mind. What's it all about?"

"Sit down and I'll tell you. It's a question of your resignation."

"Goon."

"The information in your head is priceless. I don't think you realize what a valuable property you've become. A man like you is worth a great deal on the open market."

"Who brought me here?"

"I know how you feel, believe me. And they have taken quite a liberty."

"Who are they?"

"A lot of people are curious about what lies behind your resignation. You had a brilliant career, your record is impeccable. They want to know why you suddenly left."

"What people?"

"Personally, I believe your story. I do think it was a matter of principle. But what I think doesn't really count, does it? One has to be sure about these things."

"And that gives you the right to poke your nose into my private business?"

"Now, please. It's my job to check your motives."

"I've been checked!"

"Of course. But when a man knows as much as you do, a double check does no harm. A few details may have been missed."

"I don't know who you are, or who you work for. And I don't care. I'm leaving."

"Have you not yet realized there's no way out?"

— *No. 2 and No. 6*

"Arrival"

"I told them."

"What?"

"Everything I know. The irony of it is that they don't believe me. You know I didn't have access to the vital stuff."

— *Dutton and No. 6*

"Dance of the Dead"



Or pick none at all — after all, the series never reveals who the masters are! If the campaign works best with a deliberate haze of misleading and deadend clues about the identity of the masters, go with it.

### **Who Runs The Village?**

"Has it ever occurred to you that you are just as much of a prisoner as I am?"

"Oh, my dear chap, of course. I knew too much. We're both lifers. I am definitely an optimist. That's why it doesn't matter who No. 1 is. It doesn't matter which side runs The Village."

"It's run by one side or the other?"

"Oh, certainly. But both sides are becoming identical. What in fact has been created is an international community. A perfect blueprint for world order. When the sides facing each other suddenly realize that they are looking into a mirror they will see that *this* is the pattern for the future."

"The whole earth as The Village?"

"That is my hope. What's yours?"

"I'd like to be the first man on the moon."

— No. 6 and No. 2

"The Chimes of Big Ben"

"I risked my life and hers to come back here, home, because I thought it was different. It is, isn't it, isn't it different?"

— No. 6 to Colonel

"The Chimes of Big Ben"

### **Meeting No. 1**

"She [No. 2] must get instructions. Who do they come from? Is he here tonight, the man behind the big door?"

"Well, there's no need to know. This place has been going for a long time."

"Since the war? Before the war? Which war?"

"A long time!"

— No. 6 and his Observer

"Dance of the Dead"

"Did you ever meet No. 1?"

"Face to face?"

"Yes."

"Meet him?!" (laughs)

— No. 6 and No. 2

"Fall Out"

### **Who Is No. 1?**

No. 1's identity is only allegorically revealed in "Fall Out," if indeed it is revealed at all. Having numbered Villagers running all the way to No. 2 certainly suggests that a No. 1 exists, but his existence is never definitely established. The President in "Fall Out" has a conversation with someone (or something) — is that No. 1? No. 2 is periodically seen talking on the telephone to a superior — is that No. 1? Warders who leave The Village sometimes mention reporting in — are they reporting to No. 1? And if No. 1 exists, does he change as often as No. 2?

For a *Prisoner* campaign, the answers to these questions can be very important or not important in the least. A campaign can be run without any identity or personality assigned to No. 1; No. 1, in fact, might not exist at all. He might be a figment designed to convince Villagers that there is someone even more in control than No. 2. Or 'he' might be 'they,' an outside management committee which selects and periodically reviews each No. 2 for competence and productivity. He might be a computer, even more powerful than the General. If his identity (or lack thereof) is not an important element of the campaign, pick one, or none, of the above and move on to more crucial decisions.

However, No. 1's identity and personality can flavor the rest of the campaign, even though it is never revealed to the players:

Is No. 1 arbitrary and quick-tempered? Does he second-guess No. 2? Then the person wearing No. 2's badge will change often and be prone to nervousness.

Is No. 1 a committee? Then No. 2 might play one committeeman against the other, currying favor with some, fulfilling special projects, changing the parameters of a plot as the committee changes its mind. (Of course, he might not *know* he was dealing with a committee ... in which case, No. 2 himself would soon become ragged and paranoid, dealing with a master whose whims constantly change.)

Is No. 1 a computer? Then it will probably know as much as No. 2 does about conditions in The Village; perhaps it retains No. 2 only to maintain a facade of humanity. It can't be snowed with a mountain of data, but it can be fooled by explanations based on human arbitrariness.

If it seems interesting and useful, identify No. 1 and bring his influence to bear on the campaign. He might even appear during an adventure, but even so, is he *really* No. 1?

### **That Would Be Telling**

One of the principal elements of a *Prisoner* campaign is ignorance. Players must never have all of the answers. That would be telling.

It's an "us against them" situation, and players must be constantly kept wondering who is with "us" and who is with "them." For more on sowing discord and distrust, see *Distrust and Paranoia*, p. 62.

### **Map of Your Village**

This map (pp. 46-47) is the same one provided to residents of The Village. It provides ample detail about the physical layout of The Village itself, and no clues at all about what lies beyond. Players may be given copies of this map. GMs may add new buildings (or move the existing ones) as they see fit, either before the campaign starts or during the campaign!

The underground facilities beneath Town Hall and the Green Dome are, of course, not shown on the map. No. 6's residence is in the area marked "cottages" in the center of the Village.

## Society

In terms of sex and race, The Village is an egalitarian society: it represses all people arbitrarily. The majority of the population seem to be white and British, but that simply reflects the demographics of the late '60s British acting pool; a campaign version of The Village can be mixed any way desired.

Women are not treated as sex objects, although No. 6's interest in women is exploited by the warders, particularly his reaction toward ladies in distress. No. 2 doesn't keep a harem, and women aren't second class citizens. They tend to fill the less important jobs, but this seems more a reflection of the society from which they were drawn (and thus which gave them job training) rather than the intent of The Village itself. Certainly the job of No. 2 is not exclusively male.

Relationships among the Villagers (and indeed, among the warders) are allowed. In fact, they are encouraged if No. 2 thinks that this might create one more advantage or lever to be used against a recalcitrant prisoner.

Be prepared to exploit any relationship that PCs establish, either among themselves or with NPCs. If a prisoner falls in love, feel free to threaten his lover. Even better, it might be that his lover has been assigned to seduce his secret from him, or a lover could be coerced into betrayal. Conversely, any relationship can be found to have violated the rules, if the prosecution of such a violation proves useful. As with all other aspects, remember to be arbitrary — if players decide that *every* relationship will be exploited, they are much less likely to commit themselves, thus depriving No. 2 of useful grist for his mill.

Some families exist in The Village. The maid in "Arrival" has lived there as long as she can remember (having arrived with her parents?); both the watchmaker and his daughter ("It's Your Funeral") live in The Village. No. 6 tells a fairy tale to children in a nursery, in "The Girl Who Was Death," but this indicates that children live separately, rather than with their parents. Perhaps these are orphans for whom The Village has assumed responsibility, and who will be raised to be the best warders they can be.

## Slogans, Phrases and Signs

Slogans are among the best ways to impress upon players that they are gaming in a totally controlled society. In The Village, slogans replace thought and can make players screamingly aware that the other Villagers have thoroughly accepted their role in this society. The most common, of course, is "Be seeing you!," accompanied by an open-handed salute with thumb and finger forming a circle around the eye.

Other phrases, such as "You're new here, aren't you?," add to the chilling not-rightness of The Village. By not following accepted patterns, newcomers display how out of place they are. And finally, signs scattered throughout The Village reinforce the mind-control. All of these (slogans, catch-phrases and signs) help invoke the properly disconcerting atmosphere of a *Prisoner* campaign. A few others include:

You're new here, aren't you?

Trust me..

Feel free!

Questions are a burden to others; answers are a prison for oneself.

A still tongue makes a happy life.

Of the people, by the people, for the people.

## Village Society

"Why do you want to risk your life?  
We could be happy together!"

— *Queen to No. 6*  
"Checkmate"

"What would Poles or Czechs be doing here?"

"It's very cosmopolitan; you never know who you'll meet next."

— *No. 6 and taxi driver*  
"Arrival"

"Lovely woman — warm, sympathetic. She'd talk him into anything to keep him alive."

"The Professor?"

"Indeed — such is the course of true love."

"Do you need him?"

"They're both necessary, the one for the other, even essential."

— *No. 2 and No. 6, about Professor's wife*  
"The General"



## Social Order

"Society is a place where people exist together."

"Yes, sir."

"That is *civilization*."

"Yes, sir."

"The lone wolf belongs to the wilderness."

"Yes, sir."

"You must not grow up to be a lone wolf."

"No, sir."

"You must conform!"

"Yes, sir."

"It is my sworn duty to see that you do conform!"

"Yes, sir."

— *No, 2 and No. 6*

"Once Upon a Time"

"Youth, with its enthusiasm, which rebels against any accepted norm because it must, and we sympathize. It may put flowers in its hair, bells on its toes — but when the common good is threatened, when the function of society is endangered, such revolts must cease. They are non-productive and must be abolished!"

— *President to assembly*

"Fall Out"

"We've just witnessed two forms of revolt. The first, uncoordinated youth, rebelling against nothing it can define. The second, an established, successful, secure member of the establishment turning upon and biting the hand that feeds him. Well, these attitudes are dangerous. They contribute nothing to our culture and are to be stamped out."

— *President to assembly*

"Fall Out"

"Humanity is not humanized without force, and errant children must sometimes be brought to book with a smack on their backsides."

— *President to assembly*

"Fall Out"



Your community needs YOU!

It can be done. Trust me.

You're never too old to learn.

Music says all.

Music makes a quiet mind.

Music begins where words leave off.

Walk on grass.

## Currency

The unit of currency in The Village is the Work Unit, roughly equivalent to a modern-day \$. There are some variations from today's standards (the one-page *Tally Ho* costs two Work Units), so when figuring costs, use a modern-day price, modified by the GM's whim. However, no actual currency is exchanged when a purchase is made; a card is presented and the appropriate value punched out of it. (Note that this means shopkeepers can't give a day's-end tally; it isn't important that money be collected, just that it be spent!) Some other prices that are quoted in various episodes:

Phone calls (only local): free

Each three words in a *Tally Ho* private note: 1 unit

Cup of coffee: 2 units

Taxi ride: 2 units maximum

*Tally Ho*: 1 units

Bottle of non-alcoholic vodka: 16 units

Bottle of non-alcoholic whiskey: 24 units

Cuckoo clock and note pad: 42 units

First prize in art competition: 2,000 units

## Jobs

Just because The Village uses currency doesn't mean that everyone has a job. Most notably, No. 6 never accepts employment, yet he lives quite comfortably and never shows a need for additional credit. On the other hand, some prisoners do work, and can fall short between punchcard paychecks — in "It's Your Funeral," No. 6 comes to the assistance of a woman who doesn't have enough units for the candy she wants.

Most Villagers, warders and prisoners alike, work. Many "undercover" warders have two jobs — their apparent job (weeding, painting, shopkeeping, etc.) and their real job (usually surveillance). Other warders, who work in the Control Room or elsewhere underground, have only the one job.

The GM decides who works and who doesn't. If a particular job puts someone in the right place at the right time, then give him that job. If a job can be used to keep a prisoner out of the way at a crucial point, he's hired! (He is likely to be congratulated on "being accepted for the job," even though he has never applied.) If a job would interfere with plot development, ignore it.

A job table is not included in this book, because jobs, their pay, and their chance of failure should all be wholly arbitrary. A job pays what the masters (e.g., the GM) decide for it to pay: two gardeners, working side by side, might be paid 20 and 200 units a week, and next week the wage difference might be reversed! Room and board are supplied without charge to all Villagers; wages and credit allowances are spent on such things as cafe food and drink, the *Tally Ho*, taxi rides, and goods from the general stores.

If a player character is to have a job, the Labour Exchange (p. 39) is usually the place to start.

## Education

The only episode which mentions education is "The General," in which it is the focus. In "The General," most classes consist of watching television at home for 30-second stretches. However, the Professor's wife seems to be directing an informal tutorial/study hall in the garden outside her quarters, and it is reasonable to assume that the recreation hall has facilities for classes. Teaching a class is appropriate employment for an otherwise idle Villager, and he might inadvertently reveal a scholarly secret when doing so.

## Numbers, Buttons and Names

Nearly everyone has a number, even those who work under the Green Dome, with a few notable exceptions. Numbers range from 2 to above 300. They are reusable — when a person passes on, his number can be assigned to a new arrival. Roughly speaking, the lower your number, the more important you are. No. 1, overall master of The Village, is never seen or heard, although No. 2 occasionally speaks to him (her? it?) by phone. No. 2 is answerable to No. 1 and The Village's masters, but otherwise has complete authority over The Village. Nos. 3, 4 and 5 never appear in the series (although there are push buttons for these numbers on the information board in "Free for All"). No. 6, of course, is the Prisoner himself. At least four No. 8s appear in various episodes. Numbers over 100 tend to be assigned to the underground workers.

Numbers can be doubled up. In "Free for All," No. 113 is a reporter; No. 113b is his photographic colleague. In the same episode, the information board lists Nos. 3e, 4d and 6h, and the Town Council is numbered 2a through 2l.

Buttons consist of a number (usually red) superimposed on the penny-farthing bike. Most are black on white, but a few are white on black. (There is no *apparent* significance to this variation.)

Only a few Villagers don't wear buttons. The Butler never does. The Profes-

## *Sign Your Number!*

"Special delivery. Sign your number here, No. 6."

— *Postman to No. 6*  
"Dance of the Dead"

"Who are you?"

"I'm a number, just like you! Does it matter which?"

— *No. 6 and watchmaker's daughter*  
"It's Your Funeral"

## *You're All Taken Care Of*

"Here's your employment card, your card of identity, your health and welfare card, your credit card, and a free ride home."

— *Hospital attendant to No. 6*  
"Arrival"

"We'll fix you up with some new clothes."

"What about my old ones?"  
"They've been burnt."

— *Doctor and No. 6*  
"Arrival"

## *Competitions*

"Good morning! Good morning! Good morning! And what a lovely day it is! Rise and shine! Rise and shine! Before our program of early morning music, here are two announcements. The long range weather forecast is that the fine spell will continue for at least another month. Your local council, and remember it is *your* local council, democratically elected by you, have decided to organize a great new competition. Can you paint? Can you draw? Can you model in clay? If you can, then your day is just six weeks today. More about this later, but now, music."

— *Village Voice*  
"The Chimes of Big Ben"



12345  
67890



12345  
67890

**". . . I Am A Free Man!"**

"I think we have a challenge."

— No. 2 to Labour Exchange manager,  
as No. 6 leaves.

"Arrival"

"He can make even the act of putting  
on his dressing gown appear as a gesture  
of defiance."

— No. 2 about No. 6  
"The Chimes of Big Ben"

"No. 2 here. Yes, sir, I am doing my  
best — he's very difficult ... I know it's  
important, sir ... he's no ordinary person,  
sir, but if I had a free hand ... I know sir,  
yes, I know I'm not indispensable."

— No. 2 on telephone to No. 1  
"A, Band C"

sor and his wife don't; they do not even seem to have numbers, but are simply called "the Professor" and "The Professor's wife." No. 6 often refuses to wear his. ("I am not a number, I am a person!") If someone refuses to wear his button, it can be accepted as an eccentricity or prosecuted as a serious violation of the rules. (Even if prisoners are allowed to omit their buttons, it can be quite unnerving to the resisting prisoner if all other Villagers, *including strangers*, pleasantly address him by his proper number anyway!)

On the other hand, if players become too comfortable with the notion of wearing buttons, have them wake up one day to find that nobody but them is wearing a numbered button.

A number tends to depersonalize the wearer, making him a standardized unit of society rather than an individual. Names (rather than numbers) are occasionally used, most often as a dramatic device in the show, when the humanity of a character is to be stressed. Thus, we learn the names of Nadia (in "The Chimes of Big Ben"), Alison (in "The Schizoid Man"), and Button (in "Dance of the Dead"). In fact, even Dutton's termination order refers to him by name. In general, though, even important individuals are referred to by a label (the Professor, the General) rather than by a name.

**Population**

Buttons also give a rough approximation of The Village's population. The numbering system goes up to at least 300. Assume that a few people are not assigned numbers, that a few more are doubled up, and that at any given time some numbers aren't in use. Then close to 300 live in The Village, although some of the workers live underground and are never seen in The Village proper.

About 70 workers live permanently underground. The old people's home has accommodations for about 40. Apartments on the west side of The Village house about 150. The rest (about 20 or 30) live in private cottages or similar residences (e.g., No. 2 and the Butler in the Green Dome).

**Clothing**

Villagers, even many warders operating underground, sport an amazing array of casually tacky fashion. Black and white in contrast are a common theme; startling combinations of red, yellow, blue, green, white, and orange are just as

common. Villagers do not lose their fashion sense when they come to The Village; they wear what the shops provide. The surrealistic clothing is obviously yet another means used by the masters to disorient and reorient the prisoners.

From head to toe: parasols (sun umbrellas) are popular, with each triangle of cloth a different color. Caps of all sorts are available; straw boaters are common. Sunglasses are also popular, especially those with a narrow eye-slit running across the face or with black-and-white checkered lenses. Casual sweater jackets (like that worn by No. 6) are fashionable, as are brightly colored and trimmed cloaks. Occasionally a maid wears a dress (black, with white apron and trim); skirts are very rare. Both men and women favor pullover sports shirts, in either a solid color or stripes (usually horizontal). Slacks are the daywear of choice, in beige or some other bland color. Shoes run to loafers or deck shoes.

There are a few alternatives. Sailor suits are occasionally worn, as are military uniforms, especially by older inhabitants. The Butler is always dressed in upper-class serving togs, with black tie and gloves. Guards who are obviously guards wear gray-green fatigues, boots, white helmets, and white bandoliers. And No. 2 wears whatever he likes.

Nightwear is not unusual (pajamas and bathrobes). Parties call for costumes, obligingly supplied by The Village.

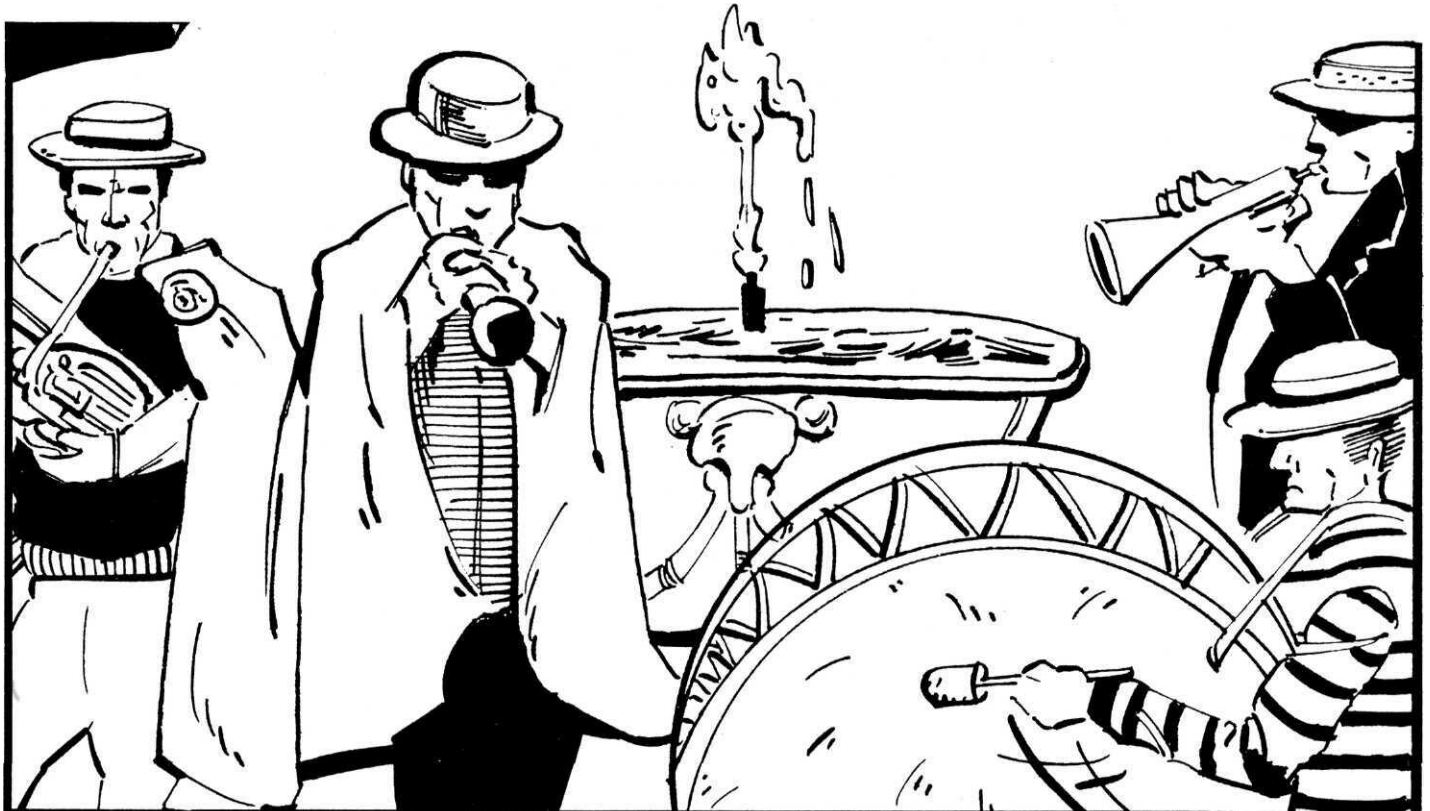
## Music

"Music says all ..." Music is an important part of life in The Village, and the band usually supplies it. There are daily concerts at the Bandstand (p. 37), and the band often appears elsewhere, as well. It plays sprightly marches for funerals, campaign speeches, and other public affairs, and sometimes for no apparent reason at all.

Indeed, music is nearly inescapable. The ubiquitous "radios" can be turned off only by smashing them, and they will be quickly repaired. Is there some subliminal component to this constant "entertainment," or is it just that the masters hope that music will soothe the savage breasts of their captives?

Background music adds realism to roleplaying sessions; see p. 63.

music  
begins  
where  
words  
leave  
off



## Public Events

"Good afternoon, everyone! Good afternoon! I have some exciting news for you. Your citizen's council officially proclaims Thursday, the day after tomorrow, as Appreciation Day, the day when we pay due honor to those brave and noble men who govern us so wisely. You will all be delighted to hear that the proceedings will be opened with an address by No. 2 himself, and concluded by the unveiling of our new Appreciation Monument. There will be speeches, thrills and excitement!"

— Village Voice  
"It's Your Funeral"

"They say six of one and half a dozen of the other. Not here — it's Six for Two and Two for nothing and Six for free, for all, for free for all! Vote! Vote!"

— No. 6's campaign speech  
"Free for All"

"A Proclamation! All citizens take notice that a carnival is decreed for tonight! Turn back the clock! There will be music, dancing, happiness! All at the Carnival, by order."

— Village Voice  
"Dance of the Dead"

walk  
on  
grass

## Special Occurrences

### Competitions

In "The Chimes of Big Ben," an art competition is announced by the Village Voice. The types of artwork entered range from paint and tapestry to sculpture, yet all but No. 6's are very similar: all are strictly representational, and all feature No. 2! When the Awards Committee can't understand No. 6's abstract sculpture ("It means what it is"), they award it the grand prize.

At the end of this episode, the Voice announces a new competition. For the masters, such competitions decrease Villager boredom and thoughts of escape. For a GM, they provoke players into helping to develop adventures. No. 6 turned the art competition into an escape attempt. If normally forbidden facilities are made available (an electronics workshop, a computer terminal, a mechanic's bay) in the name of competition or diversion, what might creative prisoners make of such an opportunity? And what ulterior motives would No. 2 have in providing them?

Sports events, although never featured in the series, are also likely candidates for Village-wide competitions. How about a chess tournament? Interesting prizes and awards help induce PCs to participate. (What award or privilege might be granted to the winner of the Kosho finals — a trip to the previously unsuspected World Kosho Federation Championship?)

Competitions can serve another purpose, as well. If the party is acting too unified, announce a competition with a desirable prize: more personal liberties, the right to judge others' behavior, better perks. Then have one of the party (but *only* one) win the competition. Award him the prize, and start singling him out for preferred treatment. See how long it takes the rest of the party to become suspicious of him.

### Public Ceremonies

In "It's Your Funeral," Appreciation Day is the appointed time for the old No. 2 to step down and the new No. 2 to take his place. There are speeches from the Address Platform, and The Village expresses its appreciation for the fine guidance that the old No. 2 has given it.

In game terms, Appreciation Day is simply a random public ceremony filled with pomp, which everyone attends. Other such ceremonies (Village Day, Town Council Week, Good Conduct awards) are just as likely — schedule one whenever an adventure could use it. Remember, it doesn't have to make sense; there's a Village full of willing participants to justify its existence. Ceremonies and competitions (and the preparations for them) can be opportunities to introduce PCs to other prisoners, especially if players have decided to suspect any NPC Villager who 'just happens to start talking to you one day over lunch.' They also provide a steady supply of unusual situations. No. 2 rarely wears the Great Seal of the Village, but he does on Appreciation Day, so that is an opportunity to plant an assassin's bomb in it.

### Village Festival

The Village Festival initiates the action in "The Schizoid Man." Alison (No. 24) is practicing both her photography and telepathy in preparation for the big event. The festival is probably a mixture of the ordinary and the bizarre. Expect a small midway, cotton candy, games of chance, and various craft competitions. But don't be surprised at beauty pageants judged by blind Villagers and dramatic enactments of The Village's debt to No. 2.

Note that once the festival has served its purpose in triggering the plot, it isn't mentioned again. In fact, it was supposed to take place in a month, but that month was spent conditioning No. 6. After a month, the calendar is rolled back,

with no hint of complaint or bewilderment from the Villagers. Just because an event is scheduled doesn't mean it will take place.

And just because it hasn't been announced doesn't mean it won't take place. Spring a sudden festival or ceremony on the party, which they didn't know about but which all NPCs have obviously been preparing for. Then have the Villagers express amused surprise that the party didn't know about it ("But *everybody* knew . . ."). If the GM is feeling particularly nasty, he can throw in a rules citation for their ignorance ("All Villagers are to have prepared five pies for the bake sale. Failure to do so is in violation of your society's standards. Please report to the Town Council for confession and sentencing.").

### ***Election Day***

Every 12 months, an election is held to select a new No. 2, or so the current No. 2 says ("Free for AH"). This seems unlikely, given the rapid turnover of No. 2s and the fact that each is supplied from outside, but as usual, the Villagers blithely accept his announcement. They greet No. 6's candidacy with avid enthusiasm, which turns to apathy when he is elected. Balloting isn't secret; both No. 2 and No. 6 stand by the ballot boxes as each Villager passes by to cast his ballot (a beribboned campaign button featuring one or the other candidate). Elections for any number of offices (No. 2, councilman, shopkeeper, King) might be held whenever it suits No. 2's purposes.

The GM might shock the players by actually letting one of their characters win an election and serve in a meaningful office. Better yet, elect a PC to an office which he did not apply for and does not want to fill, and then sanction him for improperly fulfilling the office when he resists. (Tell him it's the will of the majority — of the people, by the people, for the people — and who is he to deny the people's will?)

Public votes can be a subtle way to manipulate and control opinions. Those raised in the Western democracies will usually feel that an election (or, for that matter, a referendum vote to settle some point of Village policy) must somehow signify "fairness" and "equality." A public vote or election might persuade PCs to commit themselves to something, in the hope that they can gain from it. And PCs might feel obligated to abide by the results of a "fair vote" — or even an opinion poll!

### ***Carnival and Dance***

Occasionally the urge for fancy-dress descends on The Village, and a carnival is held. The elaborately scripted invitations are received by special delivery. Some Villagers might get to choose their costume, although No. 6 didn't. The carnival is held at the town hall, which is normally off limits to ordinary Villagers.

The dance seems to be a pleasant affair, but it follows a strict regimen. There are times for social chit-chat and times for dance, and it is forbidden to engage in one when the other is scheduled. It is interesting to note that no buttons are worn on the costumes at the carnival. The dance itself looks like a Renaissance court dance, which few Villagers would have know before their arrival. This argues for classes of some sort at The Village, else how did everyone learn these steps?

### **Government and Administration**

The Village's government demands absolute obedience to its rules, yet neither these rules nor the process by which they are applied is written down; they constantly and arbitrarily change. Offices are elective one week, appointive the next. No. 2 has absolute authority one day, yet must bow to the will of the

### ***Democracy in Action***

"Your administration is effective, though you have no opposition."

"An irritation we've dispensed with. Even its best friends agree democracy is remarkably inefficient."

— *No. 6 mid No. 2*  
"Dance of the Dead"

"You'll come?"

"I have a choice?"

"You do as you want."

"As long as it's what you want."

"As long as it is what the majority wants. We're democratic ... in some ways."

— *No. 2 and No. 6*  
"Dance of the Dead"

"This farce, this 20th-century Bastille that pretends to be a pocket democracy!"

— *No. 6 to No. 2*  
"Free for All"

### ***Elections***

"We start our election campaign today."

"Elections? In this place?"

"Of course — we make our choice every 12 months. Every citizen has a choice. Are you going to run?"

"Like blazes, the first chance I get."

"I meant, run for office."

"Whose?"

"Mine, for instance."

"You have a delicate sense of humor."

"Naturally. Humor is the very essence of a democratic society."

— *No. 2 and No. 6*  
"Free for All"



### **Council and Committees**

"All those in favor?" (*bang*) "Carried unanimously."

— No. 2 in council meeting  
"FreeforAll"

"Be careful. Do not defy this committee. If the hearings go against you, I am powerless to help you."

— No. 2 to No. 6  
"A Change of Mind"

(No. 6) "Can I help?"  
(Awards Committee member) "We're not quite sure what it means."  
(No. 6) "It means what it is."  
(No. 2) "Brilliant! It means what it is. Brilliant. Oh, no, you mustn't let me influence you! *You* are the awards committee."

— No. 6, the awards committee  
and No. 2  
"The Chimes of Big Ben"

town council the next. There is an administration, but its power ebbs and flows erratically.

The GM should use this arbitrariness to terrorize the players. Praise them one adventure and denounce them the next for identical activities. The Village's government and administration are tools in this respect; there are no definites by which the GM must abide when devising and revising their structure and goals from adventure to adventure. In this as in many other aspects of Village life, the episodes are examples, not guidelines which must be rigidly adhered to. Usually, the Village administration of the moment seems to be shaped to attain a specific goal. Let that, if anything, be the guideline — form a government and specific administrative offices for the purpose of specific plot developments.

For example, if an Office of Economic Development is appropriate in an adventure, it exists. (It is probably in the left-hand wing of the Labour Exchange, or just off the main corridor of Town Hall.) It can set prisoners in competition and conflict over personal possessions, wealth and status. If someone then decides to visit the Office of Economic Development a couple of adventures later, it might still be there (but does it have the same administrator running it?), it might have been converted over to some other use, or there might simply be a blank wall where its door used to be ...

### **Town Council**

The Town Council, chaired by No. 2, is another surrealistic element of Village life. Holding the power of life and death, it is the highest authority within The Village, yet it is often merely a rubber-stamp committee for No. 2's decisions. Council members are distinguished by the tall black top hats they wear during meetings.

There are about a dozen members on the Council, chosen either by election or appointment — sometimes one, sometimes the other. (If elected, they were probably nominated by No. 2 and ran unopposed.) It is rare for a rebel to make his way onto the Council; members are picked from among the most outspokenly and unquestionably loyal of Villagers, and a significant proportion of them are



warders. They meet in the Council Chamber, a large, high-ceilinged room in Town Hall (p. 36).

For the most part, the Council and its decisions are redundant, since anything it decides can just as easily be declared by No. 2 or The Village as a whole. However, Council deliberations have the veneer of democracy — prisoners who are unswayed by dictatorial decrees from No. 2 or by the anarchic rule of a Village mob might have trouble opposing a "democratic" decision of the Council. In addition, PCs might occasionally be deluded by these pretensions to democracy and appeal to the Council for a rationally-considered decision, or even contest for a Council seat Oust as No. 6 ran for election in "Free for All"). If they do so, string them along for a while, then leave them hanging, the more fools they for having thought that the democratic process could solve their problems in The Village. Or amaze them ... let it work . . . once.

### **Other Committees**

The Finance and Awards Committee are each mentioned once, both times in conjunction with the art competition in "The Chimes of Big Ben." The Finance Committee sets the number and value of the prizes for the competition; the Awards Committee determines who has won these prizes. The Finance Committee is never seen. The Awards Committee consists of three Villagers who seem to be prisoners — following No. 2 about the exhibit hall, they sheepishly base their decisions solely on what they think he likes.

The Ladies' Appeals Subcommittee in "A Change of Mind" acts as a speaking chorus, calling on No. 6 repeatedly to confess and repent of his social misbehavior. They are doing this selflessly, for his own good, and become quite indignant when he refuses to acquiesce to their suggestions. At least one subcommittee member is a recent offender; it's probable that all four have recently confessed, since the newly converted are among the most ardent appealers.

Other committees might include:

*Entertainment*, which determines which juke box songs are played at the Cat and Mouse and which movies are played at the Palace of Fun;

*Band*, which determines who plays which instrument and what the band's music selection includes;

*Games*, which recruits Villagers for games on the chess lawn and Kosho arena . . . and so forth.

The GM may create a variety of interesting and/or pointless committees. They will have only the power the masters allow; committee membership can be a reward for a Villager's proper conformity. Once a trend of this sort is established (for instance, the most subservient are awarded committee seats), use it to increase the players' paranoia. If a player character confides in a seemingly rebellious NPC, appoint that NPC to a committee, then let the player wonder whether his confidence has been betrayed. Or have the NPC confess his part in the plot, but not publicly name names, because, as he tells the player character, "You would feel much better if you confessed yourself, and I know you will." Once that NPC is on the Appeals Subcommittee, he is a constant reminder that whatever plot is underway has probably already been compromised.

They can also be used to introduce PCs to specific Villagers, possibly to bring them in on GM-hatched plots. (If No. 65 is late for a meeting, and a PC checks on him, she might find that he has been busy calculating the depth of the underground passageways and has lost track of time.)

### **Village Rules**

Various rules are cited each time a violation is punished, but if they really exist they are nowhere written down. In "A Change of Mind," No. 42 undergoes social correction for failing to respond to a greeting. In "Dance of the

### **Rules**

"Although you've only been here a short time, my dear, there's only one thing to learn and it can be learned very quickly — obey the rules, and we will take good care of you."

— *No. 6 to No. 58*  
"Free for All"

"It is the duty of all of us to care for each other, and to see that the rules are obeyed. Without their discipline, we should exist in a state of anarchy."

— *Observer (Prosecutor) to court*  
"Dance of the Dead"

"You are not allowed animals. It's a rule."

"Rules to which I am not subject."

— *Maid and No. 6*  
"Dance of the Dead"

"You're not using any offensive weapons, I hope? You know the ruling about axes, swords, chisels, that sort of thing. They may fall into the wrong hands."

— *No. 2 to No. 6*  
"The Chimes of Big Ben"

"Has anyone ever seen these rules?"

— *No. 6 to court*  
"Dance of the Dead"

**feel  
free!**

## Curfew

"Hello, and good evening, curfew time, sleep time, 15 minutes from now to curfew. Meanwhile, allow us to lull you away with . . ." (music plays).

"Curfew in five minutes. To curfew the minutes are five."

"Curfew time one minute. Sixty seconds."

"And now it's here. It's curfew. Chiming out as usual. Nighty-night. Be seeing you."

— *Village Voice*

"The Chimes of Big Ben"

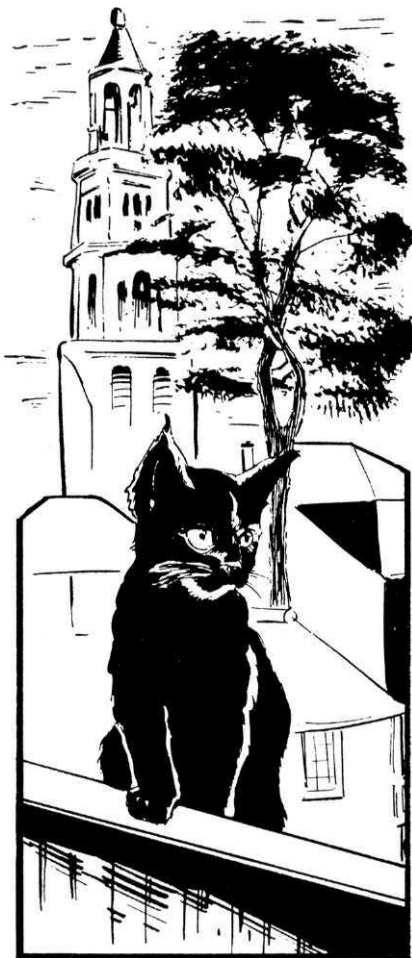
"You wait until tonight!"

"You mean we're allowed out after hours?"

"Anyone would think you were locked in, the way you talk!"

— *Maid and No. 6*

"Dance of the Dead"



Dead," No. 6 is sentenced to death for possession of a radio. (He is in the midst of an elaborate escape attempt at the time, but that more flagrant violation is never mentioned.)

This absence of quotable rules provides fertile ground for PC harassment. If prisoners are making more progress than the GM prefers, charge them with something. Anything. It need not directly involve their current preoccupation (yet another escape attempt, for instance); any charge, no matter how seemingly trivial, will at the least distract them. At best, they will be forced to temporarily abandon their current course of action.

Some charges are obvious: attempting escape, possessing contraband materials, constructing weapons, violence. Should any player break the constraints of the background by meeting all solutions with violence, slap his character under restraint; if the offense is repeated, that character is a candidate for death or zombification. The masters do not tolerate violent rebellion!

But "criminal" charges can be creative and unsettling: wearing a temporarily prohibited color, failure to sleep after curfew, hoarding units (\$), twirling your umbrella the wrong way during a parade. Most rules, however, are social in nature, and should emphasize society's claim on the individual: asking (unwarranted) questions, locking one's door, wearing a hat at the cinema. And don't forget the ridiculous: if a PC is in the midst of a free-wheeling brawl with two warders on foot and another in a security cart, and they stumble through the band while it is marching, consider citing all four (or just him!) for failure to yield the right of way to a parade. Or, perhaps most disturbing: cite the *guards*, and call *the prisoner* as a witness at their trial!

*If the GM can unsettle the players to the point where their PCs become anxious to learn and obey the rules, then No. 2 has scored a significant point.*

## Punishment

Many punishments are purely social in nature (see p. 29). Most other punishments would consist of a loss of privileges, ranging from minor (fine of currency units) to major (house arrest) to draconian (reclassification as an experimental subject). Needless to say, this last would apply only to "nonessential" prisoners who created a great deal of trouble.

No. 6 got away with a great deal, usually with no more punishment than a stiff talking-to from No. 2. Part of this was because he *didn't care* about most of the things The Village could do. No. 2 and his minions will know everyone's weakness. They will know what sanctions are likely to impress each individual . . . and they won't waste effort with punishments that don't truly punish, unless the purpose is to intimidate someone else.

## Curfew

Night-time curfew is around 11 o'clock. The Village Voice gives 15-, 10- and 5-minute warnings before curfew. Curfew defines when it is legal to be outside, and when it isn't. It also sets the time when a PC is least likely to encounter a randomly roaming Villager who wants to know what he's doing. Occasionally, all doors (including those to cottages and apartments) are automatically locked at curfew. (If not at curfew, then possibly halfway through the night, so that any roaming Villagers are locked out.)

Given the many electronic monitors scattered about The Village, it is difficult to move about at night undetected, but No. 6 does so on a few occasions, and PCs will probably be able to do so as well; roll vs. Stealth or Disguise at -3 every 5 minutes, or oftener in an especially high-security area. As with other violations of Village rules, breaking curfew should be punished arbitrarily, and sometimes not at all.

Villagers abroad after curfew may also encounter Rover (sidebar, p. 43).

## Court System

The first rule of The Village's court system is to never be constrained by whatever the current rules are. In "Dance of the Dead," No. 6 is tried by a tribunal costumed as Nero, Elizabeth I and Napoleon; his trial is the evening's entertainment. In "A Change of Mind," he appears before the Town Council. And on numerous occasions, he is simply called on the carpet before No. 2.

Thus, rules, judge, jury and sentence are whatever No. 2 feels will best serve today's purpose. To be most effective, they should occasionally be changed in mid-course. (The trial in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is a good model.) A prisoner who has carefully built a reasonable majority on the Town Council should be called before a tribunal. A prisoner who has carefully developed a good working relationship with No. 2 should be summoned instead by the Town Council, being told by No. 2 in parting that the council's judgments cannot be overruled. And perhaps this time No. 2 is not at the council meeting!



## Information and Files

One of the most important tools available to No. 2 is a thorough dossier describing each Villager. No. 2 and his warders know everyone's weaknesses, strengths and desires, and how to play on them.

In game terms, this means that a character's file contains more information than either the GM or the player himself knows about the character, no matter how complete a character story has been created. Sometimes this information must be created on the spot. (For example, if a character is confronted by someone who claims to know him, as Sir Charles is confronted by No. 6 in "Do Not Forsake Me," and if these two individuals have not actually met during the campaign itself, the player or GM with something to prove must create a few common pieces of knowledge on the spur of the moment.)

Both the GM and the players should realize that occasions like this might arise, and be willing to go along with the pretense. (What is roleplaying, after all, but a constant pretense?) If one person invents a fact, the other person shouldn't deny that fact unless it is totally counter to his character conception. Of course, if it is indicated that the character himself (and not the GM or the

## In Court

"Guilty! Read the charge!"

