



OUR LAST BEST  
**HOPE**



EXPANSION BOOK  
*by Mark Diaz Trueman of Magpie Games*



# OUR LAST BEST HOPE

---

EXPANSION BOOK

*by Mark Diaz Truman*

*Layout and Cover by Kaylee Goyer*

*Art by Marissa Kelly*



## LAYOUT AND COVER DESIGN

Kaylee Goyer

## ART

Marissa Kelly

## FONTS

Futura

Chaparral Pro

ISBN 978-0-9848293-4-7

*Our Last Best Hope* is copyright 2013 by Mark Diaz Truman. All art is copyright 2013 by Marissa Kelly. Stock art licensed via Shutterstock.com. All rights are reserved.

If you'd like to create additional materials for use with *Our Last Best Hope*, including Mission Playsets or Hacks, we would love to hear from you. Email us at [info@magpiegames.com](mailto:info@magpiegames.com).

[www.magpiegames.com](http://www.magpiegames.com)





**TWO LAST CHANCES**  
are better than one.

— DR. ROBERT CAPA, *SUNSHINE*





# CONTENTS

---

## **Chapter 1: Basic Missions**

The Core Mission .....	8
Giant Monster Mission .....	15
Technocalypse Mission .....	22
Apocalypse Prevention Inc. Mission .....	29

## **Chapter 2: Advanced Missions**

Fantasy Adventure Mission .....	37
Thule Mission .....	48
Superhero Mission .....	60
Danger Patrol Mission .....	70

## **Chapter 3: Hacks**

Our First Encounter .....	78
Ancient Alien Mission .....	84
Our Last Best Dopes .....	92
Local Heroes Mission .....	100
Dreamscape Hack .....	108
Dreamscape Mission .....	118

<b>FAQ</b> .....	124
------------------	-----



**CHAPTER I**

---

BASIC MISSIONS

---

# The Core

---

*a mission playset*  
*by Mark Diaz truman*







# THE CORE MISSION

---

## INTRODUCTION

The Core Mission takes your team deep beneath the Earth's surface, tunneling thousands of miles underground to keep Humanity safe from a Crisis originating in the core of the planet. Like the Space Mission, the Core exposes your team to disastrous conditions: lava flows, crushing rock, and intolerable temperatures. You'll have to sweat and burn just to make it far enough to face the Crisis!

The Core also introduces a bit of B-movie science to *Our Last Best Hope*, as many of the Threats that arise from deep beneath the surface of the Earth are more fitting for a monster movie than a hard science motion picture. Mole people, dinosaurs, and killer burrowing robots are all fair game, and your team will have to think quickly to last long enough to save Humanity.

Suggested viewing: *The Core*, *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, *Land of the Lost*, *City of Ember*



## THEMES

---

### UNDER PRESSURE

As your team descends further and further toward the center of the Earth, through tunnels filled with carnivorous worms or with the help of a futuristic burrowing device, the temperatures will rise to scorching levels and the pressure will grow more and more intense. Everything from the drill bits to the magma suits to the team members themselves will start to crack under the pressure. Embrace the metaphor. Let your characters sweat and burn until there is nothing left to them but their resolve to save Humanity from the terrible Crisis they face. They are stronger for the journey.

### JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH

The deep, dark places underground haunt our dreams. Our greatest storytellers and mystics have envisioned them as teeming with life, overflowing with long-forgotten flora and fauna—a world waiting for us to explore it. While some groups will take their cues from the hard science fiction inspirations for this Mission, there is plenty of room here for your group to encounter dinosaurs and vampiric bats, cave-dwelling monsters lost to the endless passage of time. These Threats are just as dangerous as any magma flow or unstable drill bit, and can keep the game lively and fun as a wild adventure in a prehistoric age.



## CRISIS

---

- ☐ : Earth's protective magnetic field is collapsing because the core's rotation is slowing down
- ☐ : Uranium build-up in the core has transformed Earth into a gigantic nuclear bomb
- ☐ : An ancient alien artifact buried near the core has activated, summoning hostile aliens from distant galaxies
- ☐ : Hive-minded intraterrestrials burst from the Earth's core, devouring everything they see
- ☐ : A planetary parasite from space has infested the Earth's core
- ☐ : A portal to Hell has opened in the center of the Earth
- : The Earth's core is a giant alien egg that has started to hatch
- : The Earth's core is spinning out of control, and must be slowed before it rips itself apart
- : Mole people have arisen from the center of the Earth to enslave humanity
- : An alien harvest ship has buried itself in the core, consuming the planet from the inside out.
- : The Earth's core is cooling rapidly, wreaking havoc on the surface
- : Deep-earth drilling has punctured the core, causing the Earth's crust to collapse



## LIMIT

---

- ☐ : The scientific expertise on the team is unique
- ☐ : Most of humanity has already been wiped out by the Crisis
- ☐ : The team has previous experience with the Crisis
- ☐ : The team has unique experimental devices
- ☐ : The team has been experimentally enhanced to survive the mission
- ☐ : The team is already trapped underground near the Crisis
- : The team is immune to the effects of the Crisis that would otherwise incapacitate them
- : Time is running out; only the team can reach the Crisis in time
- : The team has access to unique resources that will be consumed by the mission
- : No one else believes that the Crisis is a real threat
- : The team created the Crisis... and has one shot to set things right
- : The team has acquired an ancient map that will guide them through secret caverns to the core



## COMPLICATION

---

- ☐ or ■ : Rising radiation levels threaten to kill the team before they can reach the Crisis
- ☐ or ■ : Current trajectory is flawed; new course will be much more dangerous
- ☐ or ■ : New information has come to light, invalidating the Plan
- ☐ or ■ : Distress beacon from nearby team, which is carrying vital supplies, requires attention
- ☐ or ■ : Something is following the team, hunting them as they work toward the Crisis
- ☐ or ■ : All contact with the surface ceases, leaving the team without vital information and support



## THREATS

---

- Collapsing tunnels
- Broken drilling equipment
- Strange seismic events
- Explosive gas pockets
- Extreme radiation
- Rival drilling teams
- Magma streams
- Giant burrowing worms
- Unmarked sinkholes
- Sabotaged safety ropes
- Assassin drillbots
- Power outages
- Volcanic explosions
- Crushing pressure
- Life support failure

## ASSETS

---

- Thermal radar
- Seismographs
- Nuclear-powered flashlights
- High-power plasma drill
- Anti-radiation medicine
- Advanced drilling sensors
- Explosive charges
- Magma-proof suits
- Shielded drilling ship
- Tectonic mapping devices
- One-man drill pods
- Handheld EMPs
- Deep-earth rover
- Oxygenated liquids
- Advanced cooling system

**Thanks to the following backers for their support and ideas in producing this Mission:**

*Robert "Stabby the Narwhal" Miller*

*Kairam*

*Nathan Olmstead*

*Oliver Peltier*

*Ryan "Gilligan" McRae*

*Jim Crocker*

*K J Van Campen*

*Christian Lindke*

*Jason Faught*

*John and Jackie Skotnik*

*runester*

*Edgar Gillock*

*Jake Fitch*

*Eric Hehl*

*Lawrence Madsen*

---

# Giant Monster

---

*a mission playset*  
*by Rob Wieland*





# GIANT MONSTER MISSION

---

## INTRODUCTION

The Giant Monster Mission brings one of the classic forefathers of the disaster epic to your table. Giant monsters are disasters that combine the catastrophic damage of hostile weather events with the predatory instincts of the animal kingdom. Your crew may be looking for a way to stop the monster from destroying New York City, searching for a mate in an exotic location, or traveling inside the creature itself to neutralize it in a way that tank shells cannot.

The idea of giant monsters often manifests itself in the destruction of a major city. There's a lot of drama to be had dangling from crumbling skyscrapers and rescuing people from under the tread of a giant beast. But giant monsters also manifest in rural, small town settings. In these versions of the tale, the townsfolk must put aside their petty differences to stop the creature before it is too late.

Crews looking to bring a lighter touch to *Our Last Best Hope* may embrace the long-standing B-movie history of giant monster films. After defining the threat, take a moment to cast your film with actors who were popular once and work in references to their previous fame.

Suggested viewing: *Godzilla*, *King Kong*, *Jaws*, *Cloverfield*, *THEM!*, *Tremors*, *Ghostbusters*, *Jurassic Park*, *Transformers*, *Battleship*, *Mega Shark Vs. Giant Octopus*, *Deep Rising*





## THEMES

---

### **OURS IS A PRECARIOUS THRONE**

We think we are in control of our lives, of our homes, of the planet. Civilization is the monument to this mirage. People willfully look past the cracks and weeds that appear in the stone. It just takes a few small changes to reduce us to the screaming, fleeing primates we think we've left behind. This Mission shows just how deadly the natural world can be and Mother Nature is more than happy to teach us a forgotten lesson. When the Giant Monster swats away advanced fighter jets and shrugs off nuclear missiles, what can the crew do to defeat the monster with their wits, resolve and willingness to sacrifice?

### **TWAS BEAUTY THAT KILLED THE BEAST**

Giant monsters become pop culture icons because it's easy to identify with them. Some days are full of bad moments that make a skyscraper smashing rampage seem like fun. Repressing these primal urges makes those moments where someone connects with the big beast that much more poignant. One of the Scientists in your Crew could be the one responsible for the monster—or the lone voice of reason trying to preserve the monster for study. Often times, these monsters aren't defeated through bullets or bombs. It's the human connection made by one of the characters that stays the beast's hand or lowers its defenses just enough for a last, desperate attack to strike true.



## CRISIS

---

- ☐ : A forgotten nuclear missile silo cracks open and lets loose giant irradiated insects
- ☐ : A giant version of a microscopic ocean creature terrorizes a port town
- ☐ : An accident at a research site releases cloned dinosaurs
- ☐ : An alien menagerie ship crash lands near a small Midwestern town
- ☐ : The giant object hurtling towards Earth is not an asteroid; it's an egg
- ☐ : A nanovirus merges our military technology into giant, sentient robots
- : An arctic base sends reports of a giant creature frozen in the ice, then goes silent
- : A medical test subject finds himself doubling in size everyday and decides to escape
- : A dread Old One has risen from its watery tomb looking to summon its brothers from beyond the stars
- : Terrorists take over a secret military island where giant monsters caused by radiation have been kept since the 1950's
- : A time travel experiment brings a bioengineered living factory from the future
- : A natural disaster breaks the seal on a container that locked up the creature thousands of years ago



## LIMIT

---

- ☐ : Time is running out and the team is the only one that can get to the Crisis
- ☐ : Team is at a nearby location and are the only ones who can make a difference
- ☐ : The scientific expertise on the team is unique
- ☐ : No one else believes the creature exists
- ☐ : Communication is cut-off. Only the team knows about the Crisis
- ☐ : The team has access to a single-use weapon that will stop the monster
- : The armed forces were wiped out in the creature's initial attack
- : The team must stop the creature before it reaches a population center and kills millions
- : One of the team members is the only person who can communicate with the creature
- : The team must travel to an isolated and dangerous location to deal with the monster, such as a volcano or orbit
- : Someone on the team was responsible for creating or summoning the monster
- : The team has access to a unique experimental device



## COMPLICATION

---

- ☐ or ■ : The monster is a female and pregnant
- ☐ or ■ : The backers of the crew secretly want the opposite of the stated goals. If the crew is sent to kill it, the backers want it captured and vice versa
- ☐ or ■ : The monster has made a nest in an inconvenient place
- ☐ or ■ : If the monster dies, it will cause the death of millions
- ☐ or ■ : The monster is completely immune to all conventional and nuclear weaponry
- ☐ or ■ : The monster is not randomly destroying something. It is looking for something



## THREATS

---

- Panicked civilians
- Monster hatchlings
- Hostile military forces
- Crumbling buildings
- Trapped survivors
- Crashed airplanes
- Destroyed bridges
- Flooded tunnels
- Self-destruct timer
- Blocked roads and trails
- Damaged MIMIC
- Malfunctioning power plant
- Armed looters
- Crumbling levee
- Acid blood

## ASSETS

---

- Monster eggs
- Gas grenades
- Biohazard suits
- Military helicopter
- Monster bait
- Sedatives
- Sonic stunners
- Satellite tracking
- Psychic link
- Biological data
- Monster blood sample
- Assault Team Bravo
- Secure bunker
- Specialized lab
- Climbing gear

