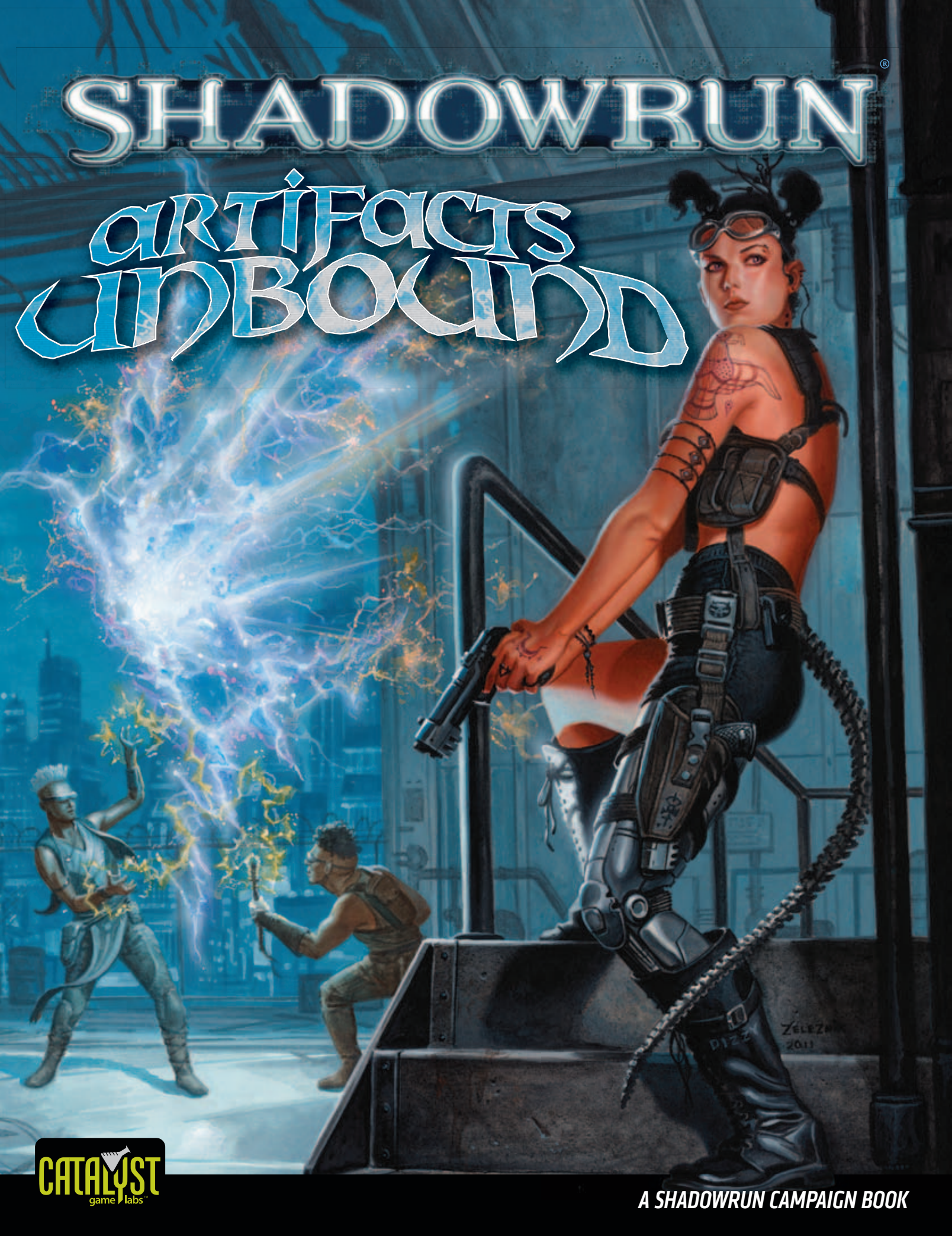


# SHADOWRUN

## ARTIFACTS UNBOUND



ZELEZA  
2011



# UNLOCK THE POWER

Four artifacts have been found. Some of the most powerful people in the Sixth World have been after them, and many people have died in the globetrotting hunt to bring these objects together. Now that they have been recovered, their powers can be unleashed—or the artifacts can be scattered, lost again until another generation summons the courage and the knowledge to dredge them up.

*ARTIFACTS UNBOUND* concludes the *DAWN OF THE ARTIFACTS* campaign in a way that makes gamemasters and players free to determine many events of their campaign. Filled with plot details, adventure seeds, basic setting information, and NPC statistics, *ARTIFACTS UNBOUND* lets gamemasters select the elements that would work best in their campaign and design a thrilling story for their game. Easy to use and flexible, this book can be used with players who have gone through the entire *DAWN OF THE ARTIFACTS* campaign, or with players just learning about the artifacts and their effect on the Sixth World.

*ARTIFACTS UNBOUND* is for use with *Shadowrun, Twentieth Anniversary Edition*.

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**SHADOWRUN**

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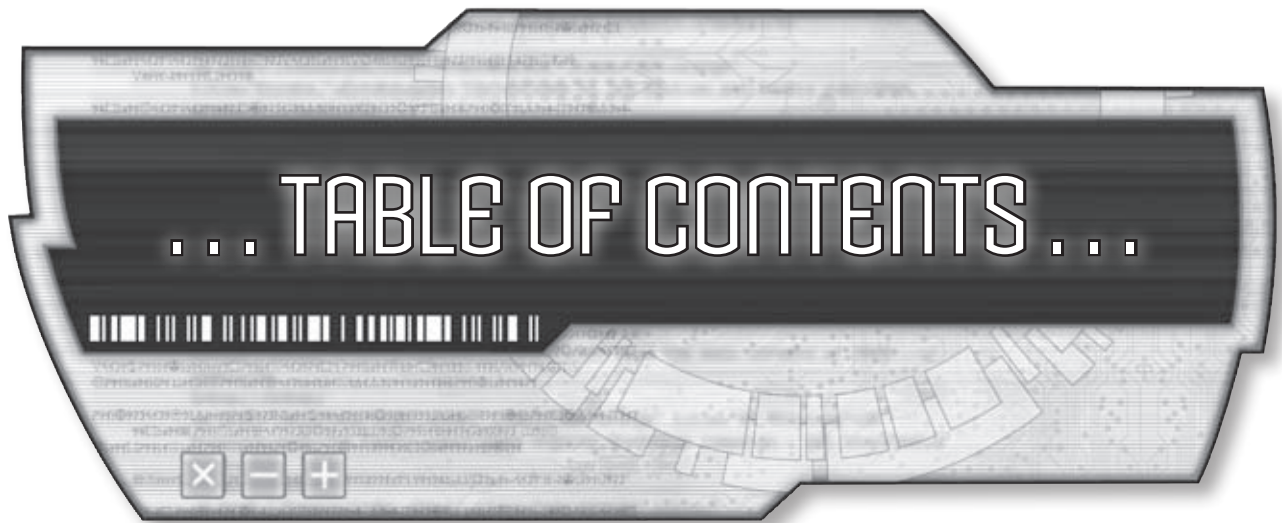




# ARTIFACTS UNBOUND

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# ... INTRODUCTION ...

*Artifacts Unbound* is the first in a new series of campaign sourcebooks for *Shadowrun*, and the format for these books have a simple goal: give players and gamemasters what they need to be immersed in ongoing *Shadowrun* plotlines while providing the tools needed to run a game easily. We designed the book to combine useful game information with compelling in-universe storytelling to give *Shadowrun* players everything they need to rush into danger.

In this book, you'll find the following sections:

- **True Power**, an in-universe section that details the hunt for artifacts that has been going on throughout the Sixth World and helps runners understand why they need to know about this and how, if they're lucky, they can profit.
- **A series of chapters that provide short adventure plots**. Each adventure contains in-universe material to set up the adventure to come, individual plot points to guide gamemasters through the adventure, then character and location information used in that chapter. Many of the locations are types that can be used in a wide variety of campaigns, such as railroad stations, airports, and more.
- **Character Trove**, a collection of NPC stats used in this book, but also usable in multiple other settings and adventures.

This book builds on the events in the *Dawn of the Artifacts* series of adventures. It is not necessary to have played through those adventures to enjoy the material presented here, but those adventures provide the background and information on artifacts that will help players understand some of the stakes of the events of this book.

We hope that *Artifacts Unbound* provides the game and plot information you need to build exciting stories for your game sessions. From tracking mysterious serial killers to tracking down a mysterious tree city to witnessing calamitous events unleashed when certain artifacts are collected, this book provides several hooks for all kinds of runners. If runners want to take part in the global chase for artifacts, they need to strap on their guns and remember that if one person is willing to pay them a lot to chase down a certain item, there's probably someone else out there who is paying at least as much money to get the item for themselves. Paydays will be high, competition will be fierce, and in the end, the world is not going to be the same. The runners can only hope that they'll come out alive on the other side to see just what has happened.

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First Printing by Catalyst Game Labs, an imprint of InMediaRes Productions, LLC  
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Connecting JackPoint VPN ...  
... Matrix Access ID Spoofed.  
... Encryption Keys Generated.  
... Connected to Onion Routers.  
> Login  
\*\*\*\*\*  
> Enter Passcode  
\*\*\*\*\*  
... Biometric Scan Confirmed.  
Connected to <ERROR: NODE UNKNOWN>  
"Archeology is the peeping Tom of the sciences."

### JackPoint Stats

81 users currently active  
in the network

#### Latest News

\* <090273> Taking bets on just what it was that happened in DeeCee. Join the pool now! -FastJack

#### Personal Alerts

\* You have 12 new private messages.  
\* You have 5 messages queued for anonymous re-routing.  
\* You have received 18 new Metalink Friends add requests.  
\* You have 11 new responses to your JackPoint posts.  
\* PDA: Museum opening on Thursday. Scope out security

#### First Degree

You are hidden from all contacts.

Your Current Rep Score: 69  
(88% positive)

Current Time: September 2, 2073,  
11:44

PREFERENCES

FEEDS

TASKS

LINKS

HISTORY

Welcome back to JackPoint, omae;  
your last connection was severed: 25  
hours, 2 minutes, 39 seconds ago.

### Today's Heads Up

- \* You can't own all the toys in the world, but you can enjoy thinking about and looking at 'em. [Tag: [Runner's Black Book](#)]
- \* Canning isn't always about keeping things fresh. [Tag: [99 Bottles](#)]

### Incoming

- \* Most of them are insane, but even if one's true it's bad news for all of us. [Tag: [Conspiracy Theories](#)]
- \* Keep up. No one ever died from being too current [Tag: [State of the Art](#)]

### Top News Items

- \* DeeCee police continue to claim unusual events were simply "odd weather." [Link](#)
- \* Draco Foundation schedules press conference in Seattle to highlight major discovery. [Link](#)
- \* Ares claims all Chicago research facilities have been shut down. [Link](#)



CHAT

MESSAGES

FILES

POSTS

NEXUS

SEARCH

### ARTIFACTS UNBOUND

Posts/Files tagged with  
"Artifacts Unbound"

True Power  
A Time of Frost  
Anchors Aweigh  
The Great Seattle Artifact Rush

[More]

CONTINUE

ADVANCED  
SEARCH

SAVE

Active



TomStar  
Firewall

Active



Jack-in-the-Box  
Antivirus

Active



SpamWitch  
Filter

On/Receiving



Commcode

Excellent



Signal

Active

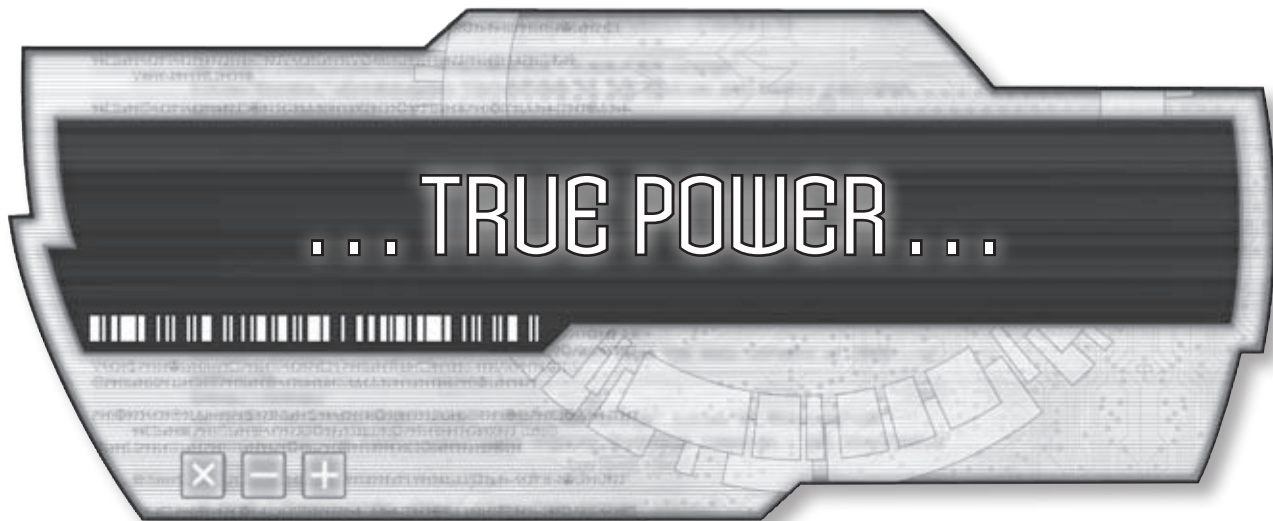


Hidden  
Mode



Local  
Map





There are certain obligations in life. Watch your own back. Keep your buddies safe, or avenge them if you don't. And never allow a straight line to just sit there.

Brody pulled on his tie and cocked his head toward the object on the table.

"This?" he said. "This is the stuff dreams are made of."

Riser scowled. "Shut the hell up. This isn't a game."

Brody smiled. "Of course it is. It's chess, just like every other run. We just managed to skip ahead of the other side's king. Or prince, I guess."

Riser stood up. He straightened the gun holstered at his hip, then pulled his jacket over it.

"That won't hide it, you know," Brody said. "Anyone will know it's there."

"It's decorum. People expect me to be armed, but they also expect me to have the manners not to flaunt it."

Brody started to grin, but then leapt to his feet as the door opened. He cursed silently. He should have understood that Riser was preparing for what he knew was coming.

The man who entered the room walked smoothly and slowly. He was significantly shorter than Riser and Brody, but something in his bearing made it seem like he was able to look down on them. The silk material of his suit and the sharpness of the crease in his trousers didn't detract from the impression he left.

He helped Riser and Brody understand their importance in this meeting by not looking at either one of them. Instead, he focused on the object at the table. He was silent for a time, and the other men thought it best not to interrupt him.

"It's one of those things," he said, "that you don't truly believe exists until you see it for yourself."

"We've had it for a couple hours now, and I'm still waiting for it to disappear right out from under us the next time I blink," Brody said.

The client smiled, looking at Brody directly for the first time. It was strange to see the face so common on political broadcasts and newsfeeds staring him right in the face.

"It will," he said. "I'm sure of it."

He approached the statue of the black bird and picked it up. He was going to just grab it with one hand, but apparently it was too heavy for that, so he used two. The client did not have a cheerful face, but he still could not prevent another smile from creeping across it.

"Humphrey Bogart," he said, "and Ghostwalker."

Brody and Riser exchanged glances.

"Sir?" Riser said.

"One of them, or at least his character, desperately wanted this but couldn't get it. The other got it, only to decide he didn't want it. And now I have it, and I have to decide how much I want it."

"I expect you want it at least twenty thousand nuyen's worth," Brody said.

The client frowned. "Perhaps." He bounced the falcon up and down, gently, as if weighing it with his hands. "I value it that much because that seems to be the going rate. This is what the world has come to—we value things not because we truly know what they're worth, but because we know the value other people put in them."

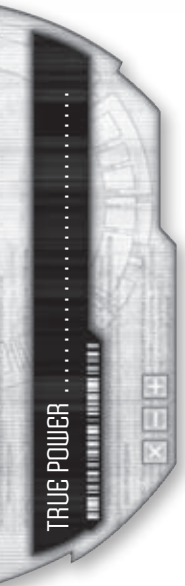
Brody thought that was an awfully philosophical turn for a politician, and he wasn't sure how to respond. Riser, however, took it in stride.

"That doesn't strike me as being much different from the way things always have been," he said.

"Perhaps," the client says. "It is instructive, though." He brought the bird closer to his chest. "I am pleased with your work. I am happy to have the object, even though I am not sure of its use. The fact that I can call on people like you to do a job like this for me is a form of power, and it is a form I appreciate. It teaches me, though, what I don't have—and that is the power to know, and to tell others, what something is worth. To make them believe in its value. That"—he shook his head—"that is the power that changes the world."

He walked out, leaving Brody confused. He had twenty thousand nuyen to split with Riser. He could choose where he would sleep and what he would eat tonight. That was all the power he wanted; all the power he thought he'd ever need.





- It's past the time when you can choose to not pay attention. For a while, it was just a couple of runs. Sure, they were interesting jobs, involving some interesting sights and major players, but if you weren't involved in them, they were nothing more than a good story.

That's changed. It turns out that people wanted to get these artifacts together for a reason, and that was because they were synergistic. Together, they could do more than they did apart. Once they got together, things started happening, and they haven't stopped. Who knows where it's going to end up. But whatever happens, you better know about it, because there's work to be had, and there are changes afoot. You need to be ready for them before they eat you alive. And in some senses, I mean that literally.

I've assembled a few resources here for your reference. First, Elijah has a primer about what's going on with these artifacts that are popping up all over and why you need to care about them. Then Frosty chimes in with some info on specific activities surrounding some artifacts because, well, she should know. Finally, I gave some space to Snopes to round up some of the rumors about what's happening this second and attempt to separate the truth from the drek.

I hope this helps. If you decide to skip it, or just ignore what's going on, I've got another file for you. It tells you how to build your own underground survival bunker in 38 easy steps. If you're going to keep your head in the sand, you might as well bury the rest of yourself down there too.

- FastJack

## MAGIC ITEMS

Posted by: Elijah

When setting the boundaries for a discussion about particular objects, I believe it is often useful to first talk about what things are not. So: If you are involved in artifacts, don't think that you are going to come across a flying carpet. Or a ring that makes any wearer invisible. Or a sword that gives anyone who wields it mighty fencing prowess. The nature of magic didn't change overnight, so do not go looking for sudden miracles that you know have no right to exist.

If this is the case, then, why are people so involved in these artifacts? What can these artifacts do that the items of which we are aware cannot? To answer that, we need to look at the worlds that existed before the Sixth.

The history of magic in the world is still not well understood. We know, of course, that the Awakening was not the first appearance of magic on the planet. Just how strong the previous manifestations were, and how prevalent magic use was in those times, is unclear. There are scholars I respect who are firm in their belief that the number of Awakened individuals now is far greater than it ever has been, and the combined magical and intellectual power of these individuals makes this the greatest period of magical use that the world has ever seen. There are others, to whom I also give great respect, who aver that no matter the number of spellcasters in past ages, their power dwarfs what we wield today, and if they were part of our age, they would sweep legions of spellcasters away as a gust of wind scatters tumbleweeds.

I do not intend to choose a side in that particular debate right now. One thing that is clear, though, is that whether mages of the past were more and less powerful than we are today, they were *different*. And as anyone working for SpiriTech or for MCT's or Aztechnology's magical divisions will tell you, magic that is different is magic that is worth something.

Added to this is the intrigue tied to anything that has managed to survive for hundreds of years. If it has survived for so long, the thinking goes, it must have some innate strength. This sort of thinking is not without its flaws (items that survive from past civilizations often turn out to be banal objects like pottery rather than things that endured because of their importance) but it is also not without merit, for some of these objects have drawn attention for hundreds of years for very good reason.

Let's take the Piri Reis Map as an example. Even before the Awakening, people knew about this object; even when people did not believe that magic was real, they were intrigued by this item, for even mundane humans could tell there was something unusual about it. Its depiction of an ice-free Antarctic coastline that the cartographer had no way of knowing in his time; speculation of its ties to the legendary Great Library of Alexandria—all that is enough to pique the curiosity of the sort of humans attracted to semiotics. It was an object that people believed might have arcane powers back before they knew for sure that arcane powers existed. Now that we have daily irrefutable proof of magic's existence, interest in—and speculation surrounding—the map, and other objects like it, has only increased.

So the artifacts rush is on, some of it fueled by curiosity, or a desire to find out just how deep the rimless power of these objects runs. (In Seattle, the rush is largely fueled by media hype, but that's another story.) Yet there is more on the table than speculation. Among the parties interested in these objects are those who do not just have to guess at their powers, because they know. Maybe they don't know the whole story, but they know some of it. Dragons and elves who saw the Fifth World, the Fourth World, and more, and who might have first-hand experience with some of these objects, or might have spoken at some point with their creators (or, for all we know, *be* one of their creators). They chase these artifacts because they know how to use them, and they have a purpose for which they will be useful. Or perhaps they are aware of another's purpose, and they want to obtain an artifact to forestall them.

All this means that we have various degrees of knowledge and power involved in a global chase. Some chase with full knowledge of what they are doing, others rush blindly primarily because they don't want to be left out of whatever is going on. In short, we have chaos.

The question of whether the artifacts are worth this effort becomes somewhat of an academic issue. Most of the tools we have used for counting value—gold, currency, etc.—have little intrinsic value. They are worth something because we say they are. Many powers in the world have said that these artifacts are worth something—a great deal, in fact—and because these people have opinions that shape the world their measures of value carry the day. So the answer to the question “Are these artifacts worth all the effort people are going to do to get them?” becomes “Yes, as is demonstrated by the fact that they are going to the effort in the first place.”





- All right, Elijah, let's climb down from the ivory tower for a second. Perceptions of worth aside, the question people are asking is "What can these things do?" If, say, Ghostwalker gets a hold of bunch of them, is he going to use them to incinerate Tenochtitlan to cinders, to ascend to a higher plane of being, or merely to serve as really expensive decorations on his mantelpiece? These are the kinds of things that directly affect people's lives, so that's what they tend to worry about.
- Haze
- I'm getting there.
- Elijah

Now that we have established the worth of these artifacts, we should consider some basic ground rules for what they are.