"The prisoner has been charged with the most serious breach of social etiquette: Total defiance of the elementary laws which sustain our community. Questioning the decisions of those we voted to govern us. Unhealthy aspects of speech and dress not in accordance with general practice and the refusal to observe, wear or respond to his number!"

— *President and Justice, about No. 48*  
"Fall Out"

"In the matter of the people versus this person, the court is now in session."

"What is my crime?!"

"We'll come to that. Perhaps I should explain, our legal system is unusual."

"No jury?"

"Three judges decide here."

"As in the French Revolution."

"They got through the deadwood, didn't they? I'm appointed by the court to defend you; this lady (his Observer) to prosecute. The judges have been chosen."  
(Claps three times.)

(Costumed Nero, Napoleon and Elizabeth I are seated. No. 6 claps derisively.)

"Proceed."

(Nero, reading from a scroll) "You are charged with having on your person and using for unlawful purposes and against the interests of the community an object, the possession and use of which breaks our rules. How do you sit?"

"Don't you ask how I plead?"

"Proceed, Prosecutor!"

— *No. 2 and No. 6*  
"Dance of the Dead"

### Completing the Files

"You see, there's not much we don't know about you, but one likes to know everything."

— No. 2 to No. 6  
"Arrival"

"Subject proving exceptionally difficult, but in view of his importance, no extreme measures to be used . . . yet."

— No. 2's report on No. 6  
"Arrival"

"I must add 'sense of humor' to your file. They tend to leave out things like that. Very important."

— No. 2 to No. 6  
"The Chimes of Big Ben"

### The Watchers

"I'm sure that a man of your calibre will appreciate that rebels must be kept under the closest possible surveillance, with a view to their extinction if the rebellion is absolute."

— No. 2 to No. 6  
"The General"

"Attention, post 14. Yellow alert . . . yellow alert . . . now leaving northern perimeter: No. 6. Repeat, No. 6 . . . now approaching. Contact imminent. Northern area, No. 6, heading for outer zone in our vehicle. Orange alert. All units."

— Supervisor  
"Arrival"

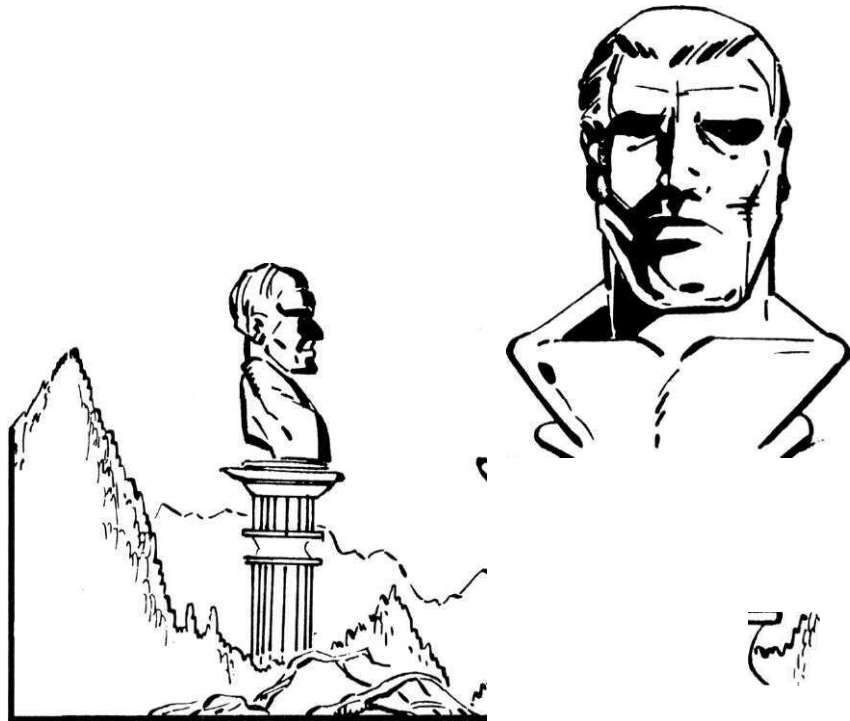
player) is the one manufacturing facts, the character being addressed is free to accept or reject whatever is being made up.

For example, if No. 34 is trying to prove he really is the man who worked with No. 13 on the Ankara assignment, he might mention the brand of coffee they drank while on stakeout, or describe the man No. 13 flirted with at the time. Since the Ankara assignment has just been made up by No. 34's *player*, No. 13's *player* has never heard of it before. However, she should go along with the story, agreeing that No. 13's "memories" are accurate and that he probably is who he says he is.

On the other hand, if No. 34's *player* indicates that No. 34's story is not really true, than No. 13 is free to deny it or accept the obvious lie.

### Surveillance

There are monitors throughout The Village, some hidden within statues (peering out the statues' eyes) and others openly standing on pedestals (the better to see you with, m'dear!). The busts are not only scattered throughout The Village proper, but also dot the woods around it.



Inside the buildings of The Village, the surveillance is just as intense. No. 2 is able to monitor No. 6 within his cottage from dozens of different angles (including from the ceiling and at least one monitor within a closet).

Of course with so many cameras and views available, it would take many more Observers than The Village has available to constantly monitor all of them. (See "Observers," p. 32, for a description of their monitoring techniques.) It is possible with today's computer-aided technology to monitor each camera constantly, but the artificial intelligence necessary to decide which sequences should be forwarded for review to human overseers would require a level of development as yet unknown . . . outside the Village.

Surveillance is an art which Control has almost fully mastered, but there are still a few cracks in the system. Some monitors are just audio receivers; others send only video images. No. 6 is able to find wooded stretches which lack monitors, and it's often possible to see when a camera pivots toward a prisoner. In game terms this means that characters should always be wary of surveillance,

but should also be aware that the odds of being caught in a specific act are usually low. Of course, a pattern of suspicious behavior raises the odds of being under the camera at any given time, and the most stubborn Villagers are assigned human Observers to keep them constantly under scrutiny.

No prisoner can ever be *sure* that he has seen or dealt with all the cameras in an area. Rolls on Traps, or any Electronics (Surveillance) skill, would be appropriate for those making the attempt.

## Alerts

When Control notices a Villager going astray, an alert is broadcast to all warders. A yellow alert is simply a call for heightened vigilance. An orange alert is the next step; it activates Rover, which is usually sufficient to handle any problem. The only red alert which occurs during No. 6's stay in The Village takes place when the rocket is about to blast off in "Fall Out."

## Peer Pressure

Much of The Village's pressure to conform comes from fellow Villagers. These pressures are most closely examined in "A Change of Mind," where all of the following methods are brought to bear in an attempt to break No. 6, to force him to conform to The Village's standards. All of these methods can be used to show player characters exactly how isolated they are; applied successfully, they can actually convince a prisoner that what he believes is fallacious and that he should bow to the opinion of the majority.

Of course, if the other PCs support him in his original belief ("The world really is round, isn't it, guys?"), a player character is much less likely to change his mind or his ways. To be truly effective, several of the other PCs must be part of the peer pressure, ardent in their support of the position to which No. 2 is trying to convert the target.

Each of these methods of peer pressure is common in the real world; they are not merely roleplaying techniques! As it does with many other aspects of life, *The Prisoner* highlights them to illustrate just how ugly and unjust they are.

## Social Groups

Social groups resemble many "consciousness raising" organizations of today's society. They are an attempt to browbeat a disagreeing person into submission to their opinions, under the guise of making him more aware and more conscious of his own faulty, mistaken opinions. Of course, since their own consciousnesses are fully raised, they are not open to opposing arguments or counter-evidence — their minds are already made up. They collectively and aggressively attack any opinion which differs from the norm.

## Silent Treatment

The silent treatment is just what its name suggests — no one speaks to the victim, or waits on him, or, as much as possible, acknowledges his existence. It is invoked to correct its target's behavior through peer pressure. Of course, some Villagers could become quite comfortable in being ignored, and that mustn't be allowed to happen. If someone is getting accustomed to this treatment, send a shrill, self-righteous individual or committee to tell the victim (repeatedly) why they are ignoring him and what he must do to rectify the situation. The Ladies' Appeals Subcommittee serves that purpose in "A Change of Mind." Stop delivering food to him, or allowing him to make purchases. Publish headlines about him in the *Tally Ho*. See what he reacts to most negatively, and emphasize that aspect of his treatment.

## Social Groups

(1st member) "There can be no mitigation. We all have a social obligation to stand together."

(No. 42) "I don't contest the validity of the complaint; my point is ..."

(2nd member) "No interruptions! All right. You say you are a poet, and you were composing, when you failed to hear No. 10's greeting."

(1st member) "Neglect of social principle."

(No. 6) "Poetry has a social value."

(1st member) "He's trying to divide us!"

(2nd member) "His intentions are obvious: to stop us from helping this unfortunate girl!"

(No. 42, to No. 6) "You're trying to undermine my rehabilitation. Disrupt my social progress."

(No. 6) "Strange talk for a poet."

(1st member) "Reactionary!"

(2nd member) "Rebel!"

(No. 42) "Disharmonious!"

— *The Social Group*  
"A Change of Mind"

## Ladies' Appeals Subcommittee

"We represent the Appeals Subcommittee."

"Quick off the mark, No. 42! — Appeals Subcommittee already. You certainly get around."

"Do not sneer at No. 42. To volunteer for social work of this nature requires considerable moral courage."

"Risk of infection from the untouchables."

"Bitterness will not help you, No. 6. You have brought your misfortunes upon yourself."

"Nevertheless, you ladies, I'm sure, out of the goodness of your hearts, will help me."

"It's clearly premature to look for contrition in the poor creature!"

— *Ladies' Appeals Subcommittee and No. 6*  
"A Change of Mind"

## Unmutual

"Your attention please. Here is an important announcement. No. 6 has been declared unmutual until further notice. Any unsocial incident involving No. 6 should be reported immediately to the Appeals Subcommittee. Thank you for your attention."

— *Village Voice*  
"A Change of Mind"

## Confession

"The council chamber has considered your case, No. 93, and already there are signs of disharmony in your behavior. You appear to be a reasonable man, but there is plenty of evidence showing your unwillingness to work for the community. The court has a busy morning, and there are several cases waiting to be dealt with. No. 6 is seriously in need of help, and we want to do something for No. 42. She appears to be in a permanent state of depression, always in tears. It is your clear duty, No. 93, to prove that you are once again a suitable member of our society. The only way for you now to regain the respect of your fellows is to publicly acknowledge your shortcomings. Go to the rostrum and confess. We will tell you what to say.

"They're right, of course."

"They're right, of course."

"Quite right."

"Quite right!"

"I'm inadequate."

"I'm inadequate."

"Disharmonious."

"Disharmonious."

"I'm truly grateful..."

"I'm truly grateful ..."

"Believe me."

"Believe me."

"Believe me, believe me, believe me."

"Believe me!"

(Waiting villagers stand and clap.)

"No. 6, enter! I take it you have completed the written questionnaire of confession? . . . No. 6, you are not called before this committee to defend yourself; all we ask is for your complete confession."

— *Voice of council and No. 93*

"A Change of Mind"

## "Second Only to One"

"It has been my lot, in the past, to wield a not inconsiderable power. Nay, I've had the ear of statesmen, kings, and princes of many lands. Governments have been swayed, policies defined, and revolutions nipped in the bud at a word from me at the right place and at a propitious time. Not surprising, therefore, that this community should find a use for me. Not altogether by accident that one day I should be abducted and wake up here amongst you. What is deplorable is that I resisted for so short a time. A fine tribute to your methods. I wish to thank you for a recognition of my talent, which placed me in a position of power second only to one."

— *No. 2 to assembly*

"Fall Out"

## Disharmonious and Unmutual

"Disharmonious" is the term used in "A Change of Mind" to label anyone who exhibits antisocial behavior. "Unmutual" is then applied to any disharmonious Villager who rails to repent of his behavior. It can be an adjective ("You are unmutual") or a noun ("I was an unmutual"). It exhibits the power of labels for stereotyping — once No. 6 has been declared unmutual, the rest of The Village knows exactly what he is and how to deal with him. Unfortunately, as No. 2 discovers, stereotyping labels are just as powerful even when they're not accurate.

"Unmutual" will be a useful term, but other labels can be just as influential. Consider "Dissident." for the one person who actually votes against No. 2 in an election, or "Hooligan," for someone who accidentally brushes against a little old lady (who has been skillfully placed in his path).

To be useful, labels, and the way Village society reacts to them, should *hurt*. Being labelled unmutual, when one doesn't mind such a distinction, is not a very potent form of persuasion. It must be impressed on such independent souls that Village society takes a very dim view of unmutuals (or dissidents, or whatever) and that otherwise unallowable behavior is expected toward unmutuals. While No. 6 is unmutual, Villagers ignore him, shout at him and even strike him, all of which would normally be considered antisocial, unmutual violations of the rules!

Spooky things can happen to unmutuals. It might be that an unmutual prisoner finds a large "U" on the back of his shirt each day, even though it wasn't there when he got dressed. ("If you aren't unmutual, why are you wearing that U"?)

## Confession

Public confession is most dramatically dealt with in "A Change of Mind," but other examples occur throughout the rest of the series. Confession serves two purposes. It purges the Villager of any remnants of his original beliefs, as he himself actively works to deny them. It also works to convince others of the errors of their own ways — if so many others are wrong in resisting the will of the majority, how can I be right?

## People

### Warders

Warders, as player characters, are discussed on p. 10. Most of what is said there applies to NPC warders as well. Warders range from the corrupt to the sincere. Most are neither; they do their job from day to day and don't make waves. The low-level warders are as much prisoners as anyone else, but they have their privileges, and they know it could easily be *much* worse.

Warders have all sorts of specialized skills. There are even a couple of warders who can work as a bomb squad when the need arises.

### No. 2

No. 2 is the Chairman of the Village, the person in charge. However, he (or she) is also answerable to the masters, responsible for everything that takes place in The Village, whether good or bad. He can be resolute or timid, easily angered or unflappable. He is subject to extreme job insecurity. There are more than 17 No. 2s in the 17 episodes of the series. Two appear in more than one episode (Leo McKern in "The Chimes of Big Ben" and "Once Upon a Time/Fall Out"; Colin Gordon in "A, B and C" and "The General"); several are only "acting" No. 2s, during "It's Your Funeral."

Each new No. 2 further worsens the Villagers' lack of security and con-

tinuity, and changing No. 2s (even within an adventure) helps foster that same insecurity in players. An ever-changing No. 2 keeps players off-balance, never knowing exactly how to deal with this new antagonist, while he has complete files on each of them. It also makes designing new adventures easier if the current No. 2 need not maintain absolute consistency with previous adventures.

However, don't feel constrained to constantly change No. 2. There is much to be said for a consistent, well-developed antagonist whose previous dealings with the player characters help the GM decide upon his current actions and reactions. And helping to eliminate a different No. 2 each adventure becomes more predictable and less satisfying than struggling against the same No. 2 over the course of several adventures. It is more difficult to make an antagonist terrifying when the players know he'll be gone at the end of one adventure.

In general, each No. 2 has several strengths, a master plan for The Village, a fatal flaw (sometimes), and a large umbrella. He sees all and knows all, or thinks he does. He has instant access to all of the computers and monitoring systems of The Village. He and the PCs will be constantly challenging each other, either directly as the PCs try to escape, or indirectly as they involve themselves in No. 2's latest scheme to mold Villagers' minds.

Discovering and exploiting flaws in No. 2's character will be a primary player motivation and a good way to develop an adventure. In "A, B and C," No. 2 is afraid of the masters. In "Hammer Into Anvil," No. 6 triggers No. 2's paranoia. Conversely, with the detailed files which he has access to, No. 2 is able to discover and take advantage of player character flaws (disadvantages). In "It's Your Funeral," No. 2 causes a young woman to faint at No. 6's feet, triggering his chivalry because "she's become a lady in distress." Don't ignore other sources of conflict, but be sure to take full advantage of this one.

Each No. 2 is different, but nearly all share a few common characteristics. They have high IQ. They have Status 4, Patron (masters and/or No. 1), and full Legal Enforcement Powers (15 points). They have a Duty (almost all the time) and at least one Quirk (often "Carries large umbrella"). Their individual skills and other attributes vary greatly. Not counting their Patron, nearly every one is at least a 150-point character. It is best to design each new No. 2 individually, but if inspiration fails, especially if the plot calls for a rapid succession of No. 2s, use the guidelines above, "Instant Characters" from the *GURPS Basic Set*, and the character template in the sidebar to generate a few quick stats.

## The Butler

The Butler is an exception to many of the rules about The Village. He never wears a numbered button, and thus stands outside the Village ranking system. He is always impeccably dressed, never in the colorfully tacky togs of most other Villagers. He never speaks, although he appears in all but two episodes. He is carefully expressionless until the final Shootout in "Fall Out." His duty is to attend the leader of The Village — usually No. 2, but twice No. 6, once as he wins election in "Free for All" and then after he survives Degree Absolute in "Once Upon a Time."

The Butler is one of the most opaque symbols in the series; every fan has his own interpretation. Some have said that he is a sheep, representing mankind without a mind of its own, obediently following the man in charge. Others think he represents survival, always choosing the safest path.

He is not an obvious starting point for adventure, nor is he likely to be drawn into any schemes, but he can be a useful plot element, appearing at just the right time (or the wrong one). He is not always in attendance on No. 2; if he sees something questionable, will he report it to his master? Probably not, but who knows for sure?

## No. 2: Character Template

ST, DX and HT: 1d + 7

IQ: 1d + 10

Advantages (pick two):

- 1) Strong Will (1d levels)
- 2) Eidetic Memory (30 points)
- 3) Alertness (1d levels)
- 4) Luck (15 points)
- 5) Danger Sense
- 6) Intuition

Disadvantages (pick one):

- 1) Addiction or Alcoholism
- 2) Major Delusion
- 3) Intolerance (-10 points)
- 4) Mild Phobia
- 5) Megalomania
- 6) Compulsive Behavior (-10 points)

Skills: anything useful, at (DX-3) + 1d or (IQ-3) + 1d.

## The Butler

3' 11", 115 lbs., black eyes, balding, black hair.

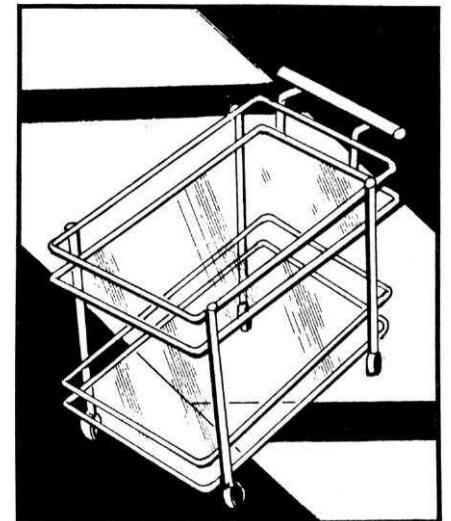
ST 10, DX 10, IQ 10, HT 10

Advantage: Acute Sense of Taste and Smell (+2).

Disadvantages: Dwarfism; Sense of Duty (to Chairman of The Village).

Quirks: Never speaks; Never wears a number; Never hurries; Always in serving attire.

Skills: Computer Operation-10; Driving (18-wheeler)-10, Driving (Stock Car)-10; First Aid-10; Piloting (Helicopter)-10; Savoir-Faire-13; Professional Skill (Butler)-15, Professional Skill (Masseur)-12.





## **Supervisor (No. 24)**

5' 9", 150 lbs., brown eyes, bald.  
ST 10, DX 12, IQ 14, HT 10

Advantages: Acute Vision +2; Alertness +2; Common Sense; Intuition; Peripheral Vision; Status +2; Strong Will +2.

Disadvantages: Duty (Almost all the time), Farsighted.

Skills: Administration-16; Area Knowledge (The Village)-18; Computer Operation-16; Computer Programming-14; Detect Lies-13; Electronics Operation (Communications)-14, Electronics Operation (Security Systems)-15; Intelligence Analysis-14; Leadership-15; Photography-14; Psychology-14; Research-13.

## **Observer Template**

ST 1d+7, DX 1d+7, IQ 1d+9, HT 1d+7

### **Advantages:**

Acute Vision +2; Alertness +1; plus three of the following six advantages:

- 1) Alertness +2 (more)
- 2) Common Sense
- 3) Eidetic Memory (30) (counts as two choices from this list)
- 4) Intuition
- 5) Night Vision
- 6) Peripheral Vision

### **Disadvantages:**

Duty (Quite Often); plus five rolls on the Guard/Observer Disadvantage Table.

### **Quirks:**

As desired.

### **Skills:**

8 points in each of three of the following skills, 4 points in each of three others, and 1/2 point in each of the rest. Area Knowledge must get at least 4 points.

- 1) Administration
  - 2) Area Knowledge (The Village)
  - 3) Computer Operation
  - 4) Detect Lies
  - 5) Electronics Operation (Communications)
  - 6) Hypnotism
  - 7) Intelligence Analysis
  - 8) Interrogation
  - 9) Lip Reading
  - 10) Psychology
  - 11) Shadowing
  - 12) Stealth
- plus 10 points in other random skills.

## **Supervisor**

The Supervisor is in charge of the Control Room and all monitoring in The Village. He is one of the underground warders and thus rarely, if ever, encounters any of the prisoners face to face. Of course, in his position as Supervisor, he is intimately acquainted with each one of his charges in The Village. The usual Supervisor is the bald fellow described in the sidebar, but this man is sometimes away, or perhaps falls temporarily out of favor. In the series, the Supervisor is one of the most consistently seen characters, but in a campaign, where all action is seen through PCs' eyes, he might never appear.

If he does appear, he is an amoral dispenser of data; information is neither right nor wrong in itself, and he supplies it upon request to those properly authorized to receive it. He is not responsible for how it is used.

## **Technician/Scientist/Doctor**

Nearly all technical personnel at The Village are warders, including some prisoners who have joined the ranks of the warders in order to continue the research to which they have dedicated themselves. A few of the more uniquely skilled professionals are prisoners who have been coerced to continue their work in The Village, under the threat of punishment to themselves or those they love. It is for this purpose that the masters are trying to locate Professor Seltzman, in "Do Not Forsake Me," since he is the only one in the world who has completely mastered mind-transference techniques.

Most highly-trained professionals among the warders are quite happy in what they are doing — happy employees, after all, require less supervision. They are supplied with all the tools they desire and plenty of comforts after hours; personal freedoms, theirs or anyone else's, are much less important than the continuation of their research and a relaxing environment away from the workplace.

This did not happen by chance, of course. When assembling personnel for The Village, the masters seek out just such people from the scientific and medical community, avoiding those who might let questions of ethics or individual rights affect their work.

In particular, they recruit those social and medical investigators whose research was impeded by laws against human experimentation. This is the main reason why The Village has access to ground-breaking techniques of behavior, mind and memory modification unavailable to the rest of the world.

Most of the lower-level professionals have no such dedication to research, but they are satisfied with steady work and comforts which they could never afford in the outside world. Their work is occasionally disrupted by upheavals in upper management, but by the time the first of these occur, they have become familiar with The Village, realize they have few options, and have no desire to rock their comfortable boat, anyway.

## **Observers**

Many of the warders, both underground and out in The Village, are *observers*, assigned to keep tabs on specific prisoners. Observing can be a round-the-clock job, with the observer grabbing sleep when his subject sleeps, or it can be divided into shifts. Some observers probably keep an eye on more than one prisoner, switching back and forth between them every five minutes or so. There is a chance, of course, that the prisoner will accomplish something significant while unattended, but it's unlikely, especially since prisoners usually don't know when they're being observed and when they aren't.

While underground, warders follow their charges in the Control Room, using the many means of electronic surveillance there. This is especially useful

when the subject is himself indoors — it's difficult to keep a discreet eye on a prisoner if the observer must be in his bedroom to watch him brushing his teeth.

When the subject moves out of doors, it's often easier to keep track of him in person, especially if he moves into an area with fewer electronic eyes, such as the woods. Observing in person, of course, entails the risk of being detected, but that isn't always a bad thing. And some observing can be conducted by teams of relays: a gardener keeping an eye on the subject between his cottage and the general stores, a repairman watching him while he listens to the band, a waitress observing him as he sips his morning cup of tea.

Observation can accomplish either of two purposes. Obviously, it serves to detect activities which violate the rules, or behavior which suggests that a rules violation is imminent (increased agitation, hooded stares at No. 2, etc.). But in addition, it serves as a deterrent, reminding prisoners that anything they do or think is probably known, so antisocial behavior should not be considered. If deterrence is the aim, personal observation is preferred to electronic monitoring, since the observer can easily let the prisoner know he's being watched.

In addition to individual observation (conducted by about 15 warders), another 40 to 60 are responsible for general observation, either in the Control Room or out in The Village. The best of these occupy the Control Room's seesaw posts, the viewing screens of which rapidly sequence through nearly every monitor in The Village. With only a momentary glance through each monitor, these warders are trained to detect questionable activity and transfer the potentially offending view to one of the other warder stations in the room for more prolonged observation, before going on to the next monitor.

The other warders in the Control Room make more detailed examinations of these scenes and prepare a quick electronic report on each one, even if the sighting was an apparent false alarm. If a seesaw observer fails to maintain an adequate average of sufficiently suspicious sightings, he is replaced in his seat by someone more competent.

The general observers out in The Village are the main group of warders with two jobs — each has an apparent job, in addition to his observation responsibilities. It is primarily these warders whom No. 6 is trying to avoid when he recruits his escape team in "Checkmate." Without watching anything or anybody in particular, they must perform their overt duties while covertly keeping an eye on everything around them.

### **Guards**

Guards are most often found underground, posted in the corridors. However, they occasionally appear in The Village for a show of force. They sometimes show up for "ceremonial" reasons; the carnival proclamation in "Dance of the Dead" is attended by several guards in riot helmets.

There are about 30 guards among the warders' personnel; 10 to 15 are on station at any one time, and it is boring duty. Unfortunately, this means that when they are actually drawn into action, they are mentally unprepared and slow to respond, as No. 6 discovered in "The General" and "Fall Out." In addition to the 30 warders assigned to guard duty, another 20 or so warders with other responsibilities (chiefly observers) are available as reserves; these reserves are drafted into action in "Fall Out."

Guards are occasionally used as bullies, as well. Any time a gang is needed to rough up or apprehend a recalcitrant prisoner, guards switch into Village garb and get the job done. Most guards greet such assignments as a welcome switch from their boring routine.

They are usually armed with billy clubs, rather than guns, which might be too dangerous if they fell into a prisoner's hands.

## **Guard/Observer Disadvantage Table**

To generate approximately 40 points in disadvantages, roll five times on the following 2d table, rerolling when necessary or desired. (For example, a second result of "Bully" must be rerolled, but a second "5-point Odious Personal Habit" result could become a second Odious Personal Habit (5 points) or combine with the first one for a 10-point Odious Personal Habit.

- 2 — Lecherousness
  - 3 — Bad Temper
  - 4 — Unluckiness
  - 5 — Unattractive \*
  - 6 — Bully
  - 7 — 5-point Odious Personal Habit \*
  - 8 — Impulsiveness
  - 9 — Stubbornness
  - 10 — Mild Phobia \*
  - 11 — Truthfulness
  - 12 — Berserk
- \* = cumulative results possible.

### **Guard Template**

ST 1d+9, DX 1d+8, IQ 1d+7, HT 1d+7

#### **Advantages:**

Legal Enforcement Powers (Not obligated to respect the civil rights of others); plus three of the following six advantages:

- 1) High Pain Threshold
  - 2) Alertness +2
  - 3) Peripheral Vision
  - 4) Danger Sense
  - 5) Combat Reflexes
  - 6) Toughness (DR1)
- plus 10 to 20 points in other random advantages.

#### **Disadvantages:**

Duty (Quite Often); plus five rolls on the Guard/Observer Disadvantage Table.

#### **Quirks:**

As desired.

#### **Skills:**

8 points in one of the following skills, 4 points in each of two others, and 1/2 point in each of the rest:

- 1) Area Knowledge (The Village)
- 2) Blackjack
- 3) Brawling
- 4) Interrogation
- 5) Guns (semi-automatics)
- 6) Judo
- 7) Karate
- 8) Piloting (Helicopter)
- 9) Powerboat
- 10) Shortsword (for clubs)

## Good Morning All!

"Good morning all; it's another beautiful day. Your attention, please. Here are two announcements. Ice cream is now on sale for your enjoyment. The flavor of the day is strawberry. Here is a warning: there is a possibility of light, intermittent showers later in the day. Thank you for your attention."

— Village Voice  
"Arrival"

## Villagers

"How do you stop this thing?" (the radio)

"We can't."

"Why not?"

"It's automatic."

"Who controls it?"

"I have no—"

"Who runs this place?"

"I don't know... I really don't know!"

"You never wondered? You never tried to find out? How long have you been here?"

"As long as I can remember."

"Your parents?"

"They died when I was a child."

"You don't remember them?"

"I found out it's wiser not to ask questions. We have a saying here: a still tongue makes a happy life."

"People must have tried to get away from here. How many have succeeded?"

"Don't ask."

"Has anyone ever escaped?"

"Some have tried. They've been brought back . . . not always alive."

"Go on. What are you afraid of?"

"Nothing. I've said too much."

— No. 6 and personal maid  
"Arrival"

"They didn't settle for ages. Now they wouldn't leave for the world."

"You mean you brought them around to your way of thinking?"

"They had a choice."

— No. 2 and No. 6  
"Arrival"

"I meet everybody — I know everything — who's sick, who's getting better. Be seeing you!"

— Flower girl to No. 14  
"A, B and C"

## Village Voice

The Village Voice is one of the most "Big Brother-ly" aspects of The Village. In a pleasant voice, she announces anything from the weather forecast to pending punishments, sometimes in the same breath. Never seen, she is the voice of the masters. Her speakers reach throughout The Village, from the bedroom to the beach. Each day, with a cheery "Good morning!", she announces the forecast and any upcoming special events. Each evening she counts down to curfew. In between, she passes on any other appropriate news or announcements.

The Village Voice serves two purposes in a *Prisoner* campaign. First, especially at the beginning of the campaign, her announcements are particularly effective at driving home to the players that The Village is unlike any place they've visited before. And second, she can be used to pass on information or announcements that are useful to plot development. She can't be ignored, and players are less likely to suspect that an announcement is directed at them personally, than if, for example, No. 2 calls one of them in and passes the information on face to face.

An excellent prop, worth the difficulty of creating it, is a prerecorded Village Voice tape to activate at appropriate times during the adventure. The messages might be important clues, or they might just be "atmosphere." The original Voice was sweet yet matter-of-fact and official-sounding.

## Villagers

Villagers range from the mindless sheep of "Free for All" to the determined resisters in "It's Your Funeral." In many cases, the same Villagers go to both extremes. What can explain this wide variety of personality within a single person? Obviously, mind-altering substances, hypnotic techniques, and other, more advanced scientific breakthroughs have been brought into play. The Village is not just an end to itself; it is also an experimental environment in which population-control methods are constantly being tested.

In game terms, this means that non-player Villagers, especially the faces in the crowd who aren't central to the current adventure's plot, will act exactly as the GM wants them to. A mindless mass sweeps No. 6 to victory in "Free for All," then reacts in total apathy as he gives his victory speech. The whole Village immediately accepts the label of Unmutual, first for No. 6, then for No. 2, in "A Change of Mind." Some Villagers resist the masters, even after being conditioned, in "Checkmate." A howling mob tries to enforce No. 6's kangaroo court death sentence in "Dance of the Dead." How do they all know, so very quickly, what the masters want them to do? Good question . . .

From adventure to adventure, Villagers can play an important role, or none at all. They are one of the forces that can be brought to bear on a party of PCs, but not the only one; use them some of the time, but not always.

Individual Villagers are important, too. At times, one individual will stand against the tide of the rest of The Village (the administrator No. 12, in "The General"); at other times, a few Villagers will play a part even though all others are "dormant" for the adventure (the jammers, in "It's Your Funeral"). And of course, sometimes the active Villager will turn out to be a warder (Nadia, in "The Chimes of Big Ben"). Villagers are the hardest characters to classify. They are the best resource available to PCs, but they could be sincere allies, warder plants, or unresisting prisoners. Even if sincere, they could be forced to betray their PC friends; sometimes it's even possible to force a PC to betray his own party!

In general, the "average" Villager is completely broken to the whim of the masters, a caricature of modern mass man. He wears what he is given, repeats

the slogans he hears, and enthusiastically participates in whatever the masters ordain. No matter how bad his lot is, prisoner or warder, he knows that it could be worse, and he won't do anything to risk the comforts he has.

## No. 6

No. 6 is the prisoner who would not be broken, the individual to whom the masters eventually concede, thus ending the series. He quits his job as an agent for personal reasons; when the masters decide they need to know why, he is brought to The Village to be dealt with. For many months, he and the various No. 2s lock horns; no No. 2 ever succeeds in learning his secret, and he never succeeds in escaping. He is a powerful, skillful, strong-willed individual, one whom nearly all admire and respect.

No. 6 might reside in a campaign Village, but this isn't necessary. In fact, while his skills, knowledge and attributes can prove useful, he can also tend to overshadow player characters, which is not desirable. If his presence is useful and interesting, use him, but don't let him take over the campaign.

It may seem contradictory to play in The Village without including No. 6, since he is *the* prisoner who provides all of the basic source material on which a *Prisoner* campaign is based. But he represents Everyman, and what he does, anyone else with strength of conviction can also hope to accomplish. In addition, he is arguably not the most powerful force in his world; he is recognized not because he conquers the masters, but because they fail to conquer him. He is not an irreplaceable individual, but the archetypical hero on which player characters can model themselves. And, having modeled themselves, they become the prisoners that he represents, taking over his role in The Village.

To repeat: if his presence is useful and interesting, include him, but he isn't mandatory. It might be interesting at some point to flip things around, enlisting some or all of the PCs into an attempt to break No. 6, either by coercing or tempting them. Or introduce a "prisoner" who seems to be the No. 6 of the television series, but is actually a warder. The interplay among PCs, No. 6 and No. 2 could become quite challenging, especially for the GM.

## Jammers

Jammers are mentioned only in "It's Your Funeral," but they are an interesting element in a campaign. Jammers are prisoners who provide concealing "chaff" for escape attempts and other schemes. They pretend to be constantly exchanging secret messages, devising elaborate plans, and in general keeping warders chasing non-existent plots. If the warders stay abreast of their scheming, they won't be able to devote as much time to tracking down the real plots. And if the warders ignore them, the jammers might just pull off a plot of their own.

After a short period of monitoring, warders are able to determine whether a prisoner is truly scheming or just jamming. However, it then becomes a calculated risk to ignore that prisoner and concentrate on more likely conspiracies. If jammers are active in a campaign, the GM must decide how effective they are and how much cover they provide for the real intriguers. Once PCs discover them, they will probably try to actively manipulate them, but jammers are just as resistant to prisoner manipulation as to warder interference.

And just because jammers are active in one adventure doesn't mean they stay active in the next adventure. No. 2 might become fed up with their interference and wipe their minds of all memories since they arrived in The Village. He might convert them to a proper frame of mind. He could even replace one with a look-alike warder who is then perfectly set to detect future conspiracies. In each of these cases, prisoners who come to the jammer for help will experience a much different outcome than expected.

## No. 6: Character Stats

6', 165 lbs., light blue eyes, brown hair.

ST 12, DX 13, IQ 13, HT 12.

Advantages: Alertness +4; Attractive; Charisma +1; Combat Reflexes; Peripheral Vision; Strong Will +4; Toughness (DR1).

Disadvantages: Addiction (tobacco); Code of Honor (especially to damsels in distress); Fanaticism (to Our Side); Sense of Duty (to good people); Stubbornness.

Quirks: Never eats sweets; Enjoys wordplay; Quotes Shakespeare.

Skills: Acrobatics-13; Acting-14; Area Knowledge (The Village)-15; Area Knowledge (Europe)-16; Artist-14; Boating-14; Brawling-17; Computer Operation-13; Demolitions-16; Detect Lies-14; Disguise-12; Driving (Auto)-13; Electronics Operation (Communications)-14; Electronic Operation (Security Systems)-14; Escape-12; Fast-Talk-13; Fencing-18; First Aid-12; Guns (Pistol)-16; Guns (Submachine Gun)-14; Holdout-12; Hypnotism-12; Intelligence Analysis-13; Interrogation-14; Kosho-12; Lip Reading-11; Leadership-12; Lock-picking-13; Piloting (Helicopter)-11; Powerboat-12; Psychology-11; Research-13; Savoir-Faire-14; Scrounging-12; Seamanship-15; Shadowing-14; Stealth-14; Streetwise-15; Survival (Forest)-15.

## Fighting Back

"My name, my number — on a list!"

"Honors or deportation?"

"Jamming."

"Jamming? Domestic science?"

"You'll learn about jamming one of these days; it's our most important way of fighting back!"

— *Watchmaker's daughter (No. 50) and No. 6*

"It's Your Funeral"



## *Is He John Drake?*

Patrick McGoochan, the guiding force and star of *The Prisoner*, starred in an earlier series, called at different times *Secret Agent* and *Danger Man*. He played the part of John Drake, a British intelligence agent.

It has been suggested that No. 6 and John Drake are actually one and the same man. They bear a very strong physical resemblance to each other and are both intelligence agents, both working for Great Britain. No. 6's real name is never revealed in *The Prisoner*, his birthday and fiancée, are both mentioned there, but neither John Drake's birthday nor his fiancée (if any) are ever revealed. (It is interesting to note that No. 6 and McGoochan share the same birthday.) John Drake disappeared shortly before No. 6 first shows up in The Village. The two have at least one common working acquaintance (Potter, in "The Girl Who Was Death" and multiple DM/SA adventures). So it is very possible that John Drake and No. 6 are the same man. But then again, maybe they aren't.

## *The Hospital*

"I'm sad, No. 6, I thought you were beginning to ..."

"Give in?"

"Be happy. Everything you want is here."

"Everything's elsewhere."

"Don't cause me to take steps. We indulge any member of our community for a time. After that."

"I know, I've been to the hospital. I've seen."

"You've only seen a fraction."

— *No. 2 and No. 6*

"Dance of the Dead"

"And remember, if you get another attack of egotism, don't wait — report to the hospital immediately."

— *No. 2 to Rook*

"Checkmate"

"What are we to do with him?"

"There you go again. You mustn't be so eager, Doctor. Your techniques are efficient, but not always beneficial. No. 6 will yet be of great value."

"He can't do as he likes."

"He is an individual, and they're always trying. Don't worry, his Observer will ring me the moment he puts a bomb in your lovely hospital."

— *Doctor and No. 2*

"Dance of the Dead"

## *The Village*

## Places

The Village is a charming potpourri of colorful cottages and larger buildings, built up and down the green slopes bordering a small bay. It is liberally sprinkled with hedges, lawns, flower beds, ornate columns and statuary. There are arches above the walkways. Its winding roads are narrow, not even wide enough for two of its striped taxis to pass each other. Signposts clearly identify each building, including individual residences. There are many speakers throughout The Village, both indoors and out, so that all residents can be sure to hear any public announcements. Most of these speakers are mounted on black and white striped poles and protected with the same colorful awnings which cover the other kiosks and booths here. The Village Voice (p. 34) communicates through these speakers, as well as through individual speakers in each residence.

## Hospital

The hospital, built like a small, four-story fortress, is where Villagers go to be cured or changed. It has enough wards, examination rooms, operating rooms, and other facilities to take care of the relatively small Village, but it also holds abundant facilities for research and experimentation into the many mind-altering and personality-adjusting techniques which are constantly being tested here.

Most of the experimental stations set up in the hospital are only there on a temporary basis, for as long as it takes to field-test a given theory or device. Some are permanent facilities useful to many different types of experiment.

The Computer Room, for example, is a permanent fixture which most experimenters use. They are usually dealing with jealously guarded secrets and techniques, however, so files will be rigorously encoded and locked to protect each scientist's data from other users of the system. In most cases, a Computer Operation roll, with at least a -2 penalty, is necessary to access the system, and another roll at -5 to -10 or more is required to access a particular file of experiments. Any failure by 3 or more will alert a warder in the Control Room and another in the main Computer Room under Town Hall. (In at least one episode, a device had keys marked in code, to make it harder for unauthorized persons to figure out how to use it.)

Other hospital facilities include the amnesia room (see *Mind-Wipe*, p. 71), an aversion therapy room (containing a chair wired for shock treatment synchronized with a viewing screen), multiple observation rooms, and a red-lit group therapy room, where participants lie strait-jacketed on the floor.

Part of the hospital's upper floors are devoted to quarters for those staff who prefer not to mix with their experimental subjects in The Village.

There is a secret entrance to the hospital in the woods, and there is an underground passage from the hospital to the main underground facilities.

## Town Hall

Town Hall is where the town council meets and where many Village administrative details are dealt with by the warders. It has two main rooms, plus a series of smaller rooms and offices opening off the hallway which connects the two larger rooms.

The council chamber is at the north end of the hall. It is a large circular room, with a chair and desk for each councilman (about 12) arranged in a circle around the center of the room and a larger chair (almost a throne) at edge of the circle opposite the main door. This is No. 2's seat. At the top of this chair, above No. 2's head, is one of the blue lights which the masters uses to directly monitor The Village. This light is constantly flashing when the room is in use, and one can never be certain when the masters are taking a direct interest here.

When someone is testifying before the council, he stands in the center of the room on a small railed platform, like a witness stand, surrounded by the council. This platform can rotate, so that the person testifying is able to face each councilman one by one.