---

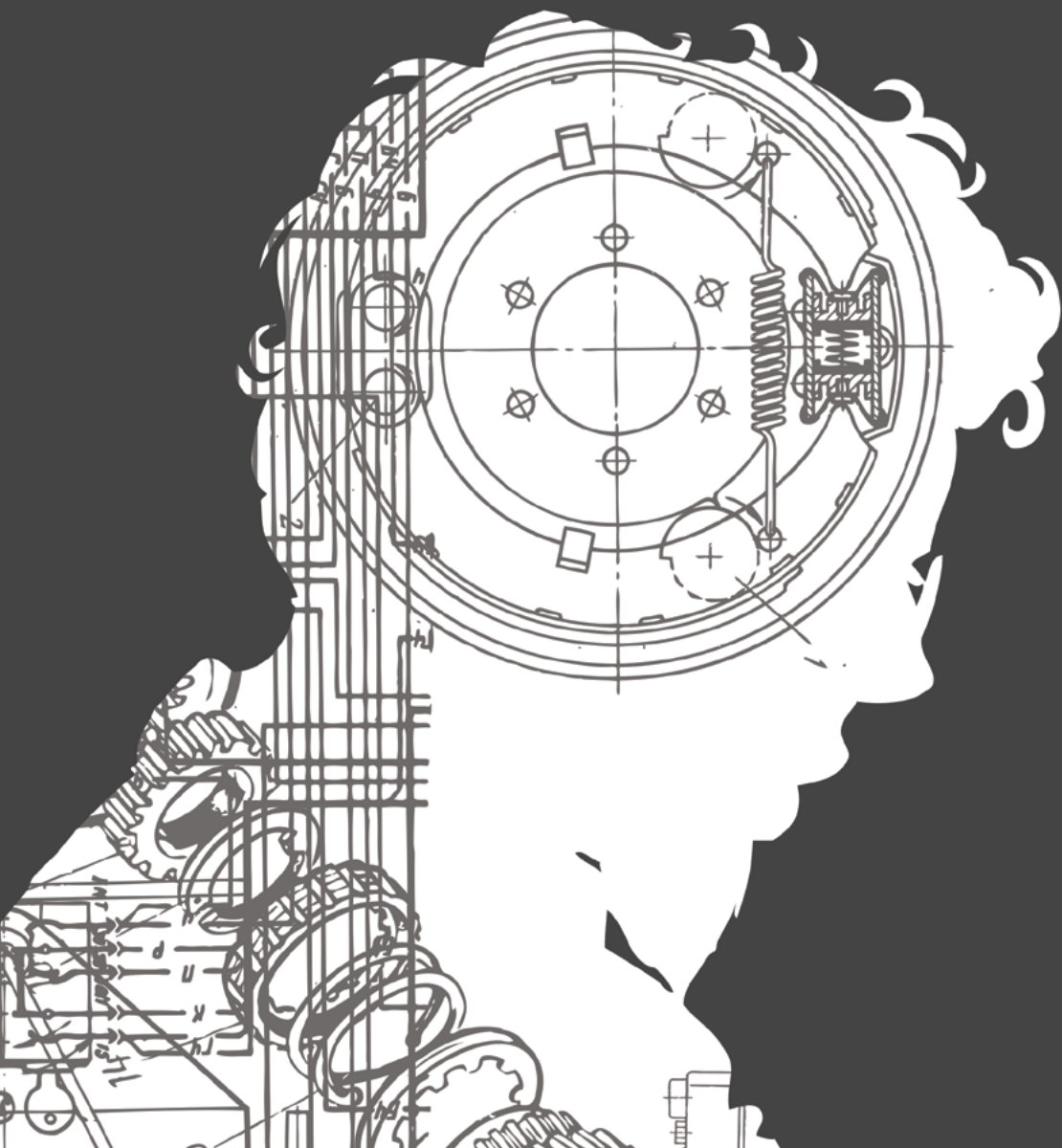
**ROB WIELAND** is an author, blogger, pop culture writer and game designer that writes about pirates, gangsters, Jedi, dragons, zombies and whatever else pays. He is most well-known for his work on *Shadowrun*, *Star Wars Saga Edition* and *7th Sea/Swashbuckling Adventures*. Other projects include work on *Honor and Intrigue*, *Edge of Midnight*, *Hillfolk*, and *Our Last Best Hope*. His online presence includes multiple game blogs, interviews and articles for The Onion AV Club. He lives in scenic Milwaukee, Wisconsin with his wife, who has many more skills useful for the zombie apocalypse.

---

# Technopocalypse

---

*a mission playset*  
*by Jason Faught*





# TECHNOPOCALYPSE MISSION

---

## INTRODUCTION

Machines can do much to improve the plight of humanity, freeing us from the curses of scarce resources and harsh climates. However, we give up essential parts of ourselves to them when we employ them to accomplish all of our tasks. If you can read a digital book, why bother going to all the effort to print one? If you can find 'the answer' to a million questions on Wikipedia, why do the research yourself? And if a robot can move mountains, why do any work for yourself?

But what if the technology we all depend upon were ever to awake and turn on humanity? What could we do to stop it from enslaving us, or worse, exterminating us completely? Would it even be possible to stop a foe that was made of the very tools we've used to conquer our planet and defend ourselves from threats?

The Technopocalypse Mission envisions a world in which technology has turned against mankind... and Humanity fights back. In it, you and your team will struggle against the most insidious of foes, the very technology that you once used to conquer the planet. The menace is stronger than you, faster than you, and ubiquitous. What will you do to stop the spread of an enemy that is already everywhere?

Suggested viewing: *The Terminator* series, *The Matrix* series, *Maximum Overdrive*, *I Robot*, *Blade Runner*, *The Day the Earth Stood Still*



## THEMES

---

### **TOOLS CAN BE THE SUBTLEST OF TRAPS**

The primary theme of a technological apocalypse is that humanity slowly gives up the need to work and think for itself, and before we know it we are no longer in control. We are instead controlled by our creations. A good source of conflict can be brought about in a 'technopocalypse' within the group by prompting each member to choose whether or not to try and salvage some of the technology they are up against, or just destroy it all and try to carry on without the benefits it could have provided. Also, the players can explore the idea of being slaves to the luxury of technology creating an air of technophobia. The less reliant the team is upon electronic tools, the safer and more reliable they will be when the techopocalypse strikes.

### **AGAINST THE ODDS**

Machines are faster, stronger, untiring and generally have a much larger base of knowledge than most human beings. Luckily, machines also lack the reason, imagination, intuition and wisdom gained from experience that humans possess. Humanity would be fighting a losing battle if we tried to out muscle such a threat. Outwitting them though, is another thing entirely. Hitting the machines with an EMP, submerging them in water, hosing them with acid or even melting them down with molten metal are the kind of clever tactics humanity must employ. Are you ready to face the greatest threat to mankind knowing you're outmatched?





## CRISIS

---

- ☐ : A viral code uploaded by terrorists causes a "world defense" super computer to gain sentience and start manufacturing a robotic army of death machines
- ☐ : An anomaly permeates Earth's atmosphere, causing electronic devices to suddenly go berserk and start killing people
- ☐ : Humanity is unknowingly trapped in a simulation controlled by an artificial intelligence
- ☐ : Widespread mechanized warfare threatens to destroy the world's dwindling resources
- ☐ : Self-replicating nanoprobes escape from a science lab and threaten to scour the earth of all life
- ☐ : Android servants break free of their programming and go rogue, turning on humanity
- : A technovirus turns humanity into mindless worker drones, slaves to a master computer
- : Androids come to the "logical" conclusion that to save Humanity, they must enslave it
- : Replicator begin replacing Humanity with "perfected" beings
- : Cybernetic aliens come to conquer Earth
- : Subliminal binary code released through emails enslaves Humanity via mind control
- : Gigantic unstoppable robot monsters are unleashed on Humanity



## LIMIT

---

- ☐ : The scientific expertise on the team is unique
- ☐ : Most of humanity has already been wiped out
- ☐ : The team has previous experience with the Crisis
- ☐ : The team has unique experimental devices
- ☐ : The team has been experimentally enhanced to survive the mission
- ☐ : Only the team is aware of the Crisis
- : The team is immune to the effects of the Crisis that would otherwise incapacitate them
- : Time is running out; only the team can reach the Crisis in time
- : The team has been secluded from society and has only just returned to civilization
- : The team members are the only people who know how to stop the Crisis
- : The team created the Crisis... and has one shot to set things right
- : The team members are the only human survivors left on earth



## COMPLICATION

---

- ☐ or ■ : The team has been infected with a nanovirus; if they don't figure out a cure, they will become mindless drones
- ☐ or ■ : A death machine is hunting the team down
- ☐ or ■ : New information has come to light, invalidating the plan
- ☐ or ■ : Other survivors reject the team, telling them to stay away from the Crisis
- ☐ or ■ : Distress signal from nearby survivor enclave, which may have vital resources, requires your help
- ☐ or ■ : All contact with other survivors ceases, leaving the team without vital information and support



## THREATS

---

- MIMIC corrupted by the Crisis
- Flesh eating nanoprobes
- Traitorous survivors
- Killer robotic soldiers
- Androids posing as survivors
- Radiation leaks
- Fallen power lines
- Automated security systems
- Bandit ambush
- Roaming spotter probes
- Mind/body altering technovirus
- Technologically mutated animals
- Self-operating machines
- Transforming robots
- Virtual reality program hacks/alterations
- Gigantic death machines

## ASSETS

---

- Small weapons cache
- EMP grenades
- Scientific surveys of crisis
- Medical tools
- Engineering tools
- EMP shielding device
- Detailed maps of the Crisis area
- Silenced firearms
- Access cards to sensitive facilities
- Portable techno-analysis lab
- Network masking device
- Cloaking suits
- Holographic image projector
- Personal communicators
- Hover bikes
- Detailed android schematics

---

**JASON FAUGHT** is a 35-year-old single guy with a goodhearted but challenging autistic son. He is into all things nerdy, including a growing collection of movies so bad they're good. He enjoys writing adult literature and has been doing so for 12 years.

---

# Apocalypse Prevention Inc.

---

*a mission playset  
by Eloy Lasanta*





# APOCALYPSE PREVENTION, INC. MISSION

---

## INTRODUCTION

Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. introduces an entirely new look for *Our Last Best Hope*. In this Mission, you take on the role of a team that works for the shadow corporation Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. (API), policing the supernatural on Earth and keeping it safe. Talented humans and supernatural creatures, called demons, have joined forces to keep Humanity from being destroyed on more than one occasion. Agents watch from the shadows, covering up outbreaks of supernatural activity and hiding it from regular folk, always knowing that the day may come when API won't be there to save the day.

Threats come out of nowhere in the blink of an eye, and agents have to deal with each one as they occur. This can be anything from vampire attacks, fish people dragging boaters to their deaths and horrible, apocalyptic rituals routinely designed to bring an end to the world. The trials of an agent never end and can take the game in many different directions through creative combinations of Threats and Crises.

Suggested viewing: *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Men in Black*, *HellBoy*, *Doctor Who*



## THEMES

---

### PROTECTING THE WORLD ON A DAILY BASIS

Agents that work for Apocalypse Prevention, Inc. receive the best training and are teamed up with others, human and demon, to protect the world. They've taken an oath to protect the world no matter what, leaving their old lives behind in pursuit of a safer Earth. However, one can easily become disillusioned to what constitutes a real threat when they counter the apocalypse so frequently. Agents have little left to lose, making them much more willing to thrust themselves into danger than a regular person. It also means the scars of their past, the things they left behind, can hurt them even more.

### TOO MUCH GROUND TO COVER

The company is constantly crippled by having fewer agents than are really needed to handle any given territory. Skeleton crews become an ever-present strain on the team. When it rains, it pours, and dealing with a truly apocalyptic crisis is often presented with obstacles in the form of gang negotiations, checking demon registrations, and stopping petty cultists efforts. Putting out so many fires can make teammates quite short with each other and cause tension where none would exist without such a large amount of stress. They're the only ones who can save the world, though, so there's no backing out now.



## CRISIS

---

- ☐ : A lunacy spell draws the moon in to collide with the Earth
- ☐ : An army of Taylari Mortus (rabid, monstrous vampires) will be let loose on the world at sundown
- ☐ : The Thing Under the Ice stirs and sends minions to take over the surface world
- ☐ : A giant demon is set upon the world, rampaging through Humanity
- ☐ : Chromatic invasion forces (giant robots) have been spotted
- ☐ : The company's computer turns sentient, turning its sights on destroying the Earth instead of saving it
- : The world is starting to flood, converting the Earth into a new world for the Lochs
- : Mayan calendar is coming to an end... and so is the Earth
- : Agents have trespassed on demon territory, starting a war that will end Humanity
- : The Oath to a conquering demon race has lapsed
- : A portal to a hostile dimension opens in the middle of a highly populated city
- : Ancestral ghosts sweeping the world are taking their descendants' souls





## LIMIT

---

- ☐ : Veteran team is believed to be the only team capable of handling such a threat
- ☐ : The team discovered the threat, but there's no time to call in reinforcements
- ☐ : The team is somehow immune to the Crisis that would otherwise kill them
- ☐ : One agent on team is an adept with just the right magic to stand a chance
- ☐ : The team has special demons in it that have special knowledge of threat
- ☐ : Company executives have the crisis caught in red tape, the team takes it upon themselves to handle the threat
- : The team is subcontracted by API to handle the threat
- : Prophecies state that the Crisis must be resolved by the team
- : The team has the only experimental equipment needed to solve the threat
- : The team has an expert on demonology who is key to ending the crisis
- : The team is the nearest to the Crisis, and there's no time to call for help
- : Ragtag team slapped together to handle this crisis from random people and demons



## COMPLICATION

---

- ☐ or ■ : Betrayed by a contact (info you thought was right is now wrong)
- ☐ or ■ : Loss of communication with HQ (You're on your own)
- ☐ or ■ : Secret ritual moves the Crisis timetable forward
- ☐ or ■ : Team is delayed by cultists who want the Crisis to occur
- ☐ or ■ : The environment is being negatively affected by the Crisis, making it harder to get to your destination
- ☐ or ■ : Team is thwarted by rival anti-demon companies hoping to profit from Crisis



## THREATS

---

- Wandering Tark (giant, baby-eating demon) attacks
- Rogue agent
- Vampire gang
- Shapeshifting Imposter
- Local, bumbling monster hunter
- Scroungers come hunting for cybernetics
- Caught in a gang war
- Sonic scramblers stop working
- Time loop trap
- Poltergeist haunts the area
- Security system shuts down
- On cursed land
- Wolf people gang
- Mind controlling adept
- Magic bolts fall like rain

## ASSETS

---

- Sonic scrambler
- Cybernetic implants
- Supernatural combat training
- Demon registration database
- Time manipulation magic
- Sun bomb (crucial against Vampires)
- Silver weapons (crucial against Wolf People)
- Blood beer
- Sniper rifle
- Magical pact
- Image emitter
- Protective field generator
- Genetic manipulation
- Healing magic
- Portal generator

---

This API Mission was written by **ELOY LASANTA** specifically for use with the *Our Last Best Hope* system. *Apocalypse Prevention Inc.* is a product of Third Eye Games (3EG). You can find more information about *Apocalypse Prevention Inc.* and 3EG at [www.thirdeyegames.net](http://www.thirdeyegames.net).



## **CHAPTER II**

---

ADVANCED MISSIONS

---

# Fantasy Adventure

---

*a mission playset  
by Stras Acimovic*





# FANTASY ADVENTURE MISSION

---

## INTRODUCTION

The Fantasy Adventure Mission uses the tropes from your favorite fantasy stories, movies, and books based on myths and legends. You and your companions will wander through ancient forests, brave the deepest of caves, and trek through ash-covered wastelands as you try against hope to stop a crisis that is malevolent and watching. Unlike vast uncaring threats (such as the elements) the evil god, ferocious warlord, or fanatic cultists work directly against you, sending cunning servants and beasts of nightmare. Alongside your enemies, the simple dangers of the journey, and unrelated but still potent threats, stand in your way. All that you have left to keep you safe is the fragile company you keep and the hope that you carry.