1. As tends to be the case, non-Awakened individuals are out of luck when it comes to these artifacts. There still are not many objects out there that give magic powers to mundanes.

2. Some objects can perform their functions without having to be bound to a particular mage. The exchange for this is that they are less flexible than ordinary foci. They do what they do, and tend to do it regularly, without much input from the user. There is generally one aspect of the item that is always "on"—which of course makes smuggling these items especially tricky.

3. Given that these items have particular functions that they perform, it is difficult to have them do anything else. Difficult, but not impossible. To make a rather crude metaphor, think of a hammer. It is well suited to banging nails in place. It can serve as an improvised weapon, or perform other tasks related to the application of force as enhanced by its capabilities as a lever. For other tasks, it is ill suited; for instance, it inserts and removes screws quite poorly. Yet it has the basic elements that make up a screwdriver—it has a grip, and it has a durable substance, typically metal, on the end. All it needs to become a screwdriver is a little re-shaping.

This is the mindset of many of the powers chasing the artifacts. They understand that certain powerful teslasma have gone into an item. They know that considerable effort was expended in order to get it to fulfill a particular function. They are not anxious to repeat that considerable work. Why make a new item, they theorize, when you can just take an existing item and tweak it?

- Elijah's hammer metaphor is pretty crude all right. Here's a better one. Think of a tractor. Lots of raw power and a fine ability to drive through fields are built in. But depending on what trailer you attach to it, it can perform a variety of different functions—all of which depend on the tractor's power and off-road capabilities. So you add things on to the tractor to change it's function, but you make sure that you don't change the basic nature of the thing that made it useful in the first place.

That's one of the things people want to do with the artifacts—leave their core nature intact, but then throw on some add-ons that shape that nature to their ends.

- Winterhawk
- I get surprises on JackPoint all the time. Winterhawk making farm analogies is only the most recent one.
- Pistons

The catch, of course, is that you don't alter a powerful artifact by just pulling out your hammer and anvil. Plenty of power went into these things in the first place, and if you don't match that power, the nature of the artifact is just going to rise up and swallow what you do to it, the way sunlight erases the beam of a feeble flashlight. You need a high-ranking initiate—probably more than one, unless you have scales—and the type of ritual magic you don't just buy off the shelf of Ipissimus.

I don't have enough information to tell me just what changes the powers of the world intend to impose on the artifacts if they get them; all I know is that whatever they do will further their own ends, which tends not to mean good things for the rest of us.

One of the tricks the artifact-seekers have learned is that many of the artifacts out there are complementary—their functions enhance each other. This means that they are more powerful when they are together, which might be useful in helping altering their function, or might make them sufficient, as they are, to accomplish the ends the wielder of them has in mind.

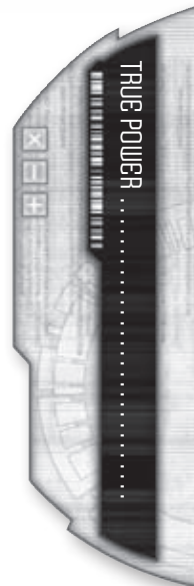
Consider, for example, the set of navigational artifacts—the Piri Ries Map, the Phaistos Disc, the Sextant of Worlds, and Shantaya's Compass. The fact that these artifacts work together is clear to anyone who has performed a modicum of research on the subject. What remains is disagreement as to just what they would do if they were all assembled together. The map, it seems, can be useful in finding the other artifacts (the clearest sign that this group has a common purpose). The disc, when it is properly understood, functions as a sort of users' guide to the others, providing instructions as to their use and directing some of their functions when it is in their presence (though it seems to have other functions as well). The sextant, on its own, is a disruptive force, sending waves of chaos into astral realms that are often severe enough to manifest in the "real" world. With the other artifacts nearby, it can be more focused, its chaotic power more deliberately directed.

Which brings us to Shantaya's Compass. Many people have theorized that the compass is there to help the wielder find a destination, but they have argued long and hard over what that destination is. More important, perhaps, is the compass' role as an anchor for the other artifacts. When viewed astrally, the compass clearly demonstrates that it was meant to hold other pieces. If all of the artifacts can be held in one place for a long enough period of time by someone who knows how to use them, the compass might unlock abilities in the other items that have been hidden—and then point the way to the place where these powers can best be deployed.

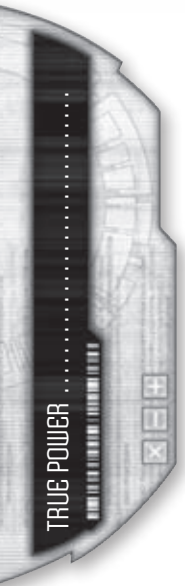
That, then, is your combination. A tool for finding artifacts. A tool for unlocking their secrets. A tool for finding primal sources of astral activity. And a tool for disrupting them.

If you have any experience with magic at all, your mind is currently swirling with thoughts of how these tools good be used, for good or ill. And you'll understand that people with more experience than you, and more power, have even more diabolical uses they could put these tools to. And you will grow very nervous.

- How about a little help for the non-magically inclined among us?
- Butch
- One simple example: Many magic theorists believe our individual sources of power have specific roots on the astral plane. So, use







the compass to find those roots, use the sextant to disrupt them. You might be able to cut off a mage from their power for a time—or you may be able to turn them into a burnout completely.

- Haze
- You only burn out when you remove yourself from contact with the plane, not when it is taken from you. Power will find its way back.
- Man-of-Many-Names

Now, as should be clear from the fact that they designed these things in the first place, the creators of these artifacts were nobody's fool. They knew what they were building, and they knew full well how the items could be used and abused, especially if they were brought together.

So they built in a defense, and a fairly simple one at that. The artifacts simply do not like being together. The more of this particular set you have in one place, the more strongly they will resist being together. If you are not ready, or not powerful enough, to wield significant amounts of mana in the name of keeping the artifacts in the same place, then they will separate. This will happen subtly, not through any flash of magic or any such thing. Circumstances around the artifact will conspire to allow them to travel in different directions. A guard tasked with setting an alarm will forget to turn it on. A mage on watch duty will find himself distracted by a wandering free spirit. And a passer-by will be seized by the sudden desire to walk into the now unguarded area and slip away with an item that has become inexplicably compelling to them.

- It gets even worse if intentional efforts are made to steal one of the assembled artifacts. Every break will go in the thieves' favor. It's quite humbling—you feel like a master thief when you get a hold of one of these things, then when you try to keep it secured you see how easily it slips through your fingers. Then you realize that you only got it in the first place because the same forces that prevent you from keeping it helped you get it.
- Frosty
- So what kind of forces are we talking about here? Are these objects controlling people's thoughts and emotions? Are they sentient?
- Traveler Jones
- The answer the second question is a definitive no. No one's mastered the art of giving life to the inanimate yet. The first part is trickier. The elements of the spells you mention are undoubtedly present, but how they manage to respond to the particular circumstances they are in is a puzzle.
- Winterhawk
- They do not need to be sentient. They just need to respond to those who are.
- Icarus

All this is to say that while there has been a fair amount of effort spent gathering these artifacts, the next stage of the effort is likely to be at least as intense, if not more so, as the parties involved work to use this wandering aspect of the artifacts to steal them away from each other, or to regather what they once had.

The final question is this: What happens should one of these individuals or groups hold on to the artifacts long enough? What

if they are able to alter them according to their own ends, and then to carry out the end stage of whatever plan they have been working on?

I don't know. The scope of that sort of power is beyond me—if I understood it better, perhaps I'd be part of the chase for the artifacts, rather than sitting here explaining it to you. I can say that I don't believe that whatever final effect will occur will result in total apocalypse, since no one really wants that—being the lone survivor on a desolated Earth isn't fun for anyone. That's about the only definitive statement I'm willing to make, though. Apocalypse won't be unleashed on the whole world, but could it be unleashed on a part of it? Maybe. Could people (including those that are mere disguises for big lizards) make progress on goals for power that have fueled their existence for dozens, or hundreds, or thousands of years? Quite possibly. Could there be other goals, other ends, of which I'm completely unaware? Undoubtedly so.

But in many ways, these large-scale things are not our concern. The world is perpetually changing beneath our feet, and we just adjust. We find a way to survive, because that's more than just our job—that's our nature. What we need to know is that there are powerful people looking for artifacts, and it's a multi-pronged fight against other powerful people. That being the case, they'll be looking for anything, even a small thing, that could be an advantage in this fight.

Make it clear that you could be that thing, and jobs and nuyen will rain down on you.

- If you were a corp drone, this is the time that you'd burnish your résumé, re-writing it to highlight your relevant experience. Now, we don't work quite that way, but the principle is the same. Have you gotten an item out of a tight spot? Are you adept at setting powers against each other so that they cancel each other out, and then working in the spaces they leave empty? Make sure your fixers remember that part of your work. They're going to have plenty of calls for work in this area—make sure you're on their mind.
- Cosmo
- That's why I keep up a regular schedule of thefts from high-profile museums and the like even when I don't have a client. Never let people forget what you can do.
- Ma'Fan

## HOW WE GOT HERE

**Posted by: Frosty**

So: I know people. That's not news. We don't need to get into the ins and outs, the whys and hows, of these relationships. We'll just acknowledge that they exist and go from there.

Thanks to these relationships, I've heard this and that about various artifacts for years. Anyone who's read Dunkelzahn's will be well aware of his interest in artifacts and the collection he had amassed. He knew more about them than almost anyone, but he was far from having all the answers. That's one of the reasons his will sometimes reads like a giant collection of riddles.

- That, and the well-known propensity of dragons to mess with metahumanity.
- Thorn



Much of this artifact stuff has been simple background noise, a low murmur of little to no significance. Take what's going on in Seattle right now. The Draco and Atlantean Foundations are getting all worked up about these artifacts they're finding, but the truth is that most of these things barely ascend to the trinket level. People wrote off news of artifacts for years because most of the news was not worth listening to.

Most, but not all. There are certain items that, once mentioned, get the attention of all the right (or wrong) people. The Piri Reis Map is one of these. The basic facts about it—the stuff Elijah mentioned—were only the tip of the iceberg. According to some who were lucky enough to experience it, viewing that thing on the astral was a consciousness-altering event that required no drugs. It wasn't just the astral connections it opened up and the opportunities to find other artifacts. It was the glimpse it gave to the underlying fabric of the astral plane, the alluring hint of what mana is made of and how it connects to itself and to living beings. That was enough to make some people want to do nothing but assense it for days on end.

- Staring at an astral map so you can figure out the nature of ethereal matter? Are you sure no one was on drugs when they were looking at this thing?
- Butch
- It's like jazz—the music, not the drug. If you need someone to explain to you the wonder of assensing something like this, then you ain't never gonna know just how good it can be.
- Haze
- Right. Assensing is great. Which is why you've never had to turn to hard drugs or anything.
- Pistons

So when word got out that the map had been seen, people rushed to it. It became more urgent when the interested parties became aware of who had it—Oni Adegoke, the leader of the Yoruba in Lagos. Adegoke's a formidable man, but he's not known as a magical expert. Everyone knew this would be a chance to get the map off someone who didn't know its true power, so they moved. Chaos descended on Lagos, and the map disappeared before it could be auctioned off.

- "The map disappeared," huh? All by itself? Or with the help of "the interested parties?" Come on, Frosty, I know you've got powerful friends, but you're supposed to be giving us the straight story, not dancing around and refusing to say who was involved. Stop trying to protect them.
- Jimmy No
- My discretion has nothing to do with trying to protect *them*.
- Frosty

That started a chase that eventually seemed like it encompassed the whole world. Four artifacts were central to this effort: the Piri Reis Map, the Phaistos Disc, the Sextant of the Worlds, and Shantaya's Compass. I covered the basics of the map already; let's briefly consider the other ones.

**The Phaistos Disc:** This is a tricky one because it appears to have multiple functions. The easier-to-understand one involves it

acting as a sort of Rosetta Stone for the other artifacts. Properly understood, the symbols on it provide a guide for how the others can be used. Note, though, that you really have to *look* at the symbols, both physically and astrally. A while back, a number of copies of the disc were made in order to confuse would-be thieves. Physically, these discs were identical to the original; if the inscriptions were what was important, then you'd think the copies would be as useful as the original. But each symbol has its own aura, and the interaction of this aura with the aura as the object as a whole, combined with information gleaned from the physical inscription, tells you what you need to know. Supposedly. Honestly, I've held the thing and assensed it, and while I admired the astral fireworks show it put on, I have no idea what it was supposed to be telling me about the other artifacts. People who are wiser and more experienced than me tell me that is the case, so with a lack of any better information, I trust them.

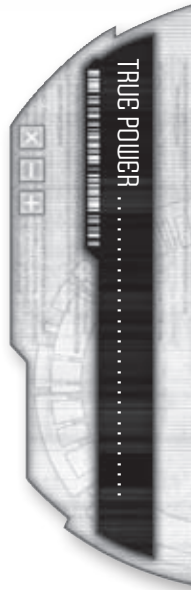
One thing I noticed while assensing it, though, was this—that thing is way too powerful to just be a glorified instruction manual. There's some serious shit going on inside that thing, but I can't for the life of me figure out what that is.

It may, perhaps, have something to do with the hidden part of the object's aura. You get a weird sensation that something is missing, like there's a closed door in your field of astral vision, but behind that door is a light shining so bright that some of it can't help but get through. It's evasive, though—every time I tried to look directly at this closed-door thing in order to figure out just what I was seeing, it skittered to the edge of my vision. Needless to say, I couldn't figure out what was going on, and I certainly couldn't figure out how to open that door. I left the experience certain that the disc had some other function, but hours of staring at and trying to interpret the inscriptions brought me no closer to the truth.

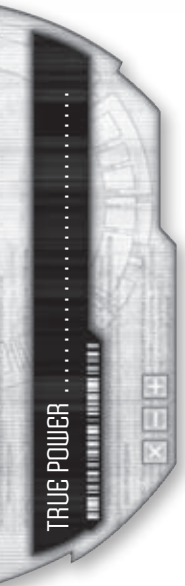
- The door has a key, and it will be given to those willing to pass through the darkest door of all
- Arete
- Has anyone met Arete in person? Does he talk like this in real life?
- Slamm-0!

**The Sextant of the Worlds:** This item has passed through the hands of Dunkelzahn, the Draco Foundation, Aztechnology, and others. Everyone who has looked at it has been intrigued by it; none of them have figured out exactly what it does. The two things that seem to have general consensus is that it has chaotic effects on the astral (and occasionally material) plane around it, and that those effects seem to be growing stronger over time. Whether that is something that is built into the artifact or that is occurring due to increased exposure to the other artifacts is unclear. But if you're Awakened and you come near this thing, you can feel its presence. It's difficult to describe, but think of the opening of a football game when the team rushes onto the field through some paper banner or something. Now think of what would happen if the entire fabric of reality was made of paper, and the sextant was a football team moving in slow motion, ripping its way through. That's what it feels like to be near it—you can almost hear reality tearing as you get close. The sensation buries its way into your brain, to the point where I'm still not sure I'm rid of it.

- This is becoming a problem for people who want to keep hold of the sextant. It's difficult because it announces its presence so







loudly. Groups intending on taking it for themselves are working on serious wards to keep it hidden, but it's not easy to hide something that seems to be more powerful than you are.

- Winterhawk
- I wonder if its recent surge in power is part of the design of the artifacts that keeps them apart? If the sextant makes itself easier to be noticed, it becomes easier to steal; if it becomes easier to steal, the artifacts can be separated.
- Jimmy No

**Shantaya's Compass:** Like the Phaistos Disc, Shantaya's Compass is an object that gains a whole lot if you look at it on the astral plane. On the material plane, you see a chain connected to a round plate holding an astrolabe. There are sixty marks around the outside of the disk. On the astral plane, these marks become much more complicated—they are notches and slots, waiting for something to be fitted into it. The speculation, as I'm sure you can guess, is that the compass is waiting to be joined to the other artifacts to unlock its full effects. What those effects might be is anyone's guess.

Like the other items, the compass is old—dating back to 550 B.C.—and well traveled. Like the others, it has changed hands through force a number of times, though most of that occurred in the first two hundred years or so of its existence. Since that time, it led a relatively calm life, sitting in private collections and the occasional museum, not being the object of theft like, say, the sextant was. My explanation for this is that those in the know understood that the compass was only truly useful in the company of the objects to which it clearly was supposed to be joined, and without those objects in hand, it did not make much sense to gain possession of the compass. Now that the other artifacts are in play, though, the compass becomes the final piece of the puzzle, which means it will be—and has been—targeted as much as the others.

- People in the past have made the mistake of thinking the chain is decorative or functional. Do not make that mistake. The item needs to be whole.
- Icarus

I'm sure you noticed that my descriptions focused on the history of the artifacts and some intriguing aspects of them without going into much detail about what they can actually do. There are three reasons (at least) for doing that.

1. As Elijah mentioned, we're still learning what these things can do. They're old, and they were made with magic quite different than what we commonly understand. It's hard enough to think like the ancients in mundane matters, even though we have some texts from their time that help us see the world through their eyes. The amount of magic-related writing they left behind is quite small, and generally incomprehensible. Trying to get into their mindset to unlock the full powers of these things is hard.

2. The second reason is related to the first. Magic you don't fully understand is magic that can easily backfire and hurt you. You don't hand a grenade launcher to someone who's going to ask you where the trigger is, and you don't invite someone to unleash the full power of an artifact when they're still figuring out how that power works.

3. There may be some things I know that I am not sharing, but to be blunt, the people who have urged my discretion have

made a stronger case for their side than any of you have made for doing the contrary.

- I'm sure they have. That's what happens when you spend too much time with the ultra-powerful—you either become one of them, or you sell your soul to them.
- Winterhawk

The upshot is that all these artifacts of mysterious function were gathered together, but they didn't stay together. In the course of their gathering, several parties were irritated—Yoruba king Oni Adegoke, some of the good citizens of Karavan, some high-ranking Saeder-Krupp personnel, an elite Eiropean magical society, and more. Also, it turns out there was a certain overlord of Denver who had been carefully tracking the movement of the artifacts, and an overly theatrical elf also made an appearance on the scene, pursuing ends only he understands.

Combine all this with the artifacts' propensity to be separate, as mentioned by Elijah, and you have trouble. And artifacts that don't stay where you'd like them to.

- So you—or, more accurately, your patron, lost them. All that effort, all that chasing around the globe, for nothing.
- Stone
- Not at all. First, even spending a single day in the presence of the artifacts gives you far more information about the artifacts than you had before (assuming you have the power and knowledge to listen to what they have to say). Second, looking for them becomes a lot easier once you know what you are looking for. My "patron" has a lot more ability to monitor these things than he used to.
- Frosty
- Or alternately, he did part of what he wanted to with the artifacts, and the second part of what he wanted involved releasing the artifacts onto the wild. Never underestimate the long games of dragons and immortal elves.
- Plan 9

This is where we sit. The artifacts are out there, and awareness of and knowledge about them keeps increasing. The collected powers involved in chasing the artifacts are too great to allow this situation to come to a calm, peaceful ending. Something's going to blow up somewhere, and I have a feeling that taking stock of the damage afterward is going to be very interesting. And painful.

## CAVALCADES OF LIES, KERNELS OF TRUTH

**Posted by: Snopes**

It's time once again for Snopes' guide to what is and isn't bugfrag crazy, or as I like to think about it, my life. Stories about these artifacts have become increasingly common in recent days, so let's not waste any time in getting to the good stuff. To make you life easier, I've given each rumor a bugfrag crazy rating on a scale of one to five. One means it's not all that crazy; you would be well advised to live as if that particular story were true. Five is completely bugfrag crazy, but that doesn't mean that you can just dismiss it—all of us





who have been in the business long enough can think of something we heard that we immediately dismissed, only to later find out (usually in a painful fashion) that it was true. So even though I rate something as a five, there's still a chance that it is Ghost's own truth.

But probably not.

## 1. SEND IN THE CLOWN

### Bugfrag crazy rating: 1

From the beginning, this whole artifacts thing has had the stink of immortal elves about it. Magic artifacts combine the allure and mystery of the past with the promise. That's them. That's what they *do*. So we expect them to be pulling a lot of the strings in all these happenings, working on the sorts of purposes they tend to work on.

Where you have immortal elves converging, you also have the chance that the laughing man will show up. The motivations of most of the immortal elves are obtuse to us mere mortals, but compared to Harlequin, the other elves are models of clarity. Part of the trick of knowing what Harlequin wants is that he doesn't always seem to know why he does what he does—he acts on instincts, and those instincts have served him well for a long time. He trusts them. But damned if he knows why they push him the way they do.

All this is to say that Harlequin's somewhere in this hunt. I don't know why, or who's side he's on. Usually, he's on his own side. If you're going to get tangled up in artifact hunts, you could very possibly get tangled up in whatever Harlequin is doing. Fair warning.

- But if I steer clear, that'll keep me from getting the chance to plant a cap in his ass.
- Bull
- Bad blood between Bull and Harlequin? This is something I didn't know about! What's the story?
- Slamm-0!
- I'm not going to go into it now. Let's just say that he makes the world interesting—*too* interesting.
- Bull

## 2. THE DISTRACTED DRAGON

### Bugfrag crazy rating: 2

It was just under a year ago now that talk started coming out of Denver saying that Ghostwalker seemed a little off his game—distracted, unfocused. That let to parties starting to agitate for the re-negotiation of the Treaty of Denver, which is where we are now. Most of the powers that be in the city are happy to leap at this small opportunity without taking time to worry about what's made Ghostwalker the way he is. Others, though, realize that if something is affecting a great dragon, then it's probably worth worrying about. Power that can hurt a dragon could, if it was redirected, hurt a whole lot of the rest of us. Or, looking at things from another angle, if something is hurting a dragon, maybe people should be looking to give it a hand so it could do some real damage.