At the other end of Town Hall is a ballroom which is used when the whole Village gathers socially. This is where the carnival in "Dance of the Dead" takes place. The ballroom can be modified to suit any type of occasion; for the fancy-dress carnival, it features shining chandeliers and elaborately decorated gilt walls.

Most of the offices are mundane in their content: the supplies office, for example, contains shipping records (origin unspecified), consumption tallies and other less interesting data. A couple of the offices, used for personnel meetings, have one-way mirrors facing out into the hallway. One room is an unofficial morgue; bodies of people officially recognized as dead are stored in the hospital morgue.

Town Hall is usually guarded by a force field which can detect those authorized to pass it and momentarily deactivate itself. Below Town Hall is one end of The Village's underground facilities (see p. 43), accessible near the council chamber.

## Cafe

The cafe is the principal alternative to eating at home, especially during the day. There is usually nothing remarkable in its layout or menu, except that alcoholic beverages are not usually available. On pleasant days, most patrons prefer the outdoor tables.

## Bandstand, Chess Lawn, Free Sea, Address Platform

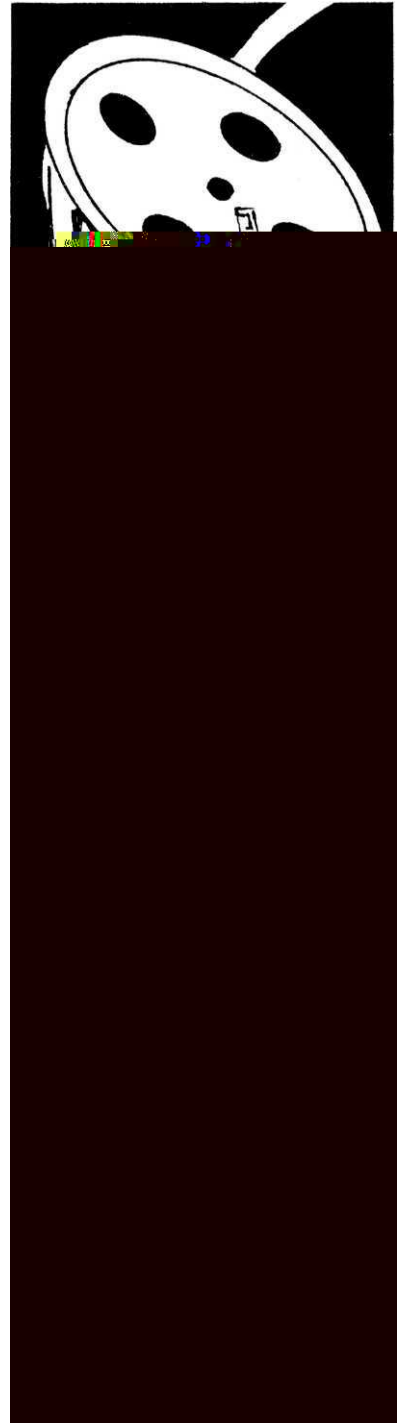
The bandstand is the usual site of The Village's daily concert. Because it can be heard throughout most of The Village, the band (about 20 or 30 strong) often outnumbers those actually seated in attendance. Selections are up to the concertmaster, but he is open to suggestions from either the band or other Villagers. Concert length and time of performance vary, but they most commonly begin around ten in the morning and last till noon.

The bandstand faces the chess lawn, the central feature of which is a large, rubber-based chessboard, with four-foot-wide squares. At either end of the board is an eight-foot-tall seat, used by the two Villagers directing play. To one side is a small storage shed where the chessboard itself and 32 staves, held by players to designate the 32 pieces and pawns, are stored while not in play. Games take place here two or three times a week. They are usually directed by expert players, but 32 Villagers can occasionally be found who will take the time to give a couple of tyros a chance to play.

Games with much smaller boards are common, especially in the pavilions near the old people's home.

The Free Sea is an 18-inch-deep pool around which daily promenades are made, usually in a clockwise direction. The band often participates in these promenades. There is a fountain in the middle of the Free Sea; this is a possible emergence point for Rover.

At the far end of the Free Sea from the chess lawn is an ornate stone address platform, built to stand about 15 feet above the ground. Speeches and proclamations of all sorts are made from here, including the campaign speeches in "Free for All."



## Green Dome

### "A World On Its Own"

"Numbers in a village that is a complete unit of our own society. A place to put people who can't be kept around. People who know too much or too little. A place with many means of breaking a man."

"Intriguing." (Thorpe)

"They have their own cinema, their own newspaper, their own television station, a credit card system, and if you're a good boy and cough up the secrets, you are gracefully retired into the old people's home."

"But, no escape." (Colonel)

"They also have a very impressive graveyard."

— No. 6 to the Colonel and Thorpe  
"Many Happy Returns"

"Quite a beautiful place, really, isn't it? Almost like a world on its own."

"I shall miss it when I'm gone."

"Oh, it will grow on you. We have everything here — water, electricity. There's the council building. We have our own council, democratically elected. We also use it for public meetings, amateur theatricals."

"Fascinating."

"Yes, indeed. There's the restaurant. Did you know we have our own little newspaper?"

"You must send me a copy."

(Laughs) "You'll be the death of me. We also have our own graveyard. But you'd be more interested in our social club, I think. Members only, but I'll see what I can do for you."

"You are too kind."

"Now if you have any problems, there's our Citizens' Advice Bureau. They do a marvelous job. Everybody's very nice. You might even meet people you know."

— No. 2 and No. 6  
"Arrival"

"Number, please."

"What exchange is this?"

"Number, please."

"I want to make a call ..."

"Local calls only. What is your number, sir?"

"Haven't got a number."

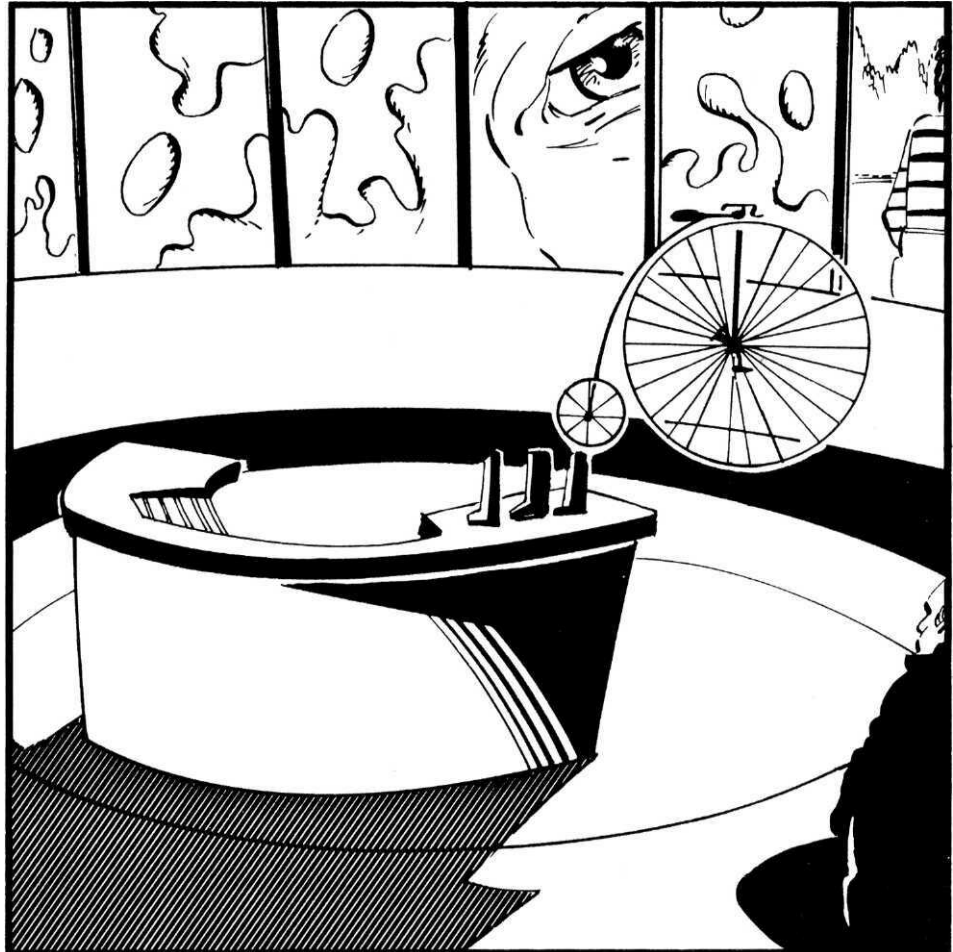
"No number, no call."

- No. 6 and telephone operator  
"Arrival"

The green dome houses the Centrum, where No. 2 keeps tabs on The Village. The foyer of the dome, between the front door and the double doorway into the Centrum, is decorated as an 18th-century European salon.

The first doorway into the Centrum is at the bottom of three stairs leading up from the foyer. Here there are white double doors with ornate handles. Six feet beyond these doors is the second doorway: two sliding metal doors whose opening is activated by an electronic eye (unless overridden from the Centrum). These metal doors can be opened manually, if the eye has been deactivated and they aren't locked in place. There are two more doors on either side of this short passage. The door on the left (as one enters the Centrum) leads to the Butler's quarters and a kitchen; the door on the right leads to a sitting room, for those rare occasions on which No. 2 wishes to have someone wait out of sight while he concludes other business. (If either visitor were a warder, that person could simply enter or exit through the passages underneath the dome.) The floor of the Centrum is about four feet below the level of the foyer; a 30° ramp leads from the metal doors down into the Centrum.

In the center of the Centrum is a five-foot-diameter black ball resting on a two-foot-tall stand. The ball has been scooped out on one side and upholstered in deep blue, so that it is a chair, No. 2's throne. From it, with the added reach of his large umbrella, he can operate the ten-foot-long curving control board which stands about four feet from his chair. The control board gives him instant access to any monitor in The Village, and contains a terminal linked to the underground mainframe computer. If he calls up a monitor, its output is displayed on a 20-foot-wide by 15-foot-tall wall screen just clockwise of the main doorway. Three cordless phones (red, yellow and blue-green) sit near at hand.



Occasionally, a larger red cordless phone, giving direct access to the masters, is on hand as well.

One of the masters' blue observation lights (described in *Town Hall*, p. 36) is occasionally present in the Centrum.

There are two other, more ordinary chairs and a small round table on the left hand of No. 2's chair, but they are usually retracted into the floor. A pennyfarthing bicycle stands near the wall beyond these chairs. On the far side of the Centrum from the main doorway is a disguised, rarely used back entrance. There is a searchlight mounted in the ceiling, which can be programmed to track anyone walking about in the Centrum.

No. 2's chair has a couple of other features. It can rotate, so that it has its back to the doorway. And it can retract beneath the floor, so that it acts as an elevator between the underground complex and the Centrum. The other chairs can retract as well, and the floor panels covering them can serve as additional elevators down into the underground passages.

Below the dome are No. 2's living quarters and the center of The Village's underground facilities (see p. 43).

### **Labour Exchange**

The Labour Exchange is where Villagers apply for and are assigned jobs. The front door opens into a waiting room backed by a counter. Labour Exchange employees behind the counter take initial applications and assign interview times. Beyond the counter are a couple of administrative offices and several small interview rooms. The largest room in the Labour Exchange is a large hemisphere, similar to the Centrum and the council chamber, where aptitudes for various types of work are tested.

### **Palace of Fun**

The Palace of Fun is home to a cabaret (the Cat & Mouse), a games arcade and a cinema. The Cat & Mouse is open between nightfall and curfew. Like the cafe, it doesn't normally serve alcohol, but is still a popular night spot — not surprising, given the alternatives. The game area features pinball, table sports and electronic games — most of the games available in a modern arcade, plus a few that have never been seen elsewhere. Some of the more exotic games are experiments devised by the hospital scientists, but it's often hard to detect which. The cinema seats only about 50; the selection of movies runs at least 20 years behind the times and is not very popular except among the old people.

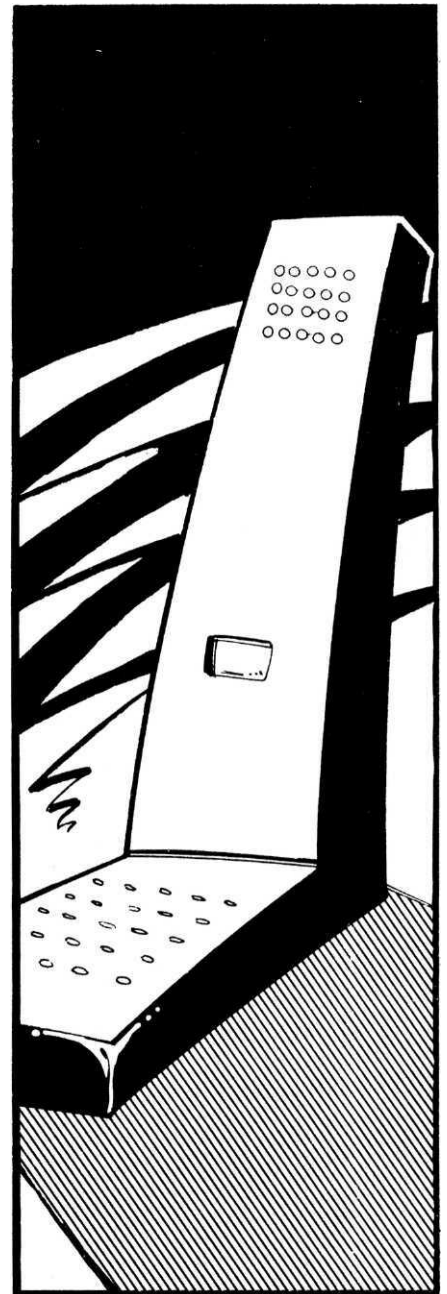
### **Recreation Hall**

The Recreation Hall is for sports and other physical recreation. The fencing strips and shooting range of "The Schizoid Man" are here, as well as two Kosho courts. The hall has a well-equipped weight room, three handball/racquetball courts, two saunas, a padded floor for gymnastics and unarmed combat, and an all-purpose indoor court. It also houses a small exhibition and lecture room, where the art competition in "The Chimes of Big Ben" is displayed. This lecture room is where several Village social clubs, including a literary society, an art club, a bridge club and a poetry circle, each meet weekly.

The shooting range employs electronic beams, rather than bullets.

### **General Stores**

The General Stores stock most goods which are generally in demand, other than staples (which are automatically supplied). Clothing is available here, as are paper goods (books, pads, paperbacks, etc.). Specialty foods (caviar, fine cheeses, odd fruits, and so forth) can be found here, but not everything all the





time. There is a basic crafts section, containing paints, clay, canvas, woodworking tools, and the like, but more specialized tools must be found at the Shop, at the appropriate time (see below). Food, and most other items sold in the Village, bears the bicycle logo. Cans are labeled, for instance, "Village Food," with the actual contents in much smaller type.

### **The Real Village**

*The Prisoner* was filmed in Portmeirion, a Welsh resort on Cardigan Bay. The town was *assembled*, building by building, by a wealthy and talented eccentric who wanted to create his own town, as a hobbyist might build a model-railroad layout! He bought beautiful structures (many of them scheduled for demolition), had them disassembled, and then reassembled them on his seaside property. As a result, it is a surprising mix of architectural styles with a unique flavor.

The town was used only for exterior shots; all of the elaborate and sinister interiors were constructed as special sets.

The *Prisoner* fan club, Six of One, holds a yearly convention at Portmeirion.

### **Shop**

The Shop is The Village's answer to boutiques. No single specialty shop could remain interesting in The Village, so the shop changes periodically. One week it might house a small art gallery; the next week it will be selling fine lingerie. In "It's Your Funeral," it is a watchmaker's shop. The town council determines the choice of upcoming incarnations, sometimes based on Villager requests.

It might be amusing to watch a prisoner, having determined that a specific item is necessary for his latest plot, maneuver for an appropriate specialty to be stocked by the shop.

### **Stone Boat**

The Stone Boat is a concrete vessel on the beach at the end of the sea wall, where young and old alike play at being sailors. The interior cabin is furnished with benches and padded seats.

### **Graveyard**

The graveyard lies in the woods at the edge of the beach near the old people's home. Burials are usually performed with appropriate ceremony; the marching band performs, and a tombstone is erected with the late Villager's number.

### **Beach**

At high tide, the sea washes right up to the stony sea wall bordering most of The Village seaward; at low tide, there is a wide strip of beach which is popular for sunbathing and swimming, especially during warmer weather. (For landlubbers, there is a high and low tide every 12 hours, with high tide separated from



low by about six hours, so each day and each night the beach will be fully exposed for a while and fully covered for a while.)

While the tide is out, there are several tidal pools suitable for wading and splashing. There are also canvas changing booths and beach umbrellas available near the beach. As at other times, most swimmers wear their buttons.

### Citizens' Advice Bureau

The function of the Citizens' Advice Bureau is shrouded in mystery. Few Villagers will discuss it; even fewer ever choose to enter it. It is ostensibly there to address Villagers' problems, but few Villagers have problems severe enough to provoke them into a trip to the Bureau. During the Professor's stay in The Village (during "The General"), the Bureau is converted into living quarters for him and his wife, and no one missed its presence. This is also the building made over to simulate No. 6's home offices, at the end of "The Chimes of Big Ben."

### Kiosks

There are numerous kiosks and booths scattered throughout The Village, for various reasons. Nearly all of them are decked with brightly striped awnings or bright plastic covers.

### Candy

On nicer days, a small booth is set up outside the General Stores, for the sale of candy, postcards and other impulse items. (Note that postcards mailed to addresses outside The Village will come back marked "Address Unknown.")

### Tally Ho

The *Tally Ho*, the Village newspaper, is a single-sided broadsheet published daily, if not more frequently. It is constantly updated, and since it prints only one copy at a time, upon demand, a purchaser will always get a paper hot off the press. (It also can be bought at the General Stores and the candy stand.) Input is either directly at the press, which is a small stand usually located near Town Hall (but which can be rolled throughout The Village), or through one of the two remote links in Town Hall and underground.

The *Tally Ho* specializes in local news; a reader would get the impression that there was no world beyond The Village. Villagers may place notes in the Personal Column, usually running 72 hours per insertion.

The *Village Weekly* magazine is occasionally available, as well.

### Free Information

There are a couple of information stands in The Village, where a directory of buildings and all current residents can be consulted. These stands also provide basic information about what services are available where. Punching the appropriate button lights up the location being sought on the display map. The information stand near the General Stores can also be used to summon a taxi.

### Telephone

There is a telephone in each apartment, cottage and shop. There are also four telephone booths on The Village grounds (including one at each information stand), equipped with the same style of cordless phone used in the Centrum and the Control Room. Calls are free, but only local calls are allowed. These telephones can also be used to access an operator who can answer most Village-related questions.

No. 2 can also talk back and forth with Villagers directly through the television in every cottage and apartment.

### Tally Ho

"Congratulations!"

"Come again?"

"Allow me to introduce myself. I am No. 113, and this is my photographic colleague No. 113b." ("Smile!" *snap!*) "We contribute to the local newspaper — the *Tally Ho*, you know. This is red hot stuff, you know — haven't had a candidate of your calibre for ages."

"Congratulations."

"How are you going to handle your campaign?"

"No comment."

"Intends to fight for freedom at all costs." ("Smile!" *snap!*) "How about your internal policy?"

"No comment."

"Will tighten up on Village security." ("Smile!" *snap!*)

"How about your external policy?"

"No comment."

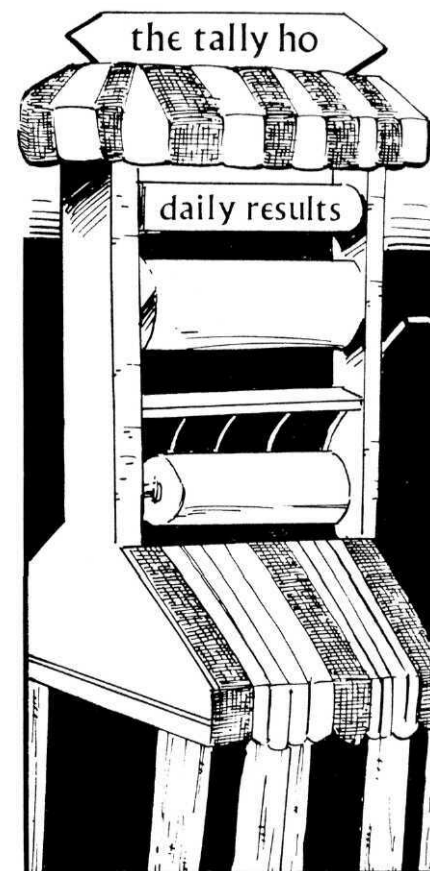
"Our experts will operate in every corner of the globe." How do you feel about life and death?"

"Mind your own business."

" 'No comment.' "

— No. 113 and No. 6 (with interjections from No. 113b)

"Free for All"



## *Kosho*

Kosho, played in "It's Your Funeral" and again in "Hammer Into Anvil," is The Village's contribution to the world of sports. The playing field consists of two trampolines, each about 8' X 14', set end to end with a man-sized basin of water between them. There is a ten-foot-high wall at either end of the trampolines and running along one side of them; this wall is about five feet higher than the surface of the trampolines and the water. The wall is about two feet wide, and is bounded by a horizontal rail which can be used for balance when jumping up to or running along the top of the wall.

Kosho equipment consists of a helmet (similar to a small, unvisor motorcycle helmet), a long, full-sleeved red robe, loose trousers, gloves, and sport shoes.

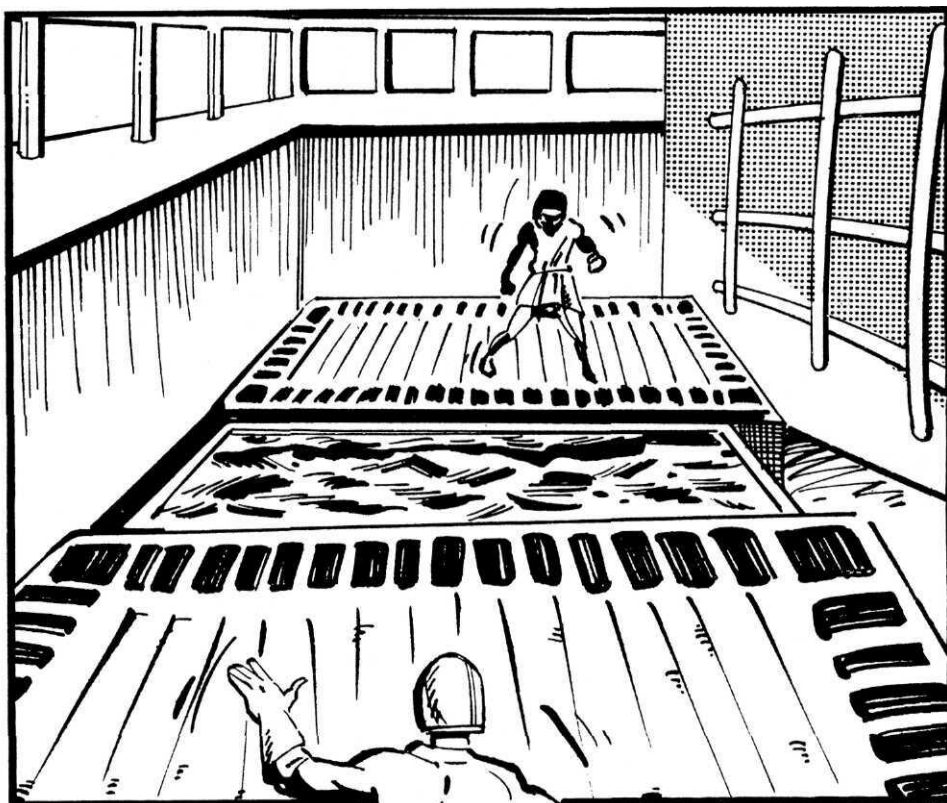
Kosho is played one-on-one. The object of the game is to dunk your opponent. Players move by jumping about on a trampoline (sometimes to the other trampoline, sometimes to the top of the wall, and sometimes just to gather momentum) and by running along the top of the wall. Players may not jump off the trampoline onto the floor.

Moving about, the contestants try to push each other into the water as they jump past each other, or to throw each other off the wall into the water. Much of the action involves sparring for position, so there is often little physical contact. The game continues until one of the players is dunked, or until both players declare it a draw.

Kosho might be used to settle a disagreement which would otherwise be addressed by brawling in the street. It is used in "It's Your Funeral" as an opportunity to switch out No. 6's watch when he isn't wearing it, but that could as easily have been accomplished at night, while he slept. Like other activities, Kosho can be used to bring certain people together or to generate a conflict which must then be resolved.

Kosho, like everything else in The Village, can serve an ulterior purpose. A prisoner who allows himself to become too involved in the game, as a participant or a spectator, has embraced one of the features of this artificial society — or, at the very least, become distracted from escape or resistance.

Kosho is a Physical/Average sport; it defaults to DX-5 or ST-5 once a game has been witnessed.



## **Village Residences**

All Villagers live in comfortably appointed quarters whose food and other supplies are regularly replenished. Several of the more important Villagers live in cottages, but most live in smaller apartments, especially those residents of the old people's home. All residences are equipped with moveable walls, enabling No. 2 to order a nearly instantaneous makeover any time he desires.

### *Cottages*

Each cottage is individually styled to suit its current resident. When possible, it copies that person's last home in the outside world. Each has at least three spacious rooms. The door opens automatically if its occupant wishes to enter or leave (unless No. 2 has intentionally had it locked, as he might at night). The door can also be programmed from the Control Room to open to other specific Villagers.

### *Apartments*

Village apartments are somewhat less spacious than the cottages, and are occupied by residents of less importance. Most of the serving personnel live in them, as well as prisoners who are not of much use but who can't be gotten rid of. Still, they are as comfortably outfitted as the cottages; it is obvious that money is not a concern to the masters.

### *Old People's Home*

Residences in the Old People's Home can be as large as a cottage or as small as a single room, especially if its occupant is bedridden. The old people are grouped together so that geriatric care can be dealt with more easily. Of course, some of the residents here aren't old, but are so incapacitated that they are unable to care for themselves.

## Bell Tower

The Bell Tower, rising above most other buildings in The Village, stands beside the sea. The four bells at its peak are rung on special occasions. The highest of four levels, where the bells hang, is also quite useful for surveying the entire Village; this is where No. 6 comes when he finds himself alone in The Village at the beginning of "Many Happy Returns." The second level opens into a large balcony overhanging the sea; No. 6 is here, testing the radio he finds in "Dance of the Dead," when discovered by his Observer and No. 2.

The top level can be outfitted with searchlights, as it is in "Checkmate," but Control doesn't usually bother with them, trusting to its radar and other surveillance equipment.

## Nursery

The apartment building across the lawn from the Palace of Fun also holds a children's nursery. There aren't many children in The Village, and most of these live with their parents. Those without parents, or who have been temporarily separated from their families, live in the nursery — at the time of No. 6's bedtime story in "The Girl Who Was Death," only three children are living there. One loyal Villager is employed as a Nanny when the nursery is occupied.

## Secret Caves

The slopes of The Village are riddled with hidden caves, especially in the undeveloped woods around The Village proper. A few of these lead into the underground complex beneath The Village. Some of these are closed off with sliding metal doors. Careful search might disclose a ventilation shaft or two leading up from the underground complex, as well.

Perhaps not surprisingly, those caves which lead underground seem to shift about from time to time. A cave which leads underground in one adventure might have a rock-solid back the next time it's investigated.

## Mangrove Walk

The mangrove walk is mentioned in "Hammer Into Anvil," when No. 6 is walking through the woods between the beach and the mountains.

## Underground

There is an elaborate system of hidden underground passages and rooms beneath The Village, accessible through the Green Dome, Town Hall, the Hospital, a few caves in the woods, and a couple of other places. One passage leads out of The Village, under the mountains. It is through this passage that most supplies are delivered, from food to construction materials; most delivery personnel never see The Village.

These passages are usually guarded, but not always. Some No. 2s decide that the chance of intruders getting into the underground complex is small enough that round-the-clock guards are a waste of manpower.

## Control Room

The Control Room is the center for all surveillance activity in The Village. It is a large hemisphere, like the Centrum and the Labour Exchange aptitude room. A seesaw-shaped apparatus dominates the center of the room. A senior Observer sits on either end of this apparatus, facing outward and keeping a close eye on the monitor mounted on his end of the seesaw.

Beyond the seesaw from the entrance and also facing outward are five other observation posts. Just behind them, toward the center of the room in a ring

## Rover

Rover is one of the most unusual images of terror ever conceived. A large, flabby, bouncing white ball which seems always on the verge of flight, it spells capture or death to would-be escapees. New-comers to The Village become vividly aware of its abilities the first time they see it cover a terrified victim and suffocate him to unconsciousness or death. Its deep, grating roar can be heard throughout The Village when it is on the prowl, and most Villagers instantly freeze, praying that it is seeking someone else this time.

Rover is not, in fact, a single entity. Twice during the series, three Rovers are dispatched to bring back a Villager at sea. In each case, one Rover is the normal six-foot size, while the other two are about three feet across. Rover is spawned in water, rising from the sea or even out of the Free Sea fountain to relentlessly track down violators of Village rules.

Controlled and programmed by warders, Rover is not infallible. Its range is usually less than 30 miles, sufficient for most purposes. It occasionally goes on patrol, but it is usually dormant unless activated for a specific purpose. It can recognize a password (as in "The Schizoid Man"), but if it is simply told to track a fleeing vehicle, it will continue to do so, even if the vehicle's driver jumps out. There are vague suggestions that Rover, when on patrol, senses and is drawn to violence.

Rover has a Move of about 6, and travels with equal speed over land and water. It normally has approximately PDO/DR20, making it immune to fire from handguns. It may be assumed that No. 2 has access to weapons which could destroy a rogue Rover.



## **Termination Order**

No. 6 intercepts a termination order naming Dutton, in "Dance of the Dead." It is sent by the masters and is intended for No. 2. Such orders can advance the plot — letting PCs intercept a termination order (or a message ordering the lobotomization of all old people, or whatever) gives them a purpose, possibly initiating a new adventure or redirecting a stalled adventure. Orders of this type are especially effective when directed against a PC or a Dependent.

An actual termination order is one of the more sinister "props" the GM can provide during an adventure. Dutton's termination order was a sheet of black paper, bearing nothing except his full name, in the ubiquitous "Albertus" typeface.

(To unsettle players who are very familiar with the show, let them find such a sheet of paper with a PC's name on it. Then another. Then another. The streets of the Village are full of them! It turns out that these are not termination orders, but, perhaps, election flyers.)



roland  
walter  
dutton

## **Your Village**

"The Village is a place where people turn up — people who have resigned from a certain sort of job, have defected, or have been extracted — the specialized knowledge in their heads is of great value to one side or the other. Are you sure you haven't got a Village here?"

— No. 6 to Colonel  
"The Chimes of Big Ben"

about four feet wide, lies a map of The Village, on which ground movement can be tracked. The hemispheric wall has a schematic of the stars visible from The Village, on which aerial movements are similarly tracked, a world map, and a view screen.

In addition to the numerous cameras which can be monitored from the Control Room, there are several other surveillance devices, all accessible to Control Room Observers. Visual range to sea is about two miles. Beyond that, radar can be used to track movement. There are three radar scopes, one covering a six-mile radius ring, the second covering a 12-mile range, and the third tracking movement beyond 12 miles.

There is other control equipment here as well, including any overrides currently prepared for The Village's vehicles. These controls are used to override the helicopter No. 6 takes in "Arrival," the speedboat he jumps in "Free for All," and the ship he commandeers in "Checkmate," the *Polotska*.

## **Television Broadcast Room**

The broadcast studio and control room for the closed circuit television system is located in the underground complex.

## **Speaker Central**

A set of rooms near the television studio houses the radio and speaker equipment. It is from here that the Village Voice brightens each day, from morning till curfew. There are also speaker feeds from the Centrum and the Control Room, so that announcements and emergency messages can be broadcast directly, without having to run to Speaker Central. In a pinch, remote pickups can be fed back to this studio for broadcast throughout The Village.

## **Embryo Room**

The Embryo Room is a rarely-used facility to provoke regression in a subject. About 25 yards in diameter, it is supplied with a range of materials to simulate the stages of man from birth to old age, including a crib, a rocking horse, a swing, a desk for staging office interviews, etc. The most intense process of regression possible in this room is known as Degree Absolute (p. 93).

## **Assembly Hall**

The largest underground room is the assembly hall, seen in "Fall Out." A large, rock-rimmed hemisphere, it houses the primary computers for The Village, as well as the most direct link to No. 1.

## **Transportation**

Village vehicles appear to have few abilities out of the ordinary. A taxi, helicopter and speedboat are each described below in *GURPS* terms.

It is certainly reasonable to assume that any new No. 2 is able to import the vehicles of his choice during his term in office.

## **Taxis and Other Land Vehicles**

Taxis are certainly the most distinctive of The Village's vehicles. "Mini-Moke" two- or four-seaters with a striped, fringed canopy, they are battery operated. They usually have an open rear storage compartment, useful for hauling bodies (loose, or on a stretcher) and other baggage.

Similar vehicles serve as repair carts, ambulances, etc. If combat becomes necessary, the following general description holds for most of them:

Unarmored body (PD1/DR1), heavy chassis, light suspension, the smallest possible power plant, heavy duty tires, acceleration 5 mph/second, top speed 40

mph (Move 20). Maximum load is 50% more than what it was designed for — for example, an electric cart is designed to hold about 500 lbs. of equipment and driver. Assume it could hold another 250 lbs. before bottoming out, which means it could carry another person in a pinch.

### Helicopters

Village helicopters have one distinguishing feature: their controls can be overridden remotely by The Village. It is not always definite where the master controls are (in fact, there might be more than one set of controls), but there is usually one set in either the Centrum or near the Control Room.

Helicopters are equipped to carry a pilot and passenger, plus about 20 cubic feet (maximum weight 1,000 lbs.) of cargo. Their stats are:

Small chassis (+2 piloting modifier), small power plant, unarmored body (PD1/DR1), acceleration 10 mph/second (under normal load), top speed 200 mph (Move 100).

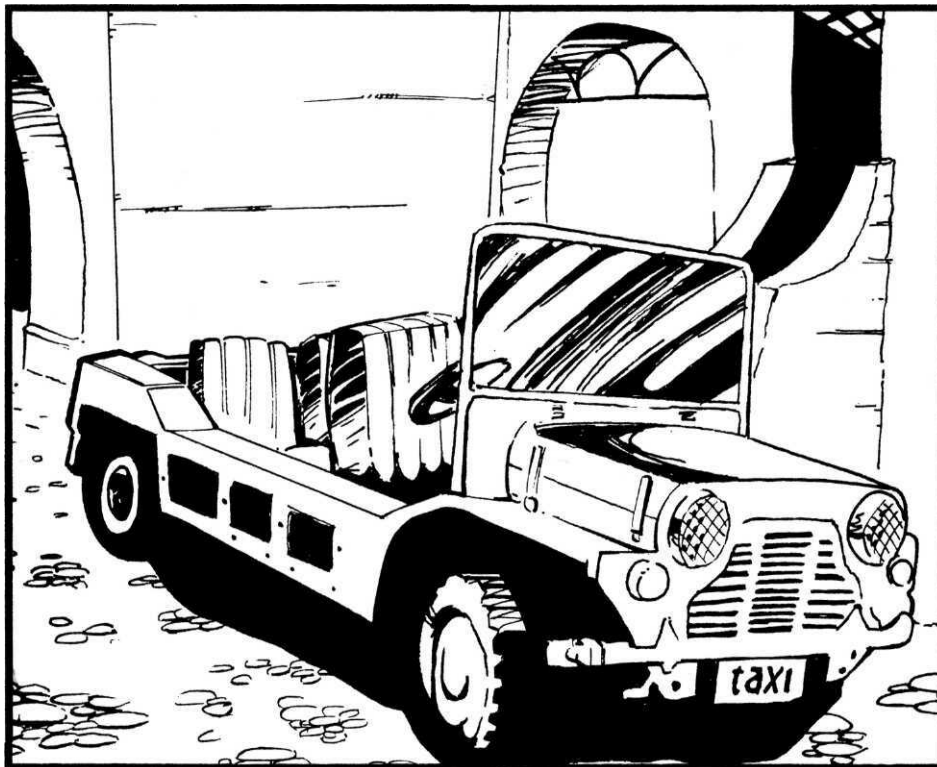
### Speedboats

Like helicopters, speedboats' controls which can be overridden by The Village. They have the same passenger and cargo capacity as a taxi. Their stats are:

Speedboat chassis, medium power plant, unarmored body (PD1/DR2), acceleration 10 mph/second, top speed 60 mph (Move 30).

### Bicycles

Several varieties of bicycle are available in The Village. The most common is a small-wheeled affair with one of the familiar striped canopies. Small motor-assisted bikes are used to travel throughout the underground passages. Their top speed is under 10 mph (Move 5). The pennyfarthing bike itself, while very common as a symbol, is rarely seen otherwise. There is one standing in the Centrum which no one ever rides; the postman uses one when he delivers No. 6's invitation to the Carnival, in "Dance of the Dead," and a man in "Arrival" is pushing one.



### Warder

"I have my *duty*."  
"To whom?"  
"To everyone — it's the rule — of the people, by the people, for the people."  
"Takes on a new meaning."  
"You're a *wicked* man."  
"Wicked?"  
"You have no values!"  
"*Different* values."  
"You won't be helped."  
"Destroyed."  
"You want to spoil things."  
"I won't be a goldfish in a bowl."  
"I must go — I'll be seeing you later?"  
"Can you avoid it?"  
"I hope it's all right — the radio."  
"What would you do?"  
"Report on it — ask for instructions."  
"No. 1?"  
"Yes."  
"Who?"  
"No!"  
"Tell me."  
"That's all I know — all there is to know."  
"In the place where you work?"  
"Don't keep asking me questions!"

— *Observer and No. 6*  
"Dance of the Dead"

### Observer

"I still don't believe it. My Observers would have told me. They do see and hear everything, you know."