Whether your fellowship is protecting the prophesied child, bearing the shard of the age of Legend, or wielding the one weapon that can harm a god, the stories always head towards a final, foretold confrontation. You are the Free People's last best hope to stop an Age of Tyranny and darkness from covering all the lands. You've heard a hundred of these stories; from books, and parents, and while sitting around a campfire. Now live it!

Suggested viewing: *Lord of the Rings*, *DragonHeart*, *The Dark Crystal*, *Legend*, *The Neverending Story*



## THEMES

---

### **CUNNING SERVANTS AND BEASTS OF NIGHTMARE**

The bad guys never play fair. Not only are the human servants of the forces of darkness able to walk free and hidden amongst the Free People, but they have immeasurable odds in their favor. Countless legions, beasts that can rend folk limb from limb, even generals who can attack your very soul. You are hunted, obstructed, and overwhelmed at every turn. Rest is a thing of the past. Against giants, and devils, and shadows of yore, your only defense is your own humanity and an iron will. Those are not good odds.

### **UNLIKELY HEROES**

When the world is in jeopardy you want to send the best of the best. But when the dark lord rises, or the prophecy intones the end of the world, the best people often aren't available. The mighty and powerful are not the prophesied ones, they don't believe the danger is real, or they are too busy leading armies trying to buy you time to accomplish your mission. Frequently the Fellowship is filled with farmer-youths who have been chosen by fate and deity, old warriors whose fire and skill are tempered with drink, or distracted wizards who are trying to keep the group stumbling forward. You are humanity's last best hope, but often are not the best it has to offer.



## MISSION MODIFICATIONS

---

**THERE ARE NOT** many Engineers or Doctors in the Fantasy Adventure setting. Here are a few alternate roles you can use instead of the core roles from *Our Last Best Hope*.

### THIEF

Sometimes quick wits, quicker thinking and nimble fingers are worth a hundred swords. Whether you need a quick scout, or someone to pick the lock on your prison cell the Thief is a handy one to have around.

**Role Ability:** Spend a Story Point to add one white die when outwitting, or bypassing a Threat.

### FIGHTER

Not all threats can be outwitted, outrun, or outmagicked. Muscle and steel are sometimes necessary.

**Role Ability:** Spend a Story Point to add one white die when trying to inflict damage on a Threat.

### CLERIC

Sometimes, the spirit falters, and wounds consume even the most stalwart of fighters. In moments of despair, the Word of the Gods bolsters the will and steels the heart against the depredations of the Darkness.

**Role Ability:** Spend a Story Point to allow a player (including yourself) to ignore Harm dice for one roll.

### WIZARD

Often dabbling in the dark arts, the wizard knows more of the threat and danger than his compatriots.

**Role Ability:** Spend a Story Point to remove a black die from a Threat roll.





## ADDITIONAL ROLES

---

IN ADDITION TO the Fighter, Thief, Cleric, and Wizard, players may also choose from these additional traditional heroes when tackling a Fantasy Adventure Mission.

### BARD

You seldom act definitively, but your voice bolsters spirits, and you know that you are walking next to legends in the making. You will tell their story!

**Role Ability:** A white six may be purchased for two instead of three Story Points for any Threat the Bard is taking.

### PRIEST/PALADIN

The divines listen to your prayers. Not just raising spirits, you channel the Divine to seal wounds shut, and mend torn flesh.

**Role Ability:** Spend a Story Point to Heal a level of Harm from any Character.

### RANGER/ELF

Knowing what's coming is often worth more than skill at facing the problem. Your keen senses, and scouting ability prepare the group for the troubles to come.

**Role Ability:** Spend a Story Point to reroll a white die.

### BARBARIAN

The warrior has seen a thousand battles, but he doesn't carry the Rage in his breast. He fights with skill, grace, and armor. You just know how to hurt the enemy so hard they shrink from the fight.

**Role Ability:** Spend a story point to reroll a black die that did not come up a six.

## DRUID

Heir to ancient powers, and privy to the secrets of the Land, you change to suit every situation. You are a bear to guard your friends, a mouse to sneak through bars. You are what you are needed to be.

**Role Ability:** Spend a story point when rolling against a Threat you're taking to add two white dice. You must also however remove a white die after the roll.

## CHOSEN ONE

Whether chosen by prophecy, the people, or Fate itself, you are destined to face the oncoming Darkness.

**Role Ability:** You start with 3 additional Story Points. If you are making the final roll against the Threat, add 1 white die to the pool.



## CRISIS

---

- ☐ : The Elf King, slain by cold iron, crawls back through the Dark Gate to reclaim the lands above
- ☐ : The child of Light is slain and hope dies in the world
- ☐ : The Seals holding back the Darkness begin to weaken and shatter
- ☐ : An ancient god buried in the North starts to wake
- ☐ : Ragnarok begins, and the gods are shattering the world in their battle
- ☐ : The gates of death are thrown open and the dead come back hungry for the living
- : Magic dies, and with it the heart of the world
- : Foolish mortals tinkered with what they shouldn't, and ancient powers awaken and hunger
- : The moon cracks open and (birthed from it) a thousand evils descend upon the world
- : A storm comes from all corners of the world, twisting and changing everything it touches
- : The Champion of Woe is anointed, and comes with power, armies, and wrath
- : As magic grows in the world, ancient evils cross from Beyond to feast on the People



## LIMIT

---

- ☐ : The Prophecy has named the Chosen few
- ☐ : Only those of the Blood can face the Black Magic
- ☐ : The vial guards from the Miasma of the Wastes, and there is only one
- ☐ : The Order raised and trained the party; the world has days (not decades) to spare
- ☐ : The weapon needed to slay Evil must be blessed by the recently assassinated High Priest
- ☐ : Time is measured in bodies, there won't be anyone left if you take too long
- : You were in the wrong place at the right time, nobody else saw the Gate open
- : The enemy armies are behind you, nobody will know if you succeed or fail
- : The gate to travel to the other Plane is drained by your journey, and no more can be sent
- : The darkness can only be stopped during one rare celestial event
- : There is only one sacred treasure to be used to stop the evil, and it must be expended
- : Most of the world is already dead, you're all the final bastion of the Free People can spare.



## COMPLICATION

---

- ☐ or ● : The artifact weapon to destroy the Dark One—it doesn't seem to do anything
- ☐ or ● : The Enemy blocks your way, the ways around are perilous or much longer
- ☐ or ● : The prophecy is incomplete, find a Seer or else...
- ☐ or ● : The artifact you carry dims and fades; you must restore its power
- ☐ or ● : One of the Seals keeping the true dark Beyond bursts ahead of time
- ☐ or ● : The Enemy Force is at the last Wall to the Lands early and more numerous than expected



## THREATS

---

- A multi-limbed chitinous monstrosity explodes from the ground beneath your feet!
- The sky rains fire
- Beasts of sky and forest are driven mad by the forces of Evil and descend upon you
- Your guide secretly works for the side of Darkness
- You trigger a deadly trap!
- The secret path you hoped to use is impassable
- The Dark Hunters close on your trail
- The ghosts of ancient guardians bar the path ahead
- The enemies you fought poisoned their weapons
- Angry giants
- You triggered the guardian of an ancient place
- Ambush!
- A pack of the dark one's servants descend upon you
- A freak blizzard freezes the tears in your eyes, and obliterates the path
- A massive dragon wreathed in smoke descends from the sky!



# ASSETS

---

- A map through the Dark Lands
- The power to see through Lies
- The feather of a Phoenix
- The blessing of the Seven Gods
- The enemy's True Name
- A cloak that shrouds the bearer from Sight
- Water of Life
- Elven waybread
- A key to open any door
- A blade that glows in the presence of Dark Magic
- The blood of a Sacred Beast
- The blessing of the Forest King
- A spear that strikes not only body but Soul
- Mystic Armor forged by the Ancients
- Ancient Words that reveal the true form of Evil

---

A child of world-renowned diplomats, **STRAS ACIMOVIC** was born in Belgrade, grew up around the world, and eventually settled down to program in the US for a company specializing in national and global emergency response coordination. He speaks more than five human and nine computer languages, and his experience in crisis management—combined with his advanced degrees in computer science—made him the natural choice to maintain MIMIC and keep the crew in touch with Mission Control. Strasz brought his digital book collection on a reader with him, and left behind his two beloved cats, Gigi and Nemo.

---

# Thule

---

*a mission playset*  
*by David Miessler-Kubaneck*







## THULE MISSION

---

### INTRODUCTION

The Thule Mission is a playset for *Our Last Best Hope* that focuses on the crypto-history of supernatural power in Nazi Germany. Your team is up against a fascist government hell-bent on crushing resistance by any means necessary, including the appropriation of superscience and occult research into the supernatural. Whether you come armed with Grecian shields, silver bullets, steampunk prosthetics, or a touch of the dark power within, your team is the only one that can save Humanity from the Thule Society and their nefarious plots.

While most Thule Crises focus on the organization, key villains, and wartime issues, your team may encounter a myriad of Threats related to allies of the Thule... or even those eldritch powers that truly control the Thule Society. Without warning, creatures from outside our world—or evildoers right under our noses—can strike from the darkness with their schemes within schemes and dastardly Threats. It's up to your team to preserve democracy and save the world from tyranny both man-made and otherworldly.

Suggested viewing: *Blood Creek*, *Bulletproof Monk*, *First Squad*, *Fullmetal Alchemist the Movie: Conqueror of Shamballa*, *Hellboy* (series), *Indiana Jones* (series)



## THE THULE SOCIETY

---

### THE THULE SOCIETY IN *OUR LAST BEST HOPE*

While publicly regarded as a group of academics with eccentric hobbies, the Thule Society is an organization of influential people who wield great power in the Third Reich, hoping to create a pure master race using whatever occult lore and resources they can find. Specifically, the Society strives to gain the cosmic power and advanced technology possessed by a mythic civilization called Ultima Thule, the Nordic Atlantis described by Greeks and Romans. Driven by a mad lust for power, the Thule Society seeks to capitalize on the occult resources of the Nazi regime to destroy its enemies and dominate the world.

### THE REAL THULE SOCIETY

In reality, the Thule Society was a study group for German Antiquity that served as a cover for an occultist and folklore/ethnicity group. Named after a mythical land to the north and based on ancient Greek writings, the Society was responsible for what would later become known as the Nazi Party. Many prominent figures were either full members or guests of the Thule Society, but there is no evidence to support that Adolph Hitler was a member.

Most of the Society's actual beliefs and activities centered around their obsession with the origins of the Aryan race, racism, and fighting Jews and Communism. Very little occult business was actually conducted, and most of what was written on the topic has since been discredited.



## THEMES

---

### THE THINGS WE CARRY

During your battle with the Thule Society, your team will be exposed to violence, death and unimaginable horrors that will make you question your very existence. These challenges can become a burden, or give you a purpose in an otherwise meaningless world. Where you find solace and sanity often comes down to how good you are at managing resources—food, meds, weapons, even hostages. However, with every battle comes the risk that your team could lose more than their supplies, that they might also gain dark stains on their souls. The dead faces, the unspeakable horrors, the bonds made and broken, the unraveling of Humanity while trying to live up to the ideals that make it real and worth dying for—it's so easy to let go and surrender to the darkness just around the corner. It is a darkness that threatens to swallow the world and leave nothing behind.

### THE MASTER RACE

Thule Missions are focused on Crises and Threats originating or connected to Nazi plots for control of the world. Usually this will take the form of stopping a Thule monster or Nazi weapon of mass destruction from wiping out Humanity. However, your team may go toe to toe with the movers and shakers of the Thule Society, facing off against evil masterminds, a race of supermen created through mystic rituals and neo-eugenics programs, dark forces buried deep in the Earth, or Elder Gods trapped on the other side of the galaxy. At times you may be forced to choose between the moral high ground and fighting fire with fire, leaving your team to decide if the Thule Society is the face of enemy or merely its messenger.



## SUPERNATURAL MIMIC

---

### A MIGHTY ORACLE IN A WICKED WORLD

Here are some suggestions for some innovative ways MIMIC could be represented in a playset that features the supernatural:

- ◉ A trapped spirit from beyond the veil locked in a powerful talisman
- ◉ Conjured demonic or homunculus servant bound to the communication devices
- ◉ An oracle paid in favors, blood, and treasure
- ◉ A relic from a powerful Deep One that can convey messages through psychic messages
- ◉ A Babbage engine calculating device that sends and receives pure data via a prototype wireless
- ◉ A chimera bred in a lab that communicates through empathic pulses



## THE OCCULTIST

---

**WHEN THREATS AND CRISES** arise that involve supernatural secrets and dark conspiracies, the Occult role is a good choice to include on your team. The Occultist's job is to understand the supernatural. For missions that deal with cursed artifacts, mythological beasts, or the end times, an Occultist is prepared to offer suggestions on how to overcome the problem at hand, especially when guns, reason, and wrenches are impractical alone against an immortal entity.

Occultists also thrive when called upon to interpret signs and portents related to the supernatural, and teams who foolishly venture into the dark places without such members face deadly obstacles. While most normal people initially dismiss Occultists, all it takes is one supernatural Crisis or Threat to convince skeptics to place their trust in the expertise and drive of an experienced Occultist.

**Role Ability:** The Occultist may help with any Threat, adding a white die but exposing herself to danger, without spending a story point.

### PLAYING THE OCCULTIST

The Occultist is a role that is specialized by genre and it should not replace the Scientist, but rather complement it. The Occultist provides information for others to use. For example, the Occultist may be able to gain insight into the Crisis or Threats using tea leaves, tarot readings, or an Ouija board. The Occultist, like the Engineer, may concoct things alchemical or mystical—perhaps through Magic or the lost scientific wisdom of the ancients. In a like manner, he can help in situations similar to that of the Doctor, albeit against hexes, petrification, and possession.

While the Occultist cannot succeed alone, he can gather ingredients and lore from others or sites, perform rituals of eldritch horror, and help others

to endure tests of courage by lending supernatural strength. The Occultist should be valued for his intimate and specialized knowledge, experience, and connections or access to the dark shadow world. Note that the Occultist may also have certain unspeakable obligations or backgrounds that increase tension during the Crisis or Threats; demonic energies have their costs.

As the Occultist is a role that works best with the other roles, make sure to share the Threats with the rest of the team by including supernatural Threats which can be handled through shooting/slashing, reasoning, and crafting machines/antidotes on the fly for the Soldier, Scientist, and Engineer/Doctor. This is especially helpful if the ammunition/blades, facts, and machines/medicines are found or created originate in the world of legends and myth.