Right now the number of theories about what's going on with Ghostwalker is legion, while the amount of actual evidence is scant. Some people claim it all has something to do with the fractured Spirit of Denver; others say he's distracted by the brewing

tensions with dragons (though Hestaby's speech to the United Nations occurred *after* the push for treaty renegotiation began).

Another theory is that he's been distracted by this whole artifacts hunt, and I think there's a grain of truth in that one. I have it on good authority that the Piri Reis Map made a pass through Denver in the course of its many journeys, and that its visit peaked Ghostwalker's curiosity about what was going on with all these things. He's done some asking around since, and it's quite possible that he's discovered some way to use these artifacts that will suit his purposes, whatever they may be. So if you're involved in the hunt, look out for the white wrym's agents.

- I know that people in Denver tend to see Ghostwalker as a unilateralist, but he is capable of working with others on high-level stuff. It doesn't mean he'll share the full extent of his plans with them, but he might be looking at ways to have the efforts of others further his own ends.
- Fianchetto

## 3. CENTRAL AMERICAN APOCALYPSE

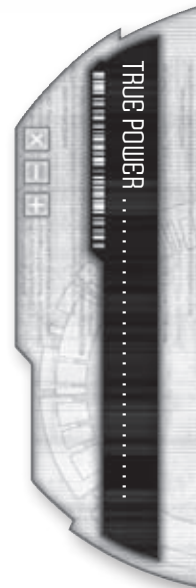
### Bugfrag crazy rating: 4

The Az-Am War is proceeding as wars tend to do, with each side looking for an extra advantage to put them over the top, and with that "extra advantage" often coming in the form of escalated destruction. It's natural, then, that rumors would start to spread about these sides looking for the artifacts as a way to blow the other side to kingdom come.

There's some merit to this story—but not a whole lot. The Sextant of the Worlds has indeed been shown to have some disruptive powers, but I haven't seen any evidence that would convince me that anyone knows how to control what it does. So bringing it into war would be like bringing in a bomb that has an equally good chance of blowing up your own people as it does of hitting the enemy. The other artifacts might be able to do some interesting things on the astral plane or to mess up some individuals, but it's unclear how much mass effect they will have—and mass effect is, of course, what wars require.

That's my primary reason for being skeptical about this rumor. The effort it takes to get these artifacts together does not seem to be worth it from a military perspective. These sides want raw firepower, and as both the Aztlan army and Sirurg by himself has shown, there's already a good amount of heat down there without people having to spend a lot of time chasing after artifacts.

- I'm with Snopes on this one. It's possible that the astral powers of the objects could help in some interesting assassination attempts, but from what I've heard it's nothing that the collective spirit-summoning powers of the two sides couldn't accomplish already. Well, maybe that's an exaggeration, but as Snopes point out, the improvement they'd get isn't necessarily worth competing for these things.
- Winterhawk
- They will seek the artifacts if they have enough mages who are wise enough to by indirections seek directions out.
- Man-of-Many-Names





## 4. THE BLACK LODGE

### Bugfrag crazy rating: 3

Okay, I admit it—I took the easy road there, giving this one a straight-down-the-middle-of-the-road rating. That’s because I never know what to believe about the Black Lodge. I’ve heard all the rumors, from stories about the Black Lodge’s ties to good old Aleister Crowley to allegations of the Black Lodge engineering the Night of Rage to rumors of Black Lodge members in the highest levels of all sorts of national governments. Each time I tell myself that something I’ve heard about them may be plausible, it turns out to be bunk; each time I dismiss something out of hand, I get a hint that maybe there’s some truth to it. Of all the secret organizations in the world, this one is about the best I’ve ever seen at keeping a lid on their operations—except, of course, for the organizations we’ve never heard of.

I find it entirely plausible that the Black Lodge would be interested in the artifacts, and that they would have some imaginative uses for them. I also find it plausible that they would use the artifacts hunt as a cover for some of their other, more twisted doings. I’ve heard all kinds of speculation—Nadja Daviar’s return is supported by the Black Lodge! Hestaby is acting at the Black Lodge’s behest!—but most of it makes no sense. I try not to make definitive statements until I have some hard evidence, and one of the Black Lodge’s primary purposes is to ensure that no hard evidence of their activities exists.

- The Black Lodge doesn’t have many members, but they have a presence in several cities, with the strongest individual lodges located in some of the most politically vital cities in the world. Governments are the ideal tool for them to work with—they’re just as corruptible as corporations, but easier for an outsider to get into. They’re less powerful than the corporations, of course, but life is full of trade-offs. I’d look for any Black Lodge efforts around the artifacts to be centered in a North American capital city, probably Atlanta or DeeCee
- Plan 9
- That’s Plan 9 for you—always willing to walk in where hard evidence fears to tread.
- Winterhawk

## 5. REVENGE OF THE GOVERNMENTS

### Bugfrag crazy rating: 5

There are a number of people in the world who pine for the days when governments held more power than corporations. In truth, I think those days ended around the fall of the Ottoman Empire, but there are those who believe that many of the governments of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were not as controlled by corporations as they are now, and they have a point. I’ve heard some of these people speculate that the artifacts could be gathered by a national government, or a coalition of national governments. The New European Economic Community is the group I’ve heard mentioned the most often as a possible contender for the artifacts.

I don’t believe a word of it. First, it’s not clear at all that the artifacts would really do anything to advance the NEEC’s goals. This is an economic/political body, and navigating the metaplanes

doesn’t have a whole lot to do with its short-term or long-term goals. Second, the NEEC has corporate fingerprints all over it—if you want to look for a place where political bodies can gain more independence from corporations, you need to look at something that isn’t corporate-dominated. Third, this just isn’t the NEEC’s style. They’re about the backroom deal, the political maneuver, not the boost in magical power. I can’t see them caring too much about the artifacts.

- If any governments are going to get involved, it’s going to be the ones in the Western Hemisphere, particularly the ones in Denver. If Ghostwalker wants these things, it makes sense for these governments to try to get to one of them first, and use them to gain whatever leverage they can over their master.
- Kay St. Irregular

## 6. NON-REFUSABLE OFFERS

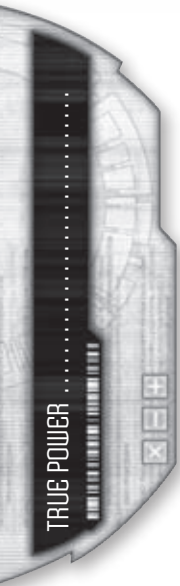
### Bugfrag crazy rating: 2

If there’s a shadowy activity going on in the world, then nine times out of ten organized crime is going to find a way to be involved in it. That’s what they do—that’s why criminals got organized in the first place, so that they could be more efficient about the ways they extracted wealth from illegal activities. While I don’t see too many organized crime groups looking to take final possession of the artifacts everyone is after, they’re quite interested in being the middleman in any transactions involving the artifacts. If they can get to an artifact first, then they can set up a bidding war and rake in a nice profit.

Of course, that’s what Oni Adegoke thought when he set up his auction for the Piri Reis Map, only to have the thing sneak out from under him. All the other searchers have gotten more aggressive about getting their hands on the artifacts, and if they get wind of where the artifacts are, they’re not just going to sit around while the Mafia or whoever accepts bids. They’re going to go in and get what they want. That being said, organized crime outfits are where they are because they’re quite comfortable with being aggressive and responding to aggression in others. They may start treating artifacts like the scion of a wealthy family—something that is ripe for kidnapping because of the hefty ransom it will bring in. Things will get dirty if that happens, but organized crime is not known for their reluctance to wallow in the muck.

- I believe you will see the more prudent outfits offering themselves as allies to some of the parties in the search. It is a way to bring in some income while making a friend. Stealing an item and then reselling it in a bidding war can make good money, but it can also alienate everyone involved. Every organized crime outfit in the world understands the importance of having well-placed allies, because the ones that did not understand that point have been crushed.
- Red Anya

So there’s your brief rundown. The long and short of it is that if you go out there after the artifacts, you could run into just about anyone, and at this point, their level of desperation could be running quite high. Be careful, be safe, and make sure anyone hiring you understands the meaning of “hazard pay.”





# ... A TIME OF FROST ...

## Reposted from SEATAC Sweetie's political/erotica blog Back On Your Back in Black-1/16/73-

Nothing is more depressing than being a sex worker this time of year. We have the January blahs, too. The holidays get busy with being arm candy and exclusive parties, but this time of the year is mostly just house calls with people who are just as depressed as you are. It's just as busy as December, but you really need to amp up the enthusiasm, otherwise the client doesn't have any fun. I lose more clients this time of year through a combination of resolutions and depression than any other time of year. Even election season. Actually, election season is like Christmas for me. Lot of stress to be dealt with.

My usual sessions with **Distinguished Gentleman** tapered off for a bit due to his career aspirations. He was passed over for a big promotion a few years ago, and a similar opportunity came up again recently. Being seen on the town with someone like me is not as big of a deal as it used to be, but I can understand why he might be gun shy. He left me off the guest list at the Inauguration Ball. Once he had done the rounds to show off his new position, I got the call two days after New Year's. He was more enthusiastic then he had been in a while.

- Looks like KB is back on top in more ways than one.
- Slamm-O!
- Can he write off SEATAC Sweetie as a business expense?
- Netcat
- Most joygirls are paid for by the same corporations that cough up campaign donations. It guarantees that any dirt comes back to the company. If the puppet doesn't dance to the music, off go a few snaps of the politico's indiscretion to the media—or to their opponent in the next election.
- Kat o' Nine Tales

**Lounge Lizard** came by as well. I know some of my readers find it disgusting that I do business with him, but what can I say? I like a man with a talented tongue and a penchant for Chunkpunk albums. Not only did he agree to my fabulous rate, he left me tickets to their show in April. I'll be in a luxbox, naturally, but feel free to send me a drink and I may be willing to sit on your lap for a song or two.

- I can't believe she would do that with something not even human.
- Orkce0
- When the Johnson comes calling, do you really care who's holding the bag? What's the big difference between what she does and what we do? Scan up the old saying about glass houses and stones.
- Butch
- A penthouse overlooking the ocean, actually.
- Orkce0
- Remember, Orkce0. Most of KB's Humanis buddies would say the same thing about you.
- Butch

**The Hook-Up** even made an appearance. Though I can tell the stress is getting to him. Keeping all my admirers away is a full-time job all by itself. He treats me nice, though. So I return the favor when he has a slight, uh, crash and reboot problem. I suggested the anti-viral program I use to stay at peak efficiency, but of course, that would tip off the **Spider Back at Home**.

- Ninety percent of her admirers want to shoot her, not her picture. I've heard she gives out plenty of "free samples" to the boys down in the Department of Public Database so the corps can't track her down. Sorry to hear that The Hook-Up failed his performance review.
- Kay St. Irregular

Incoming .....





- If The Hook-Up is who I think he is, he also probably has some support for SEATAC Sweetie coming from NeoNET. She better keep him happy or she'll be floating in the bay and nobody will bother to fish her out.
- Pistons
- It wouldn't surprise me if she kept some of the "evidence" for ritual links as collateral against her disappearing. That kind of threat-magic that can find you wherever you live—can put on a whole lot more pressure than some dirty pictures.
- Lyran

Just in case my regulars are tired of my usual stories, I just came back from my first call on a new client. We'll call him **No Man**, because he lives on his own private island. I didn't even know they had those in Seattle. I've been to penthouses, boardroom, helpads, and secret research labs, but a mansion built in 1999? A creepy old house is a new one even for me.

- We used to call them "McMansions." Some guy would strike it rich as part of a tech start-up and design his own house. Unsurprisingly, a lot of these houses looked alike, because they were basically picking from pre-fab designs from the same companies. People thought they were tacky. But now, they are classics.
- Fastjack

The house was huge and well kept. I didn't see any drones around, so either he can afford a human staff that cleared out for the night or he has a lot of time on his hands to dust. There were security cameras everywhere, and No Man spoke to me through speakers hidden throughout the house. He was truly a mysterious gentleman and never laid a hand on me.

Well, he did ask me to leave all my clothes at the front door and walk through his big mansion, but that's a story for another time.

- That was ... anti-climactic.
- Slamm-O!
- SEATAC Sweetie knows the importance of leaving people wanting more. I did, however, manage to get some more details from her through less public channels. Sweetie was pretty sure the guy was watching her—his commands came to her in real time. As she walked through the house, the rooms kept rearranging themselves. Nothing major, but she was around long enough to notice that items on the top shelf moved to the mantle, or a statue changed positions. I asked her if maybe it was some buggy AR or something, but she says she knows how AR looks and feels. Especially on naked skin.
- Sunshine

## THE STORY

### OVERVIEW

Jane Foster has been in the shadows a long time. She started out running with a go-gang in Columbus, MO. A brush with fate thrust her on to a much larger stage, and she has never looked back. She's rubbed elbows with immortal elves, worked in the service of a Great Dragon, and knows more about the secret history of the world than most people. She is a formidable ally and one of the few people in the world the runners can trust. Or can they?

Any shadowrunner worthy of the name does a little legwork on an employer. Sure, Mr. Johnson does his or her best to obscure who they are and where the money is coming from, but the more a runner knows, the more they'll be able to plan for those pesky contingencies—contingencies that can be fatal. The more they work for Frosty, the more they should want to know about her background. What do other teams think of her? Does she have any old enemies? Old friends? What information is she not telling them that could get them geeked someday? This adventure is perfect as a side job during or after the *Dawn of the Artifacts* series. It also could be the payoff if the team takes the initiative and checks out their new fixer. A contact may have also heard a distorted version of the events below and tells runners the story to warn them about Frosty. She denies the information if confronted with it, but she won't discuss any details. Who is telling the truth? The runners will have to dig to find out.

Runners digging into Frosty's history find out about her old team. After being dragged into the events of the classic campaign *Harlequin*, she moved to Seattle and put together a successful crew

of runners. Unfortunately, their last run ended in disaster. Frosty had a choice to make between loyalty to her crew and loyalty to her patrons. She chose her patrons, and the crew suffered because of it. Maybe if they were in the same situation, the runners would chose differently. Maybe not. The runners also discover that one of the survivors, an ex-decker named Kelvin, is still around. Kelvin has retired from the shadows, but he is the only person besides Frosty who knows what happened.

Kelvin could be the friend of a contact or even an old enemy. The runners hear a version of the story from the contact, but to get the real deal, they have to speak with the man himself. To speak to Kelvin, the runners have to get on his island. They can try a classic infiltration or they can take a more social route. Kelvin uses the services of a joygirl by the name of SEATAC Sweetie. Sweetie is willing to meet up with the runners to give up Kelvin's location. A hit from one of SEATAC Sweetie's disgruntled clients gives the runners an excellent bargaining chip with the joygirl if they step in to protect her. Of course, they will also earn the ire of Knight Errant for a firefight near one of Seattle's biggest landmarks, but it's nothing a few hours down at Central Processing won't fix.

Kelvin and Frosty ran as part of a team from 2055 to 2059. They did a lot of jobs—much of it dirty—for a lot of people. If the runners find him, Kelvin can tell the story of how the crew broke up. Frosty went off on her own, they went to back her up, and half the crew ended up dead. After the runners leave the island, they should be asking as many questions as they have answered. Can they trust her? Should they tell her they know about her past? What happens if she finds out Kelvin is still around?



There were three survivors from the incident: Frosty, Kelvin and another unnamed runner. The identity of the unnamed runner is left to the gamemaster's discretion. This is a chance to work in a character from your game into the *Dawn of the Artifacts* campaign history, like a trusted contact or a favorite villain. For long-time players, it might be a chance to bring back an old character from a previous edition. How are they handling retirement? How did they handle the many changes of the past twenty years? What would they think of this new team of upstarts?

## PLOT POINT ONE

### *Looking into the Past*

If the runners are going to put themselves on the line for Frosty throughout the events of *Dawn of the Artifacts*, or keep trusting her in their aftermath, they will want to learn more about her. She has flung them around the world in search of the artifacts, and paranoid runners may want to know more about what's driving her. Everyone has a motivation. Experienced runners know most fixers have at least two—the one they tell the runners and the one that's true. Frosty has some big backers behind her willing to pay for a professional crew zipping around the world to kill or be killed in exotic locations. Even if Frosty were to come clean, a prime runner would never believe her. There's only one word they trust—the word on the street.

Frosty has been around for a while. She has a solid reputation, and most of her contacts give her high marks. But nobody's perfect. After some diligent digging, info turns up about the first crew she ran with when she came to Seattle. They ran hot for a while, but a disastrous job shook the crew apart. Some rumors began to swirl that Frosty gave up the rest of the crew for her current bankroll. Frosty herself is silent on the matter. Anybody asking her about it directly gets the subject changed in public and a private plea to not bring it up again. She asks the runners to trust her.

Two members of her original crew are still around. One skipped town and was never heard from again. Kelvin was the street name of the decker. He is still in Seattle, but he long since retired from the shadows. He's living the dream of many runners—he bought an island and retired there, away from the glaring eye of Lone Star. He used his big score wisely and got out of the game. Nobody goes on or off the island. Some of the wilder rumors insist he uploaded himself to a private server long ago, or he died from a heart attack and his programs pretend he's still alive. A few people claim he was cut off from his meat body during the Crash and haunts his mansion like some kind of wireless ghost.

The truth is that Kelvin is alive, and he is not without the need for some interaction. He engages the services of SEATAC Sweetie, a notorious joygirl. He found her through the blog she keeps that discusses the sex lives of her clients (with a veneer of anonymity provided to them). It serves as a gathering place for people to gossip about the power players in Seattle and what goes on behind closed doors. SEATAC Sweetie is a more approachable target. She believes that she is well known enough that if something were to happen to her, her readers would track down and expose those responsible for her death. The runners may have a chance to test this theory out first hand.

Kelvin is also useful as a contact for those groups not involved in the *Dawn of the Artifacts* campaign. He's heard about Frosty poking around looking for artifacts. An artifact was the reason his former crew was taken out, so he's curious why she's poking about for more. In this case, Kelvin is actually the runners' true employer. Anything they do for Frosty is also passed on for Kelvin to analyze. This setup offers an additional layer of intrigue. Being double agents might be a refreshing change for most groups. They get to sell someone out for once.

## PLOT POINT TWO

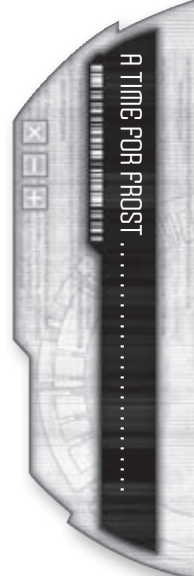
### *SEATAC Sweetie*

Arranging a meeting with Seattle's most notorious joygirl is more difficult than it sounds. SEATAC Sweetie dictates the terms of any encounter. She wants to meet at the Pike Place Market during the dinner rush. She gives the runners specific instructions on how they should identify themselves at the meet. They are each to buy one pound of Japanese eel from the Dehut Shipping fish-vendor booth. They will then toss the eel into the trashcan closest to the Rachel the pig statue (see p. 59, *Seattle 2072*). Then, they will find an open table at the coffee house chain across the street and wait. If they do what she asks, she will approach the runners ten minutes later.

SEATAC Sweetie is a short, petite blond woman. Her hair is cut short, but she wears a blond wig and large sunglasses to keep her identity hidden. She sits at the table next to the runners and engages them in indirect conversation. If they approach her as clients, she negotiates in general terms and asks for a 1,000 nuyen deposit while she checks their SINS. If they approach her directly for information, she is willing to talk freely. Her visit to Kelvin's island is summarized in the first section of the chapter. She is willing to go into more graphic detail in person, but she mentions two things not mentioned in the previous section. She reveals these pieces of info either after a Charisma + Negotiation Opposed Test or for every additional 500 nuyen the players give her. SEATAC Sweetie noticed that Kelvin has no surveillance equipment in his bathroom, which has a beautiful view of the bay. She also just got a call yesterday scheduling a return appointment soon.

Once she delivers the goods, it's time to inject a little excitement into the proceedings. A hit team, undeterred by the public setting, makes a movie to eliminate Sweetie. While the public place is usually safe, she got a little predictable and uses the Pike Street Market for all of her first meetings with new clients. A go-ganger on a motorcycle strikes first, ripping past the patio seating and spraying SMG fire. The round after the go-ganger takes his shots, a group of four thugs emerges from a parked Eurocar Westwind to shoot at either SEATAC Sweetie or anyone that is an obvious threat. The hit team engages for three rounds or until Sweetie is dead, whichever comes first. At the beginning of the third round, all parties involved hear Knight Errant sirens approaching. The hit team disengages, and the first security drones arrive at the end of the third round, with reinforcements arriving each subsequent round.

Who is behind the hit team? Obviously, one of SEATAC Sweetie's clients is upset with her candor on her blog. Which client is left up to gamemaster discretion. Kenneth Brackhaven might be





tying up loose ends now that he's the governor of Seattle. NeoNET might think it is tying up a leak coming from Alan Horell. Saving Sweetie could also be a springboard to any of the adventures in this book. If she survives, SEATAC Sweetie will have no problem mentioning the incident in her next blog. She is also available as an unorthodox contact, another example of how people drift between levels of society providing necessary services.

## PLOT POINT THREE

### *Kelvin's Island*

The runners might convince SEATAC Sweetie they should accompany her on her next run to the island. She is willing to take them on as security consultants for a small fee. She also can be persuaded to let a female runner take her place while she calls in sick. Since she is her own boss, she can vouch for the girl she sends in her place. If the runners use this tactic, they have to be very careful about how they interact with Kelvin. Sweetie's reputation is her life and if they do something terrible like hurt or kill Kelvin, it reflects poorly on her. This is a great way to make an implacable enemy for life. SEATAC Sweetie has no problem adding the runners to the cast of characters she discusses on her blog and dragging their reputations through the mud.

