



## MISSION: BLOOD TIES

A missing person case is usually mundane and procedural, but when your mission is ordered from deep inside the Vatican and you are a Secret Agent of CROSS no case ever is. Join your teammates as you travel to Jolly Old England to locate a celebrated otolaryngologist that has gone missing. It's a cut-throat world out there so you better smell out his location before you hear of his untimely demise.

### FOUND TO BE MISSING

The team receives orders to investigate the disappearance of several notable doctors from a conference in London. Among the missing is Edmund Wolsey, an accomplished doctor with friends high up in the Vatican. Arriving at the posh Regency Hotel, the agents will most likely interface with the hotel staff members below.

HOTEL STAFF	DETAILS
Kristine Knight	Kristine is working reception when the agents arrive.
Brigham Harris	Brigham is the hotel manager and will relieve Clark if the agents start asking a lot of questions. He may seem suspicious because he is very nervous about the fallout from his security guard helping with the crime as detailed below.
Leland Mitchell	Security guard on duty during the kidnapping. Took bribe to loop security footage, silence roof alarm.

The agents can use faked police credentials (or contacts) to make inquiries or lacking either of these, resort to subterfuge with the staff. Successfully using these official methods will elicit a prompt and formal explanation of events. The hotel manager reports that last night was the annual fundraising banquet for the Young Otolaryngology (Ohtoe-larin-gology) Society. There were 138 guests, 87 of which were ears, nose, and throat

specialists, the balance friends and family. Nothing untoward occurred during the dinner, but this morning seven of the doctors were missing. There were no signs of a struggle, and there was no trace of any of the five men and two women. Requests to see security footage earns a chagrined look as the manager explains he believes one of the kidnappers inserted a loop into the camera feeds, and he hasn't any images of the victims or the perpetrators. He actually suspects Leland Mitchell actually did this rather than one of the kidnappers, but won't immediately reveal this.

Bluffing the competent staff of the Regency requires a Persuade roll at -2 to get the same cooperation as an official inquiry. A Success will only learn the names of the seven doctors who disappeared after a banquet and a polite refusal to see any security footage. Instead of fast talking the staff, successful use of Street-wise costs £50 to learn the detailed information above.

If the agents attempt to look into Leland Mitchell fairly early on, he can be found at his apartment doing some final packing for his vacation in France. He will not answer the door, but will pull a pistol on anyone that breaks into his flat. A successful Intimidation or Persuasion roll -2 roll will cause Leland to admit to taking a £5000 bribe to help the kidnappers avoid detection by the rest of the staff and loop up the cameras so there is no evidence of their crime. He has no names for the kidnappers and was paid in cash.

### OTOLARYNGOLOGISTS

Martin Boleyn	Devin Carey
Beverly Darwin	Dax Phelps
Timothy Priest	Tamar Watson
Edmund Wosley	

### CRUX OF THE MATTER

Research into the backgrounds of the seven doctors requires a successful Knowledge (Computers) roll to search the Internet with a computer, Investigation to do the same at the public library, or a Persuasion roll to use old-fashioned questioning with



co-workers or family of the missing doctors. Unfortunately, these methods discover nothing to tie the individuals together beyond their particular medical specialty. All are solid members of the medical community and well respected in their field with multiple awards for their service, but none of them stand out as the target for kidnapping. However, a Raise on any of those rolls will reveal what seems to be an odd quirk. All seven are very distantly related to the royal family through the House of Tudor that predates the current House of Winsor by hundreds of years.

## HOUSE OF TUDOR

The House of Tudor, an English royal dynasty of Welsh origin, which ruled England with five sovereigns including Henry VII; his son, Henry VIII, infamous for splitting the English church away from Rome so that he could ensure an annulment with his wife, Catherine of Aragon; followed by Henry VIII's three children, Edward VI, Mary I, and Elizabeth I.

This trivial information concerning the doctors' past relatives conversely does not lead to what happened to them now. However, the odds of seven doctors sharing a common, if distant, blood bond cannot be a coincidence. If one of the agents decides to delve into the doctors' family tree, a successful Investigation roll yields the revelation that although each doctor has a different specific lineage, he or she can all claim Henry VIII as a direct ancestor.