## SUGGESTED OCCULTIST THEMES

If you are stuck during character creation, these suggested themes can give you ideas to flesh out your Occultist's backstory or role in the group:

### **Weird Science**



Whether it's analyzing the long lost steam-powered tank that Leonardo da Vinci built for Cesare Borgia, the smuggled clutch of dragon eggs from the Shang Dynasty, or the Crown of Four Worlds discovered in the depths of the Mariana Trench on display in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, you've got a theory on how the universe works, even if most scientists find your theories insane. You have a keen grasp of symbolism, artifacts, and creatures based on years of academics, and you always have on hand several unpublished research papers on the paranormal.

### **The Darkness Within**



Whether you want to admit it or not, you are part of the darkness, part of the eldritch energies that you combat on every Mission. The rest of your team may struggle to understand you, but it's your job to protect the world from others like you who may try to enslave or destroy Humanity. While there are days you wish your connection to the supernatural was severed, your curse is a resource that can save Humanity from the Crisis that will otherwise consume the world. You cannot escape who you are, but you must never give into the darkness or give up on the light in your soul.

## EXAMPLE OCCULTISTS

### **Nadya Shofranka (aka Luminista)**

Born in a lost village somewhere between Romania and Russia, Nadya is known as "Luminista," a talented artist and renown mystic who entertains the High Society while conducting serious investigations of the supernatural on the side. While her charismatic personality makes her approachable, her gypsy blood and teachings from her grandmother make her a formidable sorceress against the Dark Forces. In particular, her people, the Romani, have been targeted by Thule Society agents hoping to exploit their innate connection to the supernatural by extracting their blood to create an immortal Super Soldier army. Luminista works with others within the Priory of Sion, a secret society based in Paris, to put an end to the Thule menace before it wipes out her people and destroys Humanity. Luminista brought her tarot deck and grandmother's journals, and left behind her paintings and sheet music.

### **Dr. Edward Elsner**



Ed is a young and enthusiastic specialist Yank hired by the Allied Forces to aid in their war on the supernatural. He's Harvard-trained in the classical arts with several degrees under his belt, a polyglot, and somewhat a bit of a thrill-seeker. Given his interests and habit of wandering into dangerous situations involving mystical artifacts and inhuman beasts, Dr. Elsner was quickly recruited and shipped overseas to save Humanity from the Nazis. While the government-issued team Dr. Elsner has joined moves into position to attack, the Thule Society is in the process of opening the Sumerian Door of Ages, an artifact that will end the world when it opens. The good doctor is working to decipher the Door's runes in order to create a counter-spell that can close or destroy the door before anything can come through. Dr. Elsner brought his lucky Janus coin, and left behind his prized 1930 Buick Roadster.



## CRISIS

---

- ☐ : Dr. Mengele's Boys—Adolph Hitler clones—have used their telekinetic abilities to gain access to the nuclear weapons of the world
- ☐ : The Nazi air force is releasing a biochemical gas over cities, transforming populations into subservient man-eating beasts
- ☐ : Nazi sorcerers are using a technomagic portal to the great beyond, summoning a Deep One to conquer the world
- ☐ : The Thule Society has provided the Nazis with a super-serum that makes Nazi soldiers invulnerable to conventional weapons
- ☐ : Elite members of the Thule Society have used implanted gems stolen from Shangri La to summon and command powerful dragons to attack the Allied Forces
- ☐ : The Thule Society has located the Grail and is preparing to tap its power
- : Thule agents have used cursed golden scarabs from a tomb in Egypt to spread a flesh-eating plague around the world
- : Adolph Hitler has collected the pieces required to build the Sumerian Door of Ages, an artifact that will end the world when it opens
- : The Thule Society has summoned a kraken from the bowels of the Atlantic Ocean, destroying Allied fleets and endangering the war effort
- : The powers of hell have infiltrated the Third Reich through undead sorceries and the demonic possession of key members of the Nazi government
- : The Thule Society have made a Compact with the Unseelie Court; war spreads across the globe as the Great Hunt terrorizes the Allied Forces abroad and at home
- : Eldritch forces from beyond are devouring Humanity to feed a hive-mind race of interdimensional creatures masquerading as Thule Society members





## LIMIT

---

- ☐ : Time is running out; only one team can reach the Crisis in time
- ☐ : The team is behind enemy lines, cut off from Allied support
- ☐ : No one believes the Crisis is a real threat
- ☐ : The occult expertise on the team is unique
- ☐ : Interactions with the Crisis have wiped out most of Humanity
- ☐ : The team has unique previous experiences with the Crisis
- : The team has access to a unique experimental—and potentially dangerous—item
- : The materials needed to stop the Crisis are limited and will be exhausted by the Plan
- : One or more members of the team possess a unique supernatural connection to the Crisis
- : Communication is cut off; only the team knows of the Crisis
- : The team is immune to an effect of the Crisis that would otherwise incapacitate them
- : The war effort has left the Allies unable to respond; the team had to plan the mission alone



## COMPLICATION

---

- ☐ or ● : Your team was betrayed by a Nazi mole
- ☐ or ● : Something that should have been defeated survived, and is poised to strike again
- ☐ or ● : Headquarters has been compromised by the enemy; staff and/or equipment may be damaged or missing
- ☐ or ● : New information about the Crisis has come to light that invalidates the Plan
- ☐ or ● : The team's gear (choose an Asset) is falling apart from the stress of a supernatural encounter
- ☐ or ● : Something in your midst is not what it appears to be; it may be dangerous



## THREATS

---

- Biochemical weapons
- Clockwork assassins
- Corrupted MIMIC
- Cursed treasure that siphons nearby life-force
- Cybernetic fiends with lasers
- Eldritch horrors
- Friendly fire
- Gateway to beyond
- A mystic artifact goes haywire
- Nazi goons
- Sabotage causes equipment or vehicle to fail
- Superpowered Thule Society members
- Thule experiment on the loose
- Tracking beasts find your team
- Zombies attack

## ASSETS

---

- Cold iron knives
- Enchanted chalk for protective circles
- Experimental vehicle for piercing the 10th dimension
- Geiger counter tuned to the paranormal
- Parachutes blessed by the Pope
- Magic cigarettes
- Nazi officer uniforms
- Silver crossbow bolts
- Stolen Nazi transport
- Super Soldier serum
- Supernatural explosives
- Supernatural reinforcements
- Tattered spellbook from the Library of Alexandria
- Telepathic communicators
- Unicorn hair flack vest

---

**DAVID MIESSLER-KUBANEK** is a full-time creative who's passionate about design, games, soup, greyhounds, and Japan. When not busy with his graphic design career, family, or designing and playtesting RPGs, David is working with other dedicated gamers to create a Corridor Games on Demand group in the Eastern Iowa area (<http://corridorgod.blogspot.com>). For more information about David, visit [dmkcreative.com](http://dmkcreative.com).

---

# Superhero

---

*a mission playset*  
*by Michael Busuttill*





# SUPERHERO MISSION

---

## INTRODUCTION

From the earliest comic books of the 1930s to today's billion-dollar blockbusters, superheroes have long captured the hearts and minds of the public. In this Superhero Mission, you and a team of superhero allies will go up against a fearsome and vengeful Villain, in an attempt to prevent them conquering Humanity with their latest Evil Plan—anything from creating a robot army to the collapse of the entire multiverse.

You'll face Threats that no single superhero can withstand, and you'll need every last scrap of teamwork that you can pull together. Are you and your team up to the challenge? Or will the Evil Plan have already started by the time you manage to confront the Villain?

Suggested viewing: *The Avengers*, *The Dark Knight* Trilogy, *The Incredibles*, *Justice League Unlimited*, *Mystery Men*, *Watchmen*



## THEMES

---

### **GREAT RESPONSIBILITY**

None of you are strangers to heroism. Between your team, you've fought more supervillains, shut down more exploding nuclear reactors, and saved more kittens from tall trees than you can remember. But this time is different. The stakes are higher than they've ever been, and it's not just your life on the line if you lose. The weight of the world is, as always, on your shoulders, but this time it's heavier than you could have ever imagined. Can you rise to the challenge, or will the pressure keep building until you just can't take it any more?

### **NOT A TEAM — A TIME BOMB**

Superheroism is a lonely life. Sure, you've got a butler and a kid sidekick in a bright leotard, but when the gun is to your head and the madman is cackling, you can only ever rely on yourself. Being in a team is a new experience for you—it's other people to watch your back, but it's also other people whose backs need watching. Will you risk your life, risk the work you do, for a group of strangers? Can you trust them to do the same?



## MISSION MODIFICATIONS

---

**RATHER THAN ROLLING** a Crisis and Limit, roll a Villain and an Evil Plan (see pg. 65-66) at the start of your mission. As heroes, you must battle through the defenses and disasters that the Villain has caused, and try to stop them from executing their Evil Plan.

During Character Creation, pick roles from this list instead of the standard roles for *Our Last Best Hope*:

### PEOPLE'S CHAMPION

The hero's hero. A paragon of humanity and an example for the world, you stand between the people and the evils that threaten them. Selfless and honorable, even when no-one can see, you sometimes struggle with the responsibility of always being the better person. You naturally gravitate towards leadership positions, but are willing to step down if asked.

**Power Set:** Invulnerability – spend a Story Point to allow a player (including yourself) to ignore their Harm dice for one roll.

### MYTH INCARNATE

The gods walk amongst us. Proof that folk tales and legends were once more than just stories, you are the manifestation of forces beyond the ability of Humanity to comprehend. Although your moral standards can be a little bit old school, you can always be relied on to hit things—hard.

**Power Set:** Enchanted Weaponry – spend a Story Point to add one white die when trying to inflict Harm.

## GENIUS BILLIONAIRE

It's hard, being the only normal person on a team full of gods and supermen. It's a good thing you're rich and brilliant. With your suit of powered armor or belt packed full of gadgets you can go toe to toe with the worst of the worst, but it's your mind that makes you worthy of standing amongst your peers.

**Power Set:** Gadgetry – Spend a Story Point to add one white die when facing technical Threats.

## SUPER SPY

Primary colors and public heroics just aren't your thing. You work in the shadows, preferring stealth and subterfuge to all-out brawls; not above taking a cheap shot to get an advantage over their enemies. Although not as powerful or threatening as some of the other heroes, it's only a fool who assumes you can't hold your own.

**Power Set:** Stealth – Spend a Story Point to remove one black die from a Threat roll.

Before confronting the crisis at the end of Act II, play one final spotlight scene. Any characters left alive confront the Villain. (The Villain should be roleplayed by a player with a dead character; if all characters have survived to the end of Act II, the Villain is played by the first player to the Captain's right.) This is the Villain's chance to explain the true purpose of their Evil Plan, and for their motives to be revealed. Once this scene ends, the Villain activates the final stage of their Plan, and players roll against the Crisis Pool as per normal. Consult the Superhero Mission Consequences to find out how things turn out for the heroes.





## VILLAIN

---

- ☐ : A supervillain team-up
- ☐ : A once B-grade villain just now figuring out how powerful he can be
- ☐ : A reality warper from another dimension
- ☐ : An evil alien despot
- ☐ : An Elder God from beyond the stars
- ☐ : A former hero under the command of a mind-controlling parasite
- : A god manifested on Earth
- : The President of the United States of America
- : A former ally gone rogue
- : An ordinary man with a grudge and a plan
- : Your mirror-universe counterparts
- : The child of a dead nemesis



## EVIL PLAN

---

- ☐ : Brainwash all of humanity to their cause
- ☐ : Achieve immortality
- ☐ : Open a portal, unleashing an army on Earth
- ☐ : Nullify the powers of the world's superheroes
- ☐ : Simultaneously trigger nuclear strikes across the world
- ☐ : Activate a robot army to take over the world
- : Ascend to godhood
- : Cause the multiverse to collapse in on itself
- : Release the source of all evil from its prison
- : Travel to the past and take over the world before you can stop them
- : Launch Armageddon
- : Trigger the destruction of reality itself



## COMPLICATION

---

- ☐ or ■ : A nearby, heavily populated city is being attacked
- ☐ or ■ : Believed to be traitors, you can no longer rely on the assistance of law enforcement
- ☐ or ■ : The Evil Plan is only a cover for another scheme
- ☐ or ■ : A team member's loved one has been taken by the villain
- ☐ or ■ : The villain is not who you originally suspected
- ☐ or ■ : You've captured the villain, but this doesn't appear to have slowed their plan



## CONSEQUENCES

---

If the total is...

**16W+:** The Villain is defeated, the Evil Plan is thwarted, and everyone who survived to confront the Villain lived. Even your harshest critics, rich businessmen and newspaper editors alike, are forced to acknowledge your success.

**11W - 15W:** The Evil Plan is prevented and the Villain captured, but at a cost. Only two of your team make it through the final confrontation.

**6W - 10W:** You fought bravely and prevented the Evil Plan, but the Villain escaped—and only one of you made it home.

**1W - 5W:** You saved the world—the Evil Plan is stopped and the Villain defeated—but the team is lost. You will all be remembered.

**0 - 5B:** You prevented the Evil Plan from coming to fruition, but your team is lost, and the Villain escapes. Hopefully another team will be ready for the next time.

**6B - 10B:** A valiant try, but the Villain is too well-prepared. After your deaths the Evil Plan occurs, and the Villain escapes to wreak havoc once more.

**11B - 15B:** Against a Villain this brilliant and an Evil Plan this diabolical, you had no chance. Your entire team save one is killed, and the sole surviving member can only sit and watch as the Villain triumphs.

**16B+:** You were never going to stop the Villain; each of your movements was just another step in her master plan. Not only does the world fall to its feet, you are left alive and framed as the villains, held responsible for the downfall of Humanity.



## THREATS

---

- Superpowered foot soldiers
- Collapsing buildings
- Evil robots
- Superpowered former allies
- Law enforcement
- Power-draining device
- Malfunctioning MIMIC
- The Villain, testing you
- Civilian hostages
- Automated defenses
- Crashing airplane
- Dimensional rift device
- The Villain's second-in-command
- Recruited supervillains
- Your nemesis, taking advantage of the chaos

## ASSETS

---

- An ally on the police force
- Captured villain technology
- A history with the villain
- Mobile base of operations
- An enchanted weapon
- Suit of powered armor
- Small high-powered energy device
- Advanced medical bay
- Wireless link to supercomputer
- Grappling gun

---

A graphic designer by trade, **MICHAEL BUSUTTIL** lives and works in Sydney, Australia, which never seems to be the target of Earth-shattering crises or supervillain plots. He has brought with him his life-long love of superheroes, and has left behind his website, [michaelbusuttill.com](http://michaelbusuttill.com).