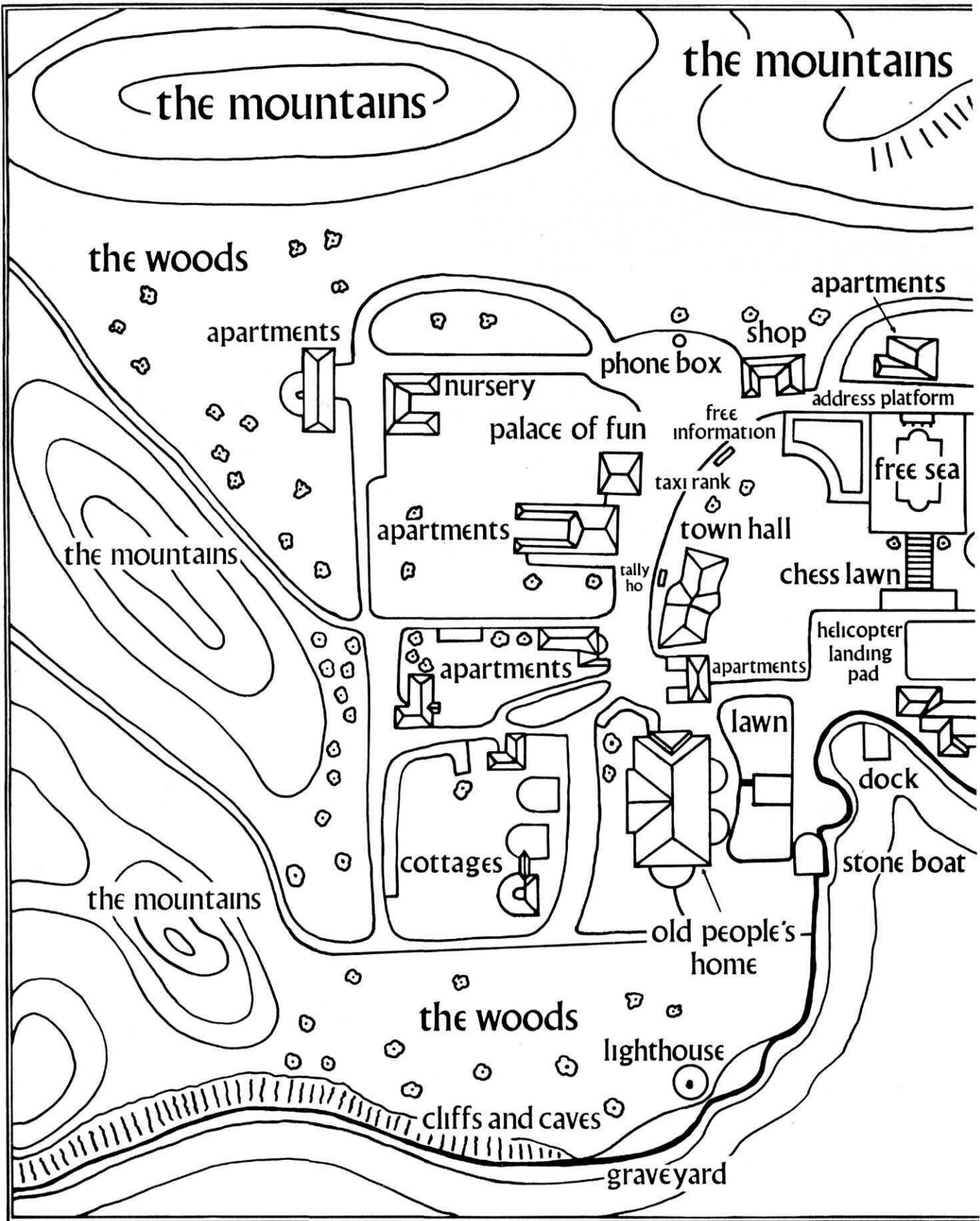
— *Interim No. 2 to No. 6*  
"It's Your Funeral"

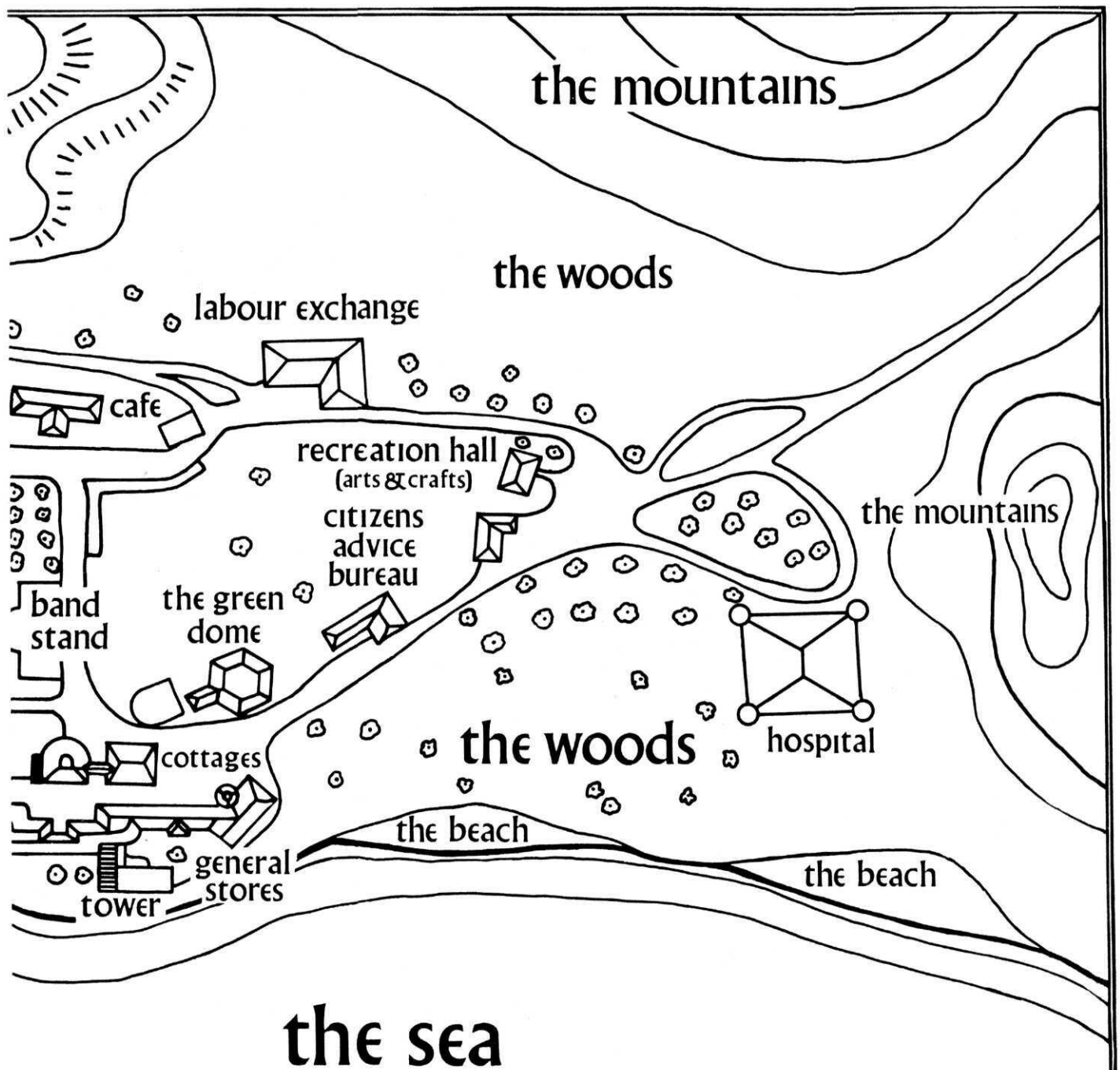
"She's one of our best Observers."  
"We have one each?"  
"Only our most fractious children."

— *No. 2 and No. 6*  
"Dance of the Dead"

"Shall I watch No. 34 instead?"  
"No, he's dead."  
"Dead? When?"  
"It's none of our business."  
"I got to know him quite well."  
"He didn't know you, did he?"

— *Observer and Supervisor*  
"Dance of the Dead"





# your village



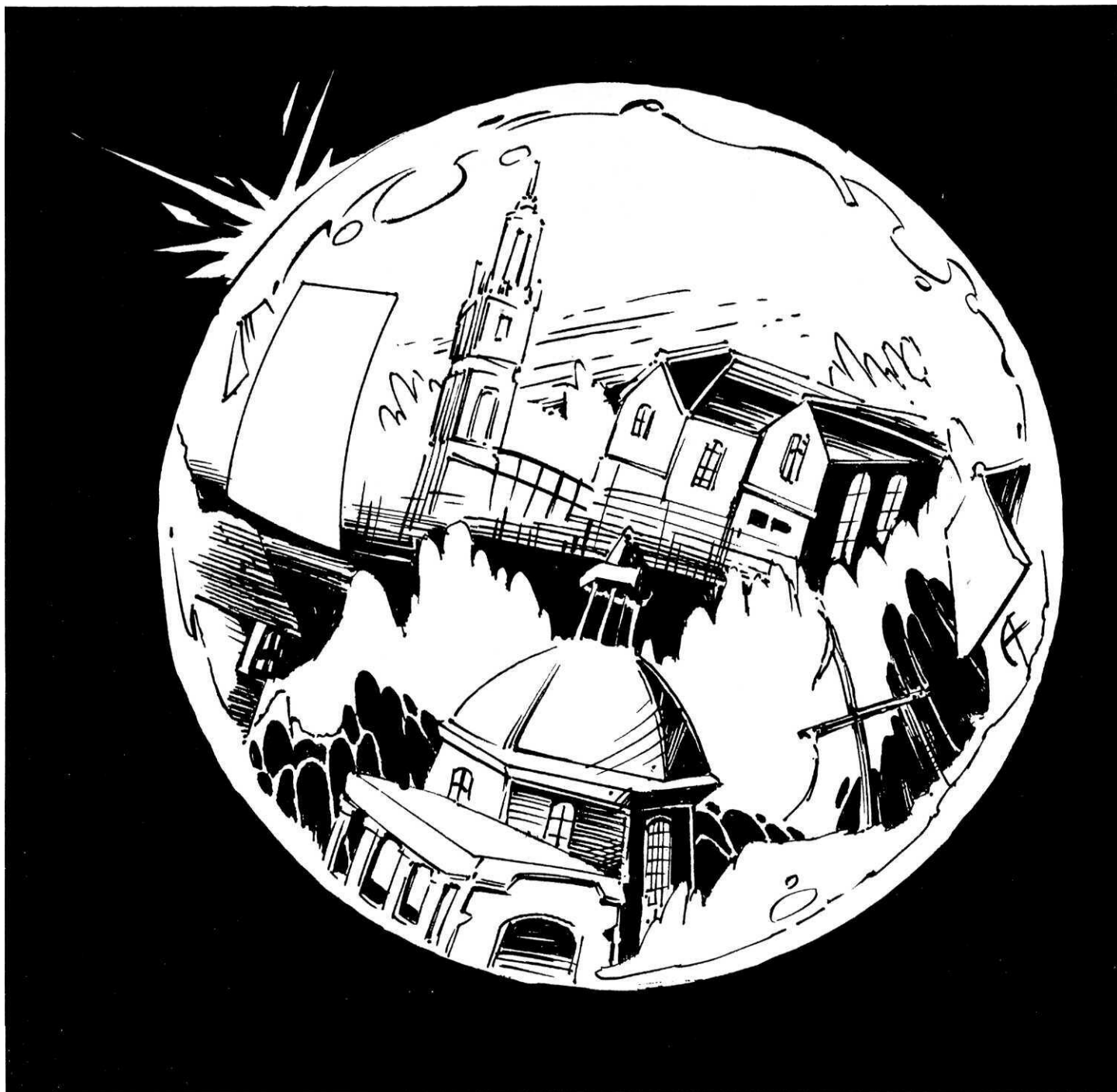
# ALTERNATE REALITIES

# 3

As "Living in Harmony" demonstrated, The Village isn't necessary for a *Prisoner* campaign. In some contexts (a medieval fantasy world, for example, or the Wild West), The Village as described in Chapter 2 would be inappropriate. What are the alternatives?

First, consider where The Village is appropriate. It works for any modern-day campaign, and can be tailored to

fit any specific background. It's easy enough, for example, to convert all of the English elements of The Village to Japanese — the Villagers themselves, the language used, the foods served ("non-alcoholic sake, 20 units"), and so on, if that happens to fit the campaign. It also works in a near-future setting, even post-holocaust. The science is still fantastic, and it's always possible that a pocket of clean air



and healthy land survived, no matter how thoroughly the rest of the world was wrecked (perhaps there's a dome over The Village). As to *reasons*: any modern or post-modern campaign is likely to have intrigues and secrets, and that's what The Village is all about.

Then in what contexts is The Village *not* appropriate? Time travel can place The Village anywhen; multiversal connections can place The Village anywhere. But once out of a context similar to today's real world, its chilling *not-quite*-rightness begins to be lost in its overall strangeness — *any* 20th-century town would look odd to Mayans or Huns. Who cares that you can only place local calls, if you've never seen a telephone before? Before Alexander Graham Bell, local calls aren't a restriction, they're a liberty!

In these and other such contexts, The Village as seen in the original *The Prisoner* series is out of place. For a successful translation into other times and places, those elements which tie it to 20th-century Britain must be stripped away, leaving the essentials which define The Village no matter where or when.

## General Principles

So what makes The Village what it is? The name itself isn't all that important. In fact, for purposes of springing a surprise on a party, the GM probably *should* find another name for his revised Village.

Most obviously, there must be a reason for The Village. This reason doesn't have to be very specific — it can be as general as that of the original Village. The masters built The Village so that they would have total control over a collection of people. For the most part, this control is so that they can learn what these people know, and prevent these people from telling anyone outside The Village what they know. But their control also provides them with experimental freedom; they aren't answerable to anyone, especially bleeding-heart liberals who would stifle the advance of science because of a few accidental deaths or unfortunate side effects.

### A Closed Environment

A second prerequisite, related to the first, is that The Village be a closed society. Its residents need no passports; they won't be going anywhere. There is no long-distance telephone service or out-of-town mail delivery. There is no communication of any sort with the outside world, though the masters themselves, those few who live in The Village, have access to the world at large, as do their most trusted warders.

Thus, prisoners are unable to tell anyone else what they know or appeal to anyone else for help; they are helpless, wholly dominated by the masters, and they know it. Additionally, a closed environment is one of the most important requirements of scientific experimentation, so that results aren't subject to outside influences. The Village provides that environment.

### "Us" versus "Them"

A third aspect of The Village, useful to most of its potential functions, is that prisoners cannot distinguish between "us" and "them." They know that they have been imprisoned and that their every move can be monitored, but they don't know which of their fellow Villagers are prisoners and which are warders. They can't plan a revolt, because they don't know who they'd be revolting against. No. 2 and the uniformed guards are obvious targets, but by the time the rebels have recruited a force large enough to challenge the guards, they've betrayed themselves to incognito warders. Their plot is doomed to failure.

### *Mad Scientists*

"We are in this prison for life, all of us, but I have met no one here who has committed a crime."

— *Watchmaker to No. 6*  
"It's Your Funeral."

In any reality, a chilling possibility is that The Village's experimental function is really its most important one. It is being run by scientists — perhaps genuinely mad scientists — who use it as a test-site for various inhuman and inhumane experiments on living subjects. Many of these techniques aim at mind control; hence the masters' preoccupation with learning the secrets of No. 6 and the other prisoners. It's not that the secrets themselves are so important ... but breaking the prisoners' will, to learn their most private thoughts, is very important!

This type of campaign would place a heavy emphasis on weird science and on the intrigues among the various experimenters. The scientists might have much less outer-world influence than would the masters of a politically-motivated Village, making it easier to "stay escaped" once a prisoner was out. On the other hand, the victim of a mind-control experiment might *think* he had escaped, when he had never left The Village!

"You don't believe it?"  
"It's improbable."  
"But not impossible."  
"Nothing's impossible in this place."

— *No. 12 and No. 6*  
"The General"

## Dream Worlds

If the limits of time, space and reality seem restrictive, consider the worlds of dreams. Put the PCs to sleep, then send them off to Never Never Land. While they dream away, the GM can lead his party through any realm he wishes to take them, changing them for better or worse along the way. He can send them into situations they would never have been foolish enough to tackle while awake. He can add, increase or delete advantages, disadvantages, and skills, he can kill PCs arbitrarily, he can break all the rules of civilized play because nothing is really happening — they're just asleep.

In a dreamland Village, the most loyal player character can turn into a snivelling warder. Departed friends can return to torture their companions. Villains who were conquered three adventures back can show up, perhaps as warders, perhaps as fellow prisoners. In "A, B and C," No. 2 sends No. 6 into dreamland, putting him in contact with three figures from his past, to find out how he would have dealt with the situation.

As always, don't overdo things. Some players will enjoy this type of adventure, but many others will hate their almost total lack of control. If the players aren't enjoying themselves, it's time to move the campaign in other directions.



## Mind Control, Horror Style

"In Haiti, we'd say he's stolen his soul."

— *Control Room Observer*  
"The Schizoid Man"

## Fantasy

The Village fits easily into worlds of fantasy and magic. The weird science of the series can be translated directly into magic; anything that can be done with science fantasy can be done with magical fantasy. It is reasonable that a powerful mage, or anyone with access to enough magical power, could establish and operate a fantastic Village.

There are many reasons why a magical Village might be established. A mage who devises spells but refuses to share them might find himself here, as well as any adventurer who knows formulae and words of power but who will not or cannot divulge them. Hostages could be held in The Village, perhaps masked or disguised so that no one could magically detect their presence or, seeing them, their identity. And experimental magicians are always in need of trial subjects; what better place to find them than among a population that can't refuse or complain?

One problem would be the magic of imprisoned Villagers, but that could be addressed with damping fields and negative magic. Villagers could also be hypnotized to forget their most powerful magics. Perhaps each Villager wears an amulet which he can't remove and which cancels any spell he tries to cast. Or perhaps only the prisoners wear them; warders could wear fake amulets which have no restraining power.

A second problem would be the intensity of the magic required to keep everything under control. A community of the sort described here might generate a magical aura visible for miles and glaringly obvious to magical senses. Perhaps the entire Village has a dome which masks this effect, or perhaps, like a black hole, its magic is so strong that it falls in upon itself, and can only be detected by an absence of expected mana. And then, it could be that mana and magic radiate no aura in this particular world.

If The Village were detectable, interference from curious, powerful mages could be another problem. It would have to be kept far away from the nosy (perhaps in another dimension?), or the "No Trespassing" signs would have to be very foreboding, or its function would have to be disguised. On the other hand, if all powerful wizards were masters — if The Village were run by a coven of all of the greatest mages — the threat of interference would be much less of a problem.

Of course, rather than taking The Village to a fantasy world, what about bringing fantasy into The Village's world? Consider the possibilities of The Village built in a high-mana area of the modern world, run by those who know the ancient ways. How would a modern secret agent react to "Body of Stone" or "Zombie"? How could The Village be detected if it were magically camouflaged? Magical masters could do everything, and more, that the masters in the television series can do. And they might disguise it as super-science to make it even harder to deal with ... "a sufficiently advanced magic is indistinguishable from technology."

## Horror

The Village is very much a world of horror. Mating it with other such worlds is an obvious, but very effective possibility. Alien masters, in fact, are just a step away from a Village run by Creatures Man Was Not Meant To Know. Awesome creatures from another dimension might be quietly investigating mankind, preparing to taking over the world. They could hide one of their number inside a box and call it a computer, the super computer known as No. 1.

An evil genius trying to conquer the world would establish a Village for much the same reason as a multinational corporation would (p. 15).

The Cabal, the loose-knit organization of occult beings described in the *GURPS Horror* worldbook, is another natural choice to fill the role of the masters. Their supernatural abilities give them an advantage over any normals they choose to imprison. They are careful as they move about in the world, but not always careful enough; anyone who uncovers the real identity of a member of the Cabal is likely to find himself in The Village, perhaps slated for next Wednesday's menu. And individuals who don't know their own supernatural abilities might be brought to The Village, willingly or otherwise, to discover what they can do.

The flip side of a Cabal-run Village is possible, as well. Consider a Village run by scientists and/or enforcement agencies, whose prisoners are all vampires, weres, and other occult characters. There is certainly strong motivation for keeping all such creatures locked away, where they can't harm *real* people and where their diabolical secrets can be discovered. Scientists might even have been able to simulate the light of a full moon, so that moon-based experiments can take place more often than once a month. The surrounding mountains are probably planted with garlic and wolfsbane, to prevent escape. All warders would simulate occult capabilities (wearing artificial fangs, taking injections which make their eyes glow, etc.), so that the truly occult prisoners couldn't tell them from their fellow prisoners.

Many player character types are possible in this type of campaign. PCs could be warders, recruited by authorities to help hold back the evil wave of the occult. But once in The Village, do they side with the human masters or the occult prisoners? At one end of the scale, the masters are truly humanitarian and the prisoners are an evil threat to all mankind. At the other end of the scale, the masters are ruthlessly subduing an oppressed minority who can't help being what they are. Where on this scale would a campaign's newly created Village lie? It doesn't have to be at one extreme or the other. Perhaps some warders are kindly ("Oooh, look at the cute little wolf-baby!"), some thoughtless ("After all, they're not really *people*."), and some hateful ("A werewolf killed my sister, and they're all going to pay for it!"). The prisoners themselves can cover the same range, some burning with evil, some filled with remorse at their



### *Outside Campaigns — Visiting The Village*

Perhaps a GM would prefer to bring an ongoing campaign into The Village for an adventure or two, and then continue with the original campaign. For example, a Fantasy campaign might discover a magical Village, get swept in as prisoners, and escape, swearing never to come near it again. Or outer space aliens might come down, erect a Village, capture the PCs, play with their minds to see what makes them tick, then fly away again, leaving the characters to wonder if they're gone for good, or gone just to get reinforcements.

Espionage is the most obvious campaign genre for visiting The Village, since secret agents routinely deal in information and information is so important to The Village; in fact, an espionage campaign can turn into a *Prisoner* campaign, either gradually or all at once. If the players tire of life in The Village, they can escape or be released, or they can move into a different line of work (and campaign) altogether.

However, because non-espionage campaigns are less related to The Village, dropping in on The Village from such campaigns can be more of a shock to players who aren't expecting it.

Any characters who spend time in The Village (wherever or whatever it is) and then get out will always be left to wonder whether they're scheduled for a return trip. And once they're out, they don't know who knew about The Village and who didn't — they still don't know whom they can trust. Even if they destroyed The Village completely, the potential exists for another to arise from its ashes or for a second to exist. How to play on this fear is dealt with in *Escape* (p. 64).

(Colonel) "You must forgive us, but you see, we have a problem. Tell him our problem, Thorpe."

(Thorpe) "You resign. You disappear. You return. You spin a yarn that Hans Christian Anderson would reject for a fairy tale."

(Colonel) "And we must be sure. You see, people defect. An unhappy thought, but a fact of life. They defect from one side to the other."

(No. 6) "I also have a problem. I'm not sure which side runs this Village."

— *The Colonel, Thorpe and No. 6*  
"Many Happy Returns"

## The Psi Village

Suppose that psionic powers (see p. 73, and Chapter 20 of the *GURPS Basic Set*) exist. Suppose that their existence is a secret; even the authorities can barely admit to *themselves* that such powers can be real. Suppose that a decision is made to study some of these "psi" users, by any means possible.

Enter The Village.

A Village of imprisoned psi-users would be a challenge even for the warders' super-science. It might be necessary to keep many of the prisoners sedated or worse, to keep them from teleporting away or forcing the warders to do their bidding. But it would explain, if not justify, the warders' utter ruthlessness and the incredible precautions taken to prevent escape. Stephen King's *Firestarter* would be required reading for the GM considering such a Village.

## Turning the Tables

One *very* different reality: Suppose that the masters are *not* all-powerful. Indeed, they know less about The Village than any of their prisoners! Somehow their plans have backfired, and now they are unknowingly running a vacation resort for the people they think are prisoners. This might explain the constant turnover in No. 2s, though. For guidance on running this particular "change of pace," the GM must look to other sources ...

"No one has *ever* escaped from Stalag 13!"

— Colonel Klink to Major Hochstetter  
"Hogan's Heroes"

**your  
community  
needs  
YOU!**

changed nature, and some just plain folks who can turn into hairy beasts. Whom do PC warders help, and whom do they oppose? The answers would change from adventure to adventure. All the while, of course, they would have to be wary of an inadvertent nip or experimental virus which could change them into occult creatures themselves.

Note that, in a campaign sympathetic to occult prisoners, PCs can be occult beings themselves! They're still fighting against repressive warders, resisting attempts to conquer their minds. See *GURPS Horror* or *GURPS Fantasy* for suggestions and character statistics suitable for this type of being.

## Other Times

Moving away from the Cabal, who might be the masters in other times of horror? Secret societies come to mind for Victorian England — the Masons, the Illuminati, perhaps a devil-worshipping cult. (These would be the people responsible for Jack the Ripper and other mysteries of the Victorian era.)

For the Roaring Twenties, the pulps are a good source of evil megalomania. Dr. Fu Manchu would feel right at home running The Village. So would a Creature Man Was Not Meant To Know, as mentioned above. There are several kindred spirits from the early 20th century, all of whom have the drive and know-how to make a Village work, the more so if two or more teamed up together.

## Space

In a space Village, there's no one to hear you scream. A Village among the stars is very similar to the one on Earth, with one more advantage for the masters. It's much harder to escape from a contained environment when there's nothing but vacuum for several light years in every direction. SF literature includes many examples of prison colonies just that isolated; it wouldn't be hard to convert any of them for use in a *Prisoner* campaign, or to drop The Village into any spacefaring campaign.

For those interested in the latter option, *GURPS Space* covers a wide variety of future social organizations. Space Villages might be possible in any future society, but they fit naturally into the mindset of most Corporate States (interstellar "multinationals" — see p. 15) and Empires. Any society with a high Control Rating — that is, any highly repressive society — might find a use for a Village.

There are many possibilities for a space Village:

It could be a relatively small facility, in orbit (as depicted on p. 48). For even more security, it might orbit an otherwise worthless star, or even float in the remote, lightless reaches of deep space.

It could be the only inhabited area on an otherwise empty planet ... a sort of "Devil's Island" in space. If the planet is hostile, prisoners must stay within the dome or die. If it is pleasant, those who escape will be able to build a frontier society in hiding. But they'll always have to wonder if they *really* escaped, or if there are warders among them, still watching!

Or it could be a *whole planet*. A large enough interstellar empire could easily produce a world's worth of dissidents, troublemakers and other Village fodder. What would a planetary dictatorship be like, if its object was not power for its own sake, but *surveillance* for its own sake?

Whatever the nature of a future Village, it could enter a campaign, not because the PCs "belong" there, but because they stumbled over it while exploring. Of course, finding such a Village would mean, at best, a life sentence as a resident. But in an interstellar campaign, escapees from a Village might just be able to run far enough and keep quiet enough to truly get away. Maybe . . .

## Western

The short answer to establishing a Wild West Village is to watch "Living in Harmony." Westerns are the modern archetype for the Good Guy/Bad Guy (White Hat/Black Hat) tale, including the espionage genre (*Secret Agent/Danger Man*, *James Bond* and *The Saint* all being prime examples of their type). *The Prisoner* turns this genre on its side, questioning who wears the white hats and who can really be trusted. It can do the same for Westerns.

When designing a Western *Prisoner* campaign, establish the classic roles (the aging but still accurate sheriff, the town drunk who is not yet beyond redemption, the dance hall girl with a heart of gold, the corrupt banker, and so forth), and then apply a twist. Who can be trusted? Who are really warders? Who fills the role of No. 2? How will the town (or ranch, or mining camp) be kept sealed off? Who are the masters and what do they want?

## Medieval

Reasons have always existed for keeping certain people locked away, but the Middle Ages usually locked them away in a dungeon; methods have always existed for learning their secrets, but earlier days usually preferred the relatively crude techniques of the torture chamber. The concept of a Village specifically designed to isolate people and extract their secrets is a giant step forward in the finding and keeping of information.

Which isn't to say that The Village couldn't have existed in earlier times. Just take that innovative step earlier than 1967 — say 1000 B.C., in China, where an emperor has constructed a hidden village in which exiled enemies of the state, people of political consequence, and so on, are kept in luxury, surrounded by informers, and prevented from leaving. Or A.D. 1200, in Europe. Or 1400, in Shogunate Japan. Note that the farther back in history that the Village is established, the easier it is to hide it from prying eyes and create a closed environment. Likewise, the further back in history one goes, the easier it will be to recruit warders who don't mind staying in one place for the rest of their lives! A medieval serf had no more freedom of movement than a Villager, and much less day-to-day security.

There are still secrets to be hidden and learned; in fact, a wider range of character types can end up as prisoners, because life, particularly the business of secrets, is less specialized in medieval times. There are no Middle Ages skyscrapers specifically devoted to the finding and keeping of secrets, accessible only with a security clearance; a king's secrets are kept in the royal castle, along with all the other royal possessions. Where Computer Operations skills are necessary to read a high-tech file, all it takes is Literacy in earlier times. Of course, Literacy is as rare in some eras as Computer Operation is in ours!

Weird sciences don't have to be all that weird — just a bit ahead of their time. Imagine the effectiveness of electronic bugs, behavior-modifying drugs, and gunpowder in controlling a population which has never seen them before.

### Welcome to Harmony

"Welcome to Harmony, stranger."  
"Harmony? Never heard of it."  
"Not many people have, senor. It's sort of . . . exclusive."  
"So am I. Where is this town?"  
"You'll find out, senor. It's not wise to ask too many questions here."

— *Mexican Sam and No. 6*  
"Living in Harmony"

"I don't know you."  
"I know you. I know all about you. That's why you're here."  
"Where?"  
"Here."

"I'm not for hire."  
"You turned in your badge?"  
"And my gun."  
"What were your reasons?"  
"My reasons."  
"You've already taken a job? Who with?"

— *No. 6 and the Judge*  
"Living in Harmony"

"The Kid's real fond of Cathy. But he does tend to get ... overaffectionate."  
"If anything happens, it'll be paid for."  
"Nothing could happen if you were sheriff."  
"... Let her go." (takes badge)  
"Let her out, Kid . . . She's safe now; safe for as long as you work for me."

— *The Judge and No. 6*  
"Living in Harmony"



# CAMPAIGNS

# 4

Perhaps the greatest difference between The Village and most other roleplaying worlds is that here, the PCs aren't high men on the totem pole. They're underdogs, and they will remain underdogs. Players used to running the most powerful characters in their world will find that the

unseen masters of The Village have powers which reduce their own abilities to insignificance. Players used to overwhelming success in their every roleplaying venture will find that they don't always win here, and those victories they do achieve will often be marginal.



In fact, The Village isn't a suitable world for some roleplayers, because they can't handle the lack of control they will often encounter. They game to win, and in roleplaying, they're used to winning constantly. Yes, the Bad Guy NPCs can put up a good fight, but by the end of each adventure, the PCs must have thoroughly thrashed them. Such automatic victories become meaningless.

In The Village, victories are anything but frequent, anything but automatic, and anything but meaningless. When they come, they will be savored, but players must realize that they will not always come.

So they must be able to handle disappointment and defeat. In fact, the GM has the means in The Village to crush them every time. Soon, they'll realize that he can. And therein lies the GM's greatest challenge in a *Prisoner* campaign. He must deal fairly with the players. They must win sometimes, but in winning they must feel they've earned the victory, not had it handed to them on a silver platter. If, arbitrarily, the GM decides they'll win this time but not the next, and it doesn't matter what they do in either case, then he's not playing with them, he's using them to play his own game of solitaire, and they'll realize that, too. When the GM gives in to this ultimate power trip, the campaign is over.

## PCs and NPCs

The thing that saved No. 6, from first to last, is that he was important; he wasn't expendable. The masters wanted his active cooperation; they wanted to recruit him. The information was important but secondary. Any No. 2 could have drained No. 6's mind, leaving an empty husk, if allowed to do so.

No. 6 has much in common with player characters. They, too, are important, not to be expended arbitrarily. Even more so than in most campaigns, the GM has the power of life and death. Random and senseless happenings are the rule, not the exception, here, so he might consider himself justified in arbitrarily eliminating a PC now and then, just to maintain the flavor of the campaign. Don't do it. Resist the temptation. That's what NPCs are for.

Threaten the PCs with violence, both mental and physical, but use NPCs, not PCs, to show that No. 2 can make good on his threats. Let the PCs realize that there are warders who are itching to take them apart, and that only No. 2 stands in the way of a swift and final trip into exploratory surgery. In fact, the GM can use that realization to make them reconsider a proposed attack on No. 2. Do they really want to destroy this No. 2, when the next might not maintain quite so tight a rein on his doctors and scientists?

## Playing Fair

A GM in a *Prisoner* campaign is all-powerful, which is certainly fun for him. He can pull any trick he wants out of his little black box of science, he can watch anything the prisoners do through his ever-present monitors, he can make anyone do anything he wants through the wonders of hypnotic suggestion. Sounds great, yes? But what about the players? Is it fun for them?

It has to be, or they will rise up in revolt.

How can players ever win fairly, if the GM holds all the cards? Roleplaying is a game; approach it as a game, and play by the rules. What are the rules? In most game worlds, the majority of the rules are set by a published rulebook, and by worldbooks like this one. In The Village, though, the rules are constantly changing; a great deal of the challenge for the players arise from the fact that they're never sure what the rules are from adventure to adventure. Therefore, this book can't prescribe what they are each time — *the GM* must decide them.

In "Arrival," No. 6 thinks he has escaped in a helicopter, until the stick is remotely overridden from within the Control Room. But in "Do Not Forsake

## Beginning the Campaign

It's possible to begin a *Prisoner* campaign by simply announcing it and having everyone sit around the table with this worldbook to generate new characters. That's not the most interesting way.

If the GM can begin the campaign without the players knowing what they're getting into, he'll be able to capture the amazement and shock that greet any new prisoner in The Village. Perhaps they can each be told to prepare a secret agent, or be given a list of character types from Chapter 1 and have them design from that list. (Don't photocopy the list directly from this book, because it would be obvious where it came from.) Alternatively, slide into a *Prisoner* campaign from another campaign, with the players none the wiser until after they wake up in their home away from home. "Arrival," the beginning adventure in Chapter 6, is designed to accommodate this "surprise" approach.

## Valuable Prisoners

"He's no ordinary man. This has got to be handled very differently."

"That could be dangerous."

"You know how important this is."

— *No. 2 and Supervisor*

"Arrival"

"I would have made him talk — every man has his breaking point."

"I don't want him broken. He must be won over. It may seem a long process to your practical mind, but this man has a future with us. There are other ways."

— *Doctor and No. 2*

"Dance of the Dead"

"How is he?"

"Still rebellious, but it will pass."

"Without treatment?"

"We don't want to spoil him."

"Unless we must."

— *Doctor and No. 2, about No. 6*

"Dance of the Dead"

"Incidentally, how's progress with Dutton?"

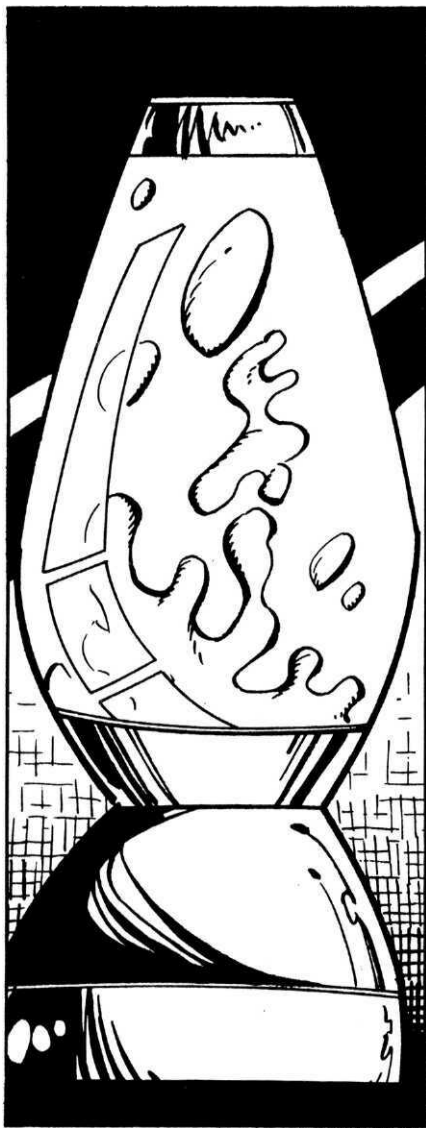
"Well, he's given me quite a lot of information, but he's reluctant to go any further. I'm afraid I'll have to be more extreme. Of course, I'll win in the end. I always do."

"Rather a small fish, you know. Still, it'll give you an opportunity to experiment. After all, he is expendable."

— *No. 2 and Doctor*

"Dance of the Dead"





### **The Adversary**

In a *Prisoner* campaign, there is often no need for an Adversary. There is usually less physical combat than in most other campaigns. And it would be awkward to have someone besides the GM run No. 2 and the other warders — No. 2 must be aware of nearly everything the GM knows.

On the other hand, the GM will probably have at least one player helping him organize opposition to the party, because a significant feature of most adventures is the plant, someone in the party's trust who is working for No. 2 and the masters. For more on plants, see *Distrust and Paranoia*, p. 62.

It would be perfectly appropriate to have a long-term "sleeper" in the party as well. If the GM can arrange in advance with a player who would enjoy it, one of the original PCs can be a high-level warder *all along*. This will be totally in keeping with the spirit of *The Prisoner*, and will be a lesson to those players who expect all deceptions and betrayals to take place within the confines of a single play session.

Me," Professor Seltzman escapes in a similar helicopter, perhaps the same one. Was someone in the Control Room a bit slow, or was that helicopter not gimmicked? What works one time doesn't always work the next. In the televised episode, it is simply that the scriptwriters want Seltzman to escape in one episode, but don't want No. 6 to escape in the other. The GM can be just as arbitrary, deciding each time someone climbs into the helicopter whether he will escape or not. But that isn't fair. He's making up the rules as he goes along.

To be fair, set the rules before each adventure. Decide which Village systems will be in operation this time, and which won't. Choose the loopholes, then drop clues so that the PCs might find them. If electronic mind transfer is the game of the day, decide whether a well-timed short circuit will upset the process. Of course, the GM can't consider each possibility that the players might explore, but he should set some parameters that will help him make quick decisions.

## **Planning Adventures**

### **Initial Motivation**

The *Adventure Design Flowchart* (below) will help the GM get started in making these decisions for an adventure. To begin with, who will initiate the action? It might be No. 2, some other warder (like the doctor at the beginning of "Dance of the Dead"), one or more of the PCs, or an NPC prisoner.

And what motivates the initiator this time? There are six broad categories listed, three for warders and three for prisoners. This is not the definitive, no-exceptions and no-additions list. A couple of these categories aren't well illustrated in the series. Other categories are possible; one that isn't listed is the motivation of No. 50 (the watchmaker's daughter), in "It's Your Funeral" — she wants to protect the Villagers from punishment. Some motivations will bridge two or more categories. For example, every time No. 6 tries to escape, his ultimate aim is to come back and destroy No. 2 and The Village.

For warders, the broad categories on the flowchart are: "Make the Prisoner Conform" (as in "Dance of the Dead"), "Learn the Prisoner's Secret" (multiple examples), and "Teach the Prisoner he is Powerless" (as in "Many Happy Returns").

For prisoners, the broad categories are: "Escape" (multiple examples), "Destroy No. 2" ("Hammer Into Anvil"), and "Destroy Another Warder" (destruction of the computer in "The General" being the best example).

These are the simpler motivations, but things can get much more complex — and the GM will want them to occasionally, to keep his players interested. Every motivation on the chart optionally leads to "Lead Someone On." As an example, in "The Chimes of Big Ben," No. 2 attempts to learn No. 6's secret. He does so by leading No. 6 into an escape attempt. On the flowchart, this is charted by:

*Who initiates the action?*

- ▶ No. 2
- ▶ to learn the prisoner's secret
- ▶ by leading him on
- ▶ so that No. 6 initiates an action
- ▶ an attempt to escape.

When designing motivations, be as specific as possible. It isn't sufficient simply to decide that No. 2 will try to learn No. 13's secret this adventure. The GM must decide exactly what method No. 2 will employ; perhaps he will alter her mind so that she hears and says the exact opposite of what is intended. He hopes to so confuse her that she will blurt out her secret by trying to withhold it. If the GM *doesn't* get this specific, players are likely to find themselves wandering aimlessly through yet another 'let's learn her secret' plot.

### Complications

Notice that motivations can loop through "Lead Someone On" more than once, so that characters can end up pulling the strings of characters who are themselves pulling the strings of yet other characters. In fact, they can end up pulling each other's strings! The interim No. 2 in "It's Your Funeral" began by manipulating No. 6, but by the end of the adventure, he was following No. 6's directions. It can also be interesting if an initiator *plans* to lead someone on to lead someone else on.

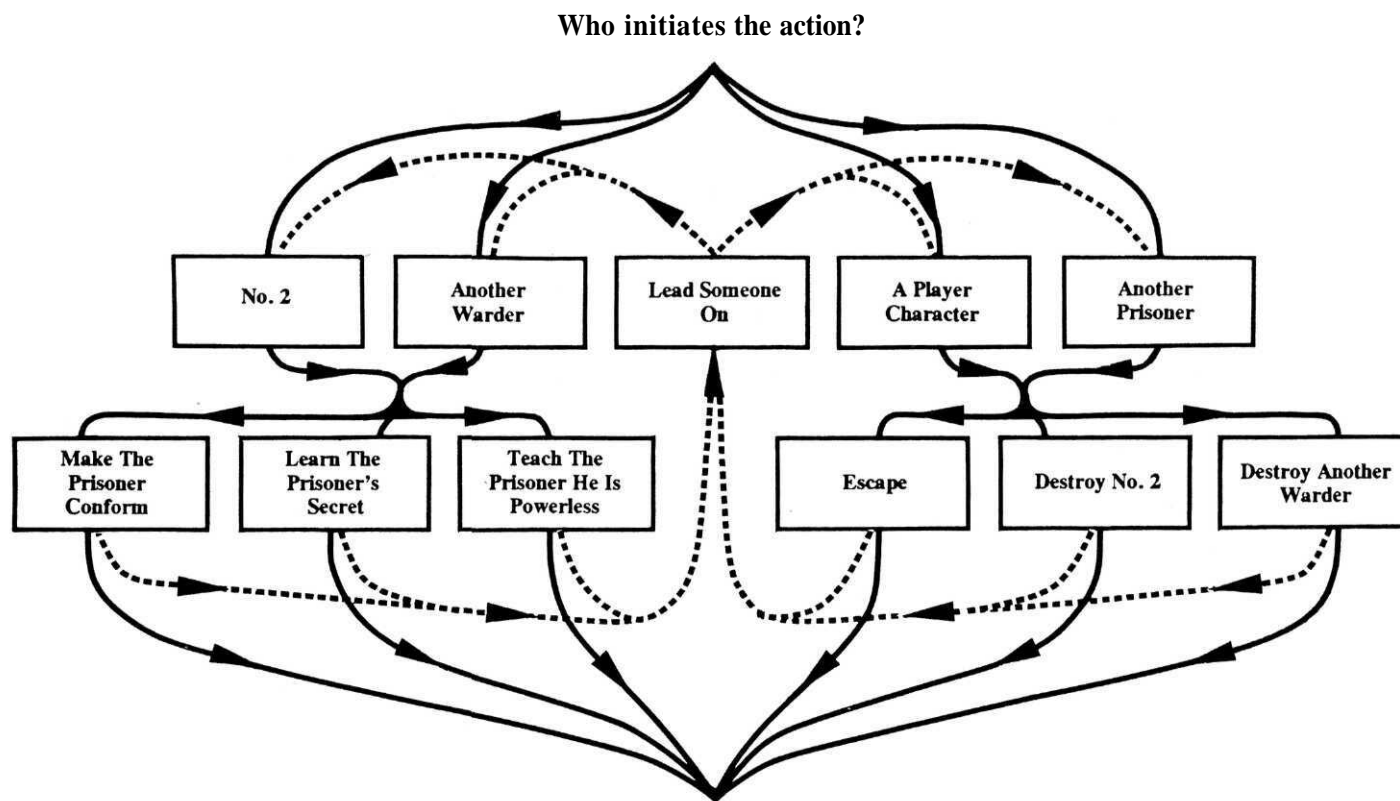
A second complication can occur when more than one person initiates an adventure. The best example of intertwined motivations occurs in "Dance of the Dead," where No. 2 is trying to break Dutton, while No. 6 attempts an escape using the dead body he finds on the beach.

Either of these complications can hopelessly tangle the plot unless the GM maintain a clear idea of what's happening, and why, and when, throughout the adventure. He must stay on top of things, but if he can do so, everyone, including himself, will enjoy it a great deal.