Getting out to Kelvin's island on their own is a challenge. SEATAC Sweetie gives them the location—it's a private island located two kilometers out of Seattle Harbor. Matrix searches pull up very little info. Kelvin bought the island in 2060 and it seems none of the info lost in Crash 2.0 ever made it back online. The mansion has some historical significance. It was purchased away from Seattle during a wave of privatization by a corporation called K Directorate. The only records that exist after the crash are Kelvin's contract with Knight Errant. He pays top dollar for them to send a Rapid Response Team in the case of an emergency. Further digging finds that Kelvin's mansion was never fully upgraded to the wireless Matrix. Any wireless attempts to contact the outside world suffer -2 penalties due to spotty reception and interference due to the geography of the island.

The grounds seem to be poorly kept—trees grow wild, and the driveway leading up to the house is cracked and broken. This is part of Kelvin's security protocol. If the house looks abandoned, people don't come sniffing around. Professionals taking time to survey the grounds will notice the small details that let on the building is more than it seems, including drones disguised as crushed BoomCola cans and tall weeds cultivated to prevent astral scouting. It would appear that whoever set up the security comes from a background as a shadowrunner, and a prime runner at that.

The inside of the manor is deceptively well kept. Kelvin does a good job keeping the place tidy on his own. He feels internal security drones are more of a liability than a convenience. Kelvin carries a pistol with him whenever he is out of his master media suite. If he expects unauthorized visitors, he arms himself with an assault rifle. If the runners make aggressive moves towards him, he retreats to his media suite, seals it up tight, releases tear gas, and calls in his security services. If the runners mention Frosty's name, he is willing to talk, at least until the security team arrives.

The runners may also get word back to Kelvin via Matrix channels or through SEATAC Sweetie. He is still active on boards that cater to old deckers. Once word filters back to him that they are running with Frosty, he may take it into his own hands to contact the runners. If the gamemaster goes this route, running this scenario works best as a series of subplots strung out over a few sessions. If the runners aren't investigating Frosty, Kelvin can be used to cast some doubts on the character.

## PLOT POINT FOUR

### *Kelvin Explains It All*

Kelvin sits down to talk with the runners in his dining room. It's a huge room with a long table that Kelvin has decorated with souvenirs from his various runs. Observant runners might pick up on some history from the things on the walls. Gamemasters can also use this room to sprinkle in hints and hook for later games. Kelvin invites the runners to sit with him at the table and offers them food and drink. Some runners might refuse, fearing some sort of drug or poison, but Kelvin laughs off such concerns. He notes that he probably would have refused when he was their age as well. Kelvin looks far older than Frosty. He wears each year of his life on his face. Even his cyberware, once novahot chrome, looks tarnished and battered. Kelvin shows what twenty years of living in the shadows does to somebody, even though he's retired and presumably healthy.

He spools the story out over dinner. Frosty and Kelvin were part of a six-person crew that ran in Seattle for a few years. They were wildly successful, pulling off a string of jobs that paid for Kelvin's current lifestyle. He squirreled away his money while his teammates bought bigger toys and faster cars. Frosty was the closest to the leader and she put herself on the line a few times to bring back a wounded comrade or chase down a Johnson that reneged on a deal. But during one of those runs she lost her ring. She said it was a simple power focus, but they way she worried about it after she lost it clued Kelvin into a deeper meaning. She went to retrieve it alone and the rest of the crew came after her to help. There was a lopsided firefight between their team, corporate security and two other rival teams. Half of the crew died and the trust between the rest of the crew had been shattered. Frosty disappeared into tribal lands. Kelvin retired from the shadows and never looked back.

He regrets how things went down. If Frosty would have told them the truth, they could have planned something out. They could have hit a different target and arranged a trade for the ring. There were a dozen moves that they could have made and she opted for one of the worst. The crew would have backed her play but she made what she thought was the right decision. He realizes she thought she was protecting them, and she may have been. But she should have let them make the decision rather than disappear.

Once Kelvin has told his tale, the runners can leave. He thanks them for the time and a chance to reminisce about the old times. He leaves it in their hands whether or not they should tell Frosty he is still around. He offers one last piece of advice. If it came down to it, if it was between the artifact and the runners, what would she choose? Would she make the same call? Or will she learn her lesson ten years too late?



INCOMING FEED.....

The encounter ends peacefully unless the runners make any aggressive moves. If they want to murder Kelvin, he doesn't go out peacefully, but an old man against a team of trained killers is no match. It truly is a young man's game.

## LOCATIONS

### KELVIN'S MANSION

The island is a large affair; roughly a kilometer in diameter, and insertion anywhere but the boat launch is a tricky affair. Bluffs drop off into the sea for two hundred feet. A large swimming pool is also located on the grounds, though it is in disrepair. There is a lone dock, a boathouse and a paved road leading to Kelvin's mansion. The boathouse holds a launch and a rigged pickup truck that will take any invited guests to the front of the house. If the runners attempt to hack the truck but are unsuccessful, Kelvin lets them think they did it—right up to the point where he causes the truck to head full speed in the forest and wrap itself around one of the trees.

The drones that patrol the island are built by Kelvin himself. Most are hidden in what looks to be trash or other bits of refuse. Kelvin collects these parts that wash up from the beach and uses them to house his drones. Inside the mansion, the drones are hidden inside knick-knacks and other décor. Kelvin has each drone rigged with a stun charge that it can use if it contacts a

hostile target. Use the stats for the Shiwase Kanmushi drones (see p. 351, *SR4A*), but add an Unarmed Combat skill of 3 and a taser that does 6S(e) damage. Note that once a drone has hit with its taser blast, the effect of the discharge effectively destroys the drone. Since they are not overly powerful on their own, the drones prefer to swarm a single target until it is down.

Wild animals also roam the grounds. Scale the creatures to the competency of the runners. Normal wild animals if the runners are new, paranormal critters if they have been around for a while. There is a decent amount of wild plant life on the island as well. Trees surround the main building and hide it from view to anyone watching from off the island.

The main way to get off and on the island is a private launch. The boat is remotely rigged by Kelvin using an old-school vehicle control rig. Because of the old equipment, hacking the boat incurs a -3 penalty to any attempt to take control of it.

Kelvin's mansion is a two-story building with six master bedrooms, a large foyer and a winding double staircase to the second floor. The house is mostly furniture free. Kelvin has turned one of the master bedrooms into his media center. The room is essentially a panic room, with reinforced doors, anti-wireless paint, and a thick collection of ferns to prevent astral scouting. Kelvin has a Rating 2 security system on the grounds of the island. The cameras, infrared, and motion detectors on the inside bring that rating up to 5 inside the mansion.



## PIKE PLACE MARKET (OPEN-AIR MARKET)

Pike Place Market is one of the most famous open-air markets in the world. Fresh fish from around the world arrives daily. The vendors are famous for putting on displays involving cutting, stacking, and throwing the fish to customers and each other. In addition, a variety of food vendors from Seattle's best restaurants offer samples of the best food in the city. It is located in the middle of a bustling commercial hub with franchise chains surrounding the market for blocks.

The Pike Place Market is also very well protected by Lone Star due to its importance as a commerce and tourist hub. Response time for any disturbance is lightning quick. Both sides of any such conflict are going to be hauled down to Central Processing for a few hours until things are sorted out. The Star doesn't take trouble as such a high profile location lightly.

Prices are comparable with those in the SR4A book. Because everyone shops at the Pike Place Market, any Availability Tests are made with a +1 bonus.

## PEOPLE

### KELVIN

*Human male*

Kelvin was a decker that hooked up with Frosty's crew after she came to Seattle. He was fresh out of a corporate cram program with a chip on his shoulder and a prototype deck. He thought he was going to bring the whole system crashing down. If he made a little cash doing it, so be it. The times were fast and the crew was tight. But then Frosty was forced to make her choice and she did. Three members of the crew survived the fallout. Kelvin retired soon after and lost track of Frosty and the other runner. When the Matrix crashed, he never really bothered to get back on the grid. What was the point? The world was filled with hackers and technomancers.

Speaking to Kelvin in his mansion feels like speaking to a ghost. He is lonely yet paranoid. He watched his close friends get ground up in the corporate gears. He sees a lot of himself and his old crew in the runners that break into his place, but he also knows that trying to share with them his experiences would be lost on them. He's willing to tell them Frosty's story and leaves the rest up to them. Hopefully, she won't have their blood on her hands as well. If they make it back alive, he's willing to let them tell Frosty he's still alive.

Should players want Kelvin as a contact, he proves to have unusual connections. Many of the people from his shadowrunning days have moved onwards and upwards. Running the shadows is not much of a lifelong career, but Kelvin has favors fifteen years old. He doesn't want for much—he's happy on his island, so those favors could prove useful to the team. He's also a reflection of what the runners might become someday. All the action, the gunfights, the spellslinging. How

does it all add up? Is this what they are destined to become? Runners go their whole careers looking for the big score. What happened after that score is made? Life still goes on.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
4	5	5(8)	3	4	6	7	5	6	1.835	11(14)	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10/11

**Armor (B/I):** 8 (9)/1

**Skills:** Automotive Mechanic 3, Automatics 4, Computer (commlink) 6 (+2), Con 3, Cybercombat (Agents) 6 (+2), Cybertechnology 4, Data Search (Street Rumors) 5 (+2), Electronic Warfare 5, Etiquette (Shadowrunners) 3 (+2), First Aid 3, Hacking (Exploit) 6 (+2), Hardware 4, Instruction 3, Negotiation 3, Perception 4, Pilot Aircraft 3, Pilot Ground Craft 4, Pilot Watercraft 3, Pistols (Semi-Automatics) 4 (+2), Software (Offensive Utilities) 5 (+2), Swimming 2, Throwing Weapons 3, Unarmed Combat 3

**Knowledge Skills:** Matrix Infrastructure 6, Matrix Security Techniques 6, Seattle Streets 5, Seattle Waterways 3

**Qualities:** Analytical Mind, Codeslinger, Exceptional Attribute (Logic)

**Augmentations:** (all betaware) Attention coprocessor [3], control rig, cyberears [Rating 3, w/ balance augments, damper, increased sensitivity, select sound filter 4, spatial recognizer], cybereyes [Rating 4, w/ eye laser system, flare compensation, low-light vision, smartlink, thermographic vision, vision enhancement 2, vision magnification], bone lacing (kevlar) datajack, encephalon [2], implanted commlink [Device Rating 6], math SPU, reaction enhancers 3, simrig

**Programs:** Analyze 6, Armor 6, Attack 6, Biofeedback Filter 5, Black Hammer 6, Browse 5, Data Bomb 5, Decrypt 6, Defuse 5, ECCM 5, Edit 5, Encrypt 6, Exploit 6, Reality Filter 5, Scan 6, Sniffer 5, Spoof 6, Stealth 5, Track 6

**Gear:** Armor clothing, FFBA (half-body suit), 4 x Ferret MPD-1x (w/ Defiance EX Shocker), 4 x GM Nissan Doberman drones (w/ Ingram White Knight), 8 x MCT Fly-Spy drones, 3 MCT-Nissan Roto-Drones

**Weapons:**

Colt Cobra TZ-110 [Submachine Gun, DV 6P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC 2 (3), 32 (c), w/ smartlink, 10 clips of EX-explosive ammo)

Morrissey Elite [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -5, SA, RC 1, 5 (c), w/ personalized grip, smartlink, 10 clips of APDS ammo)

## SEATAC SWEETIE

*Human female*

SEATAC Sweetie's real name is Violet Beauchamp. She comes from a surprisingly high-class background for someone in her dubious occupation. Her stint as a joygirl began almost as a lark. Her parents cut her off from her high standards of living to teach her a lesson of self-reliance. She started doing adult sinsense recordings to pay for school. Violet soon realized she

would make more money and had more freedom if she stayed in her newfound career. Moving on to a job as an escort was a natural fit. Her breeding allowed her to fit in high-level situations. She started the SEATAC Sweetie blog after one of her rich clients refused to pay for her services. Her parents were connected to Federated-Boeing and she spent most of her life growing up in and around the airport. She wanted to get back at him by ruining his reputation through rumor, vicious commentary, and baseless speculation. Her catty remarks picked up quite a following, both among the elite clientele and the shadow community they employ.

She now uses the blog to promote her services as an escort and her escort business to promote her blog. Violet thinks her efforts and self-promotion have made her too famous to just disappear, and she may be right. Every blog entry is a bold new step for her little media empire. She loves her life. As SEATAC Sweetie, she is both hero and villain to Seattle's social scene. SEATAC Sweetie is a scandalous creature that can get away with saying what everyone else is thinking.

The attempt on her life doesn't really phase Violet. She rotates her initial meeting spots but still goes to the Pike Place Market unprotected. She believes that nobody would be foolish enough to take another shot at her there. She is grateful to the runners if they saved her skin, and she promises to repay the favor as soon as possible. Violet does not like being beholden to anybody, so she looks for the best possible way to even things out. If they track down who tried to take her out, she makes a lucrative offer regardless of how powerful the opposition is. Otherwise, she can be quite the useful contact to get close to anyone that's rich, male and in Seattle.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
2	4	5	2	5(7)	5	3	4	3	5.6	9	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 9/10

**Armor (B/I):** 4/0

**Skills:** Blades 2, Computer 4, Con 5, Data Search 5, Etiquette (Matrix) 4 (+2), Hacking 2, Hardware 2, Negotiation 2, Perception 3, Pilot Watercraft 2

**Knowledge Skills:** Seattle Politics 3

**Augmentations:** Tailored pheromones 2

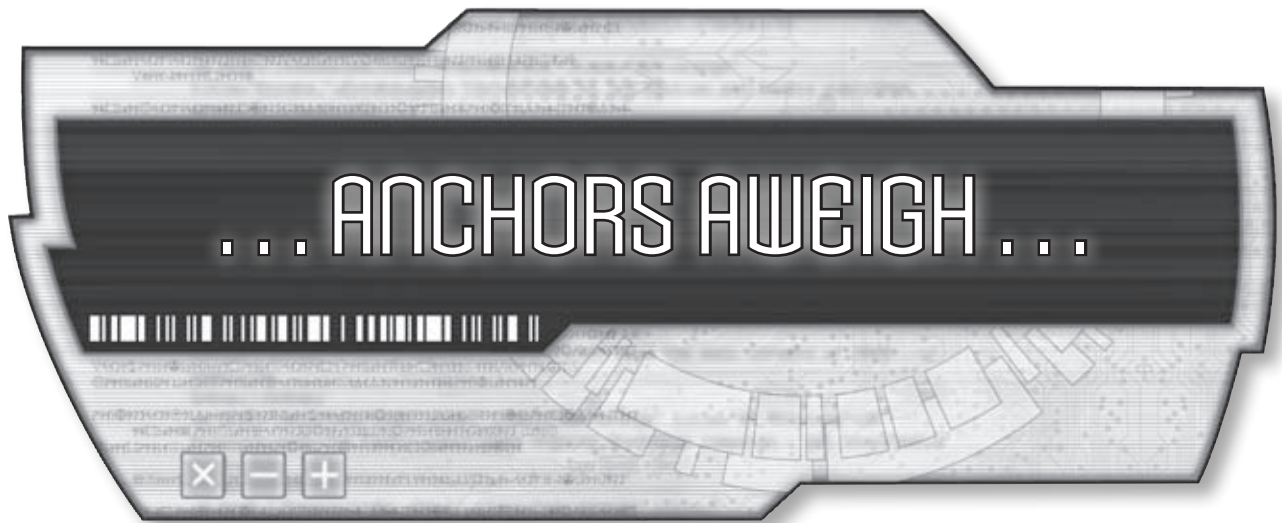
**Gear:** Armor clothing, commlink [Device Rating 4]

**Weapons:**

Cougar Fineblade (short) [Blade, Reach —, DV 2P, AP-1]







Incoming .....

#### Posted by: Sunshine

Hey everybody. I thought some of our more nautical (I'm looking at you, Sounder) and/or military-minded members would find this interesting. It's an interview with the captain of CAS's new incredible waste of mone ... I mean, fantastic new aircraft carrier. Pay close attention in the excerpt to where Captain Barret talks about his antiques collection. In light of our ongoing adventures with, shall we say, nautical-themed antiques, this guy seems to be someone we should keep an eye on.

*Excerpt from "CSS Kitty Hawk—A New Voyage, A New Captain" CAS Navy Times, April 29, 2073*

#### Bound by Tradition

Captain Barret, aside from being an accomplished naval officer, is a scholar of naval history as well as an avid collector of antiques. Most of the items in his extensive collection are of a distinctly nautical origin and come from his own family, acquired over three hundred years of service as sailors and naval officers. While some of his collection dates from the fifteenth century and the earliest days of ocean-going vessels, the majority is dedicated to both the Age of Sail and the navies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Some of his most prized possessions are a collection of archaic tools used aboard sailing ships of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to navigate using the stars. While the tools appear to be woefully outdated at first glance, Captain Barret says that even today, in an age of effortless satellite navigation, these sculptures of brass and wood are as functional today as when they were made.

"Aside from their value as historic objects, and, frankly, the beauty inherent in their precision and construction, these objects are simply useful. knowing how to use these instruments is as important to a sailor today as it has ever been." At this point, Captain Barret opened a baize-lined box and lifted out a large brass instrument known as a sextant. "If the history of the past eighty or so years is anything to go by" he said, "technology has proven itself capricious and, on occasion, unreliable. The lessons of both Crashes were hard learned, and it's only the complacent or the near-sighted who rely solely on a technology that can be

taken away at a moment's notice. A good sailor can always find his way home, no matter what the conditions, and knowing the fundamentals and tools of celestial navigation are the key to that."

*The entirety of this article can be read online at the CAS Navy Times' Matrix site. Subscription fees may apply.*

- Man, that article was terrible. That interviewer tossed more softballs than ... oh, I don't know, a softball pitcher or something. I'm glad I read all the way through it just to learn that the CAS is awful proud of their new colossal cash sink and that the captain likes old trinkets. I want my ten minutes back.
- Snopes
- What the hell did you expect, Snopes? Hard-hitting journalism? Did you not see where this was an article published in *CAS Navy Times*? It was meant as a rah-rah feel good piece that paints the navy, this ship, and her captain in a positive light. Honestly, *CNT* is only read by people in the CAS Navy and the occasional interested civilian, and it is really only concerned with preaching to the choir, which is exactly what this article does. Honestly, I liked it. Seemed like a good amount of non-OPSEC info on the carrier, and the bio sections about Captain Barret were a good read. It's nice to know that not *all* navy captains subscribe to the old "rum, buggery, and the lash" school of leadership.
- Kay St. Irregular
- Rum, buggery, and the lash? Seriously? Modern navies, and when I say modern I mean *within the last two hundred or so years*, are pretty far from that kind of behavior. Well, except maybe for Russia's navy. Anyway, this is pretty fascinating. I've been following the development of the *Kitty Hawk*-class carriers for a while now. They're a big step for the CAS, and a *huge* target for both corporate and governmental espionage. I've heard they had a hell of a time with security down in Newport News while they were building the *Kitty Hawk*. There must have been some serious tech on those boats for runners to brave not only the NNS cops but



the Ares guys as well. I'd love to spend a couple of days wandering around the *Kitty Hawk*. She's a good-looking ship, and capable, too, from everything I've heard.

- Sounder

- Kay drops the bait, and Sounder rises to the surface!
- Haze

- Oh, I'll fully admit to taking the bait there. Here's something else interesting—I've heard from some friends who say that not everything is shipshape aboard the *Kitty Hawk*. It sounds like there's some sort of feud going on between Captain Barret and his XO. No one can say what it's about, but they all say that life aboard *Kitty Hawk* is frackin' miserable right now. Take it from me—there's nothing worse than serving aboard a ship when the officers are at each others' throats.

- Sounder

- So, I don't mean to interrupt *NavyChat* here, but did anyone see something really interesting in the picture on page 14? The one of Captain Barret busy at work at his desk? Look real close at the upper-right part of the display case behind him. It's easy to miss, so I've circled it. Right there half-hidden by the CAS flag ...

- Lyran

- Image posted by Lyran<

- What the ... What the hell am I looking at here? It's just a regular ... Oh, no. No way. There's absolutely no way that's what it looks like, is it? I mean, right out there? In the open like that?

- Snopes

- Well, the article *does* say that Captain Barret collects *nautical antiques*. That's a bit much, though. No one in their right mind is just going to hang the Sextant of the Worlds up there on his wall for everyone to see, unless he's the ultimate braggart. Or just plain dumb I guess. Seems awful risky to me, though.

- Lyran

- If we think that's the sextant, you can bet your asses that those with a more intense interest in these things think so too. Something tells me that whether or not that's *actually* the sextant, Captain Barret's life is about to get a whole lot more complicated.

- Sounder

Incoming .....



## OVERVIEW

*CSS Kitty Hawk*, the CAS Navy's new aircraft carrier and the centerpiece of its new force-projection scheme, has set sail from her home port of Newport News, VA on an eighteen month cruise with her strike group. This cruise, intended to be part shakedown and part "goodwill" tour, will take *Kitty Hawk* and her dangerous little fleet to a number of foreign ports, both to staunch CAS allies and to countries that the CAS would dearly love to have as allies.

Before setting sail, *Kitty Hawk's* captain, one Samuel J. Barret, was approached with a deal that he was hard pressed to decline. Captain Barret is a known collector of antiques, specifically those with some connection to the history of sailing, such as navigational instruments, weapons, electronic equipment, uniforms, flags, model ships, and the like. One of his regular contacts, a wealthy and well-connected antiquities dealer from New York, approached him and offered to pay a fair amount of nuyen if the captain would carry something on his journey. He was told only that the piece was a bit of naval history, very ancient and mildly magical, that had been purchased by a foreign collector. All Captain Barret would need to do is carry the curiosity with him, and he would be contacted by agents of the foreign collector at an unspecified time and place along his route. Being fairly deep in debt thanks to some very poorly thought out investment schemes, and despite the numerous red flags this strange request should have thrown up, Captain Barret gladly agreed to carry this item for his dealer.