Concurrent with the research into the doctors' roots, the agents should be asking the question of how the victims exited the hotel unseen. A thorough search of the stairwells with a successful Notice roll will discover near the rooftop exit, a cufflink. A successful Knowledge (Computers) or Investigation roll will reveal that this finely crafted item bears a family crest of Doctor Edmund Wolsey. A Smarts roll will realize the victims didn't exit out of the hotel lobby doors; they exited by way of the roof.

A check of flight plans with a successful Investigation, Knowledge (Computers), or Persuasion roll will not discover any scheduled departures from the Regency, but there was one from the Leeds' Bank building just across the street. The destination of the flight was Glastonbury, England some 140 miles northwest of London, roughly a three-hour drive by car.

## SINS OF THE FATHER

During the trip, the team can reexamine the information they've gathered and will face the question of what could distant relatives of Henry VIII have to do with Glastonbury. A successful Knowledge (History) or Knowledge (Catholicism) roll will recall that the Tudor monarch ordered the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1536 that resulted in the seizure of all Church lands and abbeys. Some claim, that at the time Glastonbury Abbey was founded by Joseph of Arimathea, it was the wealthiest abbey in the country. By the king's order, Glastonbury suffered the same looting as the rest of the 850 abbeys in England, but the last abbot, Richard Whiting, accused of treason, also endured the further indignity of hanging, drawing, and quartering. Considered a scheduled ancient monument, the protected ruins of the abbey are a popular regional tourist attraction.

Racing into the abbey, they can faintly see the bodies of the seven doctors arranged in a cruciform pattern on the site of the original apse. In the moonlight, the agents can see a shiny wetness upon each of the victim's heads, likely blood. As the

agents move closer to look for clues, one of the women moans painfully.

Any additional movement towards the wounded will attract sniper fire from behind a nearby column and above from the top of the ruins. If the agents attack and injure the stealthy assassins and they fail to escape, either will tell the agents that the rest of his cult is at Glastonbury Tor.

If the characters rush to the moaning woman's side, they will find that she and all the others are still alive, but each has the same ghastly wound — all of them are missing their right ear! Healing rolls will stop the bleeding of the victims but nothing can be done about the missing ears unless one of the agents has the Extreme Unction miracle.

Any agent that successful rolls either a Knowledge (History) or Knowledge (Catholicism) will be familiar with the biblical passage from the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John describing when the guards came to seize Jesus at Gethsemane. Peter initially resisted the guards cutting off the right ear of one of the high priest's servants. Almost certainly baffled by the nature of the attack on the doctors, if the players do not remember, a Smarts roll will allow them to recall the victims are all Otolaryngologists or ears, nose, and throat specialists which oddly ties their profession to their wounds.

A Knowledge (Occult) roll will allow an agent to realize that the blood of descendants ritualistically drawn at a holy site are elements of the thaumaturgical rite of similarity and indicate someone is trying to summon someone or something from an alternate realm. Have the agents roll Notice, and anyone that succeeds will spot flashes of light atop a nearby hill. A roll of Knowledge (Occult), Knowledge (History), or Knowledge (Catholicism) will remember that Richard Whiting, the last abbot of Glastonbury Abbey actually died on Glastonbury Tor, the location of the flashing lights.

Running one-mile and up the hill requires two Vigor rolls with each failure resulting in a level of fatigue. When the agents reach the top of the hill, they can see that blasts of fire burst from the top of the square tower on the Tor creating the lights they saw below. If they enter the tower, they find twice as many cultists as agents walking in a circle with one more standing at the center brandishing an old wide-tipped iron sword. Before the team can take any actions, there is a blinding flash and the smell of ozone. The agents must make a Vigor roll to avoid being Shaken by the blast of light unless they have Anti-Glare Lens or a DUT2:4 "Protector" helmet (see *Secret Agents of CROSS*, page 76). When they can see again, a monstrous form steps out of a rent in the fabric of reality. The agents must make a Fear check at -2 as they behold one of the most deadly creatures of legend, a dragon. Those that succeed can see as the dragon wounded from some ancient battle is healed by the fire at the center of the cultists' circle. He roars as he stretches out his wings and flexes his newly healed muscles.