### Surrealism

Surrealism is produced through unnatural juxtapositions and combinations, and The Village is full of it. Council members in top hats and boating jerseys, and a stone boat with full sailing rig, are just two examples. To maintain the slightly off-key, not-quite-right qualities of The Village, try to add other surreal touches. Perhaps the clocks (not digital) run counter-clockwise rather than clockwise. Perhaps attending a band concert is free, but playing in the band costs five units a performance.

Have a list of five or six oddities ready for each adventure, and work them in as the occasions arise. If they aren't all mentioned in one adventure, the list for the next adventure is already begun.



**What weird science is available?**

**How can this plot be discovered?**

**What loopholes are available?**

**(What clues to loopholes are available?)**

**What is the probable climax?**

## Plot Developments

Having chosen the initial motivations for the adventure, the GM can fill out the plot by addressing the final questions on the flowchart:

*What weird science is available?* Weird science is usually available only to the warders, but sometimes it can fall into prisoner hands, like the Sublimator insert in "The General" and the drugs in "A Change of Mind" and "A, B and C."

*How can this plot be discovered?* What are the probable clues that will tip off the other side that something is up? For example, in "A, B and C," No. 6 finds puncture marks in his wrist. He doesn't yet know what is happening to him, but he knows *something* is.

*What loopholes are available?* And what are the probable clues to finding these loopholes? In "The Schizoid Man," No. 6 is able to shake off his electro-shock treatment with further shock. He is gradually clued in to how he was changed through vagrant memories shown in the form of flashbacks. (In a game, difficult IQ rolls might be allowed daily to focus a memory.)

And lastly, *what is the probable climax?* Escape? (Unlikely.) Release of a secret? (Just as unlikely.) The fall of a No. 2? Foiling of an attempted coup? Have a climax in mind, but be prepared for a change if the situation truly warrants it.

One good way to prepare an adventure, using these guidelines and answering these questions, is to follow the same techniques used by the television writers.

## Of Mice and Men

"Preventing is only postponing. You never understood us, No. 6 — we never fail!"

— *Outgoing No. 2 to No. 6*  
"It's Your Funeral"

"In here you only have so much time to give them what they want before they take it from you. His time had come; so will yours."

— *No. 9 to No. 6*  
"Arrival"

"He doesn't even bend a little."

"That's why he'll break. It only needs one small thing, if he will answer one simple question, the rest will follow: Why did he resign?"

— *No. 2 about No. 6*  
"The Chimes of Big Ben"

"Everything you think here is in the strictest confidence."

— *Labour Exchange Manager to No. 6*  
"Free for All"

## Getting Physical

While the emphasis in *The Prisoner* is on mindplay and psychological conflict, too much talk and too little action can become boring. The GM should make sure that each adventure contains physical, as well as mental, challenges. In every episode, No. 6 runs, fights, hides or sneaks; players should have the same opportunities.

Even in an alternate reality, a *Prisoner* campaign bears some relation to espionage adventures — opportunities should arise to pick a lock, break into a building, shadow a suspect, fast-talk a guard, brawl with warders, run from capture (especially Rover!), avoid or misdirect surveillance, and so on. Action isn't everything, but its absence can certainly make an adventure less adventurous.



# Producing a Television Series Campaign

Roleplaying is at its best when the GM and the players cooperate to create an interesting, exciting narrative. With a *Prisoner* campaign, the GM can shape this narrative into episodic adventures. Such a format helps him structure his plot, and lets his players visualize the action more clearly.

When a GM creates a *Prisoner* campaign, he wants to create this sort of narrative with players. But if sessions must end by a certain hour and are occasionally postponed, it is difficult to sustain a long, complex "novel"- or "film"-style plot. A format is needed that lends itself to short, self-contained, fast-paced adventures involving a standard collection of characters and settings. The obvious answer, for a *Prisoner* campaign especially, is a television series!

The parameters of a TV series provide a convenient framework for adventures. They give a preset length and basic outline for each episode (the TV show format), a collection of regular NPCs (supporting characters with recurring roles), an endless supply of foes (each new No. 2 and his henchmen) and a ready source of plot ideas (the series itself). The result is an easy-to-run campaign that both the GM and his players should enjoy.

On the other hand, mindlessly mimicking a series of televised plots can become dull, unoriginal and predictable. Create, using the series as a tool — don't duplicate.

## The TV Series Format

*The Prisoner* episodes break into three parts, but these parts are not the same length from episode to episode. Roughly speaking, in Act I, the plot is initiated and developed until the opposition becomes aware that something is up. In Act II, the opposition develops a response while the plot itself proceeds. In Act III, the climax occurs.

In this context, there are two basic types of *Prisoner* episodes, those in which No. 2 or another warder initiates a plot ("The Schizoid Man" being a prime example) and those in which the prisoners do so (the best example being "Hammer Into Anvil"). In several episodes, the two types are combined.

### Initiated by No. 2

This is the basic format of most *Prisoner* episodes, and will probably be the basic format of a campaign as well. No. 2 initiates a new scheme (Act I), No. 6 responds (Act II), the climax occurs (Act III).

In these cases, Act I will be the shortest of the three acts, since most of its action takes place behind the scenes, out of sight of the PCs. This is different from television episodes, because in television, you're a viewer, not a participant. Viewers can watch while No. 2 develops his plot, but players can't. In a campaign, most of Act I will take place as the GM plans the adventure; in some cases he'll talk to players privately beforehand, lining up temporary warders. Then, as the adventure begins, he works into play the clues, the visible evidences of No. 2's plot. In some cases, these clues will be obvious — in "Many Happy Returns," No. 6 wakes up to find The Village deserted. In others, they will be more subtle — in "A Change of Mind," seemingly random encounters develop into a Village-wide effort to convert No. 6. The climax of Act I will come as the players recognize the elements of a plot and begin working against it.

Act II centers on the PCs' investigations and countermeasures, as they put together the pieces of the puzzle that identify the nature of No. 2's plot. In "The General," Act II covers the alliance and plans of No. 6 and No. 12. In "A, B and C," it includes No. 6's investigation of No. 14 (the doctor), his confrontation with "B," and his discovery of the dream lab. By the climax of the second

## Cooperation

"I've nothing to say. Is that clear? Absolutely nothing."

"Now be reasonable, old boy. It's just a matter of time. Sooner or later you'll tell me. Sooner or later you'll want to. Let's make a deal. You cooperate, tell us what we want to know, and this can be a very nice place. You may even be given a position of authority."

"I will not make any deals with you. I've resigned. I will not be pushed, filed, stamped, indexed, briefed, debriefed or numbered! My life is my own."

"Is it?"

"Yes. You won't hold me."

"Won't we? Let me prove that we will."

— No. 6 and No. 2

"Arrival"

## Wheels within Wheels

"Don't go."

"I must."

"There's a reason."

"Reason?"

"No. 2 wants you to go ... or does she? Am I playing her game, or yours?"

— No. 6 and his Observer

"Dance of the Dead"

"What we do here has to be done. It's the law of survival. It's either them or us."

"Imprison people? Steal their minds? Destroy them?"

"Depends on whose side you're on, doesn't it?"

"I'm on our side."

"Then we have to find out where your sympathies lie."

"You know where they lie."

(reading file) "Subject shows great enthusiasm for his work. He is utterly devoted and loyal. Is this a man that suddenly walks out?"

"And I didn't walk out. I resigned!"

"People change, exactly. So do loyalties."

"Not mine."

"All very commendable. But let's be practical. I am interested in facts. Your only chance to get out of here is to give them to me. And if you don't give them, I'll take them. It's up to you. Think about it. Good day, No. 6."

"Number what?"

"6. For official purposes, everyone has a number. Yours is No. 6."

"I am not a number. I am a person."

"Six of one, half a dozen of another. Good day."

— No. 6 and No. 2

"Arrival"

## *Someone is Watching*

To X.0.4.  
Ref. your query via Bizet record.  
No. 2's instability confirmed.  
Detailed report follows.  
D.6.

— *Secret message from No. 6 to imaginary X.0.4.*

"Hammer Into Anvil"

"Well?"

"I'm sorry, sir, but there's nothing."

"Nothing, nothing at all?"

"No sir, they're just blank sheets of paper."

"It can't be! Why should he hide blank sheets of paper in the Stone Boat? ... Or are you hiding something?"

"What do you mean, sir?"

"I mean, was there a message here and you're not telling me?"

"Why should I do that, sir?"

"Perhaps you're in with him?"

"In with whom?"

"No. 6! No. 6! Oh, you don't know what I'm talking about. Get out!"

— *No. 2 and No. 263*

"Hammer Into Anvil"

"That's not like the old No. 2. Where is the strong man, the hammer? You have to be a hammer or an anvil, remember?"

"I know who you are!"

"I'm No. 6."

"No- D.6."

"D6?"

"Yes. Sent here by our masters to spy on me!"

(laughs) "Sorry, I'm not quite with you."

"Oh, yes. Well, yes, you can stop acting now, you know. I've been on to you from the beginning. I knew what you were doing!"

"Do tell."

"All those messages you sent. All those gentlemen you recruited. I know you were a plant. You didn't fool me!"

"Maybe you fooled yourself?"

"What does that mean?"

"Let us suppose for argument's sake that what you say is true, that I was planted here —"

"By X.0.4.!"

"X.0.4.?"

"Yes!"

"Oh, very well. By X.0.4., to check on Village security, to check on you."

"You were!"

*Continued on next page . . .*

act, the players should be fairly certain of what's up; the tension in this act comes from the need to stop No. 2 before he succeeds or strikes again.

Act III brings the PCs into the final confrontation with No. 2, climaxing in victory for one or the other. In "Many Happy Returns," No. 2 wins. In "It's Your Funeral," No. 6 (and the retiring No. 2) come out on top.

## *Initiated by Prisoners*

In this format, the players initiate the plot while No. 2 responds, reversing many of the roles of the previous format. There are not as many good examples of this format in the series, and there shouldn't be many in the campaign. The GM (and therefore No. 2) is responsible for designing adventures and initiating action, not the players. In fact, leaving a plot totally up to the players, when they've already tried to escape two or three times, can lead to an evening of "I don't know, what do *you* want to do?" unless the GM can give them very specific leads for a new escape plan.

Most plots which No. 6 seems to initiate are triggered by No. 2, instead: the escape attempt in "The Chimes of Big Ben" and even No. 6's fairy tale in "The Girl Who Was Death" both turn out to have been engineered by No. 2 to trick No. 6's secret from him. The GM can do the same. Acting as No. 2, pre-plan a plot for the players, feeding them tidbits and possibilities until they arrive at a scheme which they think they devised on their own. (In terms of the flowchart, "lead the players on.") Having done so, it is reasonable for No. 2 to be able to keep track of what they're doing, especially if he has been able to work a warder into their confidence.

Act I in this format will play somewhat longer, since it requires that players both arrive at a plot and begin to develop it — in television-speak, the action is happening in front of the cameras, not behind them.

Act II is the shorter in this case, because it concentrates on No. 2's response to the plot as the prisoners continue to develop it.

Act III is still the final confrontation, and it will climax with the same possible results, ranging from total victory to total defeat for the prisoners.

## *Mixed Formats*

Several of the episodes are not just plots by No. 6 or No. 2. In some (as mentioned above), schemes by No. 6 turn out to have been devised by No. 2. In others, both No. 2 and No. 6 develop plots — "Checkmate" involves both an escape attempt by No. 6 and an infatuation engineered by No. 2. Even with such mixed adventures, the general episodic format remains:

Act I — initiation and development; recognition and initial response

Act II — development of both plot and counterplot

Act III — final confrontation

## *Length*

Each adventure is a single episode of the series, and should be playable in a single session. An occasional adventure can run two or even three episodes, in a "To be continued ..." format. But even the episodes of a two- or three-part story should stand alone well enough that they can be enjoyed by those who missed one part or another.

Sessions with a campaign of this sort last about five hours. If there is less time available per session, it is possible to run a single episode over two or three sessions by ending each session at a "commercial break" between acts. This method demands that the next session be held soon, though. After all, TV episodes are structured to leave the audience — and the story — hanging during commercials.

## The Bible

Every TV series has a "bible," a book containing information about the characters and setting of that series. Descriptions of all the sets are found here, as are details on the likes, dislikes, and personal history of each recurring character. Writers refer to the bible as they write each episode. For a *Prisoner* campaign, the basic bible is this worldbook, modified as the GM desires. A campaign's bible should also include character sheets for PCs and NPCs, and notes about previous episodes.

## The Teleplay

With a customized bible and a solid visualization of The Village, a GM can put together an episode fairly quickly. Will this adventure be initiated by No. 2 or the prisoners? If by No. 2, will it be an overt plot to which the prisoners react, or the covert leading of prisoners into a plot of their "own"? If by the prisoners, will a non-player prisoner invite them in on a plot, or will the players devise it on their own? Will it be an escape attempt or an attempt to change some aspect of Village life (e.g., destroy No. 2)?

This is the time to be wildly imaginative. If evacuation of The Village, weird sciences and even fairy tales are all fair game, how can anything else be out of line?

Then fill in the hints and clues to be discovered (or revealed) during Act I. If No. 2 is initiating the action, the GM can be fairly definite about what these will be. If the players are taking the lead, he'll have to recognize and develop some of these clues during play.

Act II will depend more on the players' actions, but it should lead toward the climax in Act III. With this climax in mind, plan the direction and steps along the way intended for Acts II and III. (Be ready to modify this climax if the players prove more or less clever than intended.) Add brief notes on any subplots that will need resolution.

Finally, go back over the teleplay that has been created, fleshing out the individual scenes. Build No. 2 and his henchmen if this is their first appearance, write their dialogue, and tailor the details of some of the scenes to particular PCs.

This entire process shouldn't take more than one or two hours, once the GM has a good premise for the episode.

## Producing the Series

Once the series format has been established, the show can enter production — that is, the GM can start to run adventures. After he's run a few episodes, establishing the style and flavor of the series, he (the "producer-GM") can hand off his duties to other GMs. These GMs, taking the role of episode-writer-directors, follow the series format to create new episodes. Because of the stand-alone nature of each episode, and the continuity enforced by the bible, a *Prisoner* campaign can run for quite a while with several GMs rotating director's duties. Of course, the series' producer remains the ultimate authority on the campaign, but each director can add his own touch to the show.

## The Multi-GM Campaign

Whether or not a *Prisoner* campaign is run as a television series, it can benefit in at least three ways if more than one GM is helping to run the show. None of these advantages require that every player participate occasionally as GM, but the more who do so, the merrier. The most obvious advantage is that it

## Someone is Watching (Continued)

"What would have been your first duty as a loyal citizen? Not to interfere! But you *did* interfere. You have admitted it yourself. There is a name for that — sabotage!"

"No!"

"Who are you working for, No. 2?"

"For us! For us!"

"That is not the way it's going to sound to X.O.4.!"

"I swear to you!"

"You could be working for the enemy, or you could be a blunderer who's lost his head. Either way, you've failed! And they do not like failure here."

"You've . . . destroyed me."

"No. You've destroyed yourself. A character flaw. You are afraid of your masters. A weak link in the chain of command, waiting to be broken."

"Don't tell them! Don't report me!"

"I don't intend to. You are going to report yourself."

(Hands red telephone to No. 2.)

— No. 6 and No. 2

"Hammer Into Anvil"

"I don't trust No. 2, I don't trust you, and I don't trust your tame professor."

"Who do you trust, No. 6?"

"I trust me."

"Join the club."

— No. 6 and No. 12

"The General"

"We're intimidated without force. By my manner you assumed I was a guard-ian."

"That's true."

"By your manner, I knew you were a prisoner, subservient. The guardians pose as prisoners, but none of them would be intimidated by me."

"So you're a prisoner?"

"Yes. Only other prisoners would obey me."

"So you've found a way to identify us. Where does it get you?"

"It's a first step. No escape plan can succeed without knowing who you can rely on."

"What is the plan?"

"First things first. Let's find our reliable men."

— No. 6 and Rook

"Checkmate"

## Paranoia Notes

Once players are aware that some PCs (they don't know which) are probably working against them, the GM can start spreading and encouraging even more suspicion, casting doubt on everyone in turn. Again, two purposes are served by doing so. First, he makes each *player* suspicious of every other player. And second, he covers the evidence of which PC is actually working for No. 2.

It doesn't take an exceptionally bright observer to notice that a GM is passing lots of notes back and forth with a particular player. So camouflage the GM's relationship with his ringers. Send everyone else notes, too. Don't let anyone else see the notes passed to any player — require that all GM notes be returned to the GM. In fact, he might pass lots of notes to a player who *isn't* a ringer, or summon him to multiple private conferences with No. 2, to make it look like he's the ringer. Have private conferences with all of the players, but don't waste much time doing so, or the other players will quickly grow bored.

Players will want to show the GM's notes to other players, to prove their innocence. Don't let it happen. They must realize that the note represents a conversation, and that they can't prove the contents of a conversation. (Some notes actually represent written correspondence, but No. 2 isn't so foolish as to leave much correspondence lying around as evidence.)

A problem that can crop up is that the GM's notes to ringers are longer and more detailed than notes to other characters. Again, players are quick to pick up on such evidence. Be aware that this can happen, and avoid it. Discuss with the player beforehand what types of correspondence are likely to be used, and work out shortened ways to express them.

One solution is a simple number code. "1" could mean "come to the Green Dome immediately." "2" could mean "it's time to get No. 52 alone and inject the drug." And so on. The GM should keep a copy of the code in front of him (but behind his screen), and give a second copy to his ringer, so that he doesn't get crossed up. If a message is misinterpreted, it means the ringer misunderstood what No. 2 was trying to tell him.

With a number code, the GM can write and pass a message very quickly. Better still, he can simply announce a number which means nothing to anyone but his ringer ... or introduce a significant number by referring to a numbered NPC. "No. 29, balancing on a ladder, is painting the front of a cottage." Numbered messages can be passed to other players, and the players are powerless to prove that the notes are meaningless to them. ("This is a note" is a popular meaningless note in some circles.)

makes it easier on each GM, as he isn't required to write a new adventure every week or two. The other two reasons are particularly appropriate to Prisoner campaigns.

## Power and its Abuses

Among the most likely problems in a *Prisoner* campaign are abuses and perceived abuses of the GM's power. No. 2 can be anywhere, know everything, and force anybody to do anything he wishes. Well, not really, but it can certainly seem that way at times. That is a fact of life in *The Village*, and campaigns which realistically mirror *The Village* must reflect this reality. *Playing Fair* (p. 55) discusses ways to address this problem; one additional way is to rotate GMs.

By giving each player a continuing opportunity to GM the other players, everyone gets a shot at omnipotence. And everyone learns what it means to sit across from omnipotence, trying to deal with it. A GM is less likely to deal arbitrarily and harshly with a prisoner if he knows that his own character could be just as vulnerable next week. Which isn't to say that he should back off and not treat prisoners as No. 2 would. Just remember that No. 6 was a special case, and that player characters usually fall in the same special category. Endanger PCs, but be sure that there is hidden somewhere a way for them to escape the danger. And hurt them if they fail to escape.

When someone is GM of the week, his own player character becomes a useful NPC for plot development. The GM doesn't have to temporarily lobotomize or snatch some other player's character, removing him from the adventure; he can do whatever is necessary to his own (N)PC, knowing that he can reverse the damage after the adventure is over. Of course, he can also leave his character in play, but everyone will be perfectly aware that he is the most likely candidate for *Warder of the Adventure*.

## I Am The New No. 2

No. 2 changes in every episode but the last, although two No. 2s are brought back for additional duty. If GM duties rotate, then every adventure can easily have a new No. 2 as well. It isn't necessary that each player invent a new No. 2 each time he GMs an adventure; he can bring back his last No. 2, and develop the relationships which were established the first time this No. 2 was Chairman of *The Village*.

No. 2 isn't the only way *The Village* changes from episode to episode; with a new GM each adventure, these other arbitrary variations in *Village* life will show up in a campaign also. Rotating GMs is one of the best ways to reflect the unsettling shifts that take place from episode to episode.

## Distrust and Paranoia

In a *Prisoner* campaign, it must be established that players cannot know whom to trust, and in particular that they can't even know whether to trust each other. Most roleplaying is rooted in the premise that one can trust one's fellow players, and most roleplayers presume that trust from the very beginning of a campaign. In a *Prisoner* campaign, one of the GM's primary responsibilities is to eliminate that presumption of trust.

Note that it isn't enough simply to cast doubt on NPCs from time to time. If players know that they can trust each other, they'll still have a core group on which they can depend, and they'll be more at ease. It is *very* difficult to make a *Prisoner* campaign work if that trust and ease are maintained. To turn the ease into the unease necessary to life in *The Village*, the GM has to shake the PCs' and players' trust in each other.

## The Ringer

One of the best ways to sow distrust is to make sure that a PC (or more than one!) in each adventure is working for No. 2 against the party. Of course, don't choose the same PC(s) each adventure, else the circle of trust will just get smaller and tighter, excluding the chosen PCs.

In some cases, a PC can be coerced or recruited during the adventure. ("If you don't help me, you'll never see your sweet Sue again!" "If you help me, I'll bring your Enemy here to The Village so that you can work him over.") Even though such a character is working against the party, No. 2 should be aware that he might try to alert the other characters to his forced betrayal. If he does tip off the party and No. 2 discovers that he has done so, he should suffer No. 2's displeasure.

A player will occasionally want to introduce a warder into the campaign. (See *Warders as Player Characters*, p. 10.) As that section states, this can work for a while, during which he makes a fine ringer, but the player should be ready to convert the character into a prisoner, change him to an NPC, or remove him from the campaign once his cover is blown.

Another approach is more artificial but keeps No. 2 from having to twist players' arms each time he needs a ringer. Ask one of the players to take the part of a warder — an actor who has been substituted for the original prisoner. When the actor is revealed (or when he does his job) he will be removed and the original prisoner character replaced. The actor's character sheet can be very similar to that of the real character. (Should the prisoners develop physical tests to identify each other, the mind-switcher could be used to put a warder mind in the real body!)

Of course, not every player is willing for his character to work for No. 2, even for one adventure. These are his friends; why should he betray them? Try to help such players realize that they are merely playing a game, by the rules of the game. It is their *characters* who are betraying, and being betrayed, not themselves. If they can't handle those two concepts, they're in the wrong campaign.

## Introducing a New PC

As the campaign continues, players might want to introduce new characters into The Village. Sometimes this is because a new player has joined the group; other times a PC has died or left the campaign and a player needs a replacement character. A third possibility is that a player wants to rest his regular character for an adventure or two (he might need to recuperate) while he introduces a different character into the campaign.

Each of these cases is a prime opportunity to bring in a ringer, especially if the player wants his character to be a warder. But if overdone, the players will become fairly sure that every new arrival is a warder. If the GM doesn't let more than one in every four or five new prisoners be ringers, he should be able to accomplish two things. One, he'll be able to slip a ringer past his players every once in awhile. And two, PCs will know that they can probably (but not assuredly) trust the newcomer, putting him into the thick of the campaign immediately.

## Other Methods

In "Hammer Into Anvil," No. 6 writes the book on paranoia and distrust, much of which a GM can adopt for his own purposes. Have warders stop and talk to PCs when they are within sight, but not hearing, of other PCs. Have what appear to be coded messages printed in the *Tally Ho*, or announced by the Village Voice, addressed to specific people. Summon a PC to a meeting with No. 2 in the Green Dome.

## Atmosphere and Props

Establishing the proper atmosphere can improve the flavor of a *Prisoner* campaign dramatically. Life in The Village is in many ways similar to the everyday life of the players; the more that the GM can emphasize the differences between real life and The Village, the more entertaining the campaign will be.

The GM of a *Prisoner* campaign can enhance the atmosphere by creating appropriate props, including signs, identity cards, notices and so on.

If at all possible, every player should have his own numbered button. The buttons and numbers on p. 20 can be photocopied and duplicated for personal use.

Music is another obvious and easy addition to an adventure. A soundtrack album exists (see p. 95). Anyone with a good sound system and an extensive music library might record appropriate music. But the easiest way is simply to begin humming a few appropriate lines, from the series or from some other recognizable, applicable music, as players are deciding what to do or when there is some other break in the action.

Other sound effects, especially periodic Village Voice announcements, can be recorded ahead of time, for playback during an adventure. The GM should find an appropriate "voice talent" to make Voice announcements!

Posters and other signs from the series can be useful when a particular aspect of Village life is being emphasized in an adventure. Even if a slogan never actually appears as a sign (e.g., "Be seeing you!"), if it would help the adventure, draw it up and post it near the play area. See pp. 17-18 for a list of slogans.

Appropriate clothing is never out of place, and might be easier to find than expected. The styles are those of 1960s Mod (or Hip) and can often be found at Goodwill and other used clothing locations.

### The "Village Typeface"

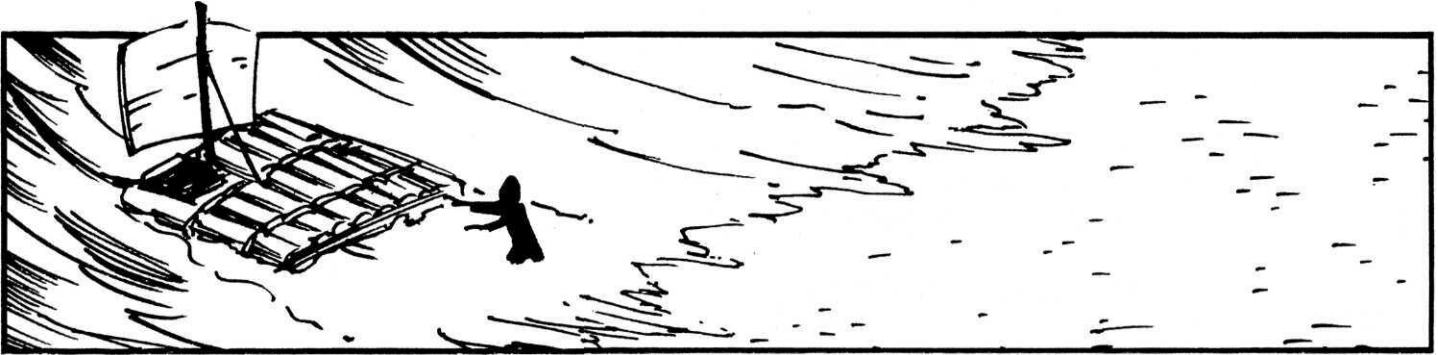
All signs and notices in The Village are set in the same unique typeface — the same one used for the title of this book. GMs creating their own signs and props should use it for maximum authenticity! The name of the typeface is "Albertus," and it is available as Formatt brand rub-down type. For *The Prisoner*, the typeface is customized by removing the dots from the lower-case I and J, and cutting the loop in the lower-case E.

For cards and other documents, titles and headlines would be set in Albertus, but the "fine print" would be in ordinary newspaper or typewriter type.

Remember that for an authentic Village campaign, British spellings would be used: "colour" and "labour" instead of "color" and "labor," "authorise" instead of "authorize," and so on.



And as soon as players become convinced that such "messages" are fake, a GM can use them to pass real messages. Then if players complain that a character couldn't have known to do what he did, point out that yesterday's *Tally Ho*, or today's public announcements, gave him the necessary signal.



### Getting Away

"There's a good move, wasn't it?"  
"I know a better one ..."  
"Oh?"

"Away from this place."  
"That's impossible."

"For chessmen, not for me."

"They told me there was no hope."

"I don't believe what they tell me; you're surprised?"

— *Queen and No. 6*

"Checkmate"

"When do you plan to escape?"

"How did you know I was going to?"

"Why, everybody plans to escape till their spirit's broken. Tell me your plan and I'll help."

"Help who?"

"I like you. If it's a good plan, I'll escape with you . . . Well, I've helped a lot of other people plan."

"Why are you still here?"

"Well, none of them ever succeeded."

"That's a coincidence."

"Why, it's been valuable experience.

At least I can tell you what not to try."

"How do I know I can trust you?"

"That's a risk you'll have to take."

"Not me."

— *Queen and No. 6*

"Checkmate"

"One day you'll go too far, and I'll die and beat you all!"

— *Rook to No. 6*

"Checkmate"

"Don't worry. It was a good idea, and you did your best. I'll stress it in my report."

— *Nadia to No. 2*

"The Chimes of Big Ben"

## Escape

Escape will always be a prime consideration for prisoners. No. 6's thoughts are never far from it. But The Village is specifically designed to prevent escape; many good people (including No. 6) have tried and failed. The PCs aren't supermen. Unless they devise a thoroughly ingenious plot, and keep any word of it from leaking, their escape attempt will fail.

The GM should decide before he begins the campaign how he will deal with the inevitable escape attempts. Will they be able to get out the first time they come up with something clever? Will every attempt be doomed to failure, because escape is impossible? Will only one particular scheme work, the details of which must be uncovered during several adventures?

Remember that just because they've escaped doesn't mean their adventures are over. Both times No. 6 escapes (in "The Chimes of Big Ben" and "Many Happy Returns") and the one time he awakes to find himself back in London (in "Do Not Forsake Me"), it turns out that his adventures abroad are part of an elaborate plot devised by No. 2.

Let the players escape at least once or twice, reeling them in again each time. Demonstrate to them just how long The Village's arm is. Then if they do get out on their own, they'll always be aware that they could wake up back in The Village tomorrow.

Or . . . they might actually escape, or even be released . . . and *then forget* about it. Selective amnesia would be easy for the masters of The Village. How do *you* know that *you* haven't been to The Village?

## Death

Death is an ever-present threat in The Village, with the graveyard nearby as a constant reminder. Nevertheless, very few people are actually killed during the course of the series. Rover claims two or three victims. Two suicides are reported (Cobb, in "Arrival," and No. 73, the young wife in "Hammer Into Anvil"). A termination order is received for Dutton, in "Dance of the Dead" (although it is not certain that the order was carried out), and No. 34 is reported dead in "Dance of the Dead." The Colonel dies, from old age and shock, when transferred into Seltzman's body ("Do Not Forsake Me").

A body washes up to shore ("Dance of the Dead," one more time), and the mad scientist, his daughter and their henchmen are all blown up in "The Girl Who Was Death," but the former is probably not related to The Village and the latter are merely fairy-tale people. Several Westerners die during "Living in

Harmony," but it turns out that these deaths are electronic dreams, and only Cathy and The Kid truly expire. No. 2 dies in "Once Upon a Time," but he is revived in "Fall Out." And then there is the final Shootout of "Fall Out" — more people die here (albeit bloodlessly) than in all the rest of the series.

The dangers in The Village are more cerebral than physical. Loss of self-respect, personality and identity are all more pressing threats than physical death. In fact, death is sometimes preferred to the alternatives The Village offers. Don't make a habit of threatening player characters with death — show them alternative horrors, and make them believe these alternatives are worse. (Of course, less important victims might be subjected to violent physical persuasion, not only to break their wills, but to weaken and disgust the more important prisoners.)

Keep in mind that, between deception and weird science, apparent death may not be real and real death may not be permanent. Dead NPCs might return in any number of disturbing ways ... as clones, as zombies, or as themselves *with no explanation*. Should it be necessary to eliminate a PC (perhaps for repeated, clumsy violence), that PC might reappear as an ominous figure glimpsed in the distance, or as a blank-faced guard. *Or as No. 2!*



## Winning and Losing

*Prisoner PCs* won't always win. No. 6 himself only bats about .500. Even a great plot is susceptible to a greater counter-plot or a twist of fate.

Thus, it isn't the GM's responsibility to make sure that PCs come out on top in every adventure, even those adventures in which they fought the good fight. Life isn't always fair, and The Village takes particular pride in being able to prove that maxim repeatedly. If anything, it's the GM's responsibility to give his PCs no more than what they've earned, and sometimes less than that.

The GM should be aware, and make sure his players are aware, that The Village gives nothing away and yields little more. Then they will grow to appreciate the small victories, and it won't be necessary to blow up The Village at the end of every adventure for them to go home satisfied.

### *Outside Reaction*

If a friend whom you haven't seen for a while contacts you out of the blue and starts describing his sojourn in The Village, how likely are you to believe him? That is the same reaction No. 6 faces each time he leaves The Village before "Fall Out." The odds are that escaping prisoners will face the same reaction.

Trying to convince a disbelieving world that The Village really exists (especially if the PCs don't know where it is, or if it moved since they were last there) can amount to several adventures in itself. Trying to convince the world (especially one's former employers) that one isn't crazy and hasn't gone over to the other side can take just as long and be just as frustrating.

In "Many Happy Returns," No. 6 has access to a jet plane when trying to find The Village. What if he hadn't? How would he have gone about his search? How might PCs conduct a similar search, in the face of widespread disbelief? In "Do Not Forsake Me," No. 6 even has a new body. Not every PC in a new body will be lucky enough to convince someone of his real identity with a kiss.

"All I know, old boy, is that you resigned from a post of the highest possible secrecy in this country, refused to give your reasons, and then promptly vanished."

"I was kidnapped."

"Oh, really? How dramatic. And then, after a gap of months, we suddenly receive a suitably coded message that you're coming back, from the other side of the Iron Curtain."

"You think that I've gone over."

"And come back out to carry on the good work."

"No."

"No, he says, no, nyet, nyet. What sort of imbeciles do you think we are?"

— Colonel J. and No. 6  
"The Chimes of Big Ben"

## Ending the Campaign

Eventually, GM and players might decide to end the campaign and move on to other adventures. The producers of *The Prisoner* do so spectacularly in "Fall Out." A campaign's conclusion can be just as spectacularly final, or it can leave unanswered questions.

If the GM decides his players are gloriously triumphant, praise them, honor them, reward them and send them out into the world, justified in their resistance. Use "Fall Out" as a guide.

If they're ready for something different but they're still stuck in The Village, make sure their next escape attempt works, or simply abandon The Village (as in "Many Happy Returns"). Don't argue too long if they tire of being relatively helpless prisoners; the original series was only designed for seven episodes.

If they've left on less than auspicious terms, the campaign is probably over but their characters will never know for sure. There's always the chance that the masters will track them down once more, perhaps for a return to The Village, perhaps simply to eliminate them. The masters (or a designated minion) can become an Enemy, appearing in occasional adventures. This new Enemy's influence might not be direct — PCs might find a bank account suddenly closed out, or they might be arrested for a particularly vile crime, with convincing evidence having been manufactured against them.

Another way to move on to other adventures is for the PCs to discover who the masters really are. During their final adventures in The Village, they might gradually come to realize that the masters are Communists, or aliens, or corporate exploiters, or a secret cabal of the Illuminati. Having escaped The Village, they now must alert the world to the threat. But the world probably doesn't believe them (see *Outside Reaction*, sidebar, p. 65). For other source material, consider the television series *V* and *War of the Worlds*.

It might be that prisoner PCs actually become converted to the masters' point of view. Maybe the masters are really benevolent; maybe the prisoners are deceived. In either case, they might be sent out into the world as agents for the masters. Or, just as unlikely, the PCs might convert the masters to their own point of view, unifying with them to fight a greater evil. In either case, the PCs have probably acquired the masters as patrons.

Even in a multi-GM *Prisoner* campaign, it isn't necessary that all GMs know who the masters are, so it might be possible to develop a concluding adventure, or series of adventures, in which the PCs discover the masters' identity.

## The Good Side of The Village

It is easy to see The Village as entirely evil, without conscience. For the most part, that is how it is portrayed in the series. A black and white relationship is established between No. 6 (representing the Individual) and The Village (representing Society): everything No. 6 tries to do is right; everything No. 2 tries to do is wrong.

It would be very easy to portray The Village that way in a *Prisoner* campaign: everything The Village does, or tries to accomplish, is evil, and should be ruthlessly opposed simply because of its source. That makes player decisions easy — and trivial. Players are the Good Guys; No. 2 and his warder minions are the Bad Guys. By that reasoning, anything the PCs do is okay, even if it means killing and maiming a sizeable number of Bad Guys. This logic is all too common in fantasy roleplaying. Kill any orc or dragon you see; they're all evil. And if the victim just happens to have a bit of treasure, so much the better; the slayers are rewarded for their public service.

*Don't* let the players get off that easily. There are positive aspects to The

### Cover-Up

Should anyone succeed in escaping from The Village, even temporarily, and returning to his old life, he will encounter a cover story created by the masters to explain his disappearance. He may find that he died in an accident ... went insane ... became a criminal and is on the run from the law . . . went over to the other side. Whatever the story, it will be one that will make old friends much less likely to help the ex-prisoner or to believe anything he says. In fact, they are likely to become tools of the masters, humoring the escapee while working to return him to custody. All in his best interests, of course.

The GM should give some thought to the "cover story" for each PC *before* he permits even a temporary escape. Prisoners will have no idea what sort of lies have been spread about them until they escape for the first time.

### Roleplaying One-On-One

*The Prisoner* has created a world which is ideally suited to one-on-one roleplaying, between a Game Master and a single player. The problems of intra-party cooperation vanish when a party is reduced to one character. Such a campaign most closely mirrors the television series itself; No. 6 in many ways acts as a solo PC in the midst of The Village.

If the GM runs all other characters, he is able to focus each adventure on the single player character, and he can ensure that all other characters act exactly as he wishes them to. Even if players are part of a regular multi-person campaign, they might try some one-on-one roleplaying, especially in The Village. The feel of play is in many ways different from normal party roleplaying.

### The Penny-Farthing Bicycle Symbol

The penny-farthing bicycle is an "ironic symbol of progress," indicating that man is progressing far too rapidly with tools that he is not yet ready to handle. It is the universally present icon for The Village, appearing on the flag, everyone's badge, stationery, food packaging, and so on.

Village: no one goes hungry, there is a constant succession of entertaining public events, and the citizens believe that they have a voice in their society — in fact, most of the Villagers seem happy. Some of them sincerely believe that The Village is the perfect society. They can't be swayed by appeals against its absolute dictatorship — for them, that is one of The Village's better points. If a good man (like No. 2) is making all of the decisions, everyone is better off.

So even if a campaign Village is rooted in evil (and it probably is), it isn't evil through and through, and it cannot be dealt with as though it were. Prisoners who begin randomly blowing up Village buildings, killing dozens at a time, have become just as evil as the masters whom they oppose. No. 6 does not kill until the final episode, though he does allow some of his captors to eliminate themselves or each other!

If PCs aren't free to kill everything that moves, what type of objectives should they have?

It is The Village's infringements on the rights of the individual which No. 6 opposes. The individual should have the choice of whether to participate in a society. No. 6's basic argument is that he never chose to be a part of Village society; that choice was made for him. So his first priority is escape. As the series progresses, though, he develops a second priority: to improve the society in which he is forcibly bound. He runs for office, in "Free for All." He destroys the program of forced education, in "The General." He breaks a sadistic No. 2, in "Hammer Into Anvil."

Similarly, the terror of a *Prisoner* campaign consists of two parts. First, The Village has made a basic choice for the prisoners — they are part of The Village, whether they wish to be or not. Second, having drawn them into its society, The Village imposes arbitrary rules which are arbitrarily changed.

So Prisoner PCs will have two objectives: to resist The Village's attempts to bind them, primarily by trying to escape, and to destroy or change the most repugnant aspects of Village society. A scorched earth policy is the simple approach to both of these, but it should not be allowed to succeed ... not necessarily on moral grounds, but because the masters have overwhelmingly superior force. They must be outwitted or out-willed.

## Character Points

As always, character points can be awarded for appropriate play. The guidelines for distributing points depend on the role played by the particular character.

For the "focus character" in an adventure, point awards should be based on the cleverness and will with which he resisted No. 2's plot. If the character was manipulated into cooperation, he should get few character points, or none at all. Remember that conforming to Village society is a form of cooperation . . . but active nonconformism is dangerous!

Character points can also be given to players whose characters aren't the focus of a particular adventure. If they are primarily Villagers in an adventure, reward those who play the part well . . . this *includes* conforming! (Remember that even No. 6 gave opaque Villager-type answers when meeting new Villagers, and used the "Be seeing you" farewell.) The more other PCs act like Villagers, the more the focus character will feel No. 2's pressure to conform.

And warder characters should receive points based on the skill and effectiveness with which they trick PCs into believing their stories, conforming to Village society, and learning their secrets.

Obviously, a successful escape, or a successful conversion of a warder to a free man (or vice versa) will be worth several character points . . . but this should not happen often!

## Vindication for No. 6

"He must no longer be referred to as No. 6, or a number of any kind. He has gloriously vindicated the right of the individual to be individual."

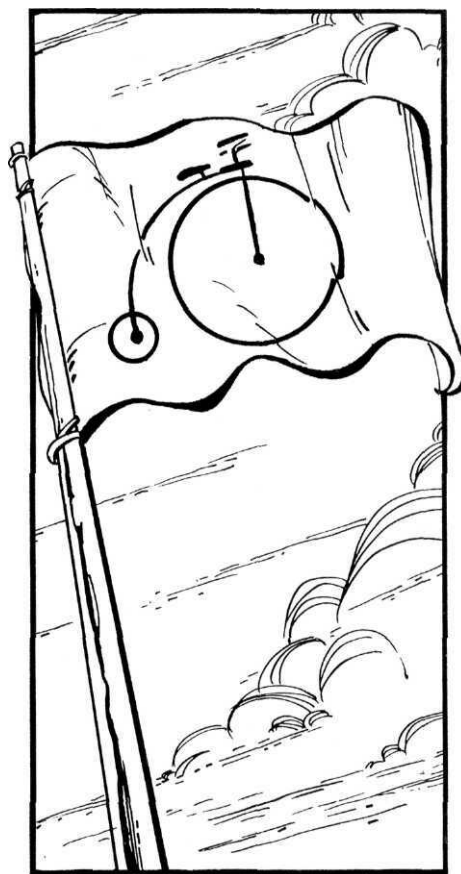
— *President to assembly*  
"Fall Out"

"The transfer of ultimate power requires some tedious ceremony, and perhaps you would care to observe the preliminaries from the chair of honor." (Fanfare as No. 6 sits)

— *President to No. 6*  
"Fall Out"

"At the other end of the scale, we are honored to have with us a revolutionary of different calibre. He has revolted, resisted, fought, held fast, maintained, destroyed resistance, overcome coercion. The right to be person, someone or individual. We applaud his private war and concede that despite materialistic efforts he has survived intact and secure. All that remains is recognition of a man, a man of steel, a man magnificently equipped to lead us, that is, lead us or go."