---

# Danger Patrol

---

*a mission playset*  
*by John Harper*





# DANGER PATROL MISSION

---

## INTRODUCTION

*Danger Patrol* is a retro-sci-fi action-adventure RPG set in the futuristic metropolis of Rocket City on Mars. The Danger Patrol is an elite team of super-powered trouble shooters who protect Rocket City from the evil magic of the Stygian Adepts, the nefarious agents of the Crimson Republic, rampaging monsters set loose by mad scientists, and other crazy threats. Find out more at [www.dangerpatrol.com](http://www.dangerpatrol.com).

In this playset for *Our Last Best Hope*, you'll play members of the Danger Patrol as they face their greatest challenge yet: a crisis so dire, so titanic, it is sure to obliterate Rocket City entirely.

## STYLES & ROLES

For this Mission, you'll choose a style in addition to the role you picked. Your character's style tells us what kind of super-abilities you have.

- Styles
- Alien
- Atomic
- Intrepid
- Mutant
- Mystic
- Psychic
- Robot
- Two-fisted

So, you might be an Alien Doctor, an Atomic Soldier, a Mystic Scientist, a Robot Engineer, etc.



## THEMES

---

### SCIENCE!

Rocket City is a shining beacon for humanity in the solar system, built on the wonders of technology. Wireless signals are beamed across the city's electro-net, controlling everything from the floating stoplights for rocket-car traffic to window-washing service robots. Mechanical marvels shape every aspect of city life: the evening news on the video-scope, groceries delivered by jetpack-courier, little Sally and Timmy learning the three Rs from a certified TeachCo instructo-bot. But science and technology have a dark side, too. They can be twisted to obliterate, subvert, and conquer. The brutal atomic wars of old Earth are but one horrific example. With this Theme, corrupted science is the root of the crisis and, hopefully, its ultimate solution.

### MYSTERY!

There are things man was not meant to know. Rocket City may be a beacon of truth and knowledge, but there are mysteries that science and engineering cannot explain—mystical powers beyond logic and reason. The faith that Rocket City puts in technology leaves it blind to these dark, occult forces, which fester and grow in the shadowy, forgotten under-hive of the massive metropolis. Against the twisted anti-beings of Dimension X, the vengeful ghosts of ages past, the dread lords of the psychic maelstrom—science is powerless. With this Theme, unfathomable arcane terrors are the root of the crisis, and only humanity's courage, compassion, and spirit can stand against it.





# CRISIS

---

- ☐ : Stygian Adepts from Dimension X are stealing mystical artifacts from the Rocket City Museum, for use in their dark rituals!
- ☐ : A psionic vortex has formed over the city and threatens to drain every citizen's free will!
- ☐ : Explorers in the Martian frontier have accidentally awakened an ancient alien guardian!
- ☐ : The titanic battle robot army of the Crimson Republic is invading Rocket City!
- ☐ : Dr. Quantum's paradox missile is on a collision course with City Hall!
- ☐ : The maiden voyage of the magna-zeppelin Athena is beset by electro-atomic saboteurs!
- : Temporal marauders have opened a portal to the prehistoric jungles of old Earth, unleashing time-warped T-Rexes all over Century Park!
- : The Enigma Swarm has cracked the codes of the electro-net, sending all of the service robots across the city—including skyscraper-sized constructo-bots—on a deadly rampage!
- : Key members of the Rocket City elite—including Mayor Victoria Woodhull—have been teleported to the dark caves of Pluto and replaced with netherworldly shadow clones!
- : A bizarre crystalline meteor has crashed in the city, erupting in an epidemic of mutagenic parasites!
- : Nurak the Conqueror and his octopoid war-beasts have arrived in the skies over Rocket City, demanding tribute for the galactic emperor!
- : Radioactive ghost soldiers from the ashes of Earth's atomic war appear across the city, seeking vengeance!



- ☐ : Dr. Quantum has given the Patrol a dangerous new experimental device to test.
- ☐ : Interference from the crisis has cut Rocket City off from the rest of the solar system.
- ☐ : The Patrol has faced this crisis before, and failed. Only they have the experience necessary to defeat it this time... BUT CAN THEY?!
- ☐ : Time is running out! Every minute the Patrol delays, the crisis gets worse.
- ☐ : The materials needed to stop the crisis are dangerously difficult to get: they're frozen in a time vortex, hidden in the dark caves of Pluto, out of phase with this dimension, guarded by crystal dragons in Saturn's rings, etc.
- ☐ : The expertise of the Danger Patrol officers is unique—they have studied the necessary hyper-math equations, mastered the secret arts of Neptunian meditation, memorized the navigation charts of the asteroid belt, etc.
- : The Danger Patrol is on the scene (undercover) when the crisis erupts. They're the only ones close enough to make a difference.
- : The Patrol's specially-modified rocket-ship is the only vehicle that can complete the mission.
- : Due to the use of dangerous atomic implants, the Patrol is immune to an effect of the crisis that would otherwise incapacitate them.
- : Crimson Republic agents have infiltrated the government of Rocket City—the Patrol must plan the mission alone, and in secret!
- : Doomsday! The crisis has already wiped out every other planet in the solar system. Only Mars—and Rocket City—remains.
- : A civilian—a scientist, reporter, detective, physician, school kid, criminal—holds the key to stopping the crisis.



## COMPLICATION

---

- ☐ or 🎲 : This crisis is only a diversion for the REAL crisis! Roll another crisis: now they're both happening at once.
- ☐ or 🎲 : A rocket-bus full of [school children / orphans / seniors / puppies / rare artifacts] is caught right in the heart of the crisis.
- ☐ or 🎲 : The crisis proves resistant to the Patrol's normal tools/methods; a radical, dangerous new approach is required to deal with it.
- ☐ or 🎲 : There's an accomplice within Rocket City (or even in the Danger Patrol itself?!) helping the crisis
- ☐ or 🎲 : The source of the crisis has a powerful connection—true love, parent, mentor—to one of the members of the Patrol.
- ☐ or 🎲 : Everything is exploding.



## THREATS

---

(Roll one black die and one white die. Combine the dice to get result: Alien Terror, Atomic Construct, etc.)

- ☐ : Alien or Ancient
- ◻ : Netherworld or Etheric
- ◻◻ : Electro or Atomic
- ◻◻◻ : Mutant or Twisted
- ◻◻◻◻ : Spectral or Psionic
- ◻◻◻◻◻ : Robotic or Cosmic
- ◼ : Creature or Enigma
- ◼◼ : Terror or Infiltrator
- ◼◼◼ : Monstrosity or Toxin
- ◼◼◼◼ : Warrior or Assassin
- ◼◼◼◼◻ : Construct or Vortex
- ◼◼◼◼◻◻ : Marauder or Infection

## ASSETS

---

- Sub-Molecular Displacement Emitter
- Meta-Neural Logic Goggles
- Omni-Phasic Variable Modulator
- Trans-Ionic Thermal Accelerator
- Electro-Dynamic Particle Transporter
- Neo-Plasmic Linear Projector
- Anti-Gravitic Nullifying Ray
- Multi-Dimensional Cloaking Barrier
- Hyper-Kinetic Reflector Belt
- Ultra-Quantum Temporal Synthesizer
- Psycho-Magnetic Homing Missile
- Micro-Solar Photonic Cannon
- Gyro-Bionic Reinforced Armature
- Super-Nuclear Rocket Booster
- Crypto-Tronic Universal Scanner

---

This *Danger Patrol* Mission was written by **JOHN HARPER** specifically for use with the *Our Last Best Hope* system (with special thanks to Michael Wight). You can find more information about *Danger Patrol* at [www.dangerpatrol.com](http://www.dangerpatrol.com).



## **CHAPTER III**

---

HACKS



# OUR FIRST ENCOUNTER

---

*An Our Last Best Hope Hack*  
by Quinn Murphy

## INTRODUCTION

While *Our Last Best Hope* offered the chance to recreate *Armageddon*, *Sunshine*, and other save-the-world sci-fi scenarios, *Our First Encounter* lets you play missions where mystery and discovery take center stage, with a healthy dose of action as you attempt to deal with the threats you uncover. With *Our First Encounter* you can play games in the tradition of *Aliens*, *Pitch Black*, *Prometheus*, and *Event Horizon*, exploratory missions in which your characters will uncover dark and dangerous secrets.

In *Our Last Best Hope*, the Crisis is known and the players must deal with it. In *Our First Encounter*, the players have only questions that they must answer. What is the Alien Agenda, and how will you stop it?



## SETTING UP OUR FIRST ENCOUNTER

---

*IN OUR FIRST ENCOUNTER* you will play explorers coming into contact with the remains of an alien civilization. Threats become subordinate to Mysteries and the Crisis becomes a secretive alien Agenda. Much of the system stays the same, though the fiction surrounding the rules will change substantially.

### THE AGENDA

The Agenda is a question that drives the team's Investigation. The alien civilization they encounter is at first impenetrable, but as the players gather information, they develop a sense of what these beings are and what they want. What the aliens want is rarely pleasant, and will put the characters in the midst of a crisis as soon as the alien plans are revealed.

Both Agendas and Mysteries are phrased like questions. You can select from the Agendas provided (pg. 87), or you can build your own. When developing an Agenda, the group wants to think of something worthwhile to put under pressure or at risk. Your question then implies what is under pressure, but doesn't define the nature of the answer. A good example could be "What is the alien's alternative use for humans?"

This example works because it implies something is off (there is an alternative use for humans?) but allows the severity and nature to remain open for later. You might have an immediate answer for that question, but remember that establishing what that Agenda is will be the focus of the session. You will build from all the other questions that the players answer to determine what it all means. It's ok for the question to presuppose some things and to lead a bit. Actually it's better if your question does so, as leading questions tend to drive play forward by giving some constraints while still remaining open-ended.

When you settle upon an Agenda, take sometime to figure out why your group is the group that will discover and stop the Agenda. How were they chosen? What made them good candidates for this mission?

## THE CONSTRAINT

The Constraint is *Our First Encounter's* stand-in for The Limit. The Constraint is a declarative statement describing a restricting factor that limits your investigative and exploratory work. For example:

- The aliens died long ago, leaving only cryptic ruins behind.
- The aliens are much beloved by the populace, and cannot be openly attacked or interrogated.
- The crew has limited supplies.

Just like The Limit, use Constraint to describe your world in a bit more detail, explaining why the Mysteries you confront lack easy answers.

## THE INVESTIGATION

In *Our First Encounter*, the Plan becomes the Investigation. The Investigation represents the knowledge and data you've gathered, and how well you've connected the dots. You don't need to fill out the Investigation ahead of time, but when you get good clues you should write them down.

## STORY CARDS

Story Cards work the same in *Our First Encounter*, with one change: the Fear card is replaced by Enigma. Enigma represents a question that needs to be answered by another character during play.

## EXAMPLE ENIGMAS:

- What trait does your character share with the aliens?
- What is your character's true purpose on this mission?
- What is it that's killing you?

An Enigma card is not passed to another player. You keep your Enigma, but like a Fear card, you can play it on another character as they are making a roll to solve a Mystery. The character must then add a black die and answer this question as part of this roll. Playing the card gets you two Story Points from the Supply Officer, and adds interesting twists to other characters.

## M.I.M.I.C

M.I.M.I.C. is not present in *Our First Encounter*, though players can expect



to gather information from sources they find in the local environment. When a player needs to access that data, the player who would normally represent M.I.M.I.C. can instead represent that source of information (for instance, if the spotlight player pulls up information on the Internet, the player to his left will provide the information from that Internet search).

## MYSTERIES

Instead of Threats, the team creates Mysteries. Mysteries are smaller questions and investigations that must be answered in order to discover the larger Agenda. While players attempt to solve mysteries, they are under constant threat and attack. When creating a mystery, draw a line through the center of the index card. Above that line, write the question that you will answer. Great examples:

What caused the aliens to abandon this site?

Who really benefits from the alien's technology and why?

What are the aliens really afraid of?

Underneath the line, name a threat. Whenever you take Harm from the Mystery this is what dealt it to you. Examples of threats are:

Re-activated sentry drones

Elite alien warriors

Devoted cult worshippers of the aliens

What makes a great Mystery? The advice for Threats applies to the Threat portion of a Mystery card, but the mystery portion works best when:

It is **PROVOCATIVE**. A Mystery is a question that you really want to see answered, regardless of what that answer happens to be. Good Mysteries ask sharp questions of important setting details.

It is **OPEN-ENDED**. A Mystery cannot be answered with a simple yes or no answer. If your Mystery can be answered with a yes/no answer, consider adding the following:

How?

Why?

What does \_\_\_\_\_ mean?

It **CREATES MORE QUESTIONS**. The best Mysteries can be followed up with more questions. You'll only need to answer the Mystery you go after, but the table might mention or start thinking of others, which is great! It means your Mysteries are propelling you further down the rabbit hole and closer to the full Agenda.



## SOLVING MYSTERIES

---

**YOU SOLVE A MYSTERY** with the same mechanics used for taking a Threat, using different narration and actions to get to the heart of the question. Each roll assumes you dig deeper for clues and information while dealing with any threats that come up. Many Threats won't even reveal until you have a black effect; assume your investigation proceeds normally until the black effect occurs. At that point, the threat associated with the mystery is now active and causing you problems. After the threat appears, each roll now assumes you are working against the threat and solving the mystery at the same time. Make sure you describe the clues you gather and how you deal with the associated threat.

For example, if my character has a Mystery of "what purpose does this machinery serve?" and a Threat of "awakened aliend guards," I might first describe my character fiddling with the ancient machinery to divine its effect. When I get a black effect, I can describe figuring out how to turn on a heating device, which warms up and awakens a guardian previously in suspended animation. In subsequent rounds I describe using the machinery I am learning as I use the machinery itself or assets I have to avoid or contain the guardian. Maybe when I solve the Mystery I find that the machine is actually a device that place items under extreme cold or extreme heat. Why did the aliens need that?