The item is a replica of the Sextant of the Worlds, a powerful and ancient artifact of unknown provenance and power. It is a

convincing replica, to the point where it is imbued with a small amount of telesma to give it an astral signature, but it does not have anything close to the actual sextant's power. Captain Barret, in his ignorance of the anything to do with the Sextant of the Worlds, hung it in a display case in his stateroom for the duration of the journey simply because he liked the look of the thing. When a reporter and photographer from *CAS Navy Times* came aboard to do a story about the captain, he thought nothing of it, and a picture of Captain Barret with something that looks an awful lot like the sextant was published for all to see right as *Kitty Hawk* and her strike group got underway. Agents of The Atlantean Society and members of the JackPoint community have lost track of the Sextant of the Worlds recently, and while it seems unlikely that it would have made it into the hands of a naval captain, they don't feel like they can afford to ignore any possible leads. They're in the market for some smart, competent, and above all daring runners to retrieve the sextant for them—or, if they don't bring it back, persuade them that it is a fake and not worth their effort.

## PLOT POINT ONE

The players are contacted by Mr. Johnson and offered an incredibly lucrative contract. All they need to do is retrieve a specific item and bring it back to Mr. Johnson so it can be passed on to his client. The catch is that the item is aboard a CAS navy aircraft carrier, which is being escorted by a carrier strike group made up of about a dozen ships, and is currently in the middle of the Atlantic ocean steaming for Europe. The players are given detailed documents regarding the carrier, the *CSS Kitty Hawk*,





including schematics, deck plans, bills of lading, crew manifests, her schedule, and so forth. They are also given bios of the ship's captain who is currently in possession of the artifact, his executive officer, the ship's other command officers, and a number of other possible embarked contacts such as *Kitty Hawk's* Purser and Master at Arms. Aside from the details on *Kitty Hawk* and her strike group, precious little assistance is offered to the players. From here on out it will be up to them to find a way aboard the ship and get the artifact.

## PLOT POINT TWO

There are two ways to go about infiltrating the ship at this point; while she's at sea and while she's docked. If the players come up with a workable plan to hit her at sea, they'll have a very difficult task ahead of them. The *Kitty Hawk* is being escorted by a mixed strike group of surface ships and submarines, along with a tight net of airborne reconnaissance and observation drones running patrols along the fleet's route. The players will have to approach the *Kitty Hawk* undetected, gain access to her decks, avoid security patrols and wandering crewmen, and get to a safe spot below decks where they can regroup, put on any disguises they have, and go about the business of tracking down the sextant. While not recommended, coming aboard while at sea is certainly feasible, especially if the players have members who are experienced in surface warfare along with the services of a water or air shaman.

If the players decide to hit the *Kitty Hawk* while she's docked, they'll find her in a populous European city (the exact city is left to the gamemaster's discretion) along with her strike group. Infiltrating the ship will be much easier while she's docked, as much of her crew will be ashore on liberty, and her security forces will so busy with drunken, rowdy sailors that a team of shadowrunners with good disguises and forged IDs should have little problem getting aboard. Once aboard, the players will find that despite the numerous crewmen ashore enjoying the charms of the port, there are still plenty of sailors and officers aboard to get in their way. Without detailed maps and deck plans, players with little or no experience with navy ships will quickly get lost within the maze of compartments and corridors in the ship's bowels.

## PLOT POINT THREE

Once the players are aboard *Kitty Hawk*, it quickly becomes apparent that something is clearly wrong. There is a general feeling of anxiety and unspecified dread aboard the great ship, and her officers and crew are more suspicious and paranoid than seems normal. If they snoop around, and they should be encouraged to do so, they will quickly find that the ship's officers, and by association the entirety of her crew as well, have fallen into two passive-aggressive warring camps; those who are loyal to the ship's captain and those who are loyal to her executive officer. The finer points of this situation are sure to be lost on the players, and they may not even be interested in them. What is important to them, however, is that the atmosphere aboard is ripe for exploitation, and canny players can use it to their advantage in retrieving the sextant.



At this point, the players can play it one of two ways. They can find a way to get the captain's attention, and do him some sort of favor in exchange for the sextant, or they can seek out the executive officer and use him to do some of the heavy lifting for them. Whichever way they choose, the players will have to move quickly and be extremely convincing or they risk having the ship alerted to their presence, which could get them involved in a potentially long and drawn-out running firefight with ship's security and marines in strange terrain.

## LOCATIONS

Most, if not all, of the action during this run will take place aboard the *CSS Kitty Hawk*, a massive, state-of-the-art aircraft carrier. The *Kitty Hawk* is one thousand meters long and is home to thousands of CAS Navy personnel. Her inner decks are a twisting warren of compartments, equipment spaces, corridors, wardrooms, and unidentifiable spaces that will be confusing to everyone save the experienced sailor.

### CSS KITTY HAWK

A joint venture between Ares' Nautical Surface Warfare Division and Newport News Shipbuilding, the *Kitty Hawk* is the lead ship of the CAS's new *Kitty Hawk*-class of advanced super carriers. *Kitty Hawk* and her sister ships *Houston*, *Pensacola*, and *Canaveral* are slated to be the foundation of four new carrier strike groups that will allow the CAS to both project its power around the globe and free up assets for pirate and smuggler interdiction in home waters. Laid down at Newport News Shipbuilding Yards in 2069, the *Kitty Hawk* is a variant of Ares' *Camelot*-class carrier specifically tailored to the needs of the CAS navy's new order of battle.

The *Kitty Hawk* is home to over 4,000 officers, enlisted crew, and marines, and she carries nearly 100 aircraft and drones. She is the flagship of *Carrier Strike Group 1*, a small fleet that includes nearly a dozen warships including destroyers, guided missile carriers, and a few of the CAS navy's beloved submarines. She is a state-of-the-art supercarrier featuring electromagnetic catapult systems, exceptional command/communicate/control functions, and nearly everything she needs to keep her people and her aircraft in top fighting shape for months at sea with little or no resupply.

Below are some of the common locations aboard *Kitty Hawk* in which the players will find themselves if and when they decide to infiltrate the ship in pursuit of the sextant.

#### Flight Deck

The *Kitty Hawk's* flight deck is a dangerous, chaotic expanse of weather-lashed deck from which her deadly fighters are launched. Extremely hazardous under the best conditions, in the thick of an exercise or during a full combat launch situation the flight deck is sheer death to anyone not familiar with the delicate dance of the crewmen who arm, launch, and recover the *Kitty Hawk's* fighters. Players should be encouraged to not linger on the flight deck for fear of attracting attention or being injured or killed by one of the numerous dangers of a working aircraft carrier.

#### Hangar Bays

The hangar bays are bustling hives of activity at all hours of the ship's day. Home to the various fighters, drones, and other aircraft that call the *Kitty Hawk* home, the hangar bays are also constantly in use by the many techs and mechanics who are forever tending to the needs of their finicky, high-maintenance aircraft. Players with mechanical or technical know-how, especially in areas dealing with aeronautics, should fit right in among the avionics techs, ordnance crews, and jet mechanics.

#### Engineering

These decks are home to *Kitty Hawk's* two massive nuclear reactors and the men and machines required to keep the massive ship running. Like the hangar bays, the engineering decks are in constant use twenty-four hours a day, with engineers, boilermakers, and machinists mates keeping the reactors and power plants up and running, and security personnel keeping a watchful eye out for danger. Engineering is one of the most heavily guarded areas of the ship, and players should be encouraged to steer clear unless working in engineering is absolutely necessary.

#### Bridge

Located in the ship's superstructure and commanding an expansive view of her flight deck, the bridge is the *Kitty Hawk's* command, control, and communications nerve center during day-to-day operations. It is from the bridge that the ship's course is plotted, communications are received, and commands are given out. During daylight hours, either the captain or the ship's executive officer will be on duty, along with numerous enlisted, petty officers, and junior officers going about the business of running a modern aircraft carrier.

#### CIC

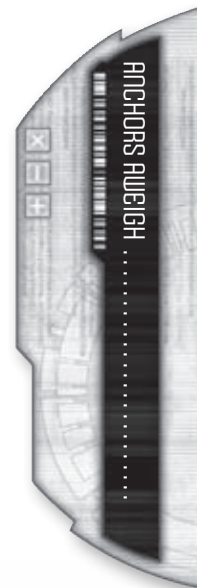
The Command Information Center, or CIC, is nestled deep in the *Kitty Hawk's* heart, insulated from danger by meters of hull, armor, and compartments. The CIC is typically only used in the thick of battle and can be thought of as a secondary bridge from which the ship can be piloted and fought. The controls for the majority of the *Kitty Hawk's* defensive systems are located here, and as such there is always a crew and security presence, if only to man the system monitors and keep an eye out for troublemakers or security threats.

#### Officers' Quarters

Compared to the Spartan conditions in which *Kitty Hawk's* enlisted crew live, the decks that house her officers are palatial. Composed of numerous staterooms, day cabins, private cabins, entertainment and exercise facilities, and the officers' mess, depending on the time of day the officers' quarters are abuzz with the comings and goings of the *Kitty Hawk's* numerous officers.

#### Wardroom

A combination dining room, drinking establishment, and recreation facility, the wardroom is a richly appointed space adjoining the officers' quarters. All junior officers, as well as any warrant officers aboard ship, are considered members of the wardroom and are free to take advantage of any services it offers.





## PEOPLE

### CAPTAIN SAMUEL J. BARRET, CASN

Captain Barret is a navy man through and through, a born sailor whose family can trace the history of their naval service back three hundred years to when his ancestors sailed as privateers against the Royal Navy during the American Revolution. A tall, powerfully built man with dark hair and bright green eyes, Barret hails from Virginia Beach where he was raised in the bosom of the CAS navy. From his earliest memories, all he ever wanted was to go to sea, like his father and grandfather and countless Barret men and women before him. Thanks to the social and political connections of his family, he was sent to all the best schools and had access to training and education opportunities not available to many of his peers, opportunities he took full advantage of.

Barret is the very model of a modern CAS naval officer. After graduating from the CAS Naval Academy, he spent the early years of his career serving aboard the smaller frigates and destroyers of the CAS navy. It was during this time, while fighting pirates and smugglers that threatened the CAS's maritime interests, that Barret gained a reputation as a bright, affable, aggressive, and efficient, if perhaps a bit over ambitious, officer. He developed a leadership style that relies on shrewd judgment of character and strong delegation skills, and he is renowned for his ability to identify his subordinates' strengths and weaknesses and assign them duties and responsibilities that match them. Captain Barret also believes in leading from the front, and he is known throughout the fleet for running a tough but fair ship and for having very high expectations not only of his crew and officers, but of himself as well.

While his strong personality and leadership style have won him numerous friends and allies in the service, they have gained him more than a few enemies who have been put off or made to look bad at one time or another by Barret's brashness and straightforward demeanor. These enemies are quick to point out, fairly or not, that Barret's success has come more from luck and privilege than any inherent skill or ability. They also like to mention his financial problems (Captain Barret is currently in quite a large amount of debt thanks to some ill-advised investments) and his alleged cuckolding of more than one of his fellow officers. He is also on the outs with more than one of his superiors, due both to politics and to his sometimes contrary and insubordinate attitude. Despite these hindrances, he has finally reached what he considers the pinnacle of his career, command of a capital ship—a position he achieved with help from the political interests of his family as well as the strength of his record.

Taking command of the *Kitty Hawk* has proven to be the toughest challenge of Captain Barret's career. From the outset, leading the ship and her battle group has been fraught with one challenge after another, the largest and hardest for him to bear being the dramatic schism within the ranks of his officers. Barret believes that the only truly efficient ship is a happy one, and he works hard to see that his officers and men are well taken care of in the way of liberty, pay, and benefits. Sadly, he and his executive officer, a mean-eyed, cross-grained officer named West, haven't



seen eye to eye since they met. Barret has had numerous heated discussions with West regarding his capriciousness, his treatment of the crew and junior officers, and his apparent inability to properly lead men. This has caused a rift within the wardroom, with the ship's officers coming down either on the captain's side or on West's, a situation that makes the entire crew edgy and unhappy. As such, it's an extremely unhappy ship that Captain Barret finds himself in command of, and he can currently find no way to rectify the situation.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
4	3	4	3	5	6	6	4	5	5.1	10	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10/10

**Armor (B/I):** 4/0

**Skills:** Automatics 3, Blades 2, Computer 2, Dodge 3, Etiquette (Military) 5, Leadership 6, Longarms 4, Navigation (Ocean) 6, Perception 4, Pilot Ground Craft 4, Pilot Watercraft 5, Pistols 4, Swimming 5

**Knowledge Skills:** American History 3, Astronomy 5, Carrier Ops 5, CAS Military Politics 4, CAS Navy 6, Horse Racing 2, Investing 2, Military History 3, Military Theory 5, Naval Antiques 4, Naval History 6

**Qualities:** Guts, Home Ground (Aircraft Carriers), In Debt (250,000), Lucky, Poor Self Control (Ladies' Man).

**Augmentations:** Comlink, cybereyes [Rating 4 w/Flare Compensation, Vision Magnification], datajack.

**Gear:** Armor clothing (working uniform)

**Weapons:**

Colt American L36

**Note:** As captain of a state of the art supercarrier, Captain Barret has access to all manner of military grade weapons, armor, and gear as the situation warrants. The Gamemaster should feel free to outfit Captain Barret however he sees fit, within reason, when dealing with the players. If it should come to it and Captain Barret needs to enter combat, he will be armed and armored like one of Kitty Hawk's Marines.

## COMMANDER TITUS WEST, CASN

Titus West is a tall, rangy, rough-hewn sailor in his late middle age with grey hair and pale eyes. He hails from Charleston, South Carolina, and he is a member of an old navy family, one who can trace their roots nearly as far back as the Barret's. Despite graduating from the CAS Naval Academy and holding the rank of commander, he is known throughout the fleet as an incompetent officer who should have been shuffled to a desk years ago. Those who have served with him describe a surly, suspicious, intractable shipmate who is constantly aggrieved, quick to take offense, and quick to lay the blame for his problems on others. Sailors who have had the misfortune to serve under him curse him as a brutal and an over-zealous disciplinarian whose leadership style involves more screaming, belligerence, and striking subordinates than is usually considered proper. Few trust him, and even fewer like him. Those allies he has tend to share the same sort of constantly aggrieved victimhood, and he's surrounded himself with a group of sycophants and supporters from among *Kitty Hawk's* more unpopular officers.

Commander West owes his position as executive officer of the *Kitty Hawk* more to politics and family influence than to any actual leadership or officer-like qualities. He is incredibly jealous of Captain Barret, both of his accomplishments as a naval officer and of his being made captain of the *Kitty Hawk*, a commission West feels should have been his by rights. He also feels that Barret's ideas of discipline are lax, sure signs of weakness of character and leadership. West also feels, mostly due to his captain's regard for the well-being of his men, that the captain is entirely too familiar with the enlisted men. That's behavior West considers neither officer-like *or* gentlemanly.

It is largely due to West that the state of the *Kitty Hawk's* morale is as bad as it is. West would dearly love to find a way to relieve Captain Barret of his command so that he could take over the coveted billet of commanding the CAS's new carrier. This has caused a massive amount of strife in the wardroom, as West and his followers butt heads with the captain and those officers loyal to him and the ship.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
4	3	3	4	2	3	3	5	3	4.5	6	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10/11

**Armor (B/I):** 4/0

**Skills:** Automatics 3, Blades 3, Dodge, Etiquette (Military) 4 (+2), Gunnery 4, Intimidation 5, Longarms 4, Perception 3, Pilot Ground Craft 4, Pilot Watercraft 4, Pistols 3

**Knowledge Skills:** Carrier Ops 3, CAS Military Politics 4, CAS Navy (Professional Knowledge) 4, Military Theory 4

**Qualities:** Guts, Home Ground (Aircraft Carrier), Incompetent (Leadership), Paranoia, Toughness, Uncouth

**Augmentations:** Comlink (implanted), cyberarm (right full, subtle, customized, w/ Body 4, Enhanced Strength 4), cyberears [Rating 3 w/ damper, select sound filter], cybereyes [Rating 3 w/ flare compensation and vision magnification], datajack

**Gear:** Armor clothing

**Weapons:**

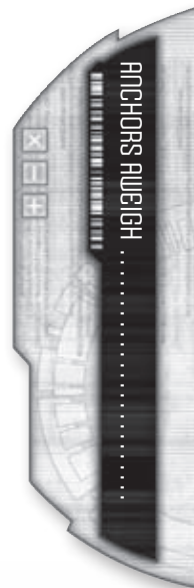
Colt American L36 [Light Pistol, DV 4P, AP —, SA, RC —, 11 (c)]

**Note:** As the executive officer of a state of the art supercarrier, Commander West has access to all manner of military grade weapons, armor, and gear as the situation warrants. The GM should feel free to outfit Commander West however he sees fit, within reason, when dealing with the players. If it should come to it and the XO needs to enter combat, he will be armed and armored like one of *Kitty Hawk's* Marines.

## GRUNTS

### CAS SAILORS (Professional Rating 2)

The bulk of *Kitty Hawk's* crew is made up of enlisted sailors. These sailors are the heart and soul of the carrier, performing a myriad of duties from launching and recovering aircraft and operating the numerous command, communicate, and control systems to swabbing decks and performing administrative duties. While the average sailor is essentially a non-combatant, all sailors receive





combat training in basic and will take up arms and defend the ship when called upon to do so. In a combat situation, sailors will fight either with a weapon issued from the ship's armory (typically a shotgun), or with whatever they can find such as heavy tools or makeshift clubs.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
3	4	3	3	2	3	2	2	5.9	6	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

**Armor (B/I):** 6/4

**Skills:** Automatics 2, Blades 2, Clubs 3, Etiquette (Military) 3, Longarms 2, Swimming 2, Technical Active Skill (choose one) 3, Unarmed Combat 1

**Quality:** Home Ground (Aircraft Carrier)

**Augmentations:** Datajack

**Gear:** Armor vest

**Weapons:**

- Remington 990 [Shotgun, DV 7P, AP -1, SA, RC (1), 8 (m)]
- Club [Club, Reach 1, DV 3P, AP —]

## CAS SAILOR LIEUTENANTS

**(Professional Rating 3)**

Either senior non-commissioned officers like chief petty officers or junior commissioned officers like midshipmen or lieutenants, these sailors tend to the day-to-day leadership duties aboard the *Kitty Hawk*. Typically older and more experienced than the bulk of the enlisted sailors, these men and women are veterans of the sea, many having served numerous tours in both the brown-water and blue-water navies of the CAS. Like regular sailors, the majority of the *Kitty Hawk's* NCOs and officers aren't combat veterans but can hold their own in a fight should it come to it. If pressed into combat, they will fight with either assault rifles or sidearms, and many wear light armor.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
4	4	4	3	3	3	2	3	5.9	7	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

**Armor (B/I):** 12/10

**Skills:** Automatics 3, Blades 2, Etiquette (Military) 4 (+2), Leadership 3, Pistols 4, Swimming 2, Technical Active Skill (choose one) 4, Unarmed Combat 2

**Quality:** Home Ground (Aircraft Carrier)

**Augmentations:** Datajack

**Gear:** Light military armor

**Weapons:**

- Colt Manhunter [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, RC —, 16 (c)]
- AK-97 [Assault Rifle, DV 6P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC —, 38 (c)]

## KITTY HAWK SECURITY TEAM

**(Professional Rating 3)**

These men and women are specially trained in shipboard security measures and answer to the ship's Master at Arms, who in turn answers directly to the *Kitty Hawk's* XO, Commander West. The only sailors allowed to carry weapons at all times as part of their job, ship security officers maintain order aboard ship, enforce the CAS's Uniform Code of Military Justice, and generally keep the peace among nearly 5,000 unruly sailors. They are also responsible for the ship's armories and weapons lockers, and they will organize and arm teams of regular sailors in the case of a ship-wide security emergency.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
4	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	5.9	8	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10/10

**Armor (B/I):** 7/6

**Skills:** Automatics 4, Clubs 3, Etiquette (Military) 3 (+2), Longarms 3, Military Law Enforcement (Professional Knowledge) 3, Perception 2, Pistols 4, Swimming 2, Unarmed Combat 2

**Quality:** Home Ground (Aircraft Carrier)

**Augmentations:** Datajack

**Gear:** Armor vest, commlink (Device Rating 3), helmet

**Weapons:**

- Fichetti Security 600 [Light Pistol, DV 4P, AP —, SA, RC (1), 30 (c)]
- Remington 990 [Shotgun, DV 7P, AP -1, SA, RC (1), 8 (m)]
- Stun Baton [Club, Reach 1, DV 6S(e), -half]

## SECURITY TEAM LIEUTENANTS

The NCOs and officers that lead the *Kitty Hawk's* security teams are tough, sharp-eyed, and generally not to be trifled with. With years of naval security experience under their belts there is little that phases them, and even less that escapes their notice.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
4	4	4	3	4	5	3	4	5.9	9	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10/10

**Armor (B/I):** 7/6

**Skills:** Automatics 3, Clubs 3, Etiquette (Military) 3 (+2), Intimidate 4, Leadership 4, Longarms 3, Military Law Enforcement (Professional Knowledge) 4, Perception 4, Pistols 3, Swimming 2, Unarmed Combat 4

**Quality:** Home Ground (Aircraft Carrier)

**Augmentations:** Datajack

**Gear:** Armor vest, commlink (Device Rating 3), helmet

**Weapons:**

- Fichetti Security 600 [Light Pistol, DV 4P, AP —, SA, RC (1), 30 (c)]
- Remington 990 [Shotgun, DV 7P, AP -1, SA, RC (1), 8 (m)]
- Stun Baton [Club, Reach 1, DV 6S(e), -half]



## CAS MARINES

### (Professional Rating 5)

Like the old United States Marine Corps from which they trace their line, the CAS Marines are an elite group of professional warriors. While they specialize in amphibious assault, they are also well versed in most aspects of ground and air warfare, and they are well suited to the heavy-hitting lightning strike-style of warfare perfected by their predecessors. Aboard ship they generally keep to themselves and spend their time doing physical training in the *Kitty Hawk's* gyms or performing live-fire exercises on her flight deck. In the case of a ship-wide emergency, the Marines will muster along with the *Kitty Hawk's* security teams to meet whatever is threatening the ship head-on.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
5	5	5	4	3	3	3	4	5	8	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 11/10