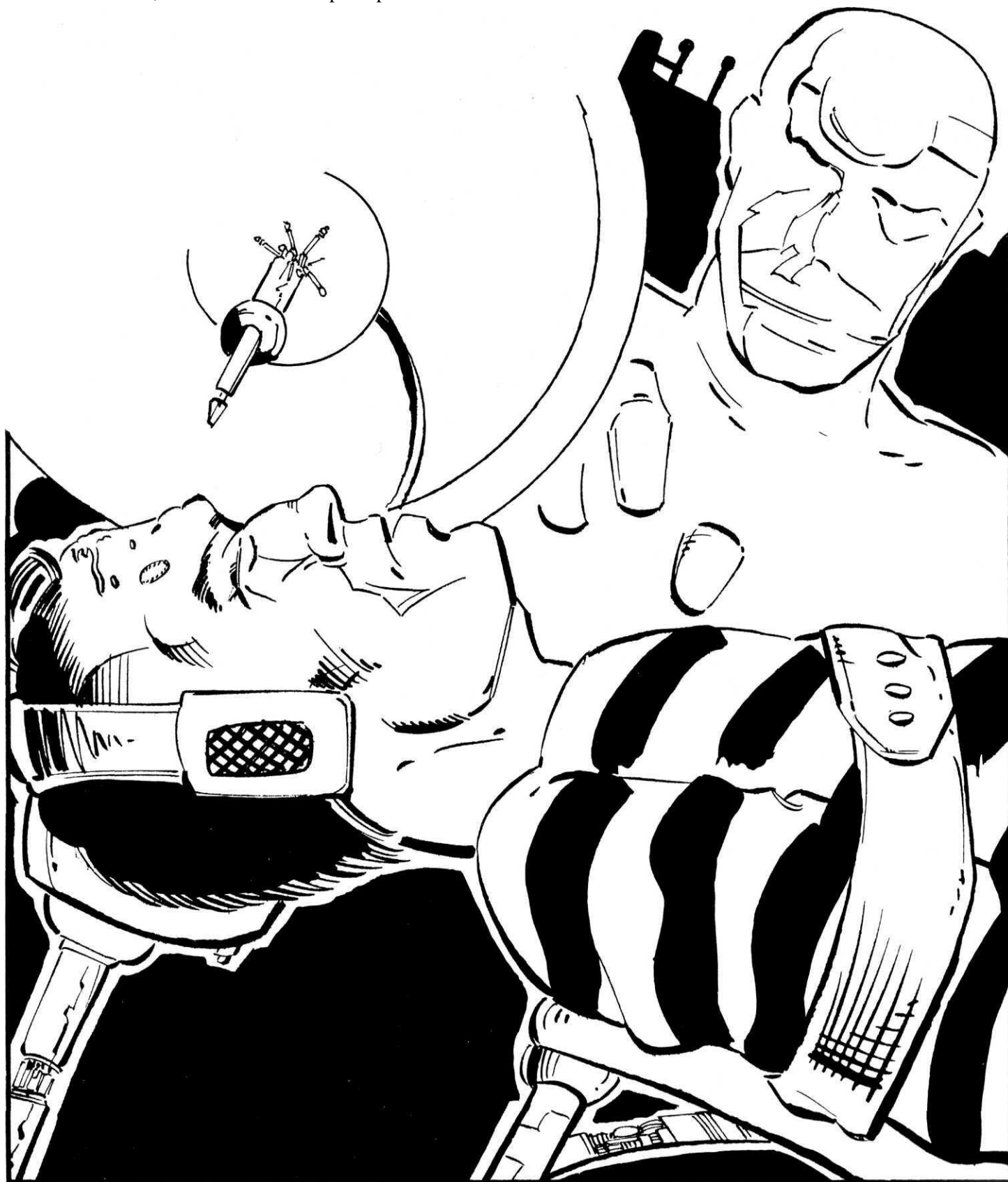
— *President to assembly*  
"Fall Out"



# WEIRD SCIENCE

# 5

Anything is possible in The Village, as long as the GM so wills it. Mind-switching, teleportation, resurrection — what we have here is the technology of science fantasy, not near-future science fiction. The guiding principle is that science is a tool, to be used to develop the plot.



If a building or corridor needs to be off limits, force fields exist! If dreams need to be accessible to the warders, they can be viewed on a video screen, and presumably recorded on videotape. But if taped recordings of dreams would foil the plot, then there's some reason why they can't be had — perhaps the brain's electro-pulses are convertible to the radiation that energizes a television tube, but not to relatively insensitive magnetic media.

Don't let common sense get in the way. It makes sense that someone could aim a camera at the television and tape the dream that way. If the GM needs to prevent that from happening, then perhaps the camera is broken, or the electromagnetic field generated by the dream-viewing equipment scrambles the magnetic storage capability of the camera. On the other hand, don't get carried away. A GM can kill his plot in five minutes if characters can be hypnotized to do *anything* No. 2 wants them to.

Pay attention to advances in the sciences, factual, hypothetical and fictional. Some of the following was actually possible in 1967. And some of it wasn't possible then, but is possible today. At this writing, the validity of tabletop fusion is still in question. But even if it is eventually disproved, it is available if needed in The Village.

Given a background that justifies the invention of *any* effect necessary, the challenge to the GM is to keep his image of objectiveness. The players should not get the idea that the GM is using the weirdness of The Village to substitute for pre-planning . . . even if he is. Ideally, the *characters* will become convinced that the *masters* are arbitrary and super-powerful, without the *players* worrying that the GM possesses both these qualities!

Described below are the most important of the weird sciences that occur in the series, their dangers, and a few suggestions for other effects. Since The Prisoner deals so much with mental conflict, most of these techniques are creative ways to play with Villagers' minds, but a few other fantastic possibilities also appear throughout the series.

## Thoughts and Dreams

In "A, B and C," No. 6 is hooked up to a machine which converts the energy from his brain — his thoughts — into electrical impulses which are displayed on a television monitor.

At the same time, he is given an injection which allows No. 14 to direct his thoughts, thus controlling his dreams. She uses a computer to conjure one of Madame Engadine's famous Paris soirees. Later, when urged by No. 2, she intrudes directly, putting words into the mouth of No. 6's dreamtime companion, B. No. 6 hears her words in B's voice, but doesn't believe that B is speaking for herself.

There don't appear to be any dangers to the dream-monitoring mechanism, but the injections are experimental and dangerous. Only three total can be administered, and only at 24-hour intervals.

## Truth Test

In "Free for All," No. 6 is given a Truth Test, one of the weirdest applications of weird science. Essentially a lie-detector apparatus tied to a mechanical hypnotizer, the test is visually displayed on a large screen as a block and a ball, on converging inclines. When a lie is told (or even thought), the ball slides downward toward the intersection of the inclines; when the truth is told, the block slides upward. At the conclusion of the test, No. 6 has been won over (temporarily) to the truth of the masters' premises.

## Super Science

"If I told you 10 years ago that we'd have flown a rocket around the moon, would you have believed me?"

— *No. 2 to the Colonel*  
"Do Not Forsake Me Oh My Darling"

"The trouble with science is that it can be perverted."

— *Duplicate No. 6 to No. 6 and No. 2*  
"The Schizoid Man"

## Old Science

One of the interesting aspects of *The Prisoner* today is that it was filmed over 20 years ago, and some of its technology, even its futuristic technology, is vividly obsolete. The General, the computer that knows everything, can only handle facts. Information is input on large plastic (or metal) perforated strips. Typewriters are used, not word processors. Even the simplest information is stored on large tape disks. Microchips are nowhere in evidence. And so on.

There are at least two ways to deal with this. The first is to retain all these technologies, effectively casting the campaign in the late '60s. Benefits include the fact that players who are very familiar with the series will be immersed in the strangeness that permeates The Village. Mainframes designed for simple tasks provide an immediate visual cue.

Drawbacks include the fact that some of these technologies can seem antique, reducing the tone of dread The Village should provoke. Mainframes designed for simple tasks are simply silly, given today's technology.

The opposite approach is complete renovation, bringing The Village into the '90s and the 21st century. Modern technology can explain many of the apparent inconsistencies of the series! For instance, why didn't No. 6 systematically destroy the cameras in his cottage? Because he couldn't find them; a 1990 spy camera can be the size of a pinhead, one more bump on a bumpy plaster wall.

The tradeoffs are between immediate recognition and modern reality. The GM will have to decide which technologies to keep, scrap or update, based on what is best for his campaign and for his players.

## The Pulsator and Other Hypnotic Effects

Each bedroom in The Village is equipped with a lamp over the bed. While the resident is awake, its light maintains a constant brightness; when asleep, the light can pulse hypnotically, for a couple of effects. The principle effect is to deepen sleep, so that Villagers don't awaken and wander about at night. In addition, it can hypnotize, so that suggestions are more easily implanted in a Villager's mind. For best and deepest effect, the pulsator lamp is lowered until it hangs within a couple of inches of its subject's face.

This lamp is ideal for controlling and modifying prisoner behavior. If No. 2 needs a character, even a player character, to do something against his will or against his character description, an hypnotic suggestion will do it. Hypnotism can make the weak-willed become stubborn and the icy-cold become seductive. In game terms, it can negate, create or reverse almost any mental advantage or disadvantage. It can also create or negate Dependents, Allies and Enemies, by acting on the character or the appropriate NPC.

Bedlamps aren't the only manner in which hypnotism is employed. The White Queen in "Checkmate" and the doctor (No. 86) in "A Change of Mind" are both hypnotized by more pedestrian means. The Queen becomes instantly enamored of No. 6; the doctor is given a post-hypnotic suggestion by No. 6 which is triggered by the tolling of four o'clock.

But, at least for game purposes, No. 2 cannot simply hypnotize the PCs into spilling their secrets. It didn't work on No. 6, and it shouldn't work on the player characters. This may be an artificial limit, but it is a necessary one; it was honored in the series, and it must be honored in a game. The masters can work their wiles on a prisoner's mind, but the most important prisoners must, in the end, change sides of their own free will.

## Shock Treatment

Behavior can also be modified through shock treatment. Several of No. 6's skills are changed in "The Schizoid Man." He becomes left-handed and two habits — "Prefers eggs for breakfast" and "Smokes cigars" — are changed to "Prefers flapjacks for breakfast" and "Smokes black Russian cigarettes."

In general, shock treatment isn't as effective as hypnotism. Shock treatment convinces the body, not the mind (to be simplistic), and the mind still resists the change. No. 6 believes something is wrong, but is not convinced until he finds independent proof in the photo of his bruised nail. Hypnotism could have eliminated his disbelief.

However, hypnotism can only change the mind, not the body. (Again being simplistic. There's considerable overlap between the two methods, and they can help reinforce each other.) Hypnotism is not very effective with physical advantages, disadvantages and quirks. And some subjects are resistant to hypnotism (a subject's Strong Will resists Hypnotism skill rolls). In such cases, shock treatment is an alternative. That is probably why the White Rook is treated in "Checkmate."

And sometimes the GM will want the uncertainty that shock treatment provides. If No. 6 had been hypnotized to believe he was No. 12 in "The Schizoid Man," he would have had no mental conflict. While the treatment changed his body, he was still convinced that he was No. 6, and that created the doubt that nearly defeated him.

The method by which No. 6 reversed his own shock conditioning may have been scientifically dubious, but it was ingenious. A PC who becomes aware that he has been conditioned should be given the benefit of the doubt if he develops a clever (not a cypcat) way to help himself.

### Mind Games

"His mind is now yours. What do you want from it?"

—No. 14 to No. 2  
"A. BandC"

"Energy from his brain — thoughts — like sound waves. Converted into electrical impulses and finally into pictures."

—No. 14 to No. 2  
"A. BandC"

"Fill him with hallucinatory drugs! Put him in a dangerous environment! Talk to him through microphones! Give him love! Take it away! Isolate him! Make him kill and then make him face death! He'll crack! Break him, even in his mind, and the rest will be easy!"

—Judge (No. 2)  
"Living in Harmony"

"This is only the beginning. Will you never learn? We have many ways and means, but we don't wish to damage you permanently. Are you ready to talk?"

—No. 58 (No. 2) to No. 6  
"Free for All"



## Speed Learning/Sublimator

The focus of "The General" is on speed learning through subliminal insertion. Subliminal suggestion and advertising are almost as old as motion pictures. It was quickly discovered that if a picture or message was flashed to a viewer, even when totally out of context in the middle of a story, and even for only a single frame, that the viewer subconsciously (subliminally) perceived the message and was influenced by it. The sublimator takes the process a step further, by screening an entire tape so rapidly that it can only be perceived subliminally. The result is a great deal of information received in a very short time.

It would appear, at least on the surface, that this could be used only to imprint "facts," as opposed to beliefs or ways of thinking. But suppose that prisoners are imprinted with the "fact" that No. 2 is benevolent and that The Village is a perfect society. This false "information" could no doubt be disregarded once the victim realized that he didn't really believe that, but it would be distracting to say the least!

Other, more "logical" methods of achieving the same result have been advanced since the General's time. Pills which contain data coded into DNA might imprint information directly onto the brain. Speed learning tapes and chips, again fed directly into the brain, are another possibility. The sublimator has the advantage of being able to affect many viewers, all at the same time.

Sublimation is one answer for the ever-changing behavior of the Villagers, if ways of thinking can be imprinted as easily as facts. (Another explanation is nighttime mass hypnotism.) Either can be used to explain why Villagers change their behavior from adventure to adventure, unless the GM devises an even better weird science. Sublimation (or the alternatives mentioned above) can also be used to quickly educate characters, especially NPCs, with such mental skills as Area Knowledge, languages, and most craft and science skills.

## Mind-Switching

One of the weirdest sciences demonstrated is the ability to switch minds between bodies, seen in "Do Not Forsake Me" (especially since the same level of expertise isn't able to switch the minds back to their original bodies). This is a wonderful technology, whose possibilities are only touched upon in that episode. It provides an undetectable physical disguise, especially useful for criminals. Even after the fact, criminals can switch bodies to avoid apprehension. Professor Seltzman used it both to escape and to acquire a younger, healthier body. If the technique becomes widespread, identification by physical records — fingerprints, retina patterns, and so on — becomes obsolete. And for the hedonistic or curious (neither of which seems to aptly describe the masters) it can be used to provide new experiences, especially if switching into other species is possible.

No. 2 uses it simply to coerce No. 6 into finding Professor Seltzman for him, but switched bodies within The Village can provide other sorts of distress and mental anguish. Even if the GM doesn't switch a player character into another body, how can the character ever be certain that he's talking (scheming) with the same person that he knew yesterday?

## Mind-Wipe

Selective mind-wipe is used in combination with mind-switching, in "Do Not Forsake Me." When No. 6 wakes up in the Colonel's body, he has temporarily lost a year of memory. He thinks that it is exactly one year earlier, before he ever knew of The Village. By the end of the episode, his memory has

### *Mental Programming*

"I don't dispute the accuracy of your statement — it is correct in every detail. The trouble is, you see, there is nothing you can tell me which may not have been told you by the person you claim to be, under sedation or hypnosis. We're all aware of truth drugs and other ingenious means of extracting information. It could all have been recorded and you could have learned it parrot-fashion."

"Ask me the minutest details of anything you know that we did together."

"The same problem applies."

"I could never convince you, then."

"Only sufficiently to intrigue me, to make sure that you are watched and followed every inch of wherever you go."

— *Sir Charles and No. 6*

"Do Not Forsake Me Oh My Darling"

"Our prize prisoner — the one we call No. 6 — toughest case I've ever handled. I could crack him, of course, but I can't use the normal techniques — he's too valuable — mustn't damage him permanently, say our masters.

"Your job, No. 12, will be to impersonate him, take his sense of reality away. Once he begins to doubt his own identity, he'll crack. What do you think of the idea?"

"I think it has fascinating possibilities, but you'll have an awful job convincing me that I am not your No. 6."

"Ah ... excellent, No. 12, of course — always the professional. Started living the part already, eh?"

— *No. 2 and No. 6*

"The Schizoid Man"

"Thus the miniaturized course can be projected through the sublimator at a speed thousands of times faster than the eye can read. It is imposed directly onto the cortex of the brain and is, with occasional boosts, virtually indelible."

-No. 2

"The General"



## Mind Control

"As you know, the advanced yogi is capable of living in a state of suspended animation for months, his mind and body disassociated. Now, what Seltzman did was to take this discipline several stages further, and with scientific aid he was able to transmit the psyche of one person into another."

— No. 2 to the Colonel  
"Do Not Forsake Me Oh My Darling"

"Now we call this our amnesia room. Rather proud of it. With it we can erase the memory back to any point in time we choose. This man you see was extremely cooperative. He told us all we wanted to know in three days . . . with hardly any persuasion. So now, we wipe out all unhappy memories of The Village and put him back into circulation to gather more information."

— No. 2 to the Colonel  
"Do Not Forsake Me Oh My Darling"



returned. (It might also have been used in "The Schizoid Man," to eliminate a month of shock treatment memories.)

Full mind-wipes, although much easier than the selective approach, can be troublesome because they eliminate all sorts of basic, useful information, such as table manners and how to speak. Selective mind-wipe eliminates only those specific memories which need to be expunged, leaving everything else. They are much harder than full wipes, because the brain doesn't store memories in a neat, ordered fashion; the erasing mechanism must first locate where each of the sought-after memories are stored.

An intermediate process, of intermediate difficulty, is to eliminate all personal memories, while leaving social memories — a situation very similar to amnesia. A person treated thusly wouldn't remember who he was, where he lived, or anyone he once knew, but he would remember most of his skills: Brawling, Driving and Leadership, for example. He probably wouldn't remember any Area Knowledges, but that's up to the GM. Similarly, retention of mental advantages and disadvantages would have to be decided case by case — he probably still has Common Sense, but is he still Lecherous? Strong Willed?

The mind-wipe in these episodes wears off — through suggestions and reminders, No. 6 is eventually able to recall part, if not all, of the lost period. But mind-wipe, either full or selective, need not require this occasionally annoying aspect. A non-eroding mind-wipe would be particularly useful with warders. They can contract for two, or five, or ten years, and when their hitch is up, a selective erasure and a remote vacation home will retire them safely without fear of compromising Village security. (Of course, it would be easier and cheaper to simply imprison them or erase their memories back to the start of their contract with no one the wiser, but that might suggest that The Village does not always live up to ideal social standards.)

In a campaign, all types of mind-wipe are potentially useful. Non-eroding wipes most often come into play when a character needs to totally forget something that happened, especially from one adventure to the next. If a character learns or does something that would make it difficult for him to continue in subsequent adventures, erase it from his mind.

Eroding wipes can be very useful within an adventure. Having eliminated a block of memory from a prisoner, the GM can then feed him clues exactly when he wants to; his restorative flashbacks happen whenever they are most useful. It's nice to feed clues on some sort of cue ("Holding the dagger in your hand reminds you of when you last saw it, plunging into No. 36's back"), but the cue can be anything the GM wishes. If it's time to remind him about the dagger, and a taxi is passing, tell him, "The passing taxi reminds you of another taxi — a plastic model that was sitting on a bureau, No. 36's bureau ... as you plunged a dagger into his back. That's right! You suddenly realize that you are the one who killed him! What do you do?" Bear in mind that this type of memory loss (and subsequent gradual recovery) is very hard to roleplay, unless the memories are ones that *the player* never had.

A full mind-wipe essentially eliminates the victim from action, at least until some of his memories return. It's not a nice thing to do to a PC. Practiced on an NPC, however, especially a Dependent or other friend, it can motivate a party to (a) find a way to restore the lost memory and (b) find out why the mind-wipe took place.

"Intermediate" wipes, as described above, can fulfill many of the same purposes as a full wipe. It can be entertaining to watch a player run an amnesiac character. However, the GM must find a way to restore his memory quickly if the player himself is not amused.

Players are least likely to be upset if their characters are only selectively wiped, especially if they realize their memories are gradually returning. As with

the other eroding mind-wipes, selective wipes are a good device for conveniently spacing clues throughout an adventure.

But keep in mind that this is a *very* powerful capability; there is probably a good reason why The Village doesn't use it often. For instance, had it been available during "The Chimes of Big Ben," No. 2 could have erased No. 6's recent memories and started over, with the clocks of The Village set properly. Perhaps the mind-wiping equipment is balky and unreliable, and selective wiping doesn't work well unless it's done immediately. A valuable prisoner would only be mind-wiped if No. 2 were *sure* the machine were working right; after all, if irreplaceable information is wiped from a prisoner's brain, No. 2 would probably be the next victim used to calibrate the device!

## Wonder Drugs

When all else fails, drugs can be used to provoke almost any behavior desired. One such drug helps trigger the dreams of "A, B and C." Another is a timed knockout drug (see sidebar). A third, in "A Change of Mind," convincingly simulates the effect of a lobotomy. The GM should be creative in his invention of drugs — they can do anything he says they can.

The drawback, of course, is that the subject must somehow consume the drug for it to take effect. If a Villager becomes suspicious and starts avoiding the drug, it becomes much more difficult for the drug to have its desired effect.

## Harmony

"Living in Harmony" is a special case of several of the techniques described above. No. 6 has apparently had an intermediate mind-wipe, since he accepts the situation into which he has been placed — he becomes a western horseman. (This might also be a case of memory implant.) Harmony exists as a physical location and its inhabitants are real people, not electronic simulacra, so the action doesn't simply take place in a dream. The purpose of the episode is to confuse No. 6's distinction between reality and unreality (or between reality and an alternate reality) so that his secret, the reason he resigned, slips loose.

Alternate realities, and bridging the gaps between them, are also discussed in Chapter 3.

## Telepathy and Other Psionic Powers

Telepathy is suggested twice during *The Prisoner*. Alison, No. 24 in "The Schizoid Man," seems to be a telepath, though she later "admits" that her ability is a trick. During "Fall Out," the President repeatedly consults the flashing blue light that seems to represent No. 1 or the masters, and appears to be receiving detailed silent messages.

Without any conviction that the writers intended Teleportation, two incidents are easily explained through that psionic power. In "Free for All," No. 2 ends a conversation with No. 6 from the Green Dome and appears on No. 6's doorstep two seconds later. And after having convincingly established that The Village is on the northwest coast of Morocco, No. 6 and friends exit from The Village's underground complex just a few miles from London. It seems that either The Village itself or the truck they're driving has teleported. (Or maybe there really *are* two Villages!)

Psionic powers open up a wide range of possibilities within The Village, and an equally wide range of difficulties. What does the GM do when a character tries to read No. 2's mind? Invent psionic shields or dampers? He might as well rule that Telepathy doesn't exist in this universe. One possibility is just that: to simply rule out from the beginning any psionic powers that look to be more

## Drug Treatment

"So this is your wonder drug."

"Yes. Three doses. And that's the absolute limit."

"Why?"

"Three's dangerous enough. Four would kill him."

— No. 2 and No. 14

"A, Band C"

"Now we'll see how accurately they've timed it!" (Girl falls.) "She was given a drug yesterday, one of the new super-strength moprubenates that we've developed — she doesn't know anything about it, of course."

"Yesterday?"

"Well, the drug remains dormant until triggered by the nervous system and then it releases itself to the desired quantities to produce instant tranquility or temporary oblivion."

"But why?"

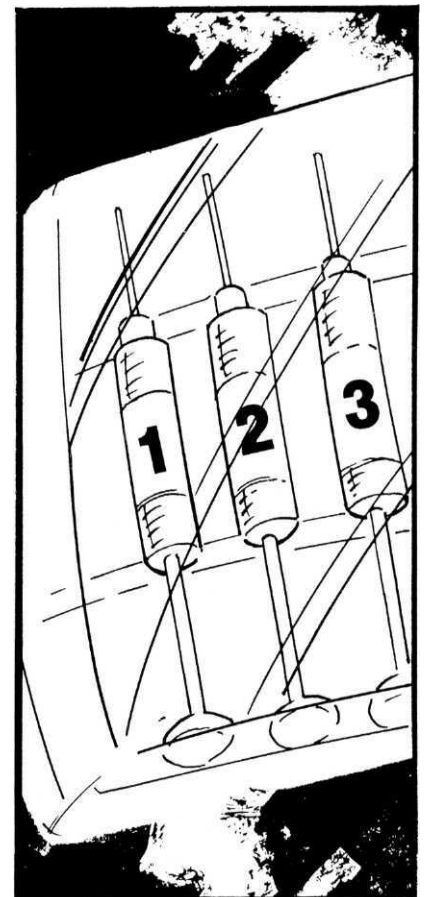
"Um? Well, in anticipation of No. 6 throwing her out, which he was about to do."

"And will. when she revives."

"Oh, no, no, no. You see, she's become a lady in distress, and he's going to be all good deeds and sympathy."

— Interim No. 2 and Supervisor

"It's Your Funeral"



## Gadgetry

"The transistor?"

"Yes. It will record all her emotions for Control. She'll dote on him, follow him like a dog. When she's out of sight she'll be sighing, when she sees him her pulses will quicken, and, if she thinks she's going to lose him, if he attempts to escape, she'll be frantic and her overwhelming emotions will send an alarm to Control . . . When we get a full record for analysis, we'll be able to program her into the alarm system."

— *No. 2 and Doctor*  
"Checkmate"

(zzzap!)

"Are you all right? You tried to go in! By mistake? It's fussy about who it lets in — this is the Town Hall."

— *Passer-by to No. 6*  
"Dance of the Dead"

"Five-yard range — nerve gas — one squirt, you're paralyzed. Two squirts, you're dead."

— *Duplicate No. 6 to No. 6*  
"The Schizoid Man"



trouble than they're worth. For another potentially troublesome example, it might be very difficult to contain a prisoner highly skilled at Teleportation.

If there is a psionic skill the GM wants to use, but doesn't want to see misused, another possibility is to rule that only NPCs have access to that skill. Remember, though, that players don't always greet such rulings with enthusiasm. Similar rulings ("Psychokinesis is allowed, but only to Power 5.") are also possible.

A final possibility is "mechanical psionics." Telepathy, telekinesis, and precognition are all possible, but only when powered by the appropriate wonder machine. In this case, No. 2 didn't teleport psionically, in the "Free for All" example — he hit the proper button and a machine did it for him. This approach essentially limits psionic powers to the warders, unless a machine falls into the wrong hands, but does so in a manner that players are less likely to take issue with.

No attempt will be made here to describe the inner workings of any of these psionic wonder machines; if the GM needs one, the button is right there on No. 2's console, right beside the force field activator.

Regardless of how psionics are used in a campaign, the GM should not abuse them. Warders who can read minds are particularly insidious. Don't let them and their like get out of hand.

## Implants

Both of the examples ascribed to telepathy can also be explained with electronic implants that feed information subvocally or even directly into the brain. This technology goes hand-in-hand with the individual speed-learning techniques previously discussed — both involve a direct electronic interface with the head, particularly the brain. Simply put, a receiver is implanted in the brain. This receiver can be as crude as a wire or as elegant as a biochemical chip. It might be used to transmit information, emotions or even actions. The subject can be conscious of what he is receiving, but he needn't be. An interesting middle ground here is the subject who is not aware of the implant, but is aware of what is being transmitted. He might interpret transmissions as his conscience, a little bird, or even instructions from space aliens.

For more details and alternatives regarding implants, consult any of the several cyberpunk stories, novels and game manuals currently in print.

## Force Fields

A force field guards Town Hall except during the carnival in "Dance of the Dead." It apparently is able to distinguish between authorized and unauthorized personnel. Another field blocks the underground corridors leading to the sublimator in "The General." It is of variable strength; the first unauthorized attempt to pass it triggers a warning, the second such attempt kills.

Force fields are remarkably useful devices for restricting access to otherwise accessible locations. PCs are adept at getting into places they're not supposed to be, despite the efforts of even the most well-meaning GM; force fields are an all-purpose guard against them.

Which isn't to say that characters can't, or shouldn't, be allowed to figure ways past fields. Overcoming a field can be an excellent intermediate hurdle during an adventure. And the consequences of circumventing a field can trigger further plot development. In "The General," No. 6 is able to walk past the field, but at the cost of increased exposure to the warder with whom he has become allied. Characters might discover that it is possible to momentarily cut power to Town Hall (having discovered where the plug is located), but a warder might

have spotted the characters while they were engaged in the dirty deed. Can he be bought? Silenced?

If there is a field, decide its exact extent, how and where it is powered, and how sophisticated it is. Then watch as the PCs attempt to overcome it. If they're successful, it might be that the field will return in later adventures, better and stronger as the warders close its loopholed.



## Persistent Machinery

In "Dance of the Dead," No. 6 rips out the inner workings of a printer, but it continues unchecked. This printer teaches an unsettling lesson that can be applied throughout a *Prisoner* campaign: Don't expect anything to behave the way you expect it to behave. Just because gutting 99 printers stops each one of them doesn't mean the 100th one will give up the ghost as easily.

The GM shouldn't always let himself be bound by normal cause and effect, especially in less important circumstances. If a point of plot development doesn't hang on the outcome, he should feel free to play fast and loose with the laws of nature. And he should be glib in his answers, if his players have the nerve to demand an explanation. Almost certainly, that printer actually operated on a small independent power cell and a microchip, laser-jetting words onto the page so that no moving parts were actually necessary. The cords, plugs and wires were all just for show.

Don't let anyone talk the GM out of a good effect just because he can't logically justify it. Logic in The Village often operates on a higher, less understandable plane.

### *Knowledge is Power*

"There is no question, no question from advanced mathematics to molecular structure, from philosophy to crop spraying, which the General cannot answer."

— No. 2 to No. 6

"The General"

"Good morning! I've brought you the activities prognosis you ordered."

"Go ahead, read it out to me, please."

"It is now 10:19, exactly. According to the prognosis, the subject is now taking his daily stroll through The Village. At approximately 10:20 he will go to the kiosk. There he will buy a copy of the newspaper, bar of soap, and a bag of sweets."

"Oh, don't! He never eats candy!"

"According to the prognosis he — "

"It doesn't matter about the prognosis. It's wrong; it doesn't work!"

"It will only take a moment to find out."

"Well, all right — go ahead."

(They watch No. 6 buy a bag of candy for an old woman who has used up her week's allowance.)

"Um, my apologies. How did you know?"

"Mission prognosis programming must include a quantum permutation of all causes and effects of supplementary elements."

"In other words, the computer calculated the old woman's behavior would change the behavior pattern of No. 6?"

"... The subject will proceed on foot to the old people's home, where at approximately 10:45 he will undertake a game of chess with No. 82, game to last approximately 15 minutes, ending with an 11-move checkmate win by No. 6."

— Programmer and Interim No. 2

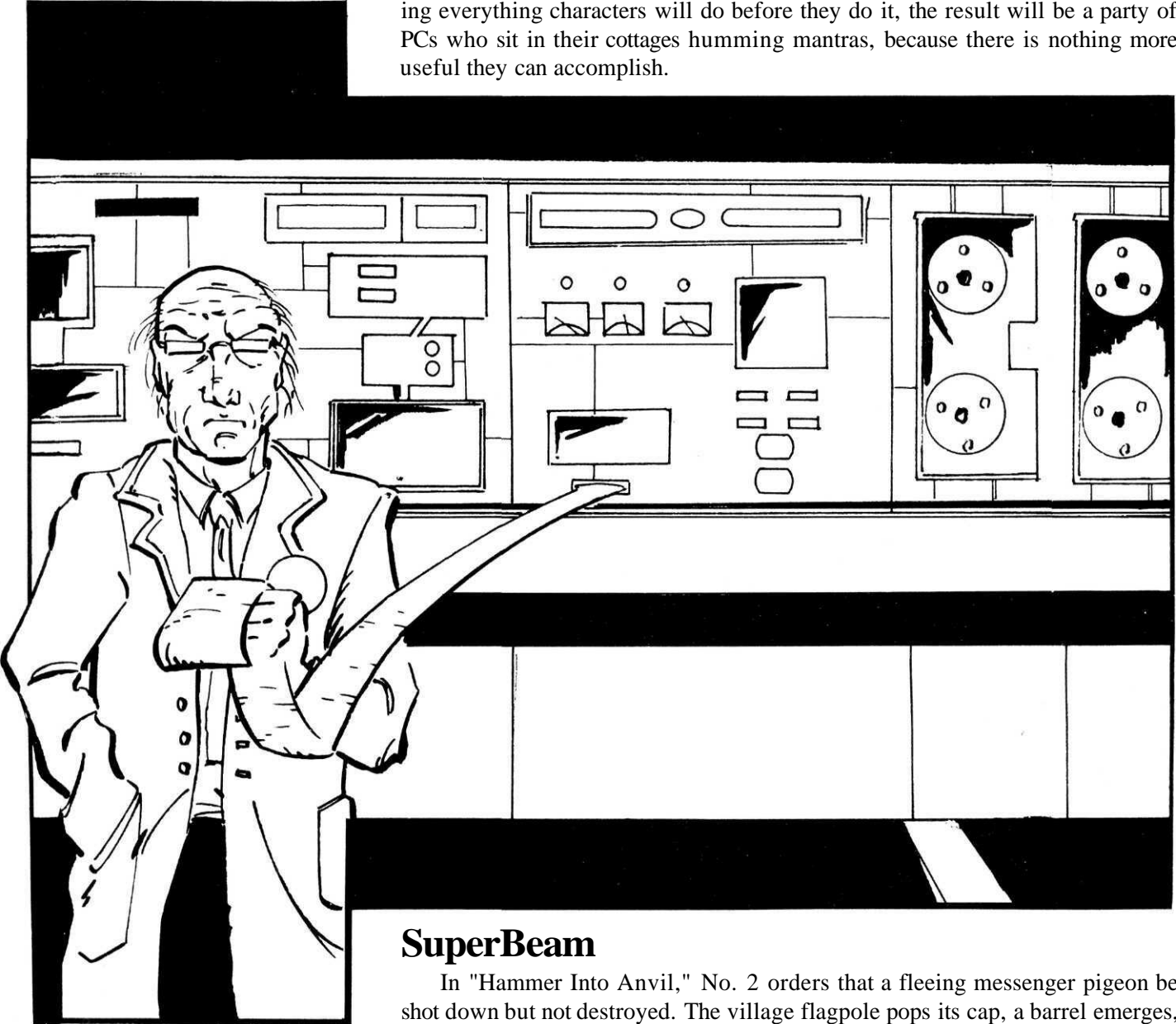
"It's Your Funeral"

## Computer Prediction of Behavior

In "It's Your Funeral," the computer was so accurately able to predict Villager behavior that it not only knew exactly when No. 6 would be passing by a candy stand, but also that No. 36 would be there as well, that she would be short of units but needing a candy fix, and that No. 6 would buy her some candy.

Without full access to The Village's computers, it's difficult to predict PC activity that completely. But remember that the GM does have such access. If No. 2 needs to interrupt a character at an inopportune time, then the computer (retroactively) predicted where he would be, a warder can be sent to greet him.

Remember, as well, though, as with most of the other weird sciences, not to overuse and overabuse this ability. If the computer develops the habit of knowing everything characters will do before they do it, the result will be a party of PCs who sit in their cottages humming mantras, because there is nothing more useful they can accomplish.



## SuperBeam

In "Hammer Into Anvil," No. 2 orders that a fleeing messenger pigeon be shot down but not destroyed. The village flagpole pops its cap, a barrel emerges, Control takes aim, and the pigeon is soon recovered alive.

As with most other technology in The Village, this beam's exact statistics are unknown. In fact, it is important that players not know exactly how precise or strong it is. It seems unlikely that it was placed there just to bring down pigeons; for game purposes, assume that it is at least the equivalent of a stun rifle (see pp. B119, 209), with a high (double-digit) accuracy bonus. Perhaps it can also kill; this is up to the GM.

## Degree Absolute

Degree Absolute (in "Once Upon a Time"), is not so much technology as it is psychological theory. Its premise is that if two minds are placed fully in conflict, then one will eventually surrender. If the pressure is great enough, that mind will die. No. 2 himself indicates that he doubts the theory, when he asks if he died by poison during his Degree Absolute confrontation with No. 6.

On the other hand, it is known that psychological pressure will make some men crack. This is demonstrated throughout the series. Acting out a psychological breakdown is one of the more difficult roles a player can face, especially if he would rather that his character *not* be cracking under pressure. Will rolls are an important mechanic here; when a particularly stressful situation occurs, the amount by which a character makes or fails a Will roll can help determine how he should react. Even so, if the GM tells a player that his character has retreated to the corner of the room and is shivering in fear, that player (and the rest of the party) are unlikely to accept the 'reality' of this reaction unless the GM's description and the player's roleplaying are both convincingly vivid.

## Laser/Sonar Surgery

This is an example of a weird science that is gradually coming true. Sonar is being used today to dissolve kidney stones without a surgical incision. In "A Change of Mind," it is used to perform frontal lobotomies.

Surgical processes that leave little or no trace are useful in two different ways. First, they can physically modify individuals without anyone realizing how or why. Recognizing that a fellow PC or other friend has been modified can be the first step in identifying a plot by No. 2 and moving to neutralize it.

Second, they can be used as they were in "A Change of Mind." Having convinced the Villagers that sonar lobotomies are possible, No. 86 performs a sham surgery on No. 6 (which is televised!), drugging and hypnotizing him into believing that he, too, has been lobotomized. Characters treated thus will behave as though they have actually been physically altered, until something or someone (i.e., a future plot development) convinces them otherwise. For No. 6, the two plot developments are that he witnesses his tea being drugged (and switches the drug) and that two warder thugs stir him to an angry response he thought no longer possible.

One nice twist (also seen in "A Change of Mind") is for a surgical process to have two effects. If a character demonstrates one of the effects, it is easier to convince players that he has suffered the other effect as well. With the sonar lobotomies, the side effect is a small lesion; even though he wasn't lobotomized, No. 6 is still given the lesion to help convince him otherwise.

Laser and sonar are ideal explanations for such invisible or fake surgery.

## Resurrection

No. 2 appears to die in "Once Upon a Time," only to be resurrected (or just "resuscitated?") in "Fall Out." The possibility of resurrection can eliminate the fear of death and help players concentrate on the more fiendish mental punishments available. In addition, characters who choose the easy out of death can be shown that that door, too, is closed.

On the other hand, resurrection shouldn't be cast as a sure thing, so that characters, especially PCs, won't sacrifice themselves extravagantly and at the drop of a hat. Early death can spoil some otherwise well-conceived adventures.

In general, try to use resurrection not to make death more common in a campaign, but less common. *Prisoner* campaigns are best fought out in the minds of the characters, not with their bodies.

### *Surgery*

"Allow me to assure you that after conversion, you won't care what it is — you just won't care!"

"The ordeal of social conversion?"

"You'll soon have lasting peace of mind."

"Drugs?"

"Would drugs be lasting? What *would* be lasting is isolation of the aggressive frontal lobes of the brain."

"Your attention, please! Here is an announcement for all staff psychologists and psychiatrists. Those wishing to study the conversion of No. 6 on the hospital's closed-circuit television, please report immediately to the hospital commons. Thank you for your attention!"

— No. 2 and No. 6; *Village Voice*

"A Change of Mind"

"We are using standard equipment. Unit containing quartz crystal is activated by a variable electromagnetic field from these high-voltage condensers here. The crystal emits ultrasonic sound waves which are bounced off the parabolic reflector here. The focal point of the reflector can be seen here by use of light waves. I will now demonstrate the molecular disturbance at the focal point . . . The ultrasonic beam is capable of penetrating, whereas the light is not."

— No. 86

"A Change of Mind"

"Now that all your aggressive anxieties have been expunged, let us say forever, I know that you will feel free to speak, particularly about that little incident which has been causing you such absurd distress, the trivia, the trivia of your resignation. Yes, you resigned. Why? Why prematurely? Why did you resign?"

— No. 2 to No. 6

"A Change of Mind"

## Clones

Clones make a possible appearance in "Arrival" and "Free for All," among the reporting and service corps. Cloning can have some of the same effects as resurrection — it can make characters decide that death isn't important. In this respect, the GM should try to use it as he does resurrection: sparingly, and to accent the mental aspect of his campaign's ongoing conflict.

Cloning can be used in other ways, as well. Imagine a PC's consternation when he realizes that the person to whom he has just spilled his plans is not his ally, but his ally's warder clone. Or, sure his Observer is safely under observation elsewhere, he looks up to find the same Observer peering over his shoulder.

Clones can also be chilling, mindless servants in The Village.

### New Lives

"How was it done? Was it the drink? You couldn't even let me rest in peace."

— No. 2 to assembly, following his resurrection

"Fall Out"

"Where'd they get you, a people's copying service, or are you one of those double agents we hear so much about these days?"

— Duplicate No. 6 to No. 6

"The Schizoid Man"

### Desperate Measures

"If you think he's that important, there's certainly no other alternative — you must risk either one of us ... I am a good man. I was a good man. But if you get him, he will be better. And there's no other way — I repeat, not other way ... Degree Absolute, tonight, please — ... a week! That's not long enough! You don't want to damage him ... very well — tonight!"