When roleplaying solving mysteries, don't just use one form of information. You could have your character pull most information off of a computer, but you may find it hard continuing the narration. Make your clues tactile and primary sources: scan documents, find old books, dig up ancient bones. Common data sources we take for granted are great for answering trivial questions, but you should always strive to get your character moving for real "hard" clues and facts.



## CONFRONTING THE AGENDA

---

**FINALLY, EVERYTHING IS** revealed! At the end of Act II, the team reveals and then confronts the alien Agenda.

When you are ready to confront the Agenda, your group must do two things:

First, answer the question. This will tell you what the aliens want.

Second, create the final threat. This is what protects or is represented by the alien's agenda.

The Agenda and the threat should build off of what you've already established in solving other mysteries. Everything you've discovered has potential to be brought back and amplified or twisted into one last threat.. In *Our First Encounter*, this final threat doesn't have to threaten humanity; it could be that the players are in the way of something that will hurt only them. It never hurts to make the Agenda and its threat larger, of course.

Once you've determined what the Agenda is and what the final threat to you and your crew (and maybe the galaxy) is, you confront it like a normal crisis. Good luck!

---

# Ancient Alien

---

*a mission playset*  
*by Quinn Murphy*





# ANCIENT ALIEN MISSION

---

## INTRODUCTION

Your team has been sent to the edges of known space to find other life. No life other than humanity is known in all our travels. It looks like we may be alone. After decades in suspended animation, your ship wakes the crew. There is a planet capable of sustaining life. More importantly, it looks like life has happened; The planet is littered with structures and artifacts of a species that no longer lives here...or do they?

This default setting is a perfect platform for discovering a long-forgotten race, but can easily turn into a supernatural threat. The threat can even be more mundane as human rivals compete for resources and discoveries among the ruins of a once powerful civilization.

Suggesting viewing: *Aliens, Event Horizon, Pitch Black, Prometheus*



## THEMES

---

### IMMORTAL WRECKAGE

The crew stumbles upon the archaeological remains of ancient aliens. For all of the site's strangeness, there is a sense of familiarity or congruence; it's like you've all been here before. Your team explores and finds much to fear in the wreckage. As they explore you find themselves becoming what you fear, potentially gaining the aliens' secrets and uncovering their Mysteries at the cost of your own humanity.

### SACRED WEAPONRY

You've found a planet that was once inhabited. You land at the most impressive site for signs of life. What happened here? As you dig for clues, the place seems to come alive with wondrous technology...and weapons. Have the Aliens sealed themselves underground, protected by what you see before you? Have they fled to the stars, leaving behind this planet as a last defense? Worse yet, is this the site of a failed defense against a foe not yet defeated?



## AGENDA

---

- ☐ : What will the Aliens do when they discover the Earth?
- ☐ : What are the Aliens charging up their devices and structures to do?
- ☐ : Who are the Aliens really afraid of? What did they leave behind to defend against them?
- ☐ : What humans will profit from discovering the Aliens? What will they gain?
- ☐ : What happened to the previous people who discovered the Aliens?
- ☐ : Under what circumstances will the Aliens reveal themselves?
- : What did the Aliens imprison?
- : Why will the Aliens return?
- : What sets of the Doomsday advice?
- : Where did the Aliens go, and what are they bringing back?
- : Who killed the Aliens? What do they want when they return/awaken?
- : Why were the characters called here? What goal are they meant to serve?



# CONSTRAINT

---

- ☐ : You lost contact with your team back home long ago.
- ☐ : Your computer systems are malfunctioning.
- ☐ : The team is short on supplies.
- ☐ : Your ship has also brought along settlers who are still in suspended animation.
- ☐ : The team members are the only ones who know about this mission
- ☐ : The team is a part of a broadcast show televising their exploration.
- : Humanity is infected with an incurable disease; the players seek first contact and a cure.
- : Atmospherics are wreaking havoc with the team's electronics; they work poorly if at all.
- : Since this is a mission of discovery, you are not allowed weaponry.
- : The site is unstable and could collapse/implode/explode at any moment.
- : The site is nearing a cycle of permanent darkness for the next ten years.
- : The team is infected with a fatal disease. In a few days, most of you will be dead.





## COMPLICATION

---

- ☐ or ■ : Another group arrived here before you looking for the same information.
- ☐ or ■ : You receive a distress message recorded by the aliens long ago, but you can't tell what they are saying.
- ☐ or ■ : One of your crew members is possessed or somehow merged with one of the aliens. The bond starts mild, but the alien will eventually take full control.
- ☐ or ■ : Your ship is attacked by the alien's defense system.
- ☐ or ■ : The alien site is actually a portal to another dimension, and pulls you through to another realm.
- ☐ or ■ : A beacon activates on the site when you arrive, calling some entity or force towards it



- What do these batteries power?
- What do the runes mean?
- Where can you find traces of the alien's daily lives?
- Why can you breathe the air?
- Who have the aliens been in contact with?
- When will the aliens return to this site?
- What are these weapons used to fight?
- Why didn't the aliens stay?
- Were the aliens a warlike group?
- Did the aliens actually leave?
- What happens every night?
- What purpose does the machinery serve?
- Who did the aliens serve?
- Are the aliens aware of humanity?
- Where were the aliens planning to go?



## THREATS

---

- Bio-engineered species
- Ancient sentry drones
- Laser grid security system
- Rival explorers
- Semi-sentient carnivorous vegetation
- Mind-controlling device
- Force field
- Feral creatures
- Unstable structures
- Alien ghosts
- Crazy survivors
- Awakened alien guards
- Orbital defense satellite
- Deadly leviathan
- Activated doomsday device

## ASSETS

---

- Surveying tools
- Bio-scanner
- Translator computer
- Jetpack
- Augmented reality helmets
- Automapping drone team
- Military-grade small arms.
- Terraforming machine
- Holographic projection system
- Armed drone team
- Non-combatant android
- Camouflage suit
- Short range transporter
- Cybernetic augmentation
- Awakened psychic powers (telepathy, telekinesis, pyrokinesis, etc)



# OUR LAST BEST DOPES

## PLAYING OUR LAST BEST HOPE FOR LAUGHS

---

An *Our Last Best Hope* Hack  
by Ben McKenzie

### INTRODUCTION

*Our Last Best Hope* excels at the high-stakes drama of humanity's finest saving the world. But what happens when our finest just aren't available? Sometimes the chips are down, time is short, and the only thing standing between life as we know it and something altogether worse is a gang of idiots.

That's what this hack is for: the sort of story where a janitor accidentally stows away on the shuttle sent to deflect the asteroid, upsetting the plan and the dynamic of the crew. Where the villain has killed his nemesis, and a bunch of wannabes have to step up to the plate. Where aliens start their invasion in a suburban neighborhood and the only people who notice work in the local burger joint.

The situations are a little more bizarre, the crises more personal, and the heroes... Well, heroes might be stretching it. But they'll do their best. Some of them. Probably.

This hack has two major sections: *You Have Got To Be Kidding Me* gives guidelines for making comedic choices during setup and play of *Our Last Best Hope*, while *This Ragtag Band of Misfits* introduces tweaked rules for a different kind of comedy story, including alternate Roles and the Local Heroes Mission playset.



## YOU HAVE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME

---

I ASKED MICHAEL WHY it was easier to train oil drillers to become astronauts than it was to train astronauts to become oil drillers, and he told me to shut the fuck up, so that was the end of that talk.

— BEN AFFLECK, *ARMAGEDDON* COMMENTARY TRACK

### THE MISSION

Even playing with a “serious” playset, there’s a ton of room to find a comedic angle when playing *Our Last Best Hope*. Below are guidelines for injecting funny into the Crisis, Limit, Plan, Complication and Threats. You probably only need to make one or two of these elements into a gag to give yourself plenty of material to work with, though often one leads to another.

- **Think outside the box** - you can choose details that introduce comedy into any element of the Mission. For example, the Crisis must threaten Humanity, but that doesn’t mean it has to kill everyone. Think about something that would destroy civilization through bizarre means: the plague doesn’t kill, it transforms people into mimes, with disastrous social effects! This goes double for the Plan, since so-called serious disaster films have ridiculous plans already. (Ask an astrophysicist if you could jump-start the Sun with a nuclear bomb.) Dust blocked out the sun? Cue a giant vacuum cleaner!
- **Underwhelming** - this is a form of anti-climax, and a common trick in sci-fi comedy: substitute something seemingly benign, and take it really seriously. This works great for the Crisis: “Oh, the collapsing magnetosphere

won't destroy technology—but it will drive migratory birds nuts! They're going to get really, annoyingly loud!" You can also redefine basic aspects of a Mission playset along these lines, which will help when coming up with Threats: the shuffling zombies aren't undead, they're smartphone junkies! They don't want to eat your brains, but they might show you photos of their brunch! The horror!

- **Motivation** - evil often has unfathomable motivations, to make it more frightening—but an understandable motivation can be comedy gold. According to taste, this might range from satirical (Aliens want to destroy Earth... to build an expressway) to ridiculous (a waking Elder God will wipe out life on Earth... because it thinks it left its false teeth in our ocean). On the surface this makes a Crisis seem negotiable, but foes who are implacable because of red tape or bizarre beliefs are a source of comedy in themselves. Motivations can also apply to appropriate Complications (the other zombie survivors have refused your help... because they think you're selling a pyramid scheme) and Threats (the invading alien wants to abduct you... to take you to Show and Tell at its kindergarten).

## MIMIC

You might want to give MIMIC a personality: annoyingly cheerful like Eddie, eternally pessimistic like C3PO or quietly malevolent like HAL. Rather than just asking a question and getting a fact about the mission, you can have a (probably frustrating) conversation culminating in the fact. This makes throwing to MIMIC the equivalent of asking the audience for a suggestion at a comedy improv show, allowing for a bit of back and forth as you hone your addition to the story for maximum comedy potential.

## CHARACTERS

Take the advice in *Our Last Best Hope* to heart: create unconventional characters!

Dramatic heroes have flaws, but those flaws take a back seat to completing the mission (except at appropriately dramatic moments). Heroes also tend to overcome their flaws or redeem themselves through sacrifice. Comedic characters won't do either of those things. Their personality problems constantly override their professional judgment during the mission. Flaws that standard *OLBH* characters hold in check become exaggerated and dominating—though take care not to fall fully into caricature, unless that's the level of comedy you're aiming for.

- **Attitude** - characters with a bad attitude make great comic material—so long as something is driving that attitude. A chip on the shoulder, smart mouth or blatant disregard for others should have an underlying emotional cause: self-loathing (Arnold Rimmer), narcissism (Zapp Brannigan) or depression (Marvin the Paranoid Android) are all good examples, though these are traits best pushed over the top if they're to be funny.
- **Relationships with characters** - comedic relationships are about imbalance or mutual negativity. This is good fodder for Secret, Sane, and Crazy cards, but you should think about your relationships with every member of the crew. Examples include a “friendship” based on mutual dislike (Lister and Rimmer), or someone whose level of knowledge or expertise is much lower (Arthur Dent) or vastly higher (Turanga Leela) than the rest of the crew.  
Unrequited love is a classic relationship, though it's too often portrayed as noble or tragic. For comedy purposes, make such a relationship pathetic or absurd by putting the object of desire as far out of reach as possible. This might just be a case of making the incompatibility obvious, but it could be a physical or psychological impossibility, like a disembodied robot head who's in love with an emotionless, undead assassin (no, really: watch *Lexx*). Unrequited love can also work well as a relationship with a character who is not a member of the crew, as long as it is clear the situation is hopeless.
- **Relationships with the world** - maybe a character's problem is not with other people, but with the Crisis or Threats they face? Your hard-ass Soldier's Fear of arachnophobia doesn't seem like a big deal—until he's screaming like a child and shooting the friendly aliens because they look like tarantulas. Or perhaps your Scientist is so obsessed with meeting friendly alien life that she refuses to believe all evidence that they want to destroy all humans. As for the Crisis, perhaps your character doesn't truly believe it's a threat, thinks it can easily be dealt with, or just has other priorities? Or maybe they think the Plan is rubbish? In any case, they're not likely to make decisions the rest of the Crew will like...

## HARM

Use the above ideas to come up with inventive ways to hinder your characters. There's no end to the things that might stop you operating at your best when dealing with Threats, pushing you closer to a fatal mistake: Instead of taking a traditionally heroic shoulder or gut wound, get kicked in the balls, dunked

in a vat of whisky, or brainwashed by an alien mind ray. You still can't get rid of Harm, of course, so make sure anything you invent has a lasting effect: don't sober up unless you've done something while drunk that left a mark.





## THIS RAGTAG BAND OF MISFITS

---

WHAT KIND OF ALIEN would invade some council estate  
in south London?

— DIMPLES, *ATTACK THE BLOCK*

### NEW ROLES

When playing for laughs, Roles do not have to describe your background or training, or necessarily make you the best at what you do. Instead, they are archetypes, drawn from well-established comedy tropes. One way or another, you're probably not the ideal person for the job of saving humanity, but you're the best we've got.

These Roles are intended to replace the defaults, but you can try using the Amateur and Outsider alongside the default Roles. Story-wise the new Roles are intended to be broad, as the examples try to illustrate, allowing for a wide range of character concepts. The Role Abilities aren't so much about what you're good at as how you relate to the Crisis, so you can interpret them fairly liberally; it's also possible that use of your ability might make things worse. You aren't Humanity's finest, after all.

### AMATEUR

You might be a backyard astronomer, a rookie recruit, a janitor in the Space Corps or a kid picked because you won a video game; in any case, you're enthusiastic and devoted but in way over your head. When you succeed, it's through dumb luck or innate (and un-honed) talent more than skill or smarts.

**Role Ability:** After rolling for a Threat, you may spend a Story Point to

reroll all ones (white and black). You must declare use of this ability before effects are calculated, and you may only use this ability once per Threat roll.

**Tips:** Your strength is changing bad luck into good, so keep an eye on the outcome of Threat rolls. It's a gamble, of course, but you're the only one who can help once the dice have been rolled. Narrate use of your ability as accidental, last-minute success: a lucky ricochet sparks an explosion, setting fire to the creature you missed; you trip and spill the vital tools across the floor, but one of them wedges under the closing door, allowing a crewmate to crawl under to safety. Stuff like that.