**Armor (B/I):** 12/10

**Skills:** CAS Marine Corps Tactics (Professional Knowledge) 3, Climbing 3, Close Combat skill group 3, Demolitions 2, Etiquette (Military) 3 (+2), Firearms skill group 4, Perception 4, Running 3, Survival 2, Swimming 2, Throwing Weapons 3

**Quality:** Toughness

**Augmentations:** Commlink, cybereyes [Rating 4 w/ flare compensation, low-light vision, smartlink], datajack

**Gear:** Full body armor, helmet

**Weapons:**

- 2 x flash-bang grenades [Grenade, DV 6S, AP -3, Blast 10m Radius]
- FN HAR [Assault Rifle, DV 6P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 35 (c)]
- 2 x smoke grenades [Grenade, DV —, AP —, Blast 10 M Radius]
- Survival knife [Blade, Reach —, DV 3P, AP -1]
- 2 x thermal smoke grenades [Grenade, DV —, AP —, 10m Radius]

## CAS MARINE LIEUTENANTS

Renowned even among other Marines for their grit, hardness, and drive, the NCOs and officers of the CASMC are some of the most hard-charging members of the CAS armed forces. These Marine leaders know how to motivate Marines and how best to use their skills and innate aggressiveness to the fullest effect.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
5	5	5	4	4	3	3	5	5	8	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 11/11

**Armor (B/I):** 12/10

**Skills:** CAS Marine Corps Tactics (Professional Knowledge) 4, Climbing 3, Close Combat skill group 4, Demolitions 3, Etiquette (Military) 3 (+2), Firearms skill group 5, Leadership 4, Perception 4, Running 3, Survival 2, Swimming 2, Throwing Weapons 4

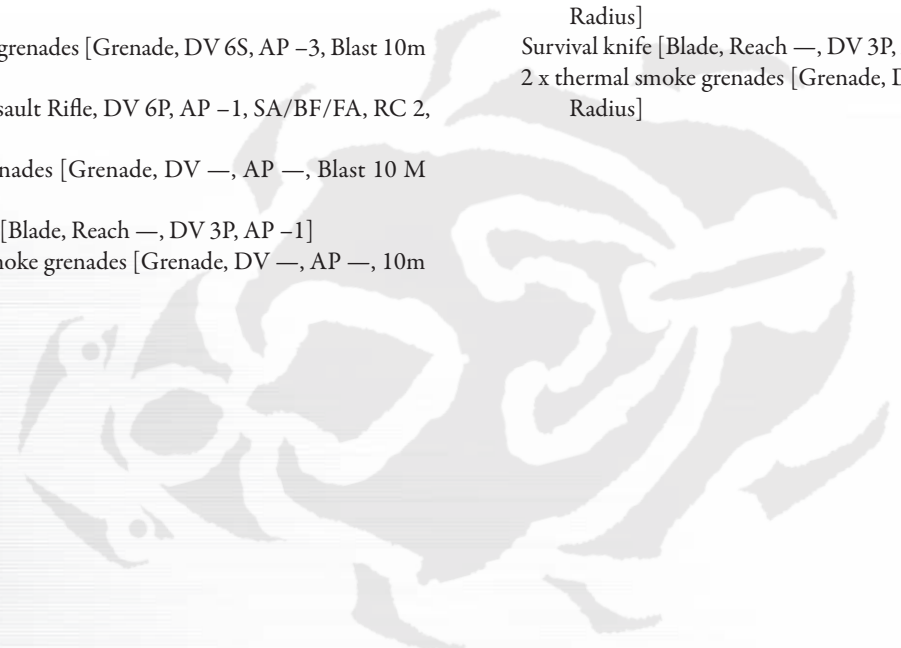
**Quality:** Toughness

**Augmentations:** Commlink, cybereyes [Rating 4 w/ flare compensation, low-light, smartlink], datajack

**Gear:** Ares Predator IV, Full body armor, helmet

**Weapons:**

- Ares Predator IV [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, RC —, 15 (c)]
- 2 x flash-bang grenades [Grenade, DV 6S, AP -3, Blast 10m Radius]
- FN HAR [Assault Rifle, DV 6P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 35 (c)]
- 2 x smoke grenades [Grenade, DV —, AP —, Blast 10 M Radius]
- Survival knife [Blade, Reach —, DV 3P, AP -1]
- 2 x thermal smoke grenades [Grenade, DV —, AP —, 10m Radius]





# ... THE GREAT ARTIFACT RUSH ...

• Unless it's related to bug spirits, I don't usually pay too much attention to magic. Not my area of expertise. Lately though, the Seattle shadows are all abuzz over this "magical artifact" drek. It's gotten to the point I'm having trouble finding runners to fill the jobs I line up because the fragging Foundations keep tying up the local talent pool. Well, the good, reliable runners anyway. Seattle's got a never-ending supply of wannabe's, posers, and psychopaths, but I steer clear of them if I can help it.

The foundations—Atlantean and Draco, that is—have been fighting each other in the sprawl for about a year now. Magical geegaws have been funneling into the city, and between stealing the same magical stone back and forth from each other, sabotaging data, or kidnapping each other's researchers, it's like a frat-house version of a megacorp shadow war. A lot of money is being thrown around, though, so I started keeping my ear to the ground and my eyes on the Matrix. I came up with this file, which fills in a few blanks about what's going on.

The author, Simon Andrews, is a mage and a changeling who's been operating in Seattle for almost a year, showing up shortly after the foundies started squabbling. He's a full-body lizard-man changeling, a Neo-Anarchist, and a party animal who spends most of his time down at the Rubber Suit boozing it up and terrorizing the patrons there who think he's part of the kaiju show the bar puts on. Despite that, it seems he's also an agent for Saeder-Krupp and Lofwyr, reporting directly to the big yellow wizworm.

• Bull

Greetings, oh great golden lizard. As you demanded, I've put together an early report on what some of the local screamsheets are calling "The Great Artifact Rush." There's still a lot going on in this dreary, drizzly cesspit of a sprawl (Emerald Sprawl my scaled ass. They should call this the Wet, Grey Sprawl), and I think things are simply gearing up to something bigger. It'll probably all explode into something bigger by the end of the year, unless something shinier distracts the local sheep and everyone loses interest. You know how it goes.

• "Great golden lizard"? How has Lofwyr not eaten this moron yet?  
• Slamm-O!

• There's something unusual about Simon that really captured Lofwyr's attention. He went to great lengths to secure Simon's services. It was suspected that he was a drake and not simply a changeling, but that's proven not to be the case. It may have something to do with his specific lizardfish appearance, though. Rumor has it that an archeology dig in the Mediterranean turned up some artwork that depicted some lizard-men that bore a striking resemblance to Simon, minus the piercings.

When Bull says that Simon is a Neo-Anarchist, he's not kidding. He's an old school British punk who was very active in the Neo-A movement in London through most of the 60's, and a lot of what he did was pretty violent. Compared to some of his past activities, he's being downright civilized here. I wonder how long it took Lofwyr to beat that civility into him?

• Winterhawk

• Calling it "The Great Artifact Rush" seems a bit melodramatic.  
• Cosmo

• The media made that term up when a local NewsNet reporter named Joe Martin caught a group of runners hitting an Atlantean Foundation warehouse. Since then, both Foundations have latched onto the term and turned it into a publicity stunt akin to the "Space Race" of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century (and to a lesser extent, the "Probe Race" during the Year of the Comet), as they both try to collect and study artifacts, each hoping to be the first to make some big, new magical discovery.

• Dr. Spin

Many of the same players are poking their nose in locally as they are on the worldwide stage, though the two primary players seem to be the Draco Foundation and the Atlantean Foundation. They're at the forefront of this so-called "Rush," and they're milking the media attention over it for all they're

Incoming .....

worth. Rather than keeping everything a secret and hiding in the shadows like Aztechnology or Celedyr's agents, they've taken their fight public. There are still plenty of shadow activities as the two groups actively work to sabotage each other, extracting each other's arcanoarcheologists, plant false data, steal newly smuggled-in artifacts, etc. But along with the shadow activities, they're also holding press conferences every time they find something new, or think they have a new lead. Each is trying to be the first to discover some long-lost secret, some magical power—anything that will make a good headline. And the news agencies are just eating it up.

For the Draco Foundation, the key player seems to be a man named Aaron Craig, who goes by the street name Moreau. He's a former shadowrunner who specializes in training paranormal animals, and he is rumored to have been a part of Dunklezahn's Watcher program for a while. He retired from active running some years back and has been regularly consulting for the Foundation since. He's recently begun acting as a fixer in Seattle, hiring runners on to participate in the "Artifact Rush" for the DF. He's getting a bit long in the tooth, but he's still dangerous. He's packed with top-of-the-line cyberware, and typically has a few trained paracritters nearby. Midori Kanematsu is the public face of DF's Seattle offices, having taken over shortly after this whole nonsense began, but Moreau is the work horse, the man who is responsible for making sure that Draco comes out on top of the this contest.

- Rumor has it that the Regional Director of Draco Seattle, Geoff Hallowell, wasn't real happy with Kanematsu moving in and taking charge. Nor is he happy about having a former shadowrunner handling the on-the-ground operations. Not much he can do, though, since Kanematsu is on the DF's board of directors, and Moreau answers directly to her.
- Cosmo
- Moreau has a daughter who's an arcanoarcheologist who's been helping to smuggle artifacts into the city. She got in trouble a couple months ago when the smuggler she was working with double crossed her.
- Beaker

The Atlantean Foundation, by contrast, is being a bit more hands-on. Laurent Nazaire, director of the Seattle Atlantean Foundation offices, is almost obsessively pursuing any artifact or scrap of information that comes into the city. He's got the entire might of AF-Seattle and the Mystic Crusaders working overtime, and Nazaire himself has been spotted meeting with shadowrunners, taking on the role of fixer himself. He's a driven dwarf, I'll give him that. I can respect anyone willing to get their hands dirty to accomplish their goals.

- Dirty? Nazaire is too clean by hald. He worked for Cross, arranged to have himself extracted, and went to work for Mitsuhamma before retiring to join the Atlantean Foundation full time. He quickly rose to his current position. He's got a clean record, he's well liked, and his branch is one of the few that goes out of its way

to be involved in the community and help out with local charities. There's something that just doesn't sit right with that.

- Cosmo
- Paranoid much? Granted, you're probably right, but maybe he's just a genuinely decent guy? Heh. Yeah. I couldn't say that with a straight face, no matter how hard I tried.
- Slamm-O!

In addition to the foundation folks, there's another party who, like me, is staying on the sidelines and gathering intelligence for the time being. Lin Yao Chang, an elven assassin who works for the Great Eastern Dragon Lung, has been watching things as intently as I have, though he seems to be having much less fun. I have yet to see him even crack a smile the few times I've run into him. I haven't been able to dig up much info on the elf, other than that he's an adept and very dangerous. What Lung's interest in this situation is, I can only speculate. I'm guessing that much like your illustrious, malevolent self, the whiskered Asian snake is just keeping an eye on—how did you put it?—"baubles and playthings from a bygone age." Lin Yao hasn't interfered with my work, or with the foundations themselves yet, so for now we're just leaving each other be.

- Very little is known about Chang's past. He popped up a couple years ago and helped Lung out with his feng shui by removing certain obstacles. Lung keeps him under wraps most of the time, though.
- Winterhawk

The other companies and interested parties have been pretty quiet. Aztechnology has been mostly silent, which surprises me. They have a rather large presence here in Seattle, and of course a long history of meddling in the local shadow community. It may well be that they're simply biding their time. Ares has been assisting both groups, offering up their services, and Knight Errant has been providing extra security for each of them. The other corporations seem to be watching from a distance, but otherwise are staying out of things completely.

- So why would the corps keep out of this, especially if some, like the Azzies, are involved with the artifact hunt elsewhere?
- /dev/grrl
- Avoiding publicity, is my guess. Like Andrews says, most organizations like to keep their artifact hunting activities a secret, as much as anything can be these days. No one is certain if there will ultimately be any net gain in chasing these things. In Seattle, the spotlight is on the artifacts, so anyone getting involved will be noticed. It's safer to sit back and watch for now, waiting to see how things shake out. They keep up their own quiet searches elsewhere, and if a big breakthrough is made, or if the public exposure in Seattle ultimately proves financially sound, the other corps can come forward and say "Hey, look! We have some too!" They let the Foundations take the risk, and they prepare to reap the ultimate rewards, if there are any.
- Winterhawk





INCOMING FEED.....

Several smaller magical groups have moved into the region lately, no doubt drawn by the artifacts. The Illuminates of the New Dawn, the Order of the Temple, and the Aleph Society have all been unusually active in Seattle lately. I'll be keeping a close eye on them.

- Several other groups have been sighted as well. The Dr. Faustus Society, the Locus Elementum, and the Order of St. Sylvester have all been moving quietly in the background, making early inquiries.
- Fastjack
- Got one more to add to the list here, FJ. And it's a doozy: The First Church of Elvis. I drek you not. I ran a couple times back in the old days with a priest of that group, a shaman named Hound Dog. He showed up in Seattle a couple weeks ago and looked me up, asking how much I knew about the situation. Apparently someone in their church had a "premonition" that an artifact would be found that would let them resurrect the King.
- Bull
- You know some really, really strange people Bull.
- Pistons

With all this hype, the truth of the matter is that there's only been one artifact that's come through that's been of note so far. A small obsidian rock called the Morel Sael. I got a chance to look the item over, thanks to a friend, and it's unlike anything I've ever

seen. It used to be part of a larger stone, and it was found buried in some Greek ruins near Phaestos, though carbon dating shows that it's much older than the ruins it was found in. The really wonky part is that it has an aura—a living one. Faint, very hard to detect, but definitely there. Never seen anything like that on an inanimate object. It caused a big stir for a week or so, though the lab geeks at the foundations have since given up trying to explain it and moved on to the next thing. They hope that stepping away from the thing will help them clear their heads so they can make sense of it when they get back to it.

- Both words are Sperethiel. Morel means "life" and Sael means "stone" or "rock." Considering the aura, I suppose calling it a "Life Stone" or "Life Rock" makes some sense.
- Haze
- Good call, though I'm sure the researchers were well aware of that from the get-go, and took that into account. Clearly, it didn't help them.
- Jimmy No

This has been a fun assignment so far, boss. Though I have to say I'd rather be a bit more involved. Some of the runners that are working for the foundations are feeding information to me, though some are going with Chang instead. I may have to deal with him one of these days. I'm just waiting for things to break down into chaos. This much ancient, unstable magic coming into

Incoming.....

the region, all these shadowrunners getting involved, and all these interested parties in the mix? How could it not become a total clusterfrag at some point? Till then, I'll keep my eyes on things and my scales well watered. There's this fantastic little bar... well, you don't need to hear about that. I'll keep filing my receipts for the bean counters, and I'll have another report for you shortly.

- Cheery outlook this guy has. Though he sounds like a riot. I should look him up. You say he hangs out at the Rubber Suit, Bull?
- Slamm-O!
- Yeah, I've seen him down there a few times. He's hard to miss. He's usually either drunk and hitting on anything that moves in the place, or chasing the holographic kaiju monsters around, pretending to fight them.
- Bull
- Oh great. Now he'll be out half the night boozing it up while I get to take care of the rugrat. Thanks a lot.
- Netcat

## OVERVIEW

The Great Artifact Rush presents a clash between two large and powerful groups, the Draco Foundation and the Atlantean Foundation. In the wake of the events of the *Dawn of the Artifacts* adventures, numerous artifacts are being discovered around the world and these two groups have become very interested in getting their hands on as many as possible to study and unlock their secrets. The foundations have bent considerable time, effort, and resources into acquiring artifacts and those capable of studying them.

Arcanoarcheologists and magical researchers are at the heart of the Foundations' efforts. Both groups have been on a hiring spree to snap up anyone with the qualifications to help them, and when one group beats the other to someone, the Foundations' have been quick to turn to shadowrunners to extract the researcher and bring them over to the other side, playing a game of chess where they keep taking each other's pieces. Likewise, smuggling, theft, and sabotage have become primary tools in the foundations' fight. Sneaking artifacts in under the nose of the competition, stealing the artifacts and data from secure warehouses, and planting false data to sabotage their opponents efforts have all become routine.

Originally the two groups were operating solely in the shadows, but when an article by NewsNet makes their efforts public, both groups quickly decided the best course of action was to embrace it. They have both publicly proclaimed how the study of these ancient relics will revolutionize the world and change the way we look at both history and magic. The news agencies have seized upon this, and now every breakthrough and discovery, no matter how trivial, becomes the subject of a press conference as each group strives to outdo the other.

The elements of this chapter can be the focus of an entire campaign, or elements from it can be inserted into an ongoing campaign with relative ease. The plot takes place in Seattle, but can be easily transposed into almost any large city to fit the needs of the campaign.

Most of the artifacts being discovered are generally useless. They're relics, and while most of them maintain a magical aura, showing that they once held some kind of force, their power is long gone. They're interesting artifacts to research, and while it's possible that they could unlock hidden knowledge, the chances of them being powerful magical items are slim. Those magic items that hold true power are likely either so foreign to modern understanding of magic that they are impossible to unlock, or they require a specialized ritual or rare and unusual conditions to activate (such as during the fourth full moon of the year, or for two minutes each month).

During the Great Artifact Rush, the major parties all play off each other, vying for the characters' attentions and loyalties. They each keep a close eye out on each other and have spies in each other's organizations, so they know almost immediately when characters interact with other organizations or parties. Each faction has a key representative, listed below, and these representatives can become contacts and fixers that the runners directly work for and with, putting a personal face to what are often large and faceless organizations.

The Draco Foundation and the Atlantean Foundations are directly opposed to each other, and each is trying to gain access to the same resources. Likewise, Lin Yao Change and Simon Andrews are both gathering the same information, and are indirectly opposing each other. What one group gets, the other wants. Early on in the campaign, the player characters may be wooed by both organizations, each offering similar payments and compensation for jobs. As the campaign plays out, though, the runners will find it more and more difficult to stay neutral. Every time they work for one side, they make the opposing side unhappy, and eventually will make enemies of one group of the other.

Early in the campaign, Simon and Lin Yao simply watch. They will offer the runners a retainer or a bounty for information, copies of data reports, or for the chance to examine an artifact before it's handed over to the foundations. Later in the campaign, they may begin to get more actively involved as their respective dragon masters desire. Particularly powerful magical artifacts would peak their attention, and anything that the dragons might believe is too powerful for mortals to control would require them to move in and try to get their hands on it, leading them to hire the runners to help them acquire it, or work in opposition to the runners and attempt to acquire it on their own.

A number of shadowrun teams are involved with the Artifact Rush on all sides, and if the runners find themselves working for one group on a regular basis, one or more rival teams could begin opposing them regularly operating on behalf of the other faction.

Likewise, any number of groups could be waiting in the wings to get involved and complicate things. Celedyr's agents, the Apep Consortium, and Aztechnology could be just biding their time until something significant is found. The Order of the Temple, the Illuminates of the New Dawn, and a multitude of smaller magical groups could have an interest in a specific magical artifact, something that links to their group somehow or that



they've uncovered a ritual that would allow them to unlock the artifact's power.

The plot points below are numbered, but they do not have to be presented in any one particular order. They are ideas that can be combined into a series of events, that can be interspersed with plot elements from other chapters in this book or with other campaigns, such as *Dawn of the Artifacts*.

## PLOT POINT ONE

### *Pass Around Extraction*

Dr. Amanda Stroh is one of the world's leading magical theorists, and she has some really unique ideas about studying magical artifacts. Because of this, both the Atlantean and Draco Foundations are very interested in getting her to work for them. Dr. Stroh herself doesn't really care who she's working for, so long as she gets to study artifacts. The Atlanteans initially bring her in, but the Draco Foundation arranges for an extraction. The Atlantean Foundation extracts her back again, and Draco extracts her yet again. Finally, fed up and deciding that it's not worth the hassle Dr. Stroh herself contacts the runners to extract her and get her out of Seattle (or whatever city the runners are in).

## PLOT POINT TWO

### *Blood Moon*

The runners are hired to meet a smuggler in the Ork Underground and transport a small artifact back to one of the foundations. They find out, however, that someone beat them to it. Even worse, they discover that the smuggler and his crew have been murdered, and all signs point to blood magic being used. The artifact is an ancient Aztech carving that is attuned to blood magic, and if the proper rituals are used it is possible to bind a much larger than normal blood spirit with it. The runners are hired to recover the artifact and stop the blood mage.

## PLOT POINT THREE

### *Bad Reputation*

One of the foundations has had a small breakthrough in investigating an artifact, and they are prepared to announce their findings in a press conference the next day. The runners have less than twelve hours to plan a break-in, steal the data, replace it with false data, and sabotage the press conference, giving the foundation in question a public black eye.

Game Info.....

### SHADOWRUN MISSIONS

The Artifact Rush is one of the key plot lines to Season Four of *Shadowrun Missions*, the ongoing *Shadowrun* Living Campaign. Adventures are available as PDF downloads, and can be used like any other adventure in a home campaign. For more information, check out [shadowrun4.com/missions](http://shadowrun4.com/missions).

## LOCATIONS

### DRACO FOUNDATION, SEATTLE OFFICES

The Draco Foundation (DF) was established by the last will and testament of the deceased president Dunkelzahn. Charged with administering his will and legacy (both the public and private sections), this foundation controls the bulk of the late dragon's wealth. With such financial backing, it continues to be a major influence in a variety of realms—from boardrooms of AAA megacorps to the world of arcanoarcheology. It is a primary competitor to the Atlantean Foundation in the world of Arcanoarcheology and antiquities.

The Draco Foundation in Seattle was being headed up by Geoff Hallowell, a human hermetic mage who has been the Regional Director for the past five years. When the Artifact Rush first started, Draco Midori Kanematsu transferred to Seattle and took over operations there full time, pushing Hallowell to the sidelines, a fact he's very resentful about. A member of the Draco Foundations Board of Directors, she proceeded to rearrange the Seattle offices and bring in new personnel, including Moreau, a fixer who acts as the Draco Foundation's primary contact with the shadow community.