Through the fires healing the dragon, the lead cultist spats at the agents, "Ignorant fools, your intervention is flawed. When King Henry VIII ripped England away from a united Catholic Europe he did it for selfish reasons. Now, his ancestors rent England from the bosom of the EU delighting in their misguided destruction of European harmony with their superficial marketing double-talk, namely Brexit."



Turning to the dragon the cultist shouts, "Beast! With Tudor blood taken by the same weapon that slew you when it was in the hands of St. George I order you to sate your hunger with these foolish meddlers and then rise on your newly healed wings to have your revenge on those who defiled the martyr. I want no one's blood left unspilt that is in league with the adulterous King Henry the Eighth!"

The cultists mean to punish the United Kingdom's leaders for their efforts to remove the UK from the European Union and tarnish the legacy of the British Monarchy for the sins the cultists perceive caused by Henry VIII's schism with Rome. As the dragon roars and advances on the team, a successful roll of Knowledge (Occult) will rationalize that the blood of the king's descendants is only part of the thaumaturgical rite of similarity, the weapon used has to be the one that made the same wound. The head cultist's sword can only be the sword of Saint Peter. Anyone that makes this roll can make another Smarts roll to know Joseph of Arimathea supposedly brought Peter's sword to Britain. The relic remained for years at Glastonbury abbey until given to Saint George by the abbot.

This requirement can only mean the legend is true and the two swords are the same blade, and Saint George's most famous deed was slaying a dragon. If the agents can get the sword, they have the means to defeat the terrifying creature before them.

Run the combat as normal, but if a character can seize the sword from the cultist, any hit causing, at least, one wound to the dragon will undo the spell and cause the creature to recoil back to where ever it came from. Once the agents defeat the cultists, they will have one of the most powerful relics in all Christendom in their possession. If the GM does not want them to have that sort of power, their superiors order the object whisked to the vaults of the Vatican for safekeeping and further study.

## NPCS

### CULTIST SNIPERS

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6  
Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d8, Streetwise d4, Tracking d6  
Charisma: -; Pace: 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 7(2)  
Edges: Alertness  
Gear: AR-10 (See ISA 7:21 "Peacemaker"), Glock (9mm), Kevlar Vest, Nightvision goggles

### CULT LEADER

See **Magical Minister** in *Secret Agents of CROSS*, page 137.

### CULTISTS

See **Cultists** in *Secret Agents of CROSS*, page 137.

The cultists have access to the following artifacts from Joseph of Arimathea's stash below.

### ADVENTUROUS SHIELD

Joseph, son of Joseph of Arimathea, a great warrior carried a create white shield adorned with a cross drawn with Joseph's blood. The shield has a sweet aroma that could render its bearer victorious and be the cause of many miracles. Supposedly, only Galahad can use the shield safely, anyone else who tried to bear it away would be killed or maimed within three days.

+20 pp for Arcane Background (Miracles) or +3 bennies.

+2 Parry, +2 Armor to ranged shots that hit

Any attack that scores at least one Wound against the wielder will increasingly add an additional Wound until the wielder is either dead, permanently injuries, or drops the shield. So the first attack that caused a Wound will cause 2 Wounds. The second attack that caused a Wound would cause 3Wounds, etc.

### SHIELD OF JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA

+1 Parry, +2 Armor to ranged shots that hit, Impervious to fire

### BROKEN SWORD OF JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA

A sword broken in the thigh of Joseph of Arimathea was repaired by Galahad leaving an obvious joint where the pieces were rejoined together. Kissing the sword would keep whoever kissed it safe from being mortally wounded for the day.

Great Sword Str+d10+2, Parry -1, 2 hands

When the wielder scores at least one Wound on a target, he will take one Wound and the sword will drip his blood.

### DRAGON

See **Dragon** in *Savage Worlds*. For the first two rounds after the dragon emerges from the rift it will stand in the flames. It is summoned with two wounds and can stand in the healing flames and heal up to one wound per round at the end of each round. The flame can be snuffed out with holy water.

### SWORD OF SAINTS PETER & GEORGE

For details, see *Secret Agents of CROSS*, page 128.

## ATTRIBUTIONS

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