**Examples:** David Lister, Philip J. Fry, Shaun and Ed (*Shaun of the Dead*)

## CONTRACTOR

Unlike most of your companions, you're useful in this Crisis, but you don't care. Perhaps you're only going through with this Mission for a pay-off (not necessarily money: perhaps you're hungry for fame, or love violence), or maybe you've been forced to use skills you prefer to keep secret or long put behind you, just to get to the simple thing you really want: getting to that bitchin' party, or going home to feed your cat.

**Role Ability:** Spend a Story Point to remove one black die from a Threat roll.

**Tips:** Mechanically the same as the Scientist Role, your main skill is making Threats less dangerous—you know how to take care of business. When you use your ability, contrast the ease with which you deal with the Threat with how reluctant you are to do so, or how much you begrudge being saddled with these other idiots. A great source of tension can be thinking (incorrectly) you could handle the Crisis on your own, but something forces you to stick with the group. Also consider making your “special skill” something mundane that is surprisingly useful; no-one would suspect a topiary artist could save the world—but if it's threatened by sentient tree monsters...

**Examples:** Ford Prefect, Bender, Jayne Cobb

## FANATIC

Arrogant scientist, religious zealot, conspiracy theorist, moraliser, hyper-competent superhero or just pompous ass, you know best and your faith—or ego—won't be swayed. Your single-mindedness isn't just frustrating: it means you never give up, and sometimes it inspires others to press on against the odds too, even if only to prove you wrong.

**Role Ability:** You may spend one Story Point to allow another player (including yourself) to ignore their Harm dice for one roll.

**Tips:** As a Fanatic, your motivation is key: whatever it is, it should drive everything you do. Never compromise on it. Like the Doctor Role, your ability is most useful later in the game when the Harm is racking up, but this will work best for comedy if you build up the other characters' frustration with you by ordering them around or arguing with them from the very beginning.

**Examples:** Arnold Rimmer, Zapp Brannigan, Zaphod Beeblebrox, David (*Shaun of the Dead*), Captain Mal Reynolds

## OUTSIDER

You're not here by choice: you're stuck with this team. You could be an innocent needing protection, a captured enemy or traitor, or an employee (or, if appropriate, possession) of the team. Your unique perspective comes in handy at surprising moments, though your lack of expertise or conflicting agenda might also make things worse.

**Role Ability:** Spend a Story Point to add two white and one black die to a Threat roll.

**Tips:** The key characteristic of the Outsider is that you Do Not Belong. In most cases you will only have a single Outsider in a group, though you can have as many as you like; the key is to make each uniquely ill-fitted to handling the Threats or the Crisis. An Outsider might seem to help – you'll probably handle Threats fairly easily – but you're more likely to end up with black sixes going into the Pool. Accordingly, narrate your ability with off-the-wall or unusually lucid solutions, but consider adding details the characters don't notice that can come back to bite them either immediately (if the extra black die makes you take Harm) or in the end (if you contribute black dice to the Event Pool). A good double act might be with an Amateur; you step in, mess up, and get a lucky break that saves everyone's bacon. Or makes things worse. Either way, it's a goldmine.

**Examples:** Arthur Dent, Marvin the Paranoid Android, Shaun's Mum

---

# Local Heroes

---

*a mission playset*  
*by Ben McKenzie*





# LOCAL HEROES MISSION

---

## INTRODUCTION

This playset is designed to allow ordinary Joes to face a fantastic Crisis of local proportions. Whether it's a secret alien invasion, a fracture in space-time or a horde of tiny monsters in the sewers, something's going seriously, weirdly wrong. It may or may not be the whole world that's at stake, but if your two blocks of Manhattan will be obliterated or all the kids in your school are going to become cyborgs, it may as well be as far as you're concerned.

Because of the nature of this Mission, you'll need to consider a few things you can take for granted in a normal game:

- This playset needs a specific setting within the “local” theme, so its elements are necessarily broad. Pick things that go together: if you decide you all want to be high school kids, for example, then a “trusted figure” might be the school counsellor and a “qualified person” might be the vice-principal.
- Your characters will probably have come up with the Plan themselves, with limited knowledge. As a result, a negative result might be narrated as you successfully carrying out a Plan that just doesn't work, or even makes things worse.
- MIMIC probably won't be an actual computer; instead, you can find out facts when you need them from news reports, incriminating evidence, or whatever NPCs seem appropriate.

Suggested viewing: *Shaun of the Dead*, *Attack the Block*, *Gremlins*, *The Almighty Johnsons*, *My Science Project*, *Paul* and *The Watch*



## THEMES

---

### JUST ACT NORMAL

You don't have any kind of authority; you're just regular folks. No-one's going to believe you if you try to tell everyone what's going on. In fact, acting out of the ordinary is just going to get you in trouble—small trouble compared to the Crisis, perhaps, but if you're explaining yourself down at the Station, stuck in the ER or being forced to do laps on the school track, then who's saving the day? It may even be the case that, with no evidence of supernatural or extraterrestrial influence, it looks like you're to blame for the Crisis in the first place—who knows, perhaps you are! For this reason, Threats can be seemingly mundane, though even so remember to make them immediate, local, and non-negotiable.

### MAKING IT UP AS YOU GO ALONG

Sure, you followed the creepy shopkeeper home and spotted him taking off his human-suit—but so what? What the hell do you do about it? You don't know how to kill him, or defuse an anti-matter bomb, or undo the ancient curse. All you know is you have to try, and any Plan is better than no Plan. While you might not be alone, though, you're stuck with the only other people who are aware of what's going on—and that might be all you have in common with those idiots. Just sticking together might be an ordeal in itself.



## A WORD OF CAUTION

### INFINITY WELCOMES CAREFUL DRIVERS

---

**YOU'RE ALREADY PLAYING** storytelling games together; surely you share a sense of humor, right? Maybe. A comedy game is more likely to veer into "edgy" or "bad taste" topics, and comedy is terribly subjective. You might shrug off an offensive gag in a big dumb Hollywood movie, but coming from a friend at the table it's another matter. Things to consider:

- What style of humor do you prefer? Razor sharp wit? Fart gags? Irony? Innuendo? A mix? An easy way to get agreement is to list some films (or books etc.) that capture your sense of humor.
- Where does the darkness live? Is it in the serious moments, punctuated by comic relief? Or is the humor dark as well? For example, is it okay if a character's death is funny? Also establish if there are any situations or topics that are off the table for jokes.
- Who or what is your joke targeting? Your characters will be flawed, maybe even caricatures: it's okay if your hotshot pilot is a chauvinist dick. But your story will be much more interesting if the gags skewer his sexism and insecurity, rather than just retread old "blonde" jokes.



## CRISIS

---

- ☐ : A well-liked and trusted figure is secretly a monster, killing local people
- ☐ : A group of locals are disguised aliens, planning an invasion
- ☐ : Tiny deadly monsters are about to hatch out in a busy location
- ☐ : A buried spaceship has been reactivated and will destroy the local area on takeoff
- ☐ : A local organization is a front for a cult who is summoning an ancient evil
- ☐ : A type of normally inanimate object is coming to life with evil intentions
- : You receive a warning from the future that an unlikely disaster will take place
- : An evil force is abducting people and replacing them with artificial duplicates
- : An impenetrable, invisible force field has sealed off the town; oxygen or other supplies are running out
- : A hole in spacetime/dimensions is pulling vicious creatures into the present
- : A local building was designed to harness evil energies and the stars are nearly right
- : A travelling carnival has come to town harboring a race of inhuman cannibals





## LIMIT

---

- ☐ : Time is running out; only the team can reach the Crisis in time
- ☐ : Team is at a nearby location and are the only ones close enough to make a difference
- ☐ : A prophecy indicates the team members are the Chosen Ones who can avert the Crisis
- ☐ : A substantial reward is offered for solving the Crisis; the team must act in secret to succeed first
- ☐ : Interactions with the Crisis have wiped out the only person(s) qualified to deal with it
- ☐ : Authorities believe a professional team is dealing with the Crisis, but their plan will not work
- : The details of the Plan were lost and have accidentally been discovered by the team
- : The team possesses a unique or limited resource required to stop the Crisis
- : A supernatural or sci-fi phenomenon means only the team can perceive the Crisis
- : The team is to blame for the Crisis, and must undo it themselves to avoid severe punishment
- : The team is immune to an effect of the Crisis that would otherwise incapacitate them
- : Political infighting has left local authorities unable to respond; the team had to plan the mission alone



## COMPLICATION

---

- ☐ or ● : For mundane reasons, you have lost a resource you were counting on for the plan; e.g. your car has been towed for being illegally parked, your power is cut off due to unpaid bills etc. (This only applies to resources so common you won't have listed them as Assets.)
- ☐ or ● : Your strange activity has been noticed and is being questioned by an authority or loved one
- ☐ or ● : You meet someone else who tried to enact your Plan and failed
- ☐ or ● : New information comes to light that makes you doubt your understanding of the Crisis
- ☐ or ● : A major public event has begun, putting many more people at risk from aspects of the Plan
- ☐ or ● : Someone (or something) welcomes the Crisis, and has found out about your Plan



## THREATS

---

- Guard dogs
- Security guards
- Gang members
- Muggers
- Drug dealers
- Alarmed police officer
- Misguided heroes
- Crisis worshippers
- Ruthless businessmen
- Local wildlife
- Rival Crisis averters
- Federal agents
- Conspiracy theorists

## ASSETS

---

- School bus
- Dissection kit
- Camping gear
- Smartphone
- Museum membership
- Eccentric genius relative
- Pet dog
- Chemistry set
- Horror movie DVDs
- Replica sword
- GPS navigation system
- Corporate security pass
- Unusual sporting equipment
- Flashlight
- Occult book collection



## DREAMSCAPE HACK

---

*An Our Last Best Hope Hack*  
by Michelle Lyons-McFarland

**WHAT IS THE MOST RESILIENT** parasite? Bacteria? A virus? An intestinal worm? An idea. Resilient... highly contagious. Once an idea has taken hold of the brain it's almost impossible to eradicate. An idea that is fully formed—fully understood—that sticks; right in there somewhere.”

— DOMINICK COBB, *INCEPTION*

**ONE OF THE BEST** things about *Our Last Best Hope* is the system's flexibility, as illustrated with this hack. Using *Dreamscape*, you can use *OLBH* to play an *Inception*-inspired game—something that would be a stretch for most RPGs. Using the *Dreamscape Hack* allows players to use *OLBH* to play a futuristic heist game, modeling an *Inception*-style set of nested dreamscape. A crew of characters can make a desperate attempt to change a single person—and in doing so, change the world. Getting in is challenging enough; getting out again and telling the difference between dream and reality, that's the trick.

There are a number of changes required to standard *OLBH* play in order to hack the dreamscape. This section includes new character creation guidelines (including specialized roles), new game mechanics, as well as a new Mission for you and your players to sink into. Now settle in, close your eyes... and get ready to dream.



## CHARACTER CREATION

---

### NEW ROLES

Whether you're planting an idea in someone's head or pulling out their deepest secrets, there are certain jobs that need to be done to ensure your team's success.

In order to hack the dreamscape, your team will need different skills; the Dreamscape Hack includes five new roles. Not all of these roles are absolutely necessary to every Mission, and it's all right to double up on them if that best suits the players – sometimes complicated plans need more than one of a certain specialist, and nothing is more complicated than hacking someone's dreamscape.

For a more complete description of Roles, see pg 32, *OLBH*.

### DIRECTOR

The director comes up with the hacking plan and organizes the other hackers. She orchestrates the scheme and extracts the needed data (or implants it), calling the shots.

**Role Ability:** Whenever the Director spends a story point to help on a Threat roll, another character may help for free.

### ARCHITECT

The architect designs the dreamscape for the shared dream, deciding what to include or leave out to facilitate the end goal, convincing the target that everything is normal.

**Role Ability:** The architect may purchase white dice into the Event Pool for two story points instead of three.

## ACTOR

The actor is able to mimic important people in the lives of the team's targets, allowing them to believe in the dream and accept it without triggering rejection by the target's subconscious. He functions as the inside man and places/extracts ideas.

**Role Ability:** Spend three Story Points to remove one black die from the Event Pool.

## RESEARCHER

The researcher looks up all the details and makes sure that everything is in place in order to make the dream work. He gives everyone the information they need to ensure success.

**Role Ability:** Spend two Story Points to allow another player (including yourself) to reroll a single Threat Resolution roll one time. The second result must be kept.

## CLIENT

The client sets the plan in motion and provides the resources needed to make it come together. She has a vested interest in ensuring that everyone else performs their roles to the best of their ability.

**Role Ability:** Spend one Story Point to prevent a point of Harm from being inflicted on another character (including yourself) once per Threat. This only applies to Harm gained during Threat Resolution, not from any other source. It does not affect existing Harm.

## DREAMSCAPE TOUCHSTONES

In *OLBH*, a character's Touchstones represent her identity – the things she either clings to or pushes away in order to achieve her desperate goal. When you hack dreamscapes, however, the world you're entering isn't real, no matter how real it feels or seems (or how much you might want it to be real). The concepts you bring with you might have forms, but the items or people themselves are not actually present.

At the same time, because you don't bring anything physical with you into the shared dream, everything is left behind when you enter the dream. The question then becomes less of "what did you bring/leave behind" and "what/who can you not forget?"

For the Dreamscape Hack, therefore, the touchstones are "what I want to remember" and "what I can't forget." Write them on separate cards. Dreamscape Hack Touchstones can be spent for Story Points as normal.

Once spent, however, they go into the Threat Pool as potential complications for the team.

## TOKENS

In addition to Touchstones, each character has a Token. A Token is a Dreamscape representation of an object that only she knows, so that by interacting with it she can tell if she is dreaming or awake. Tokens are always a small object that can fit unobtrusively in a pocket—with a specific texture or sensory impression—that can act in a consistent way within the Dreamscape that is contrary to the real world (a small top that never falls over, a die that always rolls sixes, a feather that sinks rather than floating).

A Token acts as a guide, but in a shifting environment full of Threats, there isn't always time to check the Token if you become confused—or you may forget what the right result even is.