Security at these offices is, as might be expected, based heavily in magic. At least five watcher spirits are on duty at all time, and a Force 5 spirit of air resides in the office, bound to the foundation's security mages. Force 5 wards pepper the offices, protecting anything the foundation wishes to keep. Use IOND Magicians (p. 141) as security mages, and make sure they are liberal in their use of clairvoyance and clairaudience.

### ATLANTEAN FOUNDATION, SEATTLE BRANCH

Created by Sheila Blatavska shortly after the Awakening in 2012, the Atlantean Foundation is a private organization publicly dedicated to restoring the glory of the lost golden age of Atlantis, a supposed Mecca of wonders and knowledge that disappeared into the mists of time. More than just a group of eccentric history buffs and new-agers, it is an organization with branches worldwide, popular trid shows, monthly newsletters and chats, major research centers, sponsored archeological digs, and cadres of respected scientists. It boasts millions of members and operates at a level just shy of an AA corporation.

The Atlantean Foundation has a reputation for being a bunch of scheming, power-hungry, and backstabbing lot of magicians, and most branches of the organization are merely tolerated by the city they're located in due to the trouble they frequently cause or bring with them. The Seattle branch of the Atlantean Foundation, however, is one of the few that actively generates goodwill in the city. Under the guidance of branch president Laurent Nazaire, the Atlantean Foundation has been active within the community, helping out with various local charities and causes and generating good PR without any obvious, visible self-interest.

Their good reputation does not, however, translate into a lack of security, and the measures in this office should be the same as those employed in the Draco Foundation offices.

## PEOPLE

### MOREAU

Aaron "Moreau" Craig worked for Mitsuhamma Corporate Technologies in their paranormal animal research and training program until 2050, when he left the corp over an ethics issue. He struck out into the shadows, often with a pair of well-trained hellhounds at his side, going by the street name Trouble. He and a team of runners he joined up with actively worked jobs that would hurt MCT in the Seattle for 5 years, until he faked his death in 2055 after a job involving a missing persons case and a local United Brotherhood chapter house. It was rumored that he had retired, married to a prominent Mafia member's daughter, though this was never confirmed.

In 2057 he began to work as a bodyguard for one of Dunklezahn's Watchers under the handle Moreau, eventually becoming a Watcher himself. He mostly worked as a fixer and began to freelance as a troubleshooter to the Draco Foundation, and now works for them on a full time basis. He has a daughter, Fiona Craig, an arcanoarcheologist who often gets in over her head. His current assignment has been working as a fixer in Seattle to handle jobs that the Draco Foundation wants handled off the books, such as hiring shadowrunners and arranging for smuggling operations.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
4	5 (7)	5 (7)	4 (6)	7 (10)	5	4	6	2.49	10 (12)	1 (3)

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10/11

**Armor (B/I):** 10/6

**Skills:** Animal Husbandry skill group 6, Athletics skill group 4, Automatics 6, Data Search 4, Dodge 4, Etiquette 5, Exotic Ranged Weapon (Dart Rifle) 5 (+2), First Aid 3, Infiltration 4, Longarms 4, Negotiation 6, Perception 5, Pilot Ground Craft 4, Pistols 3

**Knowledge Skills:** Biology 4, Business 2, Corporate (MCT) 3 (+2), Corporate Security 3, Criminal (Mafia) 3 (+2), Parazoology 5, Procedure (Border Patrols) 2 (+2), Security Design 4, Security Procedures 4, Shadowrunner Hangouts 3,

**Languages:** City Speak, English, Gaelic, Greek, Japanese, Sperthiel

**Qualities:** Animal Empathy, Black Market Pipeline (Animals), College Education, Dependent (medium), Enemy (2), Exceptional Attribute (Charisma), First Impression, Records on File, SINner, **Augmentations:** Attention coprocessor 3 (deltaware), biomonitor, bone density augmentation 4, datajack (engraved), muscle augmentation 2, muscle toner 2, sleep regulator, synaptic booster 2, tailored critter pheromones 3, tailored pheromones 3 (all beta-ware, unless otherwise notes)

**Gear:** DocWagon Platinum, Form Fitting Body Armor (half suit), Mortimer Greatcoat, commlink (Device Rating 6, all common use programs Rating 6, Armor 3, Attack 3, Biometric Lock, Hardening 6, Environmental Resistance, Armor Case 7)

**Weapons:**

Parashield Dart Rifle [Exotic Weapon, DV 10S, AP -2, SA, RC 3, 10(c), w/ Nuero-Stun darts, smartlink, biometric safety, personalized grip, barrel extension, bipod]

Steyr TMP [SMG, 4P, 0 AP, 3 RC, 30(c), w/ smartlink, biometric lock, thermal suppressor, gas-vent 3]

### LAURENT NAZAIRE

Laurent Nazaire is a dwarven hermetic mage of Haitian descent born in Quebec. He worked at Cross Applied Technologies for many years but arranged for his own extraction when it was clear that Cross was never going to survive as a major player in the corporate scene. He joined up with Mitsuhamma for a number of years after that, heading up one of their magical research labs. During this period, he was recruited by the Atlantean Foundation, and he eventually left MCT to join them full time. The skills he learned in the corporate world allowed him to quickly rise up in the ranks, and five years ago he was promoted to director of the Atlantean Foundation's Seattle branch, where he has fervently pursued magical research. When the magical artifacts began to show up in Seattle, Nazaire devoted himself and the organization to acquiring and studying them. To this end he's taken a hands-on approach and has been personally involved with hiring assets to track and recover artifacts and resources.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	M	Init	IP
4	3	3	4	5	4	6	7	3	6	9	7	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10/12

**Armor (B/I):** 7/2

**Skills:** Banishing 5, Binding 6, Blades 3, Conjuring 6, Counterspelling 6, Computers 3, Dodge 3, Enchanting 3, Etiquette (Corporate) 5 (+2), Leadership 5, Negotiation 6, Perception 4, Pistols 2, Ritual Spellcasting 6, Spellcasting 6

**Knowledge Skills:** Arcana 6, Corporate Politics 4, Magical Groups 5, Security (Magical) 4 (+2), Wines 5

**Qualities:** Magician

**Initiate Grade:** 3

**Metamagics:** Masking, psychometry, shielding

**Gear:** Commlink (Firewall 6, Response 4, Signal 4, System 4), power focus (3-foot-long gnarled mahogany staff topped with a large pearl, Rating 3), 3 x sustaining foci (small golden lizard pin, Rating 5; an emerald tie pin, Rating 4; and small silver rose pin, Rating 4), Zoé Executive Line Suit (long coat, shirt, trousers)

**Spells:** Analyze Device, Analyze Magic, Armor, Astral Window, Catalog, Detect Magic Extended, Fashion, Flamethrower, Heal, Improved Invisibility, Magic Fingers, Manabolt, Physical Mask, Sterilize, Stunbolt, Trid Phantasm,

**Bound Spirits:** Spirit of air (Force 6, 5 services), spirit of earth (Force 5, 3 services), spirit of man (Force 5, 4 services), spirit of water (Force 4, 4 services)

### LIN YAO CHANG

Lin Yao Chang was given over to a Buddhist monastery when he was an infant and was raised by the monks. He knows nothing of his parents or where he came from, and he lived most of his life as a simple monk, training in martial arts. When he Awakened as an adept, he focused his newfound magic into channeling the martial arts.

He was told on occasion that "fate had plans for him," but he never knew what this meant until one day when a dragon landed in the courtyard of the monastery. None of the monks seemed surprised to see Lung, and most simply bowed and went about their business. Lin Yao was told to go with Lung, and the





obedient young monk did as he was told. He continued to train under Lung for several more years, refining his skills and training into becoming deadlier and more efficient.

Lin Yao has spent the last twenty years working as a special operative for Lung. He doesn't question his orders and is rarely given any information above what is needed to do the job. His current assignment has him confused, but as usual he's asked no questions. He's simply to keep an eye on the Atlantean and Draco Foundations, and try to obtain as much information as possible about the artifacts the two groups are recovering.

**B** **A** **R** **S** **C** **I** **L** **W** **Ess** **M** **Init** **IP**  
5 7(9) 6 6 4 5 5 5 6 9 11(13) 1(3)

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 11/11

**Armor (B/I):** 10/5

**Active Skills:** Arcana 4, Assensing 5, Athletics skill group 5, Automatics 4, Blades 5, Clubs 5, Disguise 5, Dodge 6, Infiltration 6, Intimidation 5, Longarms (Sniper Rifles) 6 (+2), Negotiation 4, Palming 4, Pistols 5, Shadowing 5, Unarmed Combat (Offensive Moves) 6 (+2)

**Knowledge Skills:** Buddhist Teachings 5, Magical Theory 4, Martial Arts 5, Seattle Area 4

**Qualities:** Adept

**Initiate Grade:** 5

**Metamagics:** Adept centering, extended masking, infusion, masking, sensing

**Adept Powers:** Astral Perception, Critical Strike 4, Enhanced Perception 2, Improved Attribute (Agility) 2, Improved Ability (Unarmed Combat) 4, Improved Reflexes 2, Killing Hands, Penetrating Strike 2

**Gear:** Heritage Line Armored Chinese Mao Suit, Form Fitting Armor (half-body suit), AR contacts (w/ thermographic vision, smartlink, vision magnification, vision enhancement 3), commlink (Device Rating 6)

**Weapons:**

Barrett Model 121 [Sniper Rifle, 9P, AP -8, SA, RC 2, 14(c), w/ 6 clips APDS ammo, amartlink, biometric lock, skinlink]

Ares Predator IV [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -5, SA, RC —, 15(c), w/ APDS ammo, biometric lock, skinlink]

Unarmed Attack [Unarmed, Reach —, DV 7P, AP -2]

## SIMON ANDREWS

Simon Andrews was your stereotypical disaffected youth in rural Britain. He got into the punk and neo-anarchist scene as a teen, and his band of neo-a's were some of the most chaotic and disruptive in London through the 2050s. He Awakened during that period and channeled his magical powers into ways that made him even more destructive.

When Halley's Comet hit, Simon was affected by SURGE and transformed into a humanoid lizard. His diet also changed, and the former vegetarian found he was now a carnivore, as his body stopped being able to properly digest fruits and vegetables. It took awhile to adjust to his new body, and he became even more angry and resentful of the world. His gang of neo-a's became even more violent and began hitting higher-profile targets. When they tried firebombing a Saeder-Krupp warehouse, they bit off more

than they can chew, and SK guards nearly wiped out the cell and severely injured Simon.

He woke up in a small cell in Germany and was taken to see Lofwyr himself. Due to his appearance Lofwyr took an interest in the young neo-anarchist, though he has never told Simon (or anyone else) exactly why. He offered Simon a choice, to work for him or to be eaten. Simon wisely chose the former. Over the years Simon has become one of Lofwyr's most loyal and trusted servants. He operates as a fixer and a troubleshooter for the dragon.

Simon is laid back and still has much of his neo-anarchist personality, with a strong dislike for authority. He dresses in traditional "British punk" complete with a battered leather vest covered in graffiti, anarchy symbols, and punk-band buttons. He revels in being a freak, will hit on almost anything that moves, and likes to snack on live white mice. He's direct and in your face, but is utterly loyal to Lofwyr.

**B** **A** **R** **S** **C** **I** **L** **W** **Ess** **M** **Init** **IP**  
4 4 5 3 6 5 5 6 6 8 10 1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10/11

**Armor (B/I):** 8/6

**Skills:** Arcana 5, Athletics skill group 4, Assensing 6, Banishing 4, Binding 5, Con 5, Counterspelling 5, Dodge 5, Negotiation 5, Pistols 4, Ritual Spellcasting 5, Spellcasting (Combat Spells) 6 (+2), Summoning 5

**Knowledge Skills:** Kaiju Monster Movies 4, London Area 5, Magical Theory 5, Neo-Anarchist Movement 5, Saeder-Krupp Politics 3, Seattle Area 4

**Qualities:** Class III SURGE, Scales (Green lizard skin), Critter Spook, Unusual Hair (Lizard Frill, no body hair), Deformity (Elongated skull resembling a snout), Functional Tail (Balance), Claws (non-retractable), Fangs, Thermographic Vision

**Initiate Grade:** 5

**Metamagics:** Anchoring, Masking, Extended Masking, Reflecting, Shielding

**Spells:** Armor, Chaos, Chaotic World, Clairaudience, Clairvoyance, Fireball, Gecko Crawl, Heal, Ice Sheet, Improved Invisibility, Increase Reflexes, Mana Barrier, Manabolt, Physical Barrier, Physical Mask, Stunball, Stunbolt, Trid Phantasm, Wreck

**Gear:** Armored jacket, Suzuki Mirage

**Bound Spirits:** Spirit of air (Force 5, 4 services), spirit of fire (Force 6, 6 services)



# ... THE PHAISTOS KILLER ...



Incoming .....

- Hey, did anyone ever follow up on these?
- Snopes

**/users/Spooky/links**

**Tags: magic, conspiracy**

## REMAINS OF DEAD CAMPER IDENTIFIED

Tir Tairngire, 6/7/69

The body of Lissette Abel, 27, was discovered by a patrol early Thursday morning. Reports of the missing girl were filed with authorities a week ago. The recent rains made identifying the body more challenging. A forensic magician was flown in from Seattle. He confirmed her identity late last night, and her family was notified shortly after. Abel was a nature enthusiast who embarked on a camping trip a month ago. Authorities have not released any information on the cause of death at this time. Her family declined to comment for this story. [Link](#)

## CONSTRUCTION HALTED BY TRAGIC ACCIDENT

London, UK, 6/23/71

... **Brad Davies**, 19, was found at the bottom of the elevator shaft. NLBR Properties, the company renovating the offices of the former BBC building, blamed the death on a malfunctioning safety maglock on the elevator shaft door. The victim's immediate family has no comment. [Link](#)

## HIT AND RUN KILLS TWO

Milwaukee, UCAS, 7/6/70

A pair of Containment Zone relief workers was killed by a hit-and-run driver yesterday. **Michelle** and **Sean Higgins** were walking south on 60th street when they were struck and killed by a car. The couple met helping refugees from Chicago and was married last year. Local authorities are reviewing DOT footage and SmartGrid data to locate the whereabouts of the driver. [Link](#)

## FOOD RIOTS CLAIM EIGHT

Nashville, CAS, 10/4/69

... and skirmishes between security forces and terrorist insurgents caused the latest fatalities in the ten-day standoff. Among the casualties, embedded reporter **Gregory Pendzick** was discovered in his hotel room, dead of injuries apparently suffered during his coverage of the event. Pendzick's employer, Wizzer Media, has not commented on whether it will release his final footage. [Link](#)

## POOL PARTY ENDS IN TRAGEDY

Cairo, Egypt, 4/7/69

A dead woman was found in the Atlantis Suite of the Hotel Tahrir Menin Wednesday morning. The victim of the drowning was bellydancer **Zahra Sagira**. The entertainer was a contractor of the hotel hired for a private party in one of the luxury penthouse suites. She was discovered by one of the hotel's domestic drones. The hotel is withholding the identity of the persons who rented the suite Tuesday evening pending a full investigation. [Link](#)

- Is there a reason this is has a magic tag instead of a nutter tag?
- Winterhawk

- There's a pattern here. I just haven't found it yet.
- Plan 9

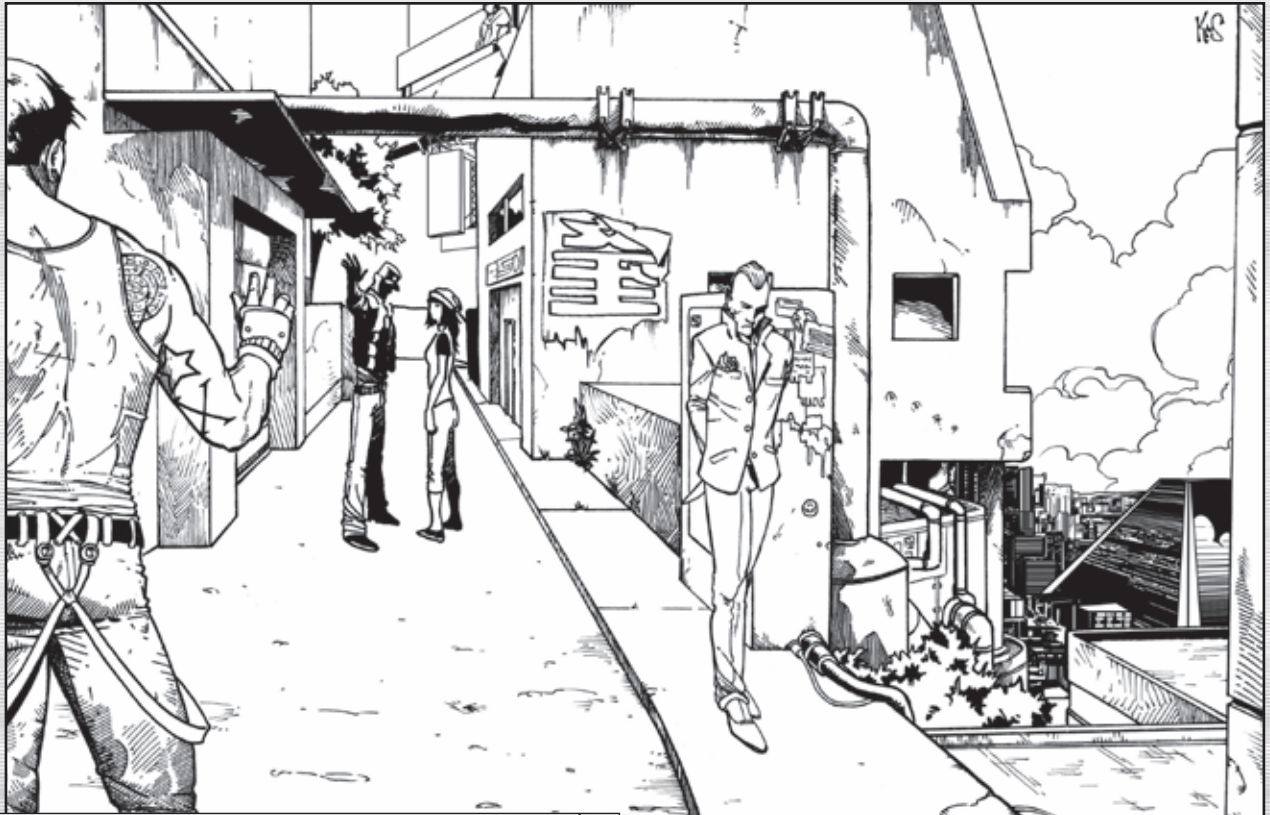
- They're all dead. What do I win?
- Snopes

- Some of the local media tried to play up some occult elements of the Saghira murder, but it was a slow news day.

- Hard Exit

- Occult elements?
- Jimmy No





- I, uh, entertain some of the local LEO, and they mentioned she had some sort of symbol painted on her body. It was not magic, nor did it resemble any symbol I was familiar with.
- SEATAC Sweetie
- All that and brains too.
- Slamm-0!
- Something tells me the other thirty-one people on this list also have strange symbols on their person. Time to do some digging.
- Plan 9
- Thirty-two.
- 

Incoming.....

## OVERVIEW

The Phaistos Disc has 241 markings on it using 45 unique characters. The characters are from no known language. Those familiar with the stone believe it can be used as a key to decode the ancient language of the symbols. What most people are unaware of is how powerful The Phaistos Disc becomes when combined with the Piri Reis Map. There are those who can handle the power unleashed by these ancient artifacts. Then there are those whose lives are ruined.

Both the Phaistos Disc and the Piri Reis Map have, at some point, been part of the vast category of magical artifacts in the MIT&T Reliquary Studies department. They have disappeared and reappeared numerous times since then, but an assistant catalog clerk stumbled upon their true potency when they were combined as part of a research project for Professor Guzman. The clerk's name was Charles Sturgis, an elf hermetic mage who was looking to join the faculty of one of the most prestigious hermetic studies programs in the world.

Sturgis began taking his work home with him. He experienced vivid dreams of an ancient time when dragons roamed the world and magic was everywhere. He began doing his own research on the map and the stone. He quickly realized their true power, and understood how the disc could be a guide to unlocking some of the map's more powerful functions. He reported little of his progress to his superiors. After six months, the project was canceled and Sturgis was moved elsewhere. It didn't matter to him. He kept his own notes at home and made a startling breakthrough. The Phaistos Disc wasn't just the key to an ancient language.

Sturgis believed it was the key to immortality.

The map, he believed, showed him the way, but it was a difficult and bloody path. First, Sturgis found each of the 45 markings somewhere on the Piri Reis Map and made careful notes of their location. His map then charted the course of the next phase of his life. He would travel to the mark, he would find a person there, and he would kill that person. He would trade their lives to join the ranks of the immortal. According to the theory he developed, each of these deaths required the corresponding symbol on the map to be somehow applied to the victim. To get



the reward he believed was waiting for him, he would find a way to make that happen.

Thanks to some strong investments, Sturgis was able to take an extended leave from his academic position. He made his first kill in Athens, where the stone had been publicly displayed. That started his spree. He has killed many over the years and learned much about the craft of murder. He believes he has plenty of time to finish his kills, so he is in no hurry. And once he is done, he can afford to take off as much time as he wants.

As a killer, Sturgis is methodical. He prefers to work in ways that can be written off as accidents, or random gang violence, or other things that the authorities will never look into. He targets those that won't be missed. Most cities have overworked police forces, and that means they prioritize the cases they investigate. If a corporate executive gets killed, the company can lean on law enforcement to figure out who is the culprit. But the lower classes have no such pull. The minimum wage earners, the shadowrunners, the criminals—in the eyes of many law enforcement bodies, they can be sacrificed without anyone making waves about it. The only hitch is the mark Sturgis feels he must leave on the corpses of his victim. They could help someone observant enough start to piece together what is happening.