— No. 2 on telephone to No. 1

"Once Upon a Time"



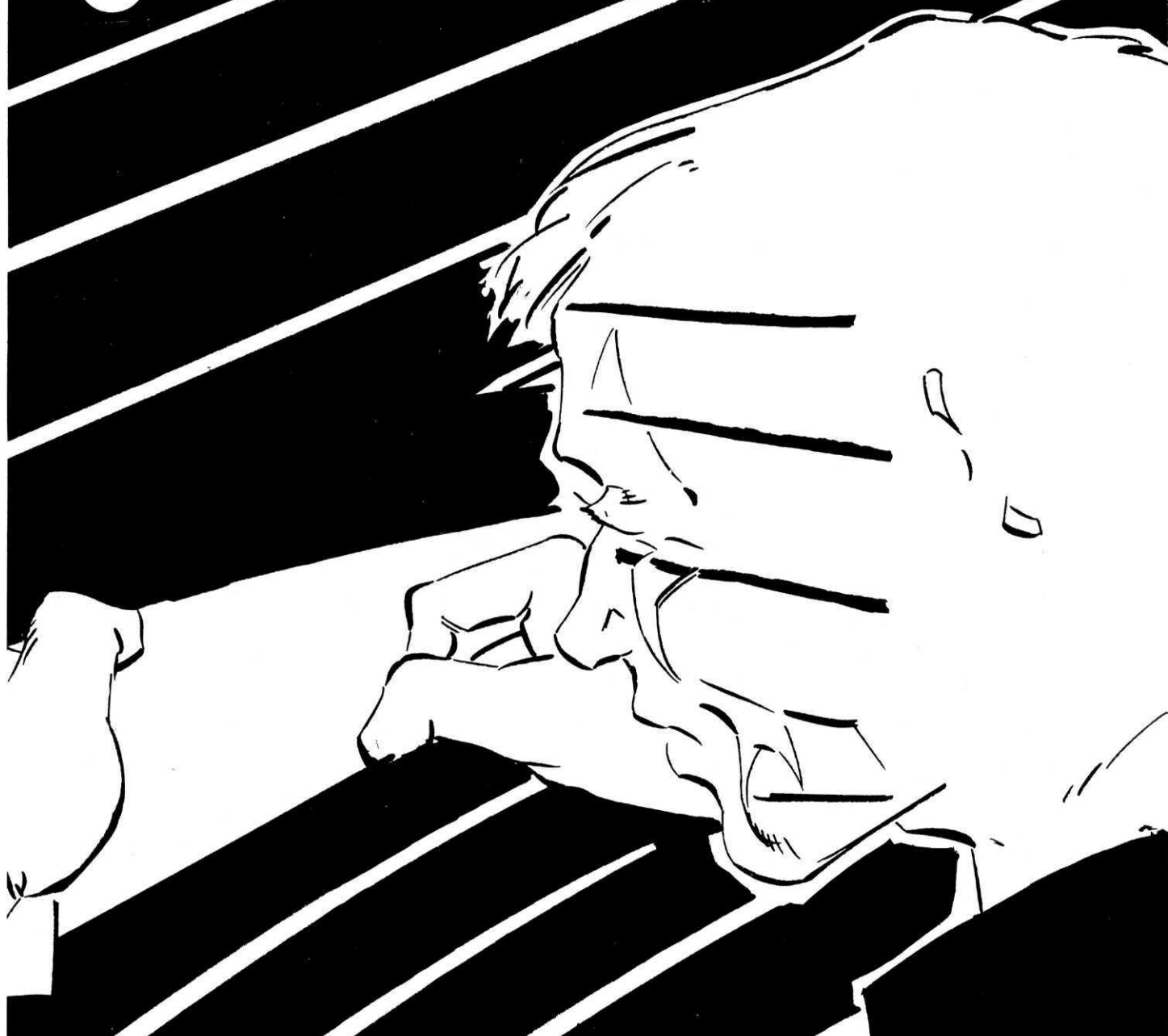
## Weapons

Weapons certainly aren't emphasized in *The Prisoner*, but as with all other aspects of science and technology, the GM has access to a full range of weaponry, both real and imaginative. For a start, he can use anything published in the *GURPS* system, from clubs to disrupters. But that's only a start. Nerve gas is described in "The Schizoid Man," and all sorts of other effects are possible: physical, chemical, biological, radiation, energy, etc.

Having read this, be reminded once more: physical weapons aren't emphasized in *The Prisoner*, mental conflict is.



6



## ARRIVAL

Note: This information is for the GM only! If you intend to play in this adventure, *read no further!*

This adventure is designed to introduce a party of adventurers to The Village, making them gradually aware of exactly what they've fallen into. It borrows heavily from the original *The Prisoner* episode of the same name, but it generalizes the specific adventures that befall No. 6 in that episode, and gives some alternatives, so that the campaign does not have to begin with an exact repetition of No. 6's arrival.



### *An Adventure in Three Acts*

Breaking this adventure down according to the television episode format described on p. 59, Act I covers the various abductions and ends as the PCs wake up in The Village. Act II includes the PCs' initial investigations of The Village, their reactions to No. 2's offer of a deal, and the beginning of their escape plans. In Act III their escape plan is foiled, but they discover the real MIA.

## The Adventure's Objectives

*Establish the characters and motivation for a campaign.* Much of the following text deals with starting a campaign, not just an adventure. "Arrival" can be run as a one-shot adventure, but many decisions about a *Prisoner* campaign must be made before the first adventure, and this section discusses some of those decisions.

*Get each PC into The Village.* Ideally, each of them should be brought in by a separate way, without any of them realizing that he's in trouble until it's too late. It would be best if the players themselves didn't realize what they were getting into — for more discussion in this direction, see *Beginning the Campaign* (p. 55).

*Have each PC explore The Village and meet the other characters in the campaign.* Some will already know each other from previous adventures or perhaps by reputation.

*Impress upon each PC the power of The Village's masters.* In particular, it would be good to foil an escape attempt.

*Have the PCs begin doubting each other.* They should all become aware that not all are as they seem; some professed prisoners might be warders, instead. If possible, some of the PCs should begin doubting not just each other, but also their own ability to withstand No. 2.

### *The Current No. 2*

Age 43, short brown hair, brown eyes, weathered complexion. 5' 3", 110 lbs.

ST9, DX12, IQ15, HT12.

Advantages: Alertness +2; Animal Empathy; Attractive; Charisma +2; Legal Enforcement Powers (full); Patron (the masters); Status 4; Strong Will +4.

Disadvantages: Duty (to masters, almost all the time); Mild Phobia (reptiles)

Quirks: Mild Megalomania ("I may not be better than everybody, but I'm better than anyone I've met so far.")

Skills: Acrobatics-15; Area Knowledge (The Village)-18; Breath Control-15; Carousing-13; Computer Operation-17; Computer Programming-17; Dancing-13; Detect Lies-17; Driving (Stock Cars, gasoline and electric)-11; Electronics Operation (Computers)-16, (Security Systems)-16; Fencing-14; Gesture-14; Guns-16; Hypnotism-16; Interrogation-15; Judo-13; Law-15; Leadership-17; Powerboat-11; Research-17; Savoir-Faire-16.

This No. 2 is an ideal choice for the office. She is competent in a wide range of areas, she has no gaping holes in the skills necessary to run The Village, and knows how and when to use other's expert advice. Her only serious disadvantage is her phobia, which she has kept carefully hidden (but which the masters might be aware of, if they ever need to rid themselves of her!). Remember that the players don't know about her phobia unless she displays it at the wrong time.

She has risen through the ranks of an appropriate organization, principally as a computer specialist — she's seen little field work, being a headquarters operative. She was attracted to the masters by a desire for more power than she would ever receive working a keyboard (see her quirks). She is determined to let no one interfere with a perfect demonstration of her ability to handle The Village, in the hopes of even greater future power.



## A Sudden Disappearance

Someone has disappeared. This person is known, or at least known of, to everyone in the party, although not necessarily all in the same way. (A mutual friend is often a good way to draw diverse characters who don't know each other into an adventure. It is less contrived than "You all just happen to be sitting at the same table in a bar.") Before beginning this adventure, the GM must decide who the missing person is, what he was doing when apprehended by The Village, and why The Village kidnapped him.

### Who Is the Missing Person?

This person (call him or her MIA), might be some PC's Dependent, or a brother he hasn't visited in five years. He might be a fellow agent. He might be a missing husband whom a weeping young woman asks a PC reporter to find, because "the police aren't doing anything." He might be a missing student or professor. He could be just about anyone whom a detective is hired to find. For each PC, decide who or what type of person that PC is most likely to diligently search for. If necessary (it probably will be), invent new friendships and relationships for some of the PCs. A composite of these elements will create a description of MIA, the missing person.

### When Was He Last Heard From?

After determining who MIA is, and how he's connected to each PC, decide what he was doing when each PC last heard from him. This will probably not be the same for each PC. One might have received a postcard from Switzerland, promising to return in a week. One might know that MIA was assigned to follow a suspected foreign agent, and last checked in just before catching a plane to Paris. MIA might have told one PC that he was traveling on business to New York or New Delhi. While working out these "last heard from" stories, decide what MIA was doing when apprehended by The Village. Put together an itinerary, starting at the earliest "last heard from" point.

### What Was He Doing Before He Disappeared?

Using the stories mentioned above, a possible itinerary includes these points:

MIA is a British agent, whose cover is that of a shoe salesman. His wife knows that he is an agent, but doesn't know much more than that. His twin brother thinks he is just a shoe salesman. Before leaving on his last assignment, MIA wrote a short note to his brother, saying that he was on his way to New Delhi to develop a market for brogans, but that he would be back in a week and they would get together to celebrate their birthday.

MIA left, but not for New Delhi. He was assigned to follow a foreign agent; that agent changed his reservation at the last minute and left for Casablanca instead, with MIA close behind. The foreign agent remained in Casablanca for only a couple of hours before catching another plane for Paris. Before MIA left for Paris, he checked in with his superiors by telegram to bring them up to date on the change in plans.

From Paris, both agents caught a train to Bern. By this time, they are traveling together for some reason, and upon his arrival in Bern, MIA sent the Swiss postcard to his wife, promising a quick return.

Something has obviously gone wrong, though. A week after the postcard, MIA's wife checks with agency headquarters. They profess to know nothing. She contacts the Bern police, but they can find no record of MIA's stay in Bern.

### Who is MIA?

MIA is a non-player character in this adventure, controlled by the GM. Remember that that doesn't mean that he is controlled by The Village. He is resisting No. 2, not complying with her wishes. In addition, he is too important for The Village to destroy his brain — he must not be damaged. If the multiple-GM approach for running this campaign is adopted, he could easily become the first GM's player character during other GMs' adventures. If that is a possibility, be sure to design him (or her) as a character suitable for use as a PC!

#### MIA's Wife

MIA's wife is hidden somewhere in The Village as well. She doesn't play any further role in this adventure, but she will probably figure in later adventures. She may also be designed as MIA's Ally, rather than his Dependent, making her suitable for use as a PC in later adventures.

#### No. 6 as MIA

If No. 6 is to take an important part in the campaign, the GM may be tempted to let *the* prisoner fill the role of MIA. Obviously, this would place all the PCs in the role of friends or confidants of No. 6. This is perhaps not an enviable role, since the masters' main use for old friends of No. 6 is as levers against him! Thus, choosing No. 6 as MIA is, in effect, defining the PCs as expendable . . . which is probably not a good idea.

a  
still  
tongue  
makes  
a  
happy  
life

## The Ringer

In this adventure, it isn't necessary to select one of the PCs as a ringer. Have each PC respond to No. 2's initial overture with a short note: "Yes" (I am willing to help) or "No" (Your offer is declined). PCs are free to tell each other what their response was. (They are also free to lie — unless, of course, they have Honesty!) If any PCs accept, their immediate assignment is to find out how MIA learned so much.

The promised reward (unlikely to be fulfilled) is release from The Village. For more suggestions, see *The Ringer* (p. 63).



## If the Players Have Seen the Series

It is quite likely that some or all of the players will have seen the original episodes of *The Prisoner* — perhaps dozens of times. They will certainly try to use this knowledge to help themselves.

The GM should allow them to do so — once or twice. Let them think they are getting away with something, just as No. 6 often thought he was getting away with something. Then let them run up against a stone wall . . . something not at all as it was in the original show! If they're irritated, they haven't yet really grasped the nature of The Village. If they realize that it's just more proof that *nothing* can be depended on, give them a character point for this insight.

In desperation, she turns to a PC detective and then disappears — The Village has decided she might be useful to them, as well.

Meanwhile, MIA's brother is a PC who never realized that his twin brother is a secret agent. (In fact, the player might never have realized that he had a twin brother at all until the GM tells him!) His brother didn't show up for their mutual birthday, and he's starting to get concerned — shoe salesmen are usually a bit more punctual than this, especially good old MIA. He tries to check with MIA's wife, but she's disappeared too! Definitely worried, he begins to retrace his brother's steps.

The third PC might be a fellow agent. MIA is overdue, and his wife is worried, but his disappearance doesn't seem to disturb MIA's immediate superiors. That in itself is somewhat unusual. After having reassured MIA's wife that he doesn't know anything but that he's sure MIA is okay, the PC decides to investigate further. He uncovers the telegram from Casablanca, but no later word. And the telegram is also unusual — the PC agent gets the impression that MIA is no longer carefully hiding his tracks from the agent he is following.

## The Story Behind MIA's Disappearance

MIA's misadventure began with a routine tailing job: a foreign national is suspected of collecting classified information. MIA is told to follow and discover who is passing him the stolen information.

The Other Agent (call him TOA) is indeed involved in the passing of classified information, but as an investigator, not a participant. He, too, has been assigned to follow up on the disappearance of documents from his own agency, but he is beginning to realize he hasn't received a straightforward assignment. Booked to New Delhi, he suspected a tail and changed his reservation at the last minute to Casablanca. When MIA did so as well, TOA spotted him. And TOA recognized MIA as one of the foreign agents TOA's agency suspects of receiving stolen information. He quickly booked a flight to Paris; when MIA followed suit, TOA knew he had confirmed the tail.

Now TOA is not sure what to do. He is being tailed by one of the agents he is supposed to be investigating. Is MIA really from the other side, or is he actually from his own side? If his own, why? Is he (TOA) suspected of double-dealing? Is MIA his backup for a potentially dangerous situation? Is TOA a sacrificial decoy, designed to flush the enemy so that MIA can neutralize them? But then, why would MIA be on his list of enemy suspects?

And if from the other side, why? Perhaps this agent (MIA), fearing that TOA is too close to the truth, has been assigned to neutralize him. But such assignments are usually handled by a separate, deadly branch of MIA's service; using MIA risks exposing the information-dealing operation that TOA suspects MIA of being involved in. And how did MIA know that TOA was involved? TOA had just two days earlier been assigned to the case, and he certainly hadn't broken any new ground since then that would have brought attention to himself.

There are too many unknowns, and TOA, breaking several rules in the Agent's Manual, decides to confront MIA.

The actual story is that The Village's masters have been clever, perhaps a bit too clever. Taking information from both sides, they have made sure that the investigators on each side are suspected as being the receiving agents by the other side. MIA and TOA have both been assigned to investigate the leaks, each from his own side, and thus each has been fingered to the other side by the masters. MIA's agency suspects TOA; TOA's organization suspects MIA. In fact, neither are involved — the masters have carefully sheltered their real operatives.

What the masters hoped to accomplish has come close to taking place: agents

from both sides chasing each other in circles, neither side accomplishing anything, but each side sure it is closer and closer to the truth as the circles and circumstantial evidences close in on each other. ("If you're not here to receive information, then why are you here?")

"But I was following you! Why are you here?"

"Following me, sure! I've caught you red-handed — now, confess! I assure you, we have means . . . .")

But TOA has jumped the tracks, confronting an agent who is obviously tailing him. Thus, when MIA insists that he was following TOA because TOA is suspected of receiving information, TOA tends to believe him, long enough for them to compare notes. When they realize that each side's investigating team is investigating the other, they know they've been set up. But by whom? A few more cross-comparisons isolate two or three highly placed agents in each organization who had to have been directly involved in the cover-up.

By this time, they've arrived at Bern, having taken a private train compartment as the best place to discuss the situation. They decide to check back in at their respective headquarters, carefully reporting only to their immediate superiors; they also arrange a rendezvous for further cooperative efforts in their now-joint investigation. Expecting a quick debriefing and then at least a day or two off duty, MIA sends the postcard to his wife.

But MIA unwisely sends a coded message back to HQ before leaving Bern, naming two higher-ups that he suspects. (Even the best make occasional mistakes.) The message inevitably falls into the wrong hands, and the masters quickly whisk him away to The Village. TOA has covered his tracks well enough that his collusion isn't suspected by the masters, and when he fortuitously spies MIA being spirited away, he decides not to check back in at his own headquarters just yet. He continues his own investigation as though he had never met MIA, keeping what he knows to himself for awhile.

So MIA and his wife are now in The Village, and the masters want to know how he uncovered their two agents in his organization. He's refusing to say, knowing that as long as he holds out and they continue questioning him, TOA has a chance to unmask them. The Village has not yet begun using his wife to pressure him; in fact, MIA doesn't yet know that his wife is nearby.

## Getting the PCs to The Village

Now that MIA is in The Village, the PCs can be lured there as well — that was the objective, after all.

Each PC now has a reason for trying to locate MIA. Ideally, each one will be beginning at a different point (MIA's original New Delhi flight, the Paris airport telegraph office, the appropriate Bern post office, etc.). With luck, PCs who don't know each other will begin to suspect each other as they encounter one another while openly or covertly tracking MIA.

The GM may find it easiest to conduct each of these preliminary sessions one-on-one with individual players. If all are sitting around a table together while each one tries to individually carry on his investigations, it will be difficult to keep each from figuring out what the others are up to and (if they are so inclined) joining together in their searches. A useful approach would be to play out this introductory scenario with each player at the same time that the player and GM establish his character story. This will eliminate the possibility of actual encounters between the players — choose the approach that will work best to establish the proper atmosphere for this particular *Prisoner* campaign.

Be sure to keep MIA and TOA's complicity a secret — that secret belongs solely to MIA.

Somewhere along the line, the masters will decide each of the PCs knows too

### *The Pickup*

In "Arrival," No. 6 is picked up immediately after his resignation, while he is at home, alone. He is gassed and never sees his assailant. In "Do Not Forsake Me," he is again gassed, this time while struggling with another British agent in Professor Seltzman's basement. The assailant had to subdue the professor before moving down to the basement.

The ideal pickup is more like the first example than the second one. The subject is alone, never sees his assailant, and never realizes he is being attacked. If no one else sees the attack, there are no other mouths to silence. If the subject doesn't see his assailant, he cannot later connect him with the assault. And if he doesn't realize he's being attacked, he can't fight back.

Gas is the preferred method of incapacitation, since it requires little aim . . . and everyone must breathe! Knockout darts and brute force are two other possibilities.

Nearly any subject will be missed when he disappears; some will be missed so loudly that it's cleaner to abduct the ones who would be shouting, as well. This is one reason why Dependents and Allies show up in The Village.

The warders who abduct prisoners-to-be are professionals, and have access to appropriate weird sciences to cover their tracks. They can seldom be traced. They take pride in their work, and like to add an artistic touch if the opportunity is available. They are told where in The Village the future prisoner will be living and working, and they try to match the pickup site to where he will wake up. This is most easily accomplished if the subject can be grabbed at home, since his Village residence is usually styled to match his outside home. However, pickup warders have occasionally abducted a subject from his lab or office and made sure he woke up in the "same place," in The Village.

much. (Now is not the time to withhold clues — send PCs down a blind alley or two, but make sure each one eventually progresses far enough to trigger the masters' suspicion.)

Once each particular investigator has triggered the masters, it's time to collect him. Select an appropriate pickup situation (see sidebar, p. 83) for each PC. When he comes to, he's in The Village.

### *Village Encounters*

These are "newcomer" encounters, designed both to introduce The Village and to lead to conversations in which each PC is asked at some point, "You're new here, aren't you?"

- The "visitors" are greeted by a Villager reading a *Tally Ho* article. It discusses the plot so far (MIA's appearance in The Village, the party's appearance) and goes on to say that the matter will soon be satisfactorily resolved, since one of the new arrivals has agreed to No. 2's quite reasonable request for information. If one of the PCs offers a cogent objection, or new information, the Villager may discard his newspaper and go buy a new copy. The new copy will contain new information or arguments that reply to whatever it was that the newcomer said!

- The newcomers meet one or two Villagers who know each of them by number, even if buttons aren't being worn.

- A gardener is observed behaving strangely; he seems to spend more time watching other Villagers than he does gardening. If approached, he will gather his gear and start working again about 20 yards further away. If he is approached again, another Villager will come up and suggest, "You don't want to be bothering him, you don't — they're always keeping their eye on troublemakers," as she points to a stone bust which seems to be looking directly at the newcomer(s).

- A Villager, in passing, invites a newcomer to join him in a sail at high tide (that evening); the boat will be waiting on the beach. (It is, of course, an imaginary trip on the stone boat.)

- The newcomers are "invited" to visit the Labour Exchange, where each one must perform a series of silly tasks, after which each is pronounced most fit to pursue a random Village occupation, to begin tomorrow morning.

- The newcomers catch just a glimpse of Rover . . . "You notice that everyone around you is standing still. In the distance, you see, just for a second, something large and white, that seems to bound along." Naturally, none of the Villagers will discuss this at all!

## Welcome to The Village

The session in which the PCs wake up will probably be totally taken with introducing them to The Village, as they wander through it. Each should be assigned a number, with the appropriate button on his desk when each wakes up. Their clothes are gone, replaced by Village wear. Be sure to stress the strangeness that other Villagers find perfectly normal — "units" instead of money, only local telephone and taxi service, non-alcoholic beverages, the Village Voice, the strange dress, doors which operate by themselves, and so on. For other suggestions, see the *Village Encounters* sidebar at left.

By this time, some of the PCs should know each other, or at least know of each other. Of course, if this adventure is part of a continuing campaign, most of the PCs will certainly know each other! In that case, the GM may want to find a player who is willing to have his character designated as an undercover agent for the masters. This character could even have aided in the others' capture! If that isn't possible, one PC can be designated as a "double" — the real PC is not a warder, but he has been replaced by a double who *is* a warder.

Let the PCs meet and decide for themselves whether they trust each other. Have several notepads available, so that the paranoia notes can flow freely. If this party has worked together in previous campaigns, they're probably inclined to trust each other. One or two private interviews with No. 2 and a few well-placed notes which must be immediately returned to the GM (before other players can read them) will help disturb that trust.

No. 2 has an interview with each PC, in which she demonstrates how much she knows about the newcomer. She also explains their presence in The Village: she wants MIA's secret (how he discovered the high-ranking double agents, and anything else he knows in that regard). Of course, No. 2 omits their other reason for being in The Village . . . that they know too much themselves. She doesn't feel it necessary to tell them that they'll be staying here for a long while, regardless of their help in this matter. Some of these interviews can be in pairs or groups.

Try to keep all players active, possibly passing notes regarding No. 2's interviews while describing The Village to those PCs not currently being interviewed.

Even if everyone in the party knows each other (from previous campaigns or simply as a basis for beginning this campaign), the properly paranoid atmosphere can be developed. For general notes in this regard, see *Distrust and Paranoia* (p. 62). In particular, let each PC know that a double agent is suspected in MIA's disappearance.

If all PCs are in an agency (not even the same agency), tell each one privately (as his agency superior, before they reach The Village) that another PC is particularly suspected and ask him to keep a sharp eye on that PC. Be sure not to be too obvious about this; in fact, the best approach might be to contact each player before the session to deliver this and other private messages. The goal is to have each player feel that he *can probably* trust the others, but not to be quite certain. If the players are certain there is a traitor among them, they will not share confidences, and no betrayal will be possible.

## The Fake MIA

No. 2 has been working on MIA for quite a while, but he refuses to break. No. 2 didn't bring in his PC friends just because they've been asking about him; she figures that at least one of them knows how MIA got his information. (They don't.)

To give the PCs someone to work with (or work on), she has brought in a warder double of MIA, someone who has a solid knowledge of MIA's file, but who can't know *everything* MIA and each PC have in common. She hopes that whoever knows what MIA knows will discuss it with the fake, thus spilling the beans. The flaw in her plan, again, is that none of the PCs know MIA's secret. On the other hand, if any of the PCs take the fake MIA into their confidence regarding their escape plans, she will have their plan stopped cold.

If the PCs are clever, one of them might discover that this isn't the real MIA. Don't have the fake MIA make any stupid mistakes, but he can be tripped up by his lack of full knowledge.

## Escape

Sooner or later (probably sooner), the PCs will start planning to escape. If none of them do so, start dropping hints and mentioning the word "escape." Have Villagers emphasize to them that no one has ever escaped. Have another Villager mention an escape that should have worked, but didn't. If all else fails, have an old Villager tell them that escape may not be possible, but that he personally knew three men, men that were very important to No. 2, who planned to escape one night. He never saw them again after they left. If they didn't escape, where are they?

The prisoners are likely to come up with any number of escape plans on their own. If they seem to need help, though, the GM may drop hints leading to the plan in the sidebar on p. 86.

Once the prisoners begin planning to escape, make sure that No. 2 finds out about it. It shouldn't be difficult, with the fake MIA in their midst and a few PCs possibly having accepted her deal. If necessary, The Village surveillance equipment can provide her with the information, especially since she's paying particular attention to the PCs, trying to discover MIA's secret.

MIA is currently hidden away somewhere along the PCs' proposed escape route, preferably toward the end of it so he isn't discovered right away, drugged unconscious. Until the GM knows how the PCs plan to escape, he won't know exactly where to hide MIA. (His location along the escape route isn't part of No. 2's scheme; it's a handy plot device.) He has several days' growth of beard and has lost weight; either of these should clue the PCs into the fact that they've been dealing with a fake MIA.

It should go without saying that hostage-taking is not likely to be a viable plan. Most warders will be considered expendable by the masters, and probably even by most of their fellow warders.

It isn't necessary that all PCs be a part of the escape plan. If only one enterprising PC decides to leave, then have him discover the real MIA by himself, before his plan is foiled.

## Climax

This adventure should end in a draw, unless the PCs pull off something very extraordinary. Any escape plans are doomed to failure from the start, but so is No. 2's scheme, since the PCs don't know what she's trying to find out. Bright PCs will realize that their plan is blown when they discover the real MIA, since that means they've been confiding in a fake MIA. Brighter (or luckier) PCs

questions  
are  
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others

answers  
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prison  
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## Escape by Sea

This escape scenario can be used in this adventure, or dropped into another one, as appropriate.

The PCs become aware of a small two-masted sailing vessel tied up at the dock. If they have been in The Village a while, they have seen this boat come and go; it seems to carry supplies, or perhaps low-level warders. At any rate, its comings and goings are not marked by any particular attention or ceremony. A half-dozen guards are present while the boat is tied up, but no Villagers go near it; PCs who approach the boat will be warned away.

When the PCs show interest in the boat, the GM should require Seamanship rolls before providing information about it. If there is not at least one PC with Seamanship skill of 13 +, they won't even be able to get the craft away from the dock, and Common Sense would suggest as much. On the other hand, knowledgeable examination will reveal that the boat is purely wind-powered, with no auxiliary motors.

Suppose the PCs know enough about boats to risk it. And suppose they can incapacitate the guards (one will be sleeping on board, assuming they act by night). The PCs now have a boat. A careful search, with as much die-rolling as the GM pleases, will reveal no motors. There is a radio, which doesn't work, but little other electronic equipment. When the escapees are a half-mile out, an observer will spot the boat leaving, and a yellow alert will sound, quickly becoming orange.

Speedboats will be dispatched, unless the PCs have sabotaged them or arranged a diversion. They are faster than the boat, but can be driven away by the guns which the PCs will have thoughtfully taken from the guards. (Should the PCs shoot to kill, they should be made to regret it later.) Rover, too, will be sent after the escaping boat . . . and will eventually catch up. It is immune to all weapons on the ship, and will bounce on board, but no one need be caught. If the PCs have the sense to go belowdecks, or even to stay in the structures on the top deck, the sinister white sphere will bounce impotently around the deck and then leave!

So the craft proceeds toward freedom — for a while. Then it turns, all on its own; the sails fill, and it carries the prisoners right back to the Village. How can this be? After all, it has no electronic controls to be overridden by radio. The GM need not answer this question at all. The Village has many powers, and the prisoners have just encountered one of them.

If the escape was bloodless, the boat will be met at dockside by the band, and the crew will be welcomed back home with no suggestion that they did anything wrong! If guards or warders were severely injured, the guilty parties will be punished.

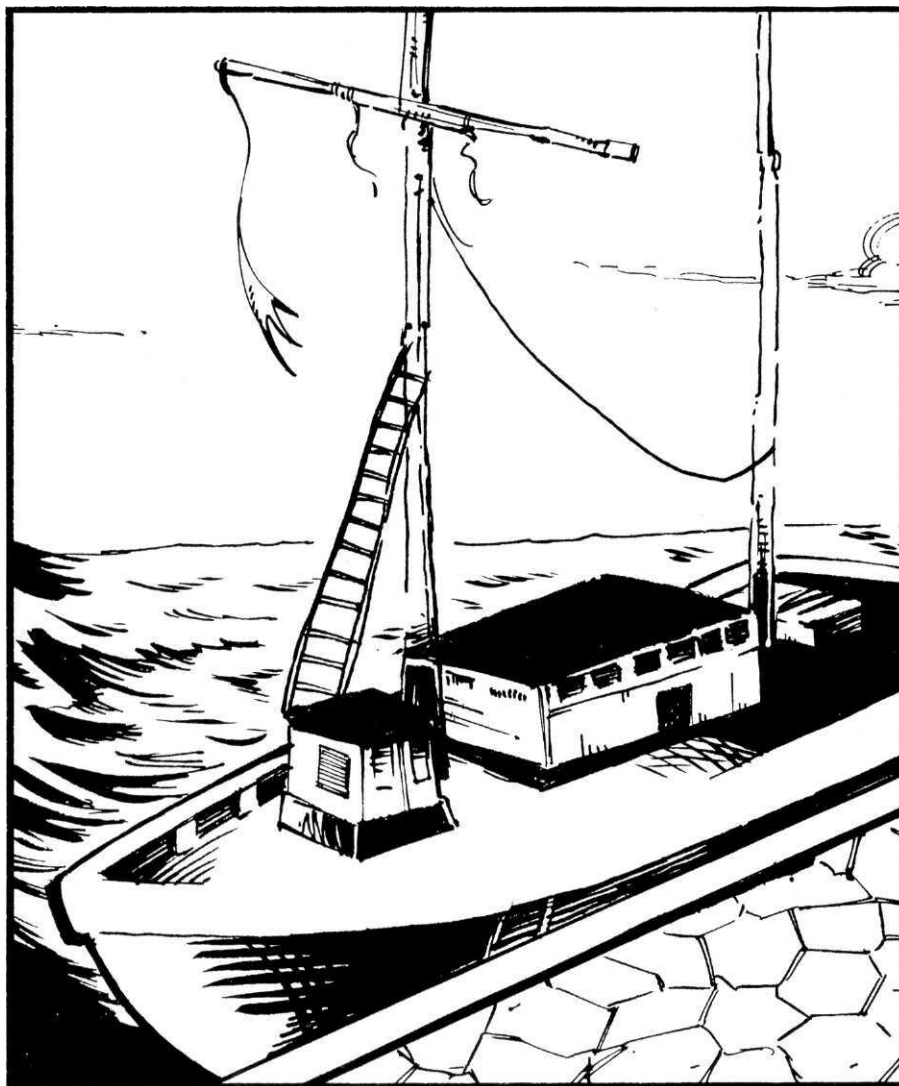
won't have confided in the fake MIA; if they have no ringer in their midst, stop them anyway, but have No. 2 call them in to applaud them for a plan that nearly worked and have her react (slightly) to something reptilian — someone's lizard-skin belt or crocodile shoes, a piece of dragon jewelry, or even something she momentarily mistakes for a snake. If a PC notices her aversion (on a successful IQ roll, with +2 for anyone possessing Empathy), he has something to use against her the next time they meet.

## Character Points

In general, as for other *Prisoner* adventures, points should be granted for intelligent attempts to escape, for constant resistance without unnecessary violence, and for strategies which set the warders against each other.

Points should be subtracted for voluntary cooperation or for being tricked or trapped into working against other prisoners. If a PC becomes concerned with following Village rules for any reason except to lull the warders into dropping their guards, that PC is co-operating! If a PC conforms to Village just because conforming is comfortable, that, too, should cost character points. (Unless, of course, that PC's personality is already conformist in nature. But such a person will soon be swallowed up in The Village.)

Likewise, dock points for unthinking violence, especially if it harms innocents. Who is really innocent here? Only the GM knows . . .



# PLOT SYNOPSES

In the standard opening sequence, a storm cloud, with thunder, heralds the arrival of a new episode, followed by No. 6 (an unnamed secret agent, not yet The Prisoner) driving his Lotus (KAR 120C) down a broad, flat road. He enters London, turns down a tunnel, and leaving his car, strides determinedly through a long corridor. Throwing back a set of double doors, he marches to a desk, lectures intently to the quiet man behind the desk, slams down his letter of resignation, and departs. While bureaucrats mechanically process his resignation, he returns to his flat, followed by a black hearse. As he is inside, apparently packing for a vacation, knockout gas is pumped into his flat and he falls to his bed, unconscious. When he wakes, still in his flat, he stumbles to the window and discovers that his neighborhood has been replaced with The Village. The opening interview with No. 2 usually follows.

## "Arrival"

The opening sequence is a bit longer than usual, to help establish the strange, new world in which No. 6 finds himself. The opening interview with No. 2 is omitted, since they have not yet met. Looking out his window onto The Village for the first time, he is struck by its beauty and strangeness. The first person he sees is a waitress, and he leaves his cottage to question her. She can tell him little — there's no police station, no phone at the restaurant, this is The Village. He finds a phone booth, but is told he can make local calls only. He hails a taxi, but it will only transport him within The Village. He requests a map, but it only indicates "the mountains" and "the sea" beyond The Village.

Returning to his cottage, he is summoned by a phone call to meet No. 2 at the Green Dome. He is offered breakfast (his preferences being on file) and is told why he is in The Village. He is then given a helicopter tour and witnesses Rover chasing down a victim.

Following an escape attempt (his first of many!) foiled by Rover, No. 6 awakens in the hospital and meets an old friend, Cobb, who was kidnapped while in Germany. Soon after, he overhears that Cobb has committed suicide. Upon his release from the hospital, No. 6 is issued his ID cards by a new No. 2.

Cobb's funeral procession is accompanied by only one mourner, whom No. 6 soon contacts. She reveals that she and Cobb had an escape plan, using an electropass synchronized with the alarm system to gain access to the helicopter. No longer having the heart to escape, she passes it on to No. 6. He flies away, only to have the controls overridden as the 'copter returns to The Village. We realize in the final scene that Cobb isn't really dead, but working for The Village's masters, and that No. 6 has been conned into a doomed attempt.

This episode serves several purposes. It introduces No. 6, and us, to The Village, and impresses upon him its other-worldliness, its omniscience, and its omnipotence. No. 2 seems to know whatever he is thinking. In reaction, No. 6 exhibits the strong-willed determination that he maintains throughout his stay in The Village.

## "The Chimes of Big Ben"

The new day is greeted by the Village Voice with the announcement of an art competition. No. 6 learns that there is a new arrival in The Village, No. 8, and is asked by No. 2 to show her around. She, too, is here only because she resigned, and her first escape attempt is simply to swim out to sea, using Olympic-class form. Rover is even swifter, however, and she wakes up in the hospital.

No. 6 agrees to participate in Village life if No. 2 halts his persecution and interrogation of No. 8. He starts work on a wooden sculpture for the art competition. Meanwhile, No. 8 (Nadia) tells him that she knows where they are, having seen a file she wasn't supposed to see before her arrival. They're in Lithuania, on the Baltic Sea, 30 miles from Poland. She dreams of hearing the chimes of Big Ben (in London) and together they plan to escape.

At the art competition, No. 6's entry is the only one with any implied abstract meaning, and the awards committee has no idea what to make of it. When told "it means what it is," they award it first prize. No. 6 uses the prize 'money' to buy a tapestry which had also been entered; the tapestry makes a fine sail, the final touch to a boat crafted from the parts of his own entry.

Sailing away that night, they are pursued by Rover. They leap from the boat and barely escape, swimming to shore. A confederate is there with transportation; No. 6 takes his watch, as well, since his own was ruined by the seawater. Carried in a shipping crate by truck, boat and plane, they arrive in London and are unpacked at the intelligence offices. Nadia is escorted away and No. 6 is on the verge of telling why he resigned when he realizes that the chimes he is hearing are tolling the wrong time! His watch should be an hour later than the chimes (Polish time vs. British time), but it isn't. His suspicions are confirmed when a pulled wire unplugs the sounds of London and an opened window reveals The Village.

Score this one zero to zero. No. 6 fails to escape, but The Village fails to learn why he resigned. Yet it reveals a tiny crack or two in an otherwise perfect Village facade. When told that he drinks his tea straight, No. 6 adds three lumps of sugar, which visibly disconcerts No. 2. It's not much, but it is a starting point. In addition, No. 6 learns more about the risks of dealing with and trusting either No. 2 or anyone else, even his former brothers in the service.





### **The Alternate "Chimes"**

A longer pilot version of this episode was made and then lost for several years. It is now available on tape, the "eighteenth" episode of this 17-part series. It is not significantly different from the description above, although the final credits give an interesting play on the symbolism of the penny-farthing bike.

### **"A, B and C"**

If No. 6 won't spill his secret while awake, how about in his dreams? An experimental process manipulates his dreams while displaying them on a television monitor. It is thought that if No. 6 had been planning to sell out, there are three possible contacts he might have been prepared to deal with. By placing him in dream contact with each one, No. 2 hopes to trigger an exchange which will reveal No. 6's real-life intentions.

All three dreams begin with one of the celebrated parties at Madame Engadine's, in Paris, attended by anyone who is anybody. After No. 6 greets Madame Engadine and strolls about for a few minutes, disk A is attached to the dream machine, and the first suspected contact appears. After a disagreement over principles and motivations turns into a fistfight, No. 2 is satisfied that "A" is not the suspected contact.

The next night, the experiment is repeated, using disk B. After a couple of minutes of interesting but not very useful dialogue, No. 2 grows impatient and demands that the doctor, No. 14, intercede by providing dialogue for the dream "B." Unfortunately, No. 6 is immediately suspicious, tells "B" that she is not who she pretends to be, and exits the dream. He is returned to his cottage, still asleep.

Meanwhile, No. 6 has found the puncture wounds in his wrist from the first two experiments and, seeing No. 14 in The Village, vaguely remembers her from his previous nights' dreams. Following her, he discovers a secret entrance to the dream lab, three files labelled "A," "B" and "C," and three syringes, two of them empty. He dilutes the solution in the third syringe with water.

The third night, he is again brought to the lab asleep, but is able to take command of his dream. Nos. 2 and 14 don't know exactly who "C" might be; No. 6 ends up at a mysterious castle with a masked figure in the courtyard. Before handing over the envelope he carries, No. 6 removes the mask, and No. 2 is revealed! The dream scene then shifts back to The Village, where No. 6 enters the lab

and hands the envelope to No. 2. It is full of travel brochures ("I wasn't selling out — that's not the reason I resigned."). His dream body then lies down on the table where his real body is resting.

This episode contains no escape attempts; the conflicts concern No. 6's mind and No. 2's job security. No. 6 wins both. It explores some of the more amazing technology available to The Village, and reveals insecurity in The Village hierarchy.

### **"Free for All"**

No. 2 calls on No. 6 with the news that it is time for the yearly election for chairman of The Village. He invites No. 6 to run against him. If he wins, he runs The Village as he wishes, and meets No. 1. As soon as No. 6 walks outside, he is greeted by a parade of Villagers, already supplied with posters and campaign buttons.

Interviewed by the *Tally Ho*, No. 6's "no comment" is transcribed as "intends to fight for freedom at all costs" and in print within two minutes. The press is saying what it wishes with no concern for the truth.

No. 6 attends the dissolution of the outgoing town council. At the meeting, motions are carried unanimously before a vote can be taken. Afterwards he is given a truth test (more weird science) and is told, "Everything you think here is in the strictest confidence."

More parades follow and No. 6 finally breaks away, fleeing in a speedboat. Retrieved by Rover, he undergoes (more?) hypnotism, so that he will campaign exactly as desired. Fewer Villagers are listening to No. 2's speeches, more and more are hanging on No. 6's every word. When election day arrives, it's No. 6 in a landslide. But when his hand is raised in victory and he attempts a celebratory speech, he is greeted with absolute silence. The Villagers no longer care. Entering the Green Dome, he runs amok, deactivating all electronic guards and releasing the villagers ("Obey my command! I'm in charge!"). But only his maid attends him, and she calmly walks up and begins slapping him. A scuffle ensues, No. 6 collapses, he is carried back to his cottage, and everything is just as it was before the campaign began.

The spotlight is on elections, and how meaningful they are in today's democratic societies. When No. 6 begins to take the election seriously, he loses. Appropriate 20 years ago, the questions raised here are even more meaningful in today's world of campaigns based on continuous opinion polls, sound bites and staged photo opportunities.