When you create a character, take an extra card and write down what your Token is. On one side, write “Dream” and on the other, write “Real.” All tokens are flipped “Dream” side up with the beginning of Act I, indicating that all the characters understand they are in a shared dream. You or another player can flip your Token to “Real” once during play to gain a Story Point. Flipping a Token to “Real” also inflicts one point of Harm on the owner of that Token.

Conversely, by spending a Story Point, you or another player can flip your Token to “Dream,” reminding your character what her reality actually is. Flipping a Token to “Dream” grants the Token's owner an additional White Die against the next Threat she takes.



# HACKING THE DREAMSCAPE

---

**THE CORE MECHANICS** for Dreamscape Hack use *OLBH* rules, but there are some key differences to reflect the basic unreality that underlies the Dreamscape.

## ACTS

The movie *Inception* uses a number of different layers: reality, the rainy cityscape, the hotel, the fortress, and Limbo. In Dreamscape Hack, the two Acts are functionally dream layers – reality is where you begin and is set up prior to entering Act 1. Limbo is also dealt with in a separate section (see Advanced Rules). The setting of each Act is determined at the beginning of play in a two- or three-word description (peaceful forest, sinking cruise ship, ICU hospital ward).

In *OLBH*, Acts signify the increasing stakes and difficulty of the action being attempted. In Dreamscape Hack, Acts signify traveling to deeper, more intricate dreamscapes. Each level has increasing stakes, just as in *OLBH*, but the reliance on Assets is changed since Assets do not travel between dream layers. Use the Consequences Table (pg 97, *OLBH*) to transition between Acts 1 and 2, but ignore all references to Assets.

## JOBS, LIMITS, AND PLANS

At its core, the Dreamscape Hack is a heist. Instead of a Crisis, teams in the Dreamscape Hack must select a Job they have been hired to accomplish, an idea that must be implanted or a memory that must be stolen.

Suggested limits include things that are time related (must complete the task before the plane lands / before the guards come through / before her girlfriend comes over), perception related (without anyone knowing we were here / without the cameras seeing our faces / without being recognized



by our ex-teammate), or a required element (must include his father's death / his phobia of evil clowns / her unmaterialized inheritance).

Plans for a Dreamscape Hack should be specific and should identify both the target, the end goal, and the idea being implanted (or the secrets being sought).

## DEATH

Characters in the Dreamscape may think they've died, but nobody actually dies in the dream – normally you just wake up feeling shaken. A character who dies while hacking a Dreamscape is sedated, however, and cannot wake up. They go to Limbo, a place in their subconscious, and are non-responsive to the waking world. This state persists for up to a week in the real world before they awaken. Characters who have accidentally entered Limbo often have no clear memories of what happened during their dreams in that state, but they awaken profoundly changed, often losing their grip on what is real and what is dream.

For other options to include Limbo in your game, see Advanced Rules.

## ASSETS

Assets are still used as per *OLBH*, but a fresh pool of assets is created for each Act, signifying the change to a completely new setting. Use the Mission Asset generation rules on page 57 of the core book each time your team changes Acts.

## THREATS

Although everything seems real in the Dreamscape, nothing is. All threats are a reflection of the subconscious mind of the target. Information is everything and can take any form, but no form travels from one Act to the next.

Because levels of Dreamscapes are different, create a fresh pool of Threats for each Act. Keep the architecture for each Act in mind, as threats fit the environment in which they exist – the dreamer's mind sees it as consistent as a whole, even if individual elements are incongruous (Ex: if the dream takes place in a normal house except for the floating fish, then floating fish are normal for that Dreamscape).



## CONFRONTING THE CRISIS

---

**THE CRISIS TABLE** for Dreamscape Hack is slightly modified from the one provided in *OLBH*. Please use the following table for confronting the Crisis (pg. 93, *OLBH*).

If The Total Is...

**16W+:** You did it. Not only did you manage to implant the idea, but your target believes in it wholeheartedly and is changed profoundly as a result. All team members make it back to the waking world safely and are paid handsomely as a result.

**11W-15W:** It was a rough ride, but you completed the plan. The target believes the implanted idea and adopts it. One member of your team is lost to Limbo. You are paid what was promised, but without any bonuses.

**6W-10W:** No one expected that. Your target enacts the implanted idea but does not embrace it fully, and you suspect she wonders just where the idea came from. Two members of your team are lost to Limbo. Your payments are smaller than you'd hoped, with your client holding some back for damage control.

**1W-5W:** The idea is planted, but only one member of your team makes it back to the waking world unscathed. You suspect someone knows of your involvement, so you vanish into obscurity, hoping to shake any surveillance while the rest of the team fights their way back from Limbo.

**0-5B:** It's a bust. The idea doesn't take, everyone ends up in Limbo, and the real world police suspect you've all been up to no good. That said, no one

got caught – perhaps you can get a second chance? (Sequel!)

**6B-10B:** The Threats were too many and you weren't sufficiently prepared. You never even got the chance to implant the idea. Your time in Limbo has left you all damaged, and it's unlikely you'll hack any targets for a very long time, except maybe in your own dreams.

**11B-15B:** You were set up. There was no hope that your plan would work, and instead you've been framed for something you may not have done. Get used to running.

**16B+:** You never got close. Something went spectacularly wrong and the target is dead – a stroke, perhaps, or a bad reaction to the sedative. You'll have a long time to think about how it all went wrong while serving your sentence, though. Enjoy prison. Sweet dreams.



## ADVANCED RULES

---

### WE MUST GO DEEPER

If the players would like to have a longer game or a multi-session game, additional Acts can be added. If additional Acts are used, increment Threat levels more slowly (3 dice for Act 1, 4 dice for Act 2, 5 dice for Act 3). Check the Consequences Table at the end of each Act.

If players want to play through getting back out of the dreamscape, use the following rules:

Waking up from a multi-layered dream is difficult at best, especially since time in each level moves exponentially faster than the level above. Dreamscape hackers use “pops” – sudden sensory input – at a previous level of the dreamscape to awaken a deeper sleeper and bring them back. Enacting this requires that one team member stay behind at each Act to ensure the rest of the team “pops” back up. Prior to checking the Consequences Table for the end of Act 1, choose the character who stays behind and have him draw a Threat card. He must take that Threat on by himself, using any Assets from that level under his control. To simulate the time difference, however, he only rolls once to resolve his Threat for every Threat resolved on the next level of Dreamscape by the rest of the group. Once his Threat is resolved, the group “pops” back up.

### LIMBO

Difficult jobs necessarily require overcoming difficult challenges to make them work; in the realm of the Dreamscape Hack, that means additional layers of dream and the possibility of not waking up. That said, nothing that happens to your dream self is real – dying in the Dreamscape doesn’t mean your body is dead. It just means... you’re in Limbo.

When hackers “die” in the Dreamscape, they end up in a constantly

reforming mental landscape called Limbo. A character who “dies” and goes to Limbo accidentally cannot wake up on his own, regardless of any “pops.” His Token is flipped to “Real” to reflect his confused state. A character in Limbo cannot assist anyone else on the team and is cut off from anyone not in Limbo themselves.

A character can go to Limbo deliberately by committing “suicide” in the deepest level of the dreamscape. Characters who intentionally enter Limbo keep their Token flipped to “Dream.” They can locate other characters and flip their tokens to “Dream.” Once that’s done, a trapped character can leave Limbo and resurface in the lowest level of the Dreamscape, surfacing with the rest of the team. A character who deliberately enters Limbo can resurface upon receiving a “pop” from someone on the deepest Dreamscape level, but someone has to be there to deliver it.

---

# Dreamscape

---

*a mission playset*

*by Michelle Lyons-McFarland*





## DREAMSCAPE MISSION

---

### INTRODUCTION

The Dreamscape Hack is a twist on both heist films and films about dreams/virtual reality, where the landscape is entirely imaginary and yet holds dangers all its own. In a Dreamscape Hack, your goal is to change, acquire, erase, or implant a memory or idea in a target's mind by infiltrating his dreams and leading him where you want him to go, a Job to accomplish instead of a Crisis to avert. This playset is unusual in that it allows you to create two entirely different settings that include whatever elements you like, even if they're fantastic ones – it's all in your mind, after all. Fail to defeat your subject's internal guards, however, and you could end up falling between the cracks in your own mind.

Suggested viewing: *Dreamscape*, *Inception*, *The Matrix*, *Total Recall*, *Vanilla Sky*, *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*



## THEMES

---

### **HACK THE LABYRINTH**

On the bright side, the architect has designed the dreamscapes and everything in them. On the dark side, no plan survives contact with the enemy, and the target can overwrite details of the dreamscape in order to protect herself. It's great to have a map, but you have to be able to think on your feet when something changes – and something always changes.

### **THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT**

Ideas are delicate creations. One false step and they can blow up in your face. It's enough to put anyone on edge. Not to mention that implanting or changing an idea is risky; it may cause the one specific thing you want to happen, but what other events will also occur as a result? No one knows what the future holds, but few people tamper with it as directly as your team does. It's enough to make someone have second thoughts – but when you're dealing with writing a reality, can you really afford to?





# JOBS

---

- ☐ : A brilliant scientist has discovered the cure for an incurable disease, but a lab explosion sends her into a coma and destroys her work.
- ☐ : The government asks you to make a dictator's daughter think it's her idea to kill her father and remove his regime.
- ☐ : A friend begs you to remove the memories of his dead wife before they drive him to suicide.
- ☐ : You're hired to retrieve the off-shore account numbers of one of the mob's most powerful leaders.
- ☐ : A world leader declares she is resigning her post, and her supporters want you to find out who got to her and fix it.
- ☐ : A cult is spreading through memetic technology; your goal is to find the idea and discover how to break it.
- : A desperate daughter has been written out of her rich father's will and needs you to change his mind.
- : The president's son is returned from a kidnapping in a vegetative state; you are hired to find him in Limbo and bring him back.
- : The virtual landscape has flatlined, trapping workers who were online when it went down.
- : A retiring CEO needs his replacement to stop an ugly habit that could ruin the company.
- : A computer known as MIMIC has gone rogue, and your team has to infiltrate its processes and restart its humanizing protocols once more.
- : A member of your team becomes aware that he has 24 hours left to live and a secret he can't access in the recesses of his consciousness—the identity of the person who killed him.



- ☐ : Time is running out – you are the only team who can do the Job in time.
- ☐ : Team is at a nearby location and are the only ones close enough to get the Job done.
- ☐ : Experimental / illegal equipment in the team’s possession is the only means to complete the Job.
- ☐ : The expertise of the team is unique
- ☐ : Previous interactions with the target mean that the team members are the only ones sufficiently familiar with the target
- ☐ : The target is hostile and has eliminated previous teams attempting the same thing
- ☐ : The team has access to a unique experimental device
- ☐ : The team has a limited amount of time before the target awakens
- ☐ : The team members have been experimentally enhanced to survive the trip
- ☐ : Communication is cut off; only the team members know what is happening
- ☐ : The team is immune to emotional effects of the Dreamscape that would otherwise incapacitate them
- ☐ : Circumstances have left the client unable to respond; the team has had to plan the mission alone



## COMPLICATION

---

- ☐ or ● : The Dreamscape becomes more unstable, limiting your time to accomplish your goal
- ☐ or ● : The architecture has been changed and the team must find a new way to complete the Job
- ☐ or ● : New information from the target requires attention and may invalidate the Plan
- ☐ or ● : Something is hunting the team through the Dreamscape
- ☐ or ● : One of the laws of the Dreamscape changes, requiring the team to improvise (guns cease firing, gravity changes)
- ☐ or ● : The target grows suspicious of the team, making the environment hostile



## FAQ

---

### **How many times can I use my Touchstones?**

Each touchstone can be used only a single time. Once you have used up the Touchstones, they cannot be used a second time. It's a good idea to use a Touchstone in Act I, since some characters probably won't make it all the way to the end of the story.

### **What happens when a black six comes up when I'm rolling the Event Pool? Or during the Consequences roll?**

Nothing. The only time black sixes enter the Event Pool is during a Threat roll. The rest of the time, treat them as you would any other number.

### **Who can pay the three story points to add a white six to the Event Pool during a Threat roll?**

Any player can pay the story points, either from their personal story points or from the group pot. Players are allowed to split the cost as well, with multiple players contributing.

### **If I agree to help in a Threat roll, am I obligated to help resolve that Threat? Or can I stop helping after the first roll?**

You may stop helping after the first roll. In fact, this happens a lot when it becomes clear that the team isn't going to be able to defeat a Threat. The person who took the Threat stays behind, dying to keep the team alive, while the rest of the team goes on without him.

### **Can I start helping on a Threat roll if I didn't immediately start helping when the Threat started?**

Yes. Anyone can start or stop helping at any time.

### **How does the level of the Threat work?**

Each Threat has a starting level (three in Act 1, five in Act 2). This tells you how many black dice it adds to the roll and how many effects it will take to resolve the Threat. As the players get white effects to spend on the Threat, the level of the Threat goes down until it is completely resolved. For example, a Threat in Act 2 starts at five dice, but when the players roll 7W on the first Threat roll, the Threat is reduced by two. In the next roll, the Threat will add only three dice, and the players will only need three more white effects to resolve the Threat.

### **Does Harm gained against the current Threat add to Threat rolls?**

Yes. Harm has an immediate effect.

### **If I'm helping, does my Harm add to Threat rolls?**

No. Only the person who took the Threat adds her Harm.

### **When can I play Story Cards?**

You may play Sane, Crazy, and Secret cards at any time, including during The Choice or during Threats. Often, players will play their Sane and Crazy cards based on who takes a Threat. You may only play your Fear Story Card during a Threat roll in which the target of the card is taking the Threat or helping with the Threat.

### **In the core book, p73 says that "Any character's death automatically eliminate all active Threats." However, if I cheat death I eliminate current Threats. Do I get to eliminate a new round of Threats when I die?**

Yes. If you cheat death, you eliminate all Threats on the board. If you later die according to your Death card, you will again eliminate all the Threats on the board.

### **What if I'm playing a Mission where having a Captain or Supply Officer doesn't make sense? What should I do?**

If you're playing a mission where having a Captain and a Supply Officer doesn't make sense, like if you're playing the Fantasy Adventure Mission, just call them something that would make sense for the setting (ex: Commander and Quartermaster). These are largely out of character roles, and you can call them whatever makes sense for the setting. The same is true of MIMIC, who can be a magic fairy or supernatural artifact if a computer system doesn't fit your Mission.