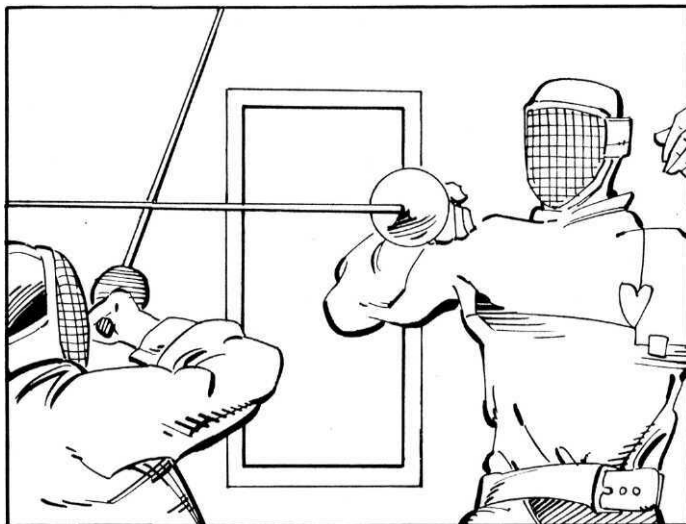
## "The Schizoid Man"

No. 24 is practicing her photography and telepathy with No. 6, in anticipation of the Village Festival. Curfew arrives; the next morning, No. 6 awakens in a strange room, having grown a moustache overnight. Villagers greet him as No. 12. Back at his cottage he finds a man who looks more like him than he does himself. This new man has assumed the role of No. 6, and here the terminology gets a bit tricky. Our hero No. 6 will still be referred to as "No. 6"; the new No. 6, the double, will be referred to as "No. 6(2)".

A switch has been pulled on No. 6, in the hopes that he will break down and reveal his secret, desperate to prove that he is indeed himself. Electrotherapy has adjusted his tastes and switched his handedness from right to left. No. 6 (2) can do everything No. 6 does, only better. He shoots and fences better (and with the proper hand), his fingerprints match those on file for No. 6, and No. 24 can read his mind much better than she can No. 6's. To intensify the pressure, No. 2 discusses with him the plan they have to break No. 6 (2) by producing a double. No. 6 is made to believe that *he* is the double and became unbalanced while studying the part.

A photo that No. 24 left with No. 6 the "previous night" provides the evidence he needs to convince himself that he is still sane. It shows a fingernail bruise which has since aged about a month — the photo wasn't taken last night, but a month ago. Realizing that he has lost a month while being conditioned, he sets about to reverse the conditioning. Sure of himself now, he confronts and defeats his double, learning the password and his real name. When Rover appears and No. 6 uses the correct password, Rover kills the double by mistake. No. 2 is convinced that the real No. 6 is the man who was killed.

Making a bid for freedom, No. 6 switches the plot, assuming his double's identity. Unfortunately, he doesn't know that No. 6 (2)'s wife died a year earlier; when he promises to greet her, his escape turns into a short trip back to The Village.



In this episode, The Village takes a further step in stripping No. 6 of his identity. They've already taken his name away; here, they try to remove all else that makes him unique, transferring his identity to another man. But once again, the Prisoner resists.

## "The General"

The "rave" this episode is speed learning which will subliminally teach a three-year course in three minutes. Those who participate have errorless recall of what they have learned. As might be expected, No. 6 has no interest in participating. He is persuaded to do so, and learns to his surprise that it works; he can now parrot the same history lessons learned by the rest of the Villagers!

Speed learning itself is relatively harmless, but its development and perfection masks a darker purpose. If historical facts can be implanted in seconds, why not opinions and beliefs? (In fact, Villager behavior in other episodes argues that this technology has already been perfected.) The developer of this wonder method, the Professor, realizes too late the ways in which it can (and thus will) be perverted by the General, the one responsible for its application. First he tries to escape and then to insert his own subliminal message of revolt.

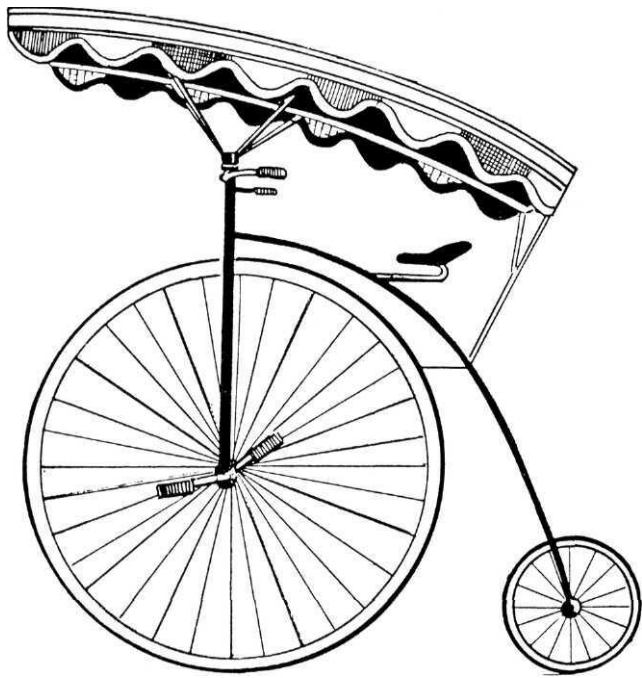
No. 6 has become part of the conspiracy by this point, along with No. 12, an administrator who is part of the General's team (in top hats and shades). No. 12 supplies No. 6 with a coded revolt message and a security pass disk which will get him past the force field under Town Hall. When No. 6 is captured, No. 2 decides to ask the General who his confederates were.

At this point, we discover that the General is a room-sized mainframe computer designed by the Professor. No. 2 boasts that there is no question that the General cannot answer. The question he is about to put to the computer (given means and opportunity, who was No. 6's confederate?) has a fairly obvious answer, so No. 6 intervenes with a challenge — he has a question that the General can't answer. No. 2 readily accepts the challenge, and No. 6 inputs a four stroke question: Why? Conveniently enough, the General is not programmed to handle either philosophy or failure; it blows up, taking the Professor with it and thus eliminating the possibility of a quick rebirth.

Progressive methods of education take it on the chin in this episode written about the time New Math and similar curricula were being introduced. The most telling line occurs just after No. 6 has been captured: "The freedom to learn, the liberty to make mistakes — old-fashioned slogans, reactionary dribble." Just as important, though, is The Prisoner's continuing premise: the individual has the right to act (in this case, to learn) as he will, rather than as someone else dictates.

## "Many Happy Returns"

No. 6 awakens one morning to find that The Village has been deactivated — no water, no telephone service, no Villagers. He fashions a raft, takes several snapshots as



evidence, and puts to sea. He is found by a pair of gunrunners who pillage his raft and dump him in the water, but he manages to board their boat and capture it.

As the boat approaches a shoreline (England), they recapture it and he goes back into the sea; he is barely able to swim to shore. Befriended by a gypsy, he makes his way to London and his flat. At his flat, he meets Mrs. Butterworth and discovers that she has both the current lease and his Lotus automobile. She feeds and dresses him (in her late husband's clothes), and he departs to report to his former superiors (different from those in "The Chimes of Big Ben").

After checking his story beginning with his arrival in England, they find it sufficiently credible to authorize No. 6 to begin an aerial search for The Village, focusing on the northwest corner of Morocco. (No. 6 kept a log while at sea.) Finally, on one flight, he sees The Village below and exclaims in triumph, only to find himself ejected from the jet and parachuting back down to his home away from home. The Village has reached out its long arm and replaced his pilot with one of their own! Did the replacement pilot really fly No. 6 to the Moroccan coastline, or in another direction entirely? No one knows.

The Village is still deserted as No. 6 walks to his cottage, but when he enters, the water comes back on, the streets spring back to life, and Mrs. Butterworth appears on his doorstep, as No. 2, with a birthday cake (it's his birthday). "Many happy returns!"

The Village has won this round, hands down. It has demonstrated to The Prisoner that no matter where he goes or how securely he digs in, he will never be certain that he won't wake up the next morning back in The Village.

## "Dance of the Dead"

Two plots intertwine in this episode. In one, No. 6 meets a former colleague, Dutton, who has told all he knows but is still not believed; in the other, No. 6 finds a

body washed up on shore and attempts to use its scavenged possessions to escape. Meanwhile, the yearly carnival is on tap ("There will be music, dancing, happiness — all at the carnival, by order").

No. 6 meets Dutton when in the hospital for an electric treatment to persuade him to talk. He meets his current Observer. He attempts to send a message for help by putting the body back into the current. At the carnival, he finds a just-received termination order for Dutton, and then is put on trial and convicted for acquiring a radio (which he found on the body). Running from the resultant mob of Villagers, he has a final confrontation with No. 2.

This episode is one of the most chilling of the series. Snatches of dialogue throughout the show make it abundantly clear exactly how thoroughly and methodically No. 6's life is observed and controlled. It gives the best description of an Observer (see p. 32) and highlights the arbitrary nature of life in The Village, from "signing your number" to a death sentence for a minor infraction against unwritten rules.

## "Do Not Forsake Me Oh My Darling"

The aged Professor Seltzman had discovered how to switch two minds from body to body before he disappeared. Now The Village's masters want him, to find out how to switch such minds back into their proper bodies. No. 6 was one of the last agents known to have been in touch with him before his disappearance, and they suspect he knows where the doctor is now.

To persuade No. 6 to reveal where Seltzman is, they switch his mind into another body and return him to his flat in London. He awakens with a new body and with a year missing from his memory. Reporting in to his former bosses (different again from those in "The Chimes of Big Ben" or "Many Happy Returns"), he finds them unwilling to believe his story of The Village and mind transfer. He does persuade his fiancée that he is really her true love (with a kiss, no less); she gives him the receipt to a pack of picture slides from which he is able to extract Seltzman's current residence.

Motoring over to Austria, he finds Seltzman, but has been followed both by British Intelligence and The Village. While fighting with the British agent, he is gassed (as in the opening sequence) and he finds himself back in The Village.

Once there, Seltzman agrees to conduct the retransfer, but insists that he be allowed to work alone. When the three men are hooked up, Seltzman manages to get No. 6's mind back into his own body, but also transfers *his* mind (Seltzman's) into the third, younger body. Now in disguise, Seltzman is flown out by helicopter, making his escape before The Village realizes the trick.

In terms of conflict between No. 6 and The Village, No. 6 comes out ahead. He is only able to convince two people of his true identity while abroad, and he ends up back in The Village, but he foils their attempt to capture Seltzman

and his abilities (with significant help from Seltzman). In terms of allegory, the broad theme here is that of the misuses to which scientific advancement can be put, a recurring theme in the series.

## "It's Your Funeral"

An elaborate plot is being woven to assassinate No. 2; an even more elaborate subplot has been fashioned to neutralize No. 6's possible interference. No. 2 is not currently in residence, his seat being temporarily filled by a series of "acting" No. 2s. The plots are the work of the last of these, in conjunction with The Village's masters.

A young woman calls on No. 6 and is rebuffed, but then faints exactly on time in his living room and thus becomes a lady in distress, one of No. 6's few weaknesses. She convinces him that a plot to assassinate No. 2 exists and that her father the watchmaker is building the bomb to do it. She says that her father is actually a dupe of The Village's masters — that they seek to both eliminate No. 2 and persecute The Village for his death. No. 6 agrees to help, not to save No. 2 but to keep his fellow Villagers from being unjustly punished.

He warns the acting No. 2, who scoffs at his warning but carefully records it. When the real No. 2 returns, he is shown a series of tapes in which No. 6 apparently warns each of the several interim No. 2s that they will be assassinated. Thus convinced that No. 6 is only crying wolf, No. 2 initially scoffs at No. 6's warnings also. Persistence

is one of No. 6's long suits, however, and No. 2 is eventually persuaded (foiling the subplot).

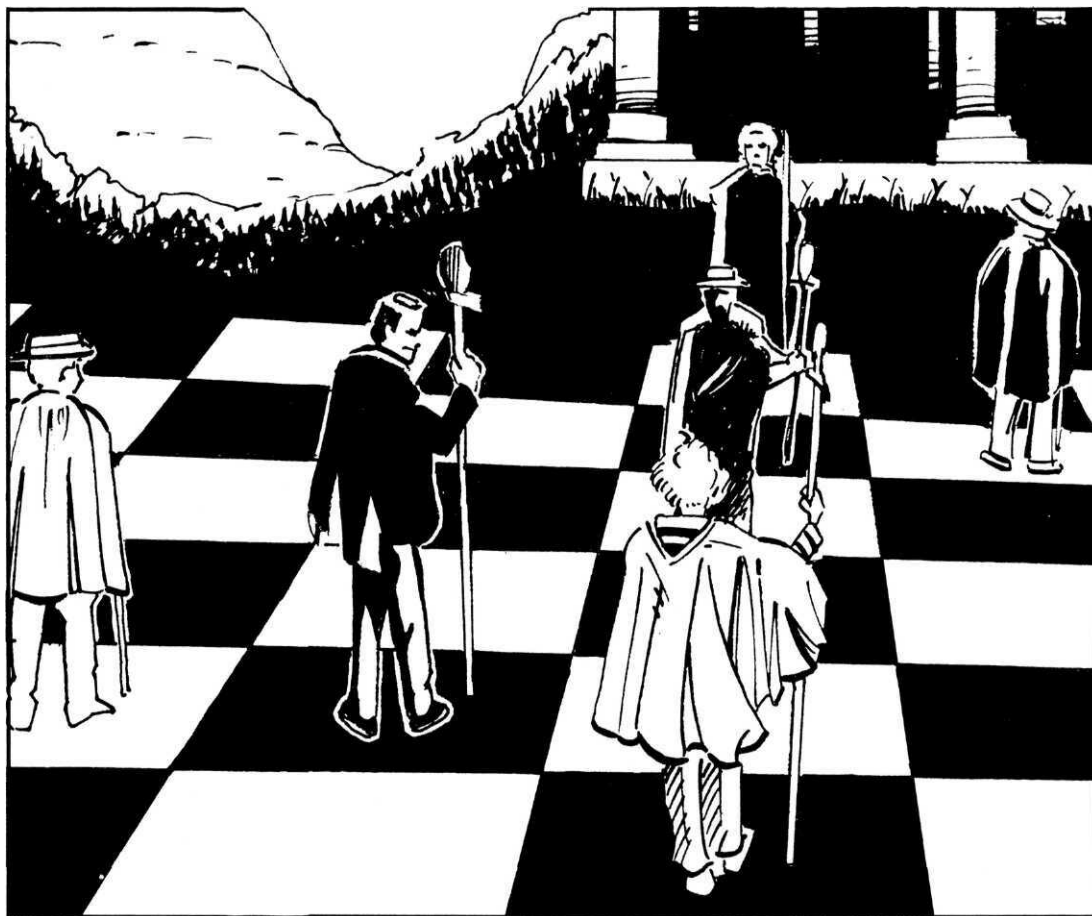
No. 2 will soon step down from office, to be replaced by the last interim No. 2. The bomb is hidden in the great seal of office that No. 2 wears, and is scheduled to explode during the transfer of power ceremonies on Appreciation Day. However, No. 6 keeps the bomb from being triggered while the old No. 2 is wearing the seal; once the new No. 2 has donned the seal, No. 6 hands the detonation device to the outgoing No. 2, who holds it as his guarantee of safe passage out of The Village.

There is little of the allegorical in this episode. A violent plot has been hatched; No. 6 foils it through (mostly) non-violent measures. Its most interesting elements include The Village's cynical manipulation of No. 6's noble weakness (in *GURPS* terms, a -10 point Code of Honor, especially towards women in distress) and the ongoing resistance of certain Villagers to their captivity (see "Jammers," p. 35).

## "Checkmate"

No. 6 is invited to participate in one of The Village's living chess games, in which each piece or pawn is played by a villager. He accepts the White Queen's invitation, and becomes her pawn. During play, a Rook moves without instructions, and is removed to the hospital for treatment.

Following the game, a conversation with the director of the white side reveals to No. 6 one way to distinguish prisoners from warders in The Village. Prisoners are sub-



missive; warders aren't. Once the Rook is released from the hospital, No. 6 meets him and tests his new theory. Sure enough, the Rook refuses to meet his eye. No. 6 recruits him to his latest escape plan and seeks out several more bona fide prisoners. Together, they construct a radio that mimics an airplane's Mayday broadcast.

Meanwhile, it has been decided to hypnotically induce the White Queen to fall in love with No. 6, so that she will follow him persistently. She is outfitted with an experimental device which detects and transmits her bio-emotional responses. Thus, when she is near No. 6 her pulse and respiration increase; when she senses danger to him (as when he is on the verge of escaping), they should increase dramatically and warn those monitoring her.

No. 6 begins to understand her sudden infatuation when he discovers the device; by destroying it, he is able to use its parts to complete the radio. Late one night, his escape team ties up No. 2 to incapacitate him, and begins broadcasting their Mayday. The *M. S. Polotska* responds, and No. 6 rows out to meet it, but the *Polotska* turns out to be a Village ship. Upon his return to The Village, No. 6 discovers the flaw in his plot. By taking command of the rest of his team, he convinced them that he was a warder, not a prisoner, and they betrayed him.

This episode deals with trust — who can trust, who can be trusted. By not trusting anyone and by keeping monitors everywhere, The Village obviously has the upper hand in this regard. The symbolism of chess, which recurs throughout the series, comes to the fore in this episode, helping to illustrate the roles everyone, warder and prisoner alike, plays in The Village.

## "Living in Harmony"

The standard opening sequence is replaced here with a Western variant. No. 6 appears as a horseman who finds himself in the town of Harmony, unable to leave. The town Judge recruits him as Sheriff, but he declines. He is soon arrested (for his own protection); while in jail he witnesses a hanging.

The victim was the brother of Cathy, a saloon girl; later that night she brings a bottle to the Kid (his guard and the Judge's muscle) and slips No. 6 the keys to his cell. He escapes, but is soon captured and dragged back to town. Back at the saloon a trial is held. No. 6 isn't charged, since he wasn't really a prisoner; instead, Cathy is convicted of abetting his escape, since she thought he was a prisoner when she helped him.

No. 6 agrees to be sheriff if the Judge will release Cathy, but still refuses to wear a gun. He is approached by a townsman who pleads with him to help end the Judge's reign of terror. When the townsman and Cathy are killed, No. 6 finally

straps on his gun (removing his badge) and guns down the Kid in a duel. A shootout in the saloon soon follows; No. 6 gets all of the gunmen but is then shot down by the Judge himself.

No. 6 wakes up in the saloon, wearing his standard Village garb rather than western gear; the Judge, the Kid, even a horse are all cardboard cutouts. He hears the Village band and, going over the hill, arrives back at The Village. He finds the Judge (No. 2), Cathy, and the Kid all in the Green Dome. It has all been a plot to confuse fact and dream, to induce him to spill his secret. His mind proves more stable than theirs, however — Cathy and the Kid return to Harmony, where he kills her once more and then falls to his death while taunting the Judge.

The primary allegory in Harmony is of The Village itself, and Harmony is thorough in its depiction of an alternate game world in which a *Prisoner* campaign can be set (see Chapter 3). This episode emphasizes No. 6's acceptance of violence only as a last resort (a trait he shares with secret agent John Drake) and his solid resolve to resist unreasoning authority, no matter what the circumstances.

## "A Change of Mind"

A two-pronged attack is made on No. 6's mind, using social pressures and scientific techniques. No. 6 is upbraided for his preference for privacy ("Now that could be taken as being antisocial.") and is brought before the council, not to defend himself, but to make a complete confession. When he declines, he finds the entire Village has turned against him: the Ladies' Appeals Subcommittee



visits him (appealing to him to convert), the *Tally Ho* editorializes against him, and finally no one in The Village will speak to him or even serve him at the cafe. He is "unmutual."

Meanwhile, frontal lobotomy is demonstrated to him as a method of insuring compliance. He is then drugged and made to believe that he has been lobotomized. (He hasn't really, because of the fear that he would lose too much valuable information and too many valuable skills.) Upon his release from the hospital, he is greeted enthusiastically by the Villagers as a healed man.

When he discovers he is being drugged, he turns the tables, passing the drug on to No. 86, his doctor, instead. As the drug wears off, he realizes that the lobotomy was a sham. He hypnotizes the now-susceptible No. 86 and then requests of No. 2 that he be allowed to address The Village from the Green Dome balcony, to recant his formerly unmutual behavior. However, in the middle of his speech, No. 86 appears and, on post-hypnotic cue, charges No. 2 with being unmutual.

She is instantly believed by the Villagers, and No. 2's latest scheme to uncover No. 6's secret is swept away by the resulting mob.

This episode once more challenges unscrupulous uses of science, both the hard sciences and the social sciences. It also gives another view of Villagers. In "It's Your Funeral," they are free-minded individuals willing to sacrifice themselves; in this episode, they possess not a single individual thought.

## "Hammer Into Anvil"

"Each man has his breaking point. You must be either hammer or anvil." No. 2 believes himself to be a hammer, and proves his breaking-point philosophy when he drives a prisoner to suicide. No. 6 vows to break him to avenge the suicide's death.

What follows is a primer in How to Provoke and Feed Paranoia. No. 6 first generates a general suspicion in No. 2's mind, then casts doubt on each of No. 2's most trusted associates, until there is no one left whom No. 2 trusts. No. 2 becomes convinced that No. 6 has been sent to test him.

At the conclusion of the episode, No. 6 confronts No. 2 in the Centrum, telling him, "Your first duty, if you suspected me of being a plant, would have been not to interfere — so you're guilty of sabotage. Who are you working for, No. 2?" No. 6 says, however, that he is not going to report No. 2's failure; No. 2 is going to report himself. Curled into a shivering fetal position, No. 2 does so.

This episode contains no special allegory; it is a straightforward challenge between a man with a solid position in his community (No. 2) and an individual (No. 6).

## "The Girl Who Was Death"

Welcome to the most fanciful of the 17 *Prisoner* episodes, one which takes place almost entirely out of the

context of The Village. The pretext, not revealed until the closing scene, indicates that the current No. 2 is grasping at straws: perhaps No. 6 will at least partially reveal his secret when telling a bedtime story to children.

The story: When another agent is killed, No. 6, once more a secret agent, is assigned to pursue the dead agent's case. A mad scientist has decided to send a nuclear missile to London, and the agent was on the track of the scientist's daughter, who calls herself "Death" and is at least as mad as her father.

Returning to the scene of the crime (a London cricket field), No. 6 avoids an exploding cricket ball, then follows a trail of murderous clues to a pub (a poisoned drink), a steam bath (suffocation by steam), a carnival's boxing arena (a challenge match), and finally the Tunnel of Love (an exploding radio — she's starting to repeat herself). A car chase ends at the ghost town of Witchwood, where No. 6 must dodge a machine gun, a trapdoor with electric spikes, and exploding cyanide candles.

When he emerges unscathed from these dangers, she abandons the subtle approach and begins lobbing grenades at him from a tower. He drives toward her in a handy bulldozer; she destroys it with her equally handy bazooka. Her job accomplished, she jumps into a waiting helicopter and returns to Dad.

No. 6, however, vanished not into ashes but down a convenient sewer. Emerging from the sewer, he hitches an unobtrusive ride on the helicopter and then follows her to a lighthouse, just offshore. At the lighthouse, he discovers that the scientist thinks he is Napoleon and that his henchmen are all dressed as field marshals. No. 6 overcomes the marshals as they struggle in the best Keystone Kops tradition, but is then captured by the scientist and his daughter. They leave him in the nose cone of the lighthouse/missile, but he turns the tables once more, escaping in their speedboat as the lighthouse explodes around them.

"Goodnight, children, everywhere."

## "Once Upon a Time"

Time is growing short, and No. 6 has still not revealed his secret, the reason he resigned. In desperation, No. 2 (the same No. 2 as in "The Chimes of Big Ben") decides to use Degree Absolute, a measure so extreme that he requires authorization before it can begin. He realizes that either he or No. 6 will not survive the ordeal. ("I am a good man — I was a good man. But if you get him, he will be better. And there's no other way, I repeat, no other way!")

Turning control of The Village over to his subordinates, No. 2, assisted by the Butler, takes No. 6 into a sealed room beneath the Green Dome, the Embryo Room. Having been electronically treated, No. 6 is taken through the ages of man, beginning with birth. At each stage, No. 2 is the figure of authority — his father, his proctor, his coach, his superior in the agency, his judge, his commanding officer, and finally his warden. As he establishes each figure, No. 2 asks No. 6 why he resigned; each time, though taken with the charade, No. 6 refuses to answer.

Eventually, No. 6 overcomes his fear of No. 2 and the number six; at that point, the tide turns and No. 6 assumes the role of authority figure. The Butler begins following his directions, not No. 2's. No. 2 is reduced to a weeping ruin and dies. The Supervisor appears, saying, "Congratulations. We shall need the body for evidence. What do you desire?"

"No. 1."

"I'll take you."

This episode, really the first hour of a two-hour finale, focuses on the perpetual struggle between No. 6 and The Village, the struggle for possession of an individual's private thoughts. The individual has won, and The Village acknowledges his victory.

## "Fall Out"

The Supervisor leads No. 6 and the Butler deeper underground, to a large cavern filled with mysterious apparatus, bustling green-gowned doctors and scientists, uniformed guards, and a white-robed audience. The audience is all wearing two-colored masks — black on one side, white on the other. Each member of the audience (about 30 or 40 total) is seated behind a small desk plaque: "Education," "Defectors," "Old Folk," etc.

At one edge of the cavern a large, upright metal cylinder protrudes from the rough wall, with a flashing blue light, identical to that in the council chamber in the Town Hall, mounted in its center.

A president, in red robes and judicial white wig, calls the assembly to order, praises No. 6 ("who must no longer be referred to as No. 6, or a number of any kind," but this synopsis will continue to do so for clarity), and initiates the transfer of power to No. 6. Meanwhile, the dead No. 2 from "Once Upon a Time" is lowered into the cavern and the scientists and doctors begin work to revive him.

The president starts a lecture on revolt, and as his first exhibit, has No. 48 brought before the assembly — "Youth, with its enthusiasms, which rebels against any accepted norms because it must, and we sympathize." No. 48 suddenly runs about the cavern until he is finally chased down, but not before he has thoroughly disrupted the assembly. He is pronounced guilty and the charge is read: "Breach of social etiquette, questioning elected authority, won't dress right, won't wear his number."

Next, the revived No. 2 is exhibited as "an established, successful, secure member of the establishment turning on and biting the hand that feeds him." Both No. 48 and No. 2 are secured below, awaiting sentence from No. 6.

Turning again to No. 6, the President presents him as a revolutionary of a different, more noble, calibre, and announces that he has a choice: he can assume leadership of The Village (presumably as No. 1), or he can freely leave. He requests that No. 6 address the assembly,

but No. 6's address is instantly and repeatedly interrupted by the masked audience.

The President finally asks if he is prepared to meet No. 1, to which No. 6 assents. Descending below the cavern, No. 6 is guided past Nos. 2 and 48 and ascends a stairwell. We realize that the stairwell is leading up into the metal cylinder at the edge of the cavern, and that it is a rocket.

At the head of the stairs, he finds a white-robed figure wearing a two-colored mask. The figure's robe prominently declares that he is No. 1. No. 6 grabs the mask away, revealing an ape face. He grabs the ape's snout, and it, too, falls away, revealing No. 6's face. No. 6 chases the figure around the room, up a ladder, and through a hatch, which No. 6 quickly locks.

Returning down the stairs, he overpowers the guards with the Butler's help. Donning the guards' robes, he frees Nos. 2 and 48 and all four emerge into the cavern, spraying machine-gun fire all about. With the control center about to explode, The Village is evacuated in a frenzy. Helicopters buzz away; the rocket is launched. The four jump into a tractor-trailer and drive away, emerging on the highway to London (which is nowhere near Morocco or Lithuania).

No. 48 stops along the way and begins thumbing a ride; No. 2 leaves the rig and heads for Parliament. Abandoning the truck, No. 6 and the Butler reach No. 6's flat; the Butler enters (the door opening automatically for him) while No. 6 drives off in his car, down a road identical to that in the opening sequence.

*Author's note: I find myself no more capable than those who have gone before me of providing a definitive explanation of all of the symbolism and allegory in this final episode. (Please excuse me if I omitted your favorite bit from the synopsis; there is simply too much to repeat it all.) McGoohan has said that this episode, and the entire series, have many explanations; I leave it to you to select your favorite.*

— David Ladyman



# BIBLIOGRAPHY

First and foremost among *The Prisoner* references are the tapes themselves. All 18 episodes (including the alternate "Chimes") are available in the U.S. through:

MPI Home Video  
15825 Rob Roy Drive  
Oak Forest, IL 60452  
1-800-323-0442

## Organizations

The Prisoner Appreciation Society, "Six of One," runs an information center at Portmeirion, where it holds its annual convention. Membership in the Society includes a subscription to an information-packed quarterly magazine, *number six*, lots of photographs and other memorabilia, and access to an extensive members-only catalogue.

For further information, send a long, self-addressed stamped envelope to either club office:

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## Publications

*The Official Prisoner Companion*

Matthew White and Jaffer Ali

Warner Books, Inc., 1988

Plot synopses and other notes on various aspects of the show. While not without errors, on the whole it comprehensively covers the series.

*The Prisoner & Danger Man*

Dave Rogers

Boxtree, upcoming (Fall, 1989)

The authorized history of both series, with plot synopses and lots of pictures.

*The Making of The Prisoner*

Roger Langley

Six of One, 1985

A short look at the production and creative decision-making of the series.

*Think Tank*

Roger Langley

Six of One, 1984

A *Prisoner* novel.

*Village World*

Max Hora

Six of One, 1987

Articles, essays and facts about *The Prisoner*.

*the prisoner, books a-d*

Dean Motter and Mark Askwith

DC Comics

These four books make up a 200-page, full-color graphic novel set 20 years after the end of the series, in which No. 6 and the final No. 2 find themselves once more at odds among the remnants of The Village.

*The Prisoner Files*

John Peel

Psi Fi Movie Press

Canoga Park, CA, 1986

Extensive synopses of the first three episodes, plus other material and photographs.

## Music

The TV series soundtrack album, *Prisoner Themes*, was compiled and edited by Larry Hall in 1985-86. It can be used as background music for a campaign session! It is available to members of Six of One.

## Background

The following material does not relate directly to *The Prisoner*, but is of potential interest to anyone seeking to design, or participate in, a *Prisoner* roleplaying game. Subjects covered include cinematic espionage, secrecy, alienation, weird science, surrealism, paranoia, and the various techniques used to control society.

*Danger Man I Secret Agent* episodes

*Mission Impossible* episodes

*Brave New World*, Aldous Huxley

*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*, Lewis Carroll

1984 and *Animal Farm*, George Orwell

*The Cyberiad*, Stanislaw Lem (especially with reference to mind transfer)

*Profession* and *The Feeling of Power*, Isaac Asimov

*Bill, the Galactic Hero*, Harry Harrison

The works of Philip K. Dick

Essays by Jorge Luis Borges and Douglas Hoffstadter



# INDEX

- "A, B and C," 8, 14, 20, 30, 31, 34, 50, 58, 59, 69, 70, 73; *synopsis*, 88.
- Address platform, 37.
- Advantages, 7.
- Adversary, 11, 56.
- Alerts, 29.
- Aliens, 14,50,51.
- Alison, 20, 22, 73.
- Alternate realities, 48-49.
- "Arrival," 5, 9, 13, 15, 17, 19, 20, 28, 34, 38, 44, 45, 55, 58, 59, 64, 78, 83; *synopsis*, 87.
- Atmosphere, 34, 63.
- Bandstand, 37, *see also Music*.
- Beach, 40-41.
- Bell Tower, 43.
- Bicycles, 45.
- Butler, 19, 20, 21, 38, 93, 94; *stats*, 21.
- Buttons, 19-20, 63.
- Cafe, 37.
- Campaigns, 4, 79-86; *beginning*, 55; *ending*, 66; *multi-GM*, 61-62; *outside*, 51; *planning*, 56-58; *plot development*, 58; *props*, 63; *TV series*, 59-61.
- Candy stand, 41, 76.
- Carnival, 22, 23, 33, 37, 45, 90.
- Cat & Mouse, 25, 39.
- Caves, 43.
- Centrum, 38, 44, 45.
- Ceremonies, 22.
- "A Change of Mind," 24, 25, 27, 29, 30, 34, 58, 59, 70, 73, 77; *synopsis*, 92-93.
- Character points, 67.
- "Checkmate," 5, 8, 17, 33, 34, 36, 43, 44, 60, 61, 64, 70, 74; *synopsis*, 91-92.
- Chess lawn, 25, 37.
- "The Chimes of Big Ben," 10, 15, 16, 19, 20, 22, 24, 25, 26, 28, 30, 34, 39, 41, 56, 58, 60, 64, 65, 73, 90, 93; *synopsis*, 87-88.
- Citizen's Advice Bureau, 41.
- Clones, 78.
- Clothing, 20-21.
- Cobb, 15, 64, 87.
- Committees, 25.
- Competitions, 19, 22.
- Computer, 28, 75, 76.
- Computer Room, 36.
- Confession, 30.
- Consistency, 4-5.
- Control Room, 32, 33, 36, 42, 43-44, 45.
- Corporations, 15, 50, 52.
- Court system, 27.
- Curfew, 26.
- "Dance of the Dead," 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 33, 34, 36, 43, 44, 45, 55, 56, 57, 59, 64, 74, 75; *synopsis*, 90.
- Death, 37, 64-65, 78.
- Degree Absolute, 14, 44, 77, 93.
- Diplomat, 9.
- Disadvantages, 7-8; *guard/observer table*, 33.
- Disharmonious, 30.
- Distrust, 62, 63.
- "Do Not Forsake Me Oh My Darling," 5, 9, 11, 15, 27, 32, 55, 64, 65, 69, 71, 72, 83; *synopsis*, 90-91.
- Drake, John, 36, 92.
- Dreams, 50, 69.
- Drugs, 73, 77, 93.
- Dutton, Roland Walter, 14, 15, 20, 44, 55, 57, 64,90.
- Education, 19.
- Election Day, 23.
- Encounters, 84.
- Escape, 56, 64, 66, 67, 85, 86.
- "Fall Out," 5, 13, 14, 16, 18, 27, 29, 30, 31, 33, 44, 65, 66, 67, 73, 77, 78; *synopsis*, 94.
- Fantasy, 50.
- Files, 27-28.
- Force fields, 74-75.
- "Free for All," 4, 7, 8, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 31, 34, 37, 41, 44, 58, 67, 69, 70, 73, 74, 78, *synopsis*, 88.
- Free sea, 37.
- Gadgetry, 74.
- "The General," 9, 11, 17, 19,28,30,33,34,41, 49, 56, 58, 61, 67, 71, 74, 75; *synopsis*, 89.
- General Stores, 39-40, 41.
- "The Girl Who Was Death," 5, 17, 43, 60, 64; *synopsis*, 93.
- Government, 23.
- Green Dome, 20, 38-39, 43, 93.
- Graveyard, 38, 40.
- Guards, 21, 33, 86; *disadvantage table*, 33; *template*, 33.
- "Hammer Into Anvil," 8, 3, 42, 43, 56, 59, 60, 61, 63, 64, 67, 76; *synopsis*, 93.
- Helicopters, 45.
- Horror, 50-52.
- Hospital, 36, 43.
- Housing, 42, 70, 83.
- Hypnotism, 69, 70, 71, 92, 93.
- Implants, 74.
- Information, 13, 15, 49, 53, 55, 56.
- "It's Your Funeral," 4, 11, 17, 19,22,30,31, 34, 35, 42, 45, 49, 56, 57, 58, 60, 73, 75, 76; *synopsis*, 91.
- Jammers, 34, 35.
- Jobs, 19; *see also Labour Exchange*.
- Journalist, 9.
- Kiosks, 36, 41,75.
- Kosho, 22, 25, 39, 42.
- Ladies Appeals Subcommittee, 25, 29, 92.
- Labour Exchange, 24, 39, 58.
- "Living in Harmony," 13, 48, 53, 64, 70, 73; *synopsis*, 92.
- Machinery, 75.
- Maid, 17, 25, 26, 34, 88.
- "Many Happy Returns," 13, 38, 43, 51, 56, 59, 60, 64, 65, 66, 90; *synopsis*, 89-90.
- Map, 13, 41, 44, *of The Village*, 46-47.
- Masters, 6, 7, 10, 13, 14, 16, 32, 36, 39, 42, 44, 49,50,52,66,91.
- McGoohan, Patrick, 3, 36, 94.
- Medieval, 53.
- Military, 8-9.
- Mind-switching, 32, 71, 72.
- Mind-wipe, 71-73.
- Money, 18.
- Music, 18, 19, 21, 25, 63; *soundtrack*, 95.
- Nadia, 10, 20, 34, 64, 87.
- No. 1,3, 16, 19,73,78,88,94.
- No. 2, 20, 30-31, 36, 38, 39, 41, 56, 62, 77; *sample stats*, 80; *template*, 31.
- No. 6, 35; *stats*, 35; *vindication*, 67.
- NPCs, 55, 59, 61.
- Numbers, 19-20.
- Nursery, 43.
- Observers, 16, 25, 28, 32-33, 36, 43, 45, 50, 59, 78, 90; *disadvantage table*, 33; *template*, 32.
- Old People's Home, 42.
- "Once Upon a Time," 14, 18, 30, 31, 65, 77, 78; *synopsis*, 93-94.
- Palace of Fun, 25, 39.
- Paranoia, 5, 8, 62, 63, 93.
- PCs, 55; *cover-up*, 66; *new*, 63.
- Peer pressure, 29.
- Penny-farthing bicycle, 45, 66; *emblem*, 20.
- Plot synopses, 87-94.
- Population, 20.
- Portmeirion, 40.
- Prisoners, 8-10, 35, 49, 50, 51, 55, 61.
- Props, 63.
- Psionics, 52, 73.
- Punishment, 26.
- Recreation Hall, 39.
- Resurrection, 77.
- Ringer, 62, 63.
- Rover, 26, 29, 37, 43, 58, 64, 87, 88.
- "The Schizoid Man," 10, 20, 22, 39, 43, 50, 58, 59, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 78; *synopsis*, 89.
- Science, 78; *old*, 69; *weird*, 58, 65, 68-69, 71, 76, 74, 77, 83, 88.
- Scientists, 6, 9, 15, 32, 36, 51; *mad scientists*, 49, 64, 68-69.
- Secrets, *see Information*.
- Seltzman, Professor, 9, 32, 56, 71, 83, 90.
- Shock treatment, 36, 58, 70.
- Shop, 40.
- Silent treatment, 29.
- Six of One, 1,40,95..
- Slogans, 17-18.
- Society, 17.
- Space, 52.
- Speaker Central, 44.
- Speedboats, 45.
- Speed learning, 71.
- Spy, 6, 8, 15,51.
- Stone Boat, 40, 57, 60, 84.
- SuperBeam, 76.
- Supervisor, 28, 32, 45, 55, 73, 94; *stats*, 32.
- Surgery, 77.
- Surrealism, 57.
- Surveillance, 19, 26, 28-29, 43, 52.
- Tally Ho*, 18,29,41,63,93.
- Taxis, 36, 44.
- Technician, 9-10, 32.
- Telepathy, 73, 74, 89.
- Telephones, 5, 41.
- Termination order, 44.
- Town Council, 24-25, 27.
- Town Hall, 23, 25, 36-37, 41, 43, 74.
- Transportation, 44-45.
- Umbrella, 21,26, 31.
- Underground, 36, 39, 41, 43-44.
- Units, *see Money*.
- Unmutual, 29, 30.
- The Village, 12; *alternate*, 48-49; *arrival*, 10; *encounters*, 84; *Festival*, 22; *good side*, 66; *housing*, 42, *map*, 46-47; *Portmeirion*, 40; *psi*, 52; *Rules*, 25-26; *typeface*,63.
- Villagers, 34-35.
- Village Voice, 19, 22, 26, 29, 34, 36, 44, 63.
- Warders, 10-11, 19, 30, 32, 33, 34, 38, 43, 45, 49, 50, 51, 56, 58, 62, 63, 74, 83, 86.
- Weapons, 33, 78.
- Westerns, 53, 92.
- White Queen, 17, 64, 70, 91, 92.



# I AM NOT A NUMBER! I AM A FREE MAN!

Welcome to The Village. You'll be staying here for a long time. Experience the tension and thrills of No. 6, The Prisoner, fighting to maintain his freedom against No. 2 and the masters of The Village. Only this time, you aren't sitting in front of the TV, unable to help. This time, you're involved, a prisoner yourself. What will you do when you find yourself captured, drugged, harassed, your every move anticipated by unseen monitors? Will you give in? Or will you fight back against the forces of conformity and defeat? Just how strong are you?

This is the authorized roleplaying worldbook for *The Prisoner*, the classic British series starring Patrick McGoochan. It describes The Village and its inhabitants, both warders and prisoners. It also covers the weird sciences available to No. 2 (the Chairman of The Village), and tells how to prepare and run a *Prisoner* campaign, in The Village or elsewhere, with special emphasis on roleplaying paranoia and keeping the players guessing! A short adventure, "Arrival," introduces a party of prisoners into The Village.

Also included are a bibliography of *Prisoner* material and synopses of all seventeen episodes.

This book is designed for use with the *GURPS Basic Set* (Third Edition), but can be used as a sourcebook for any other roleplaying game system.

"Where am I?"

"In The Village."

"What do you want?"

"Information."

"Whose side are you on?"

"That would be telling."

We want information . . .

information . . . information."

"You won't get it."

"By hook or by crook, we will."

"Who are you?"

"The new No. 2."

"Who is No. 1?"

"You are No. 6."

"I am not a number! I am a free man!"



Written by David Ladyman  
Edited by Steve Jackson  
Illustrated by John Robinson



ISBN 1-55634-161-X

SJG012956030

Made in the U.S.A.

STEVE JACKSON GAMES