Sturgis comes to Denver knowing the fates are smiling upon him. Four of the symbols appear near Denver on the map. He plans on killing each victim in a different sector of Denver. The morass of different jurisdictions and law enforcement will work to his advantage, he believes, and he will slip out of the city before they can coordinate and stop him. There is only one force that can stop Sturgis from taking more innocent lives—a team of runners hired by Dr. Guzman.

## PLOT POINT ONE

### *The Hook*

The most direct way to involve the runners in this adventure is to have them stumble upon one of the Phaistos Killer's victims. It could be part of another run or as a kick-off to a night of investigation. Discovering the body is problematic enough, but if the runners do a little investigation, they find an odd symbol on the body that is visible on the astral plane.

This circumstance generates plenty of complications. Do they report the body to the local authorities? If the body is on corporate ground, could they just have it disappear as another victim of the run? What if the runners who discovered it are mistakenly accused of the murder? The runners will have to make some quick decisions to deal with the repercussions of the situation that has just fallen in their lap.

Frosty is another good way to pull the runners in. She might notice the Phaistos Killer's pattern and ask the runners to check up on her suspicions. This hook is especially useful if the runners recently made a play for one of the artifacts and came up short. Frosty wants them to chase down this lead and is willing to pay them their previous fee if they take a few days to snoop around and see if there's anything to the idea. She will cover travel expenses to Denver if need be. In the end, while she may be disappointed that Sturgis doesn't have the stone or the map, she is still willing to pay the fee if the killer is stopped.

If the players are lucky enough to have the Phaistos Disc or Piri Reis map, the artifacts themselves might tip off the players about the killer. A subtle clue might be someone noticing the connection between the stone's symbols and a few occult murders they noticed on a conspiracy website. The clues could also be more obvious. The symbols Sturgis has already used might be a different color than the ones he has yet to use. Or the map's oceans could turn red with blood on the days he strikes. Odd behavior of the artifacts might send the runners to experts, which will tip off organizations that want the artifacts, which puts the runners in danger. Even more so if Sturgis realizes someone is onto him.

For those runners not connected to the *Dawn of the Artifacts* adventures, Dr. Guzman offers a more traditional gateway to the adventure. He contacts the runners after he figures out the killer's pattern. He may or may not realize who the killer is, but even if he knows, he keeps the killer's identity secret. He offers the runners 5,000 nuyen apiece to stop the killer. He doubles their fee if they are able to subdue Sturgis and bring him back alive. To collect the bonus, they must turn him over to Dr. Guzman rather than the local police. If the runners ask what he plans on doing with Sturgis, Guzman is firm but evasive. All Guzman says is that he will be dealt with.

Each of the deaths happens one day apart in a different sector in the order that follows.

## PLOT POINT TWO

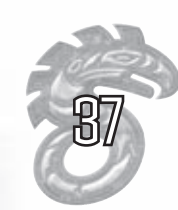
### *The CAS Sector*

JJ Miller dies the day after the runners arrive in Denver. He is the overnight clerk at the Bender Avenue Stuffer Shack, a job he took to bring in money while he struggled as a musician. It proved to be a fatal mistake. The Stuffer Shack is located two blocks north of the Easy Zee Motel that Sturgis is staying at. Sturgis went in every morning while in town for coffee and a Zap Crusher's Breakfast Bar. The killer observed his victim and set his plan in motion.

JJ's body is found in the dumpster behind the Stuffer Shack. Sturgis hacked the dumpster to trigger a tamper alarm. When JJ came to investigate, Sturgis subdued him and induced a heart attack in him through the use of multiple slap patches. The symbol in this case is painted on the body's head. The store is in decent condition, though someone used Miller's ID badge to open and loot the pharmacy. The killer did this to make the killing look like a robbery, but he also plans on using the drugs in other killings.

Thanks to his conversations with Miller, Sturgis knew that the musician had a heart condition. He also knew that six slap patches would give Miller an adrenal boost that his heart could not withstand. Once the deed was done, Sturgis put the body in the dumpster and locked it back up. He painted the symbol on Miller's forehead before he died. He then used an improved invisibility spell to go back into the store and loot the pharmacy.

Miller's forehead is covered in a circle crossed by three lines that divide the circle into six segments. The symbol has been smudged a bit by the vile trash locked in the Stuffer Shack, but it is still discernible. If the security footage is reviewed from the previous week, an image of the killer can be found. There are multiple repeat customers, but Sturgis is on camera for the three





days before Miller is killed. Tracking down a proper image requires an Intuition + Computer (2, 8) Extended Test. Having a usable image of the killer makes further investigations much easier.

Lone Star officers are interested in solving the case, but unwilling to share information with other agencies. They will, however, share resources if the runners vow to hinder any other investigations going on. Having recently taken over sector security, Lone Star would welcome a boost in the public image. Catching a serial killer would supply that boost.

## PLOT POINT THREE

### *The UCAS Sector*

The second victim is a troll known by the street name Stutzie. Stutzie worked as a bouncer for an AR country bar called Millie's. Millie's smells like cheep soybeer and is about as authentic as a lasagna burrito from Taco Hut Silver. Stutzie was loved by the staff and always felt safe while he was around. The waitresses on staff also knew his big secret—Stutzie was a homosexual. While most people are very open to the idea, a gay troll working a cowboy bar in UCAS sector could bring trouble even he couldn't handle.

Sturgis needed a little help disposing of Stutzie. A troll is a big body to move, but he thought of that ahead of time. Sturgis hacked one of the larger SUVs in the parking lot and led Stutzie to the flatbed for a rendezvous. When he was finished killing the troll, he brought him to the Meat Market and sold him for a few hundred nuyen to one of the merchants who calls himself Mr. Cutler.

Mr. Cutler's shop is in an old electronics store. He keeps up the façade with a few older models of cameras and monitoring devices. He runs his real store out of a refrigeration truck backed up to the storeroom in back. There are parts of Stutzie still for sale when the runners arrive. Mr. Cutler is also willing to sell the runners one of the cameras from his shop. The cameras still work, and Cutler makes sure they record anyone who walks into his shop looking to unload a body. Cutler is willing to sell the camera for 1,000 nuyen.

The symbol is not on Stutzie's body, but rather was painted below him in reverse on the flatbed. It was not yet dry when Sturgis convinced the troll to lie down with his shirt off. When the paint transferred, the symbol was complete. Sturgis then put his gun in the troll's mouth and fired three times. The paint on the flatbed of the truck looks like a combination of a lower case "h," "j" and the number 7.

The car turns up abandoned in the Meat Market parking lot once his spree is complete. Sturgis walked a half-mile before hailing a cab to take him back to the Easy Zee. If the runners find the car within 24 hours, they can still find the Streetline Special Sturgis used tucked in the glove compartment. After that time, various enterprising residents of the Market strip the car for parts and put them, and the gun on sale. The Streetline is available for twice the normal street price. It is the same pistol that Sturgis took from JJ Miller.

UCAS law enforcement does not consider the case to be a priority. It does not have the resources to track down every missing person, especially ones disposed of in the Meat Market. The runners are better off dealing with Mr. Cutler in this case.

## PLOT POINT FOUR

### *The Sioux Sector*

Dix was a small-time hacker that ran the shadows in Denver for the past few years. She was also a huge Denver Broncos fan. She was on the season ticket waiting list, but attended her regular game-day spot, an AR/VR sports bar called Sidelines. When her car didn't move after 24 hours, a parking service drone discovered the body inside.

A smattering of drugs and chips are found in the vehicle with her body. The murder looks like a suicide, but that unravels quickly under investigation. Toxicology reports show there are no illegal drugs in her system, but she overdosed on a sleeping aid. The aid requires a prescription, which she does not have. The same types of drugs were taken from the robbed Stuffer Shack where JJ Miller worked.

The symbol on Dix's body is located on her left foot. It was painted on during her VR experience in the bar. The symbol is three vertical lines crossed by a single horizontal line.

The Sioux Sector is more than willing to work with the runners to bring Sturgis down. The detective assigned to the case, Tyson Sherman, has been watching the other murders and recognizing a pattern. Helping him catch Sturgis could make him a valuable Denver ally for the runners.

## PLOT POINT FIVE

### *The PCC Sector*

By the time Sturgis gets to his last victim, chances are he will know the runners are on his tail. His last kill is far less methodical and carefully set-up. Sturgis lies in wait for the maid to come and tidy up his room. He specifically chose a hotel in Denver that still has a human cleaning crew for this very reason. Hotels on both ends of the spectrum still have real maids—cheap hotels can't afford to install drones, and expensive ones can charge a premium for old-fashioned personal service. The victim in this case is Sarah Babe, the mother of the night clerk at Easy Zee's in the PCC sector.

Sturgis suffocates this victim with one of the dry cleaning bags in the closet of the room. He puts her body in the bathroom and shuts the door. The day clerk discovers the body when he notices the cleaning woman did not sign out when her shift was over.

The tricky part of this killing is dealing with police arriving on the scene. A cool head and some solid Charisma will be needed to convince the beat cops the runner reporting the crime had nothing to do with Babe's death.

By this time, the runners may take a novel approach and go to the authorities with any evidence they might have. This is an excellent moment for any character who have taken meticulous care of their SIN or maintained a false identity to shine. The runners may decide to call in the Zone Defense Force if they have enough compelling evidence. Sturgis will be apprehended, but he won't be in their hands for long, given that the runners won't be good witnesses and most of their evidence won't be admissible in court. Still, if an arrest is made, the runners can claim success. If Guzman was their patron, he will still honor their arrangement, though he will not pay out the bonus for bring Sturgis back to him



alive. In the future, the runners will learn Sturgis was acquitted or escaped. He will head to the runners' home city, and the killing will start again right in their backyard.

## PLOT POINT SIX

### *The Direct Approach*

Astute runners might get ahead of Sturgis and his killing spree. He is smart, clever and dangerous, but not omniscient. They may lay a trap for him. They may track him to his hotel before his other killings. Reward player initiative with a more exciting conclusion and a direct confrontation with Sturgis.

Sturgis has a few priorities when fleeing the city. He wants to make sure he can travel, so he cleans up whatever evidence he can. He will head for a place that he feels could dispose of what he has, such as the Meat Market or a similar unsavory place. Once any bodies are taken care of, he uses his SIN to its best advantage. He will shake his pursuers in a public and secure location, such as the airport or a train station. He takes the first available transport out of the city.

The runners may move on him before he can make it to the airport. In this case, he heads for a convenient location that should shy away the runners. A team of heavily armed criminals walking into a bank, for example, would cause quite a bit of confusion. Confusion is the key to Sturgis escaping. Bank security holds up the runners and he slips away. Hospitals are another excellent location where Sturgis can disappear—he could walk in babbling a story about criminals coming to kill him, get taken to the ER, and duck out when the runners arrive. He is not above faking an injury, or even inflicting one upon himself, to stay free.

## LOCATIONS

The Stuffer Shack is a small store filled with food and other necessities that is open 24 hours. They carry pharmaceuticals, chips, and many of life's modern necessities. Additional info on Stuffer Shacks can be found in Food Fight 2.0, available for free as part of the *Shadowrun Quick Start Rules* at [www.shadowrun4.com](http://www.shadowrun4.com).

Because of the rarity of available tickets for non-corporate fans of sporting events, the major sports leagues have licensed exclusives AR/VR broadcast packages for local sports bars. The AR version offers licensed uniforms and interactive specials—if you wear the AR uniform of a player that makes a big play, you may win drink specials or other prizes. VR links cost more, but they offer fans a chance to feel like they are actually at the stadium watching the game.

The murder in the UCAS sector takes advantage of its proximity to the Aurora Barrens. Sturgis takes the body to the Aurora Mall, known as the Meat Market on the streets. The ghoulish community does a brisk trade in dead bodies in the Mall. It caters to criminal organizations looking to dispose of evidence, poor families that want to make money from a deceased relative rather than pay to bury them, or organleggers looking for cheap genetic material.

Easy Zee's exists because of a Pueblo crackdown of coffin hotels. During the Crash 2.0, forty-five people were seriously injured and eight people killed when a fire broke out due to

faulty electrical wiring and the coffins did not open per their pre-programmed fire protocols. The Pueblo sector cracked down on coffin hotels, and more traditional hourly motels spread through the sector.

The one location where the runners know Sturgis will be at least twice is Stapleton Airport (see p. 9, *Spy Games*). Sturgis knows the quickest way to make a getaway is to hop a flight out of town. He flies in for a week from Tuesday to Tuesday. If the runners catch onto him ahead of time, he will adjust his stay accordingly. He plans his killings in forty-eight-hour intervals. He catches the first flight available out of Denver if the runners come after him. This is an excellent chance to complicate a later run by having Sturgis show up in the middle of something else entirely.

## PEOPLE

### CHARLES STURGIS

*Elf male*

Sturgis was born into what many would consider a privileged experience. He was born into a family with enough money that people could look past his elf ears and save their disdain for whispers behind handcrafted oak doors. He showed magical talent early on in his life and was shuttled off to private schools that would help him hone his gift. He went to MIT&T on a hermetic scholarship and found himself on a fast track to a faculty position. Except he chafed against his ivory tower upbringing. Sturgis wanted to see the world. His studies and his continued schooling kept him away from his notions of travel.

Sturgis travels light and has kept his SIN very clean. Any weapons he needs are acquired in the city where he kills. They are also disposed there, carefully stripped of DNA evidence and dumped in restricted areas like the local barrens. How close he is to his quota of 45 kills is up to the gamemaster. If Sturgis is just starting out, he is more prone to make mistakes but less likely to have left evidence behind. If he is close to the mark, with his kills in Denver putting him over the top, he may be more willing to kill quickly and cover his tracks less.

Are the murders building to something, or is it a deranged interpretation of the artifacts powers? This is ultimately for the gamemaster to decide. If Sturgis achieves immortality this way, surely other will follow. It also raises some uncomfortable questions. Are the other immortal elves guilty of the same crimes? How do they feel about a new member in their midst? If the killing does not affect Sturgis, does he continue to kill because he feels he did the ritual incorrectly?

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	M	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
3	4	3	2	4	4	4	4	4	1	6.0	7	1

**Astral Initiative/Passes:** 8/3

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10/10

**Armor (B/I):** 6/4

**Qualities:** Magician

**Skills:** Assensing 3, Conjuring skill group 3, Data Search 3, Dodge 2, Influence skill group 3, Locksmith 1, Perception (Visual) 4 (+2), Pistols 3, Shadowing 2, Sorcery skill group 4





**Knowledge Skills:** Chemistry 3, Magical Arcana 4, Magic Theory 4, Urban Hideouts 3

**Spells:** Control Emotions, Ignite, Improved Invisibility, Influence, Mass Confusion, Mind Probe, Stun Bolt

**Gear:** Lined Coat, commlink [Device Rating 3], glasses [Rating 4, w/ image link, low-light vision, flare compensation, and thermographic vision]

**Weapons:**

Colt Manhunter [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, RC —, 16 (c)]

**DR. EDGAR GUZMAN**

*Human male*

Dr. Guzman is a rare example of a shadowrunner gone straight. He was a dwarf shaman that made a decent amount of cash under the street name of Guzzler, or Guz to his close crew. He put that money towards his future rather than buying bugger guns or badder armor. Guzzler disappeared when he was accepted to MIT&T. The same deckers he trusted to establish his new identity did a bang up job in erasing Guzzler. Guzman looks fondly on the old days and is willing to talk shop with other professionals if given the opportunity.

Guzman is now the chair of the Reliquary Studies department of MIT&T. Not bad for a dwarf from Southie. Guzman comes across Sturgis's old project during a data restoration project. Sturgis is thorough in hiding his intent, but Guzman's background in the shadows pushes him to dig deeper. He uncovers the true purpose of Sturgis's trips abroad and feels responsible for putting him on the project in the first place. Afraid of the implications of his own background should he report his findings to the authorities, Ben finds the shadows and decides to hire some runners for some network in Denver. Guzzler would have been more than happy to accept a job like this back in the day.

Guzman makes an excellent contact for future runs involving magic. He also makes a great replacement should something terrible happen to Frosty during the events of *Dawn of the Artifacts*. Guzman also makes a worthy rival. He's willing to send his own teams to collect artifacts. The runners, having worked for him themselves, know he's honorable and trustworthy with whatever artifacts cross their hands. Of course, Ben has already shed one identity in his lifetime. His calm demeanor could hide yet another surprise. He could be hiring the runners not to end Sturgis's killing spree, but to take it over for himself and earn whatever prize is worth the lives of 45 people.

<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Edg</b>	<b>Ess</b>	<b>Init</b>	<b>IP</b>
3	3	3	3	5	4	3	5	5	3	6	7	1

**Astral Initiative/Passes:** 8/3

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10/11

**Armor (B/I):** 6/4

**Qualities:** Magician

**Skills:** Banishing 3, Binding 5, Blades 1, Demolitions 4, Etiquette 2, First Aid 2, Perception 2, Sorcery skill group 3, Summoning 5

**MAKING IT PERSONAL**

For shadowrunners accustomed to trading fire with mil-spec-toting security units and shaving black IC for six-figure paydata, facing down a lone serial killer might seem like a lazy day watching *Odd Coven* reruns. This adventure is meant to be a change of pace from the usual action and tactics. There is a great way to get even the most mercenary of souls to work *pro bono*. Bring the fight to the characters rather than waiting for a call from their fixer.

But what if, instead of one of the victims mentioned in the plot point section, one of the victims is one of the runner's contacts?

Maybe the victim was in Denver visiting old friends. Perhaps the victim was on the trail of the Phaistos Killer for their own reasons. Sturgis could also be making his way through the contact list again and again, targeting old friends and trusted allies. This works especially well if you move the adventure to the PC's home city. This is an excellent chance to put them on their heels. None of their hangouts are safe. The killer knows he's being watched by dangerous people, and he plans accordingly. He waits until one becomes vulnerable and alone, and then he strikes. If the runners play smart and watch each other's backs, Sturgis moves on to easier picking in other cities. But can the runners let him go if they know he will kill again? And that his murders might have some sort of higher purpose?

Something the gamemaster should consider when taking this approach is the effect losing a contact the player paid for with build points. Some gamemasters might give the player back some build points or extra karma equal to the value of the contact. Some gamemasters might do nothing and expect the players to handle the loss as part of the story.

Both approaches have advantages. A refund keeps players that lose contacts on pace with the rest of the group. It also gives the player a chance to redevelop their character in direct response to plot occurrences. Maybe they decide to pick up some combat skills because they feel like they failed their buddy and never want to lose anyone else. The runner could pick up some knowledge skills so they can hunt the killer down in his new city.

Having a player simply lose a contact could feel a bit more realistic. There are negative events in *Shadowrun*. Bullets are fired, vehicles are wrecked, and people die. Shadowrunners live dangerous lives, and losing somebody a close friend or ally highlights the consequences of the lifestyle. It also hammers home a sense of loss while giving the players a reason to doggedly pursue the killer to the ends of the earth.

Experienced gamemasters might look into replacing Sturgis with one of the other characters from *Dawn of the Artifacts*. Anyone that came in contact with the Phaistos Disc or the Piri Reis Map could have had the same mad revelations. Hunting down a killer that is secretly an ally makes for an excellent game full of intrigue and hard choices. This also is a chance to bring back a defeated villain in a new capacity. Players love nothing more than a chance to beat up on a bad guy that they enjoyed beating up already.

The heaviest version of this twist shakes the *Dawn* campaign to its core and is perfect for *Shadowrun* campaigns unconcerned with the official storyline: The shadowrunners track the killer to her lair, only for her identity to be revealed as Jane "Frosty" Foster.



**Knowledge Skills:** Archeology 2, Astral Research 3, Magical Theory 3, Parazoology 3, Radical Groups 4, University Politics 3  
**Spells:** Chaotic World, Critter Form (Wolf), Flamethrower, Heal, Manabolt, Mob Mood, Silence

**Gear:** Armor vest, commlink [Device Rating 3], medkit [Rating 5]

**Weapons:**

Survival Knife [Blade, Reach —, DV 3P, AP -1]

## MR. CUTLER

*Ghoul male*

Cutler hails from Chicago. Cutler is most likely not his real name. He was on the inside when the bugs came. He survived by making a grim choice—he willingly contacted the ghoul strain of the HMMV virus. The one type of food that was plentiful in the Containment Zone was dead human flesh. When the wall came down, Cutler headed west. The wreckage of Chicago was barely habitable even for someone of his kind. He saw too many horrible things and vowed never to look back if he made it out. His experiences in Chicago also rendered him with a mild bigotry against shamanic mages. It doesn't matter if they are the noblest Bear or vilest toxic. To Mr. Cutler, they are just waiting to reveal their true identity as a slave of the bug spirits.

Cutler came to the Meat Market because of its status in the city. It's the closest he's every seen to true open acceptance of the ghoul lifestyle. The ghouls here know they have it better than a lot of their brothers and sisters and do a good job of policing their own. The Aurora Barrens are a rough place. As unsavory as a place like the Meat Market is, it offers stability not available elsewhere in the barrens. Cutler knows that people bring bodies to the market to make them disappear. He also knows the importance of rolling over when other people come looking for those bodies. He

cooperates with the Zonies, UCAS law enforcement, and anyone else looking to buy one of the cameras in his shop.

If the players need information of a dead body in Denver, Cutler is an excellent resource. He also is quite opposed to Tamanous activity in the Meat Market. He feels like that organization will eventually ruin the unspoken agreement the ghouls have with the rest of the barrens. If he comes to trust the runners, he may start using them against the Tamanous agents he discovers. Of course, the organization might start hitting back at him, in which case he turns to the runners for protection. Eating people to survive is one thing, but cutting them up for profit is distasteful to Cutler. Even a ghoul has standards.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
6	3	4	6	3	3	2	5	2	6	7	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 9/10

**Armor (B/I):** 4/0

**Qualities:** Ghoul

**Skills:** Etiquette (Street) 3 (+2), Intimidation 3, Longarms (Shogun) 1 (+2), Negotiation 3, Unarmed Combat 2

**Knowledge Skills:** Alcohol 5, Media Stars 3, Sports 5, Street Rumors 5, Trivia 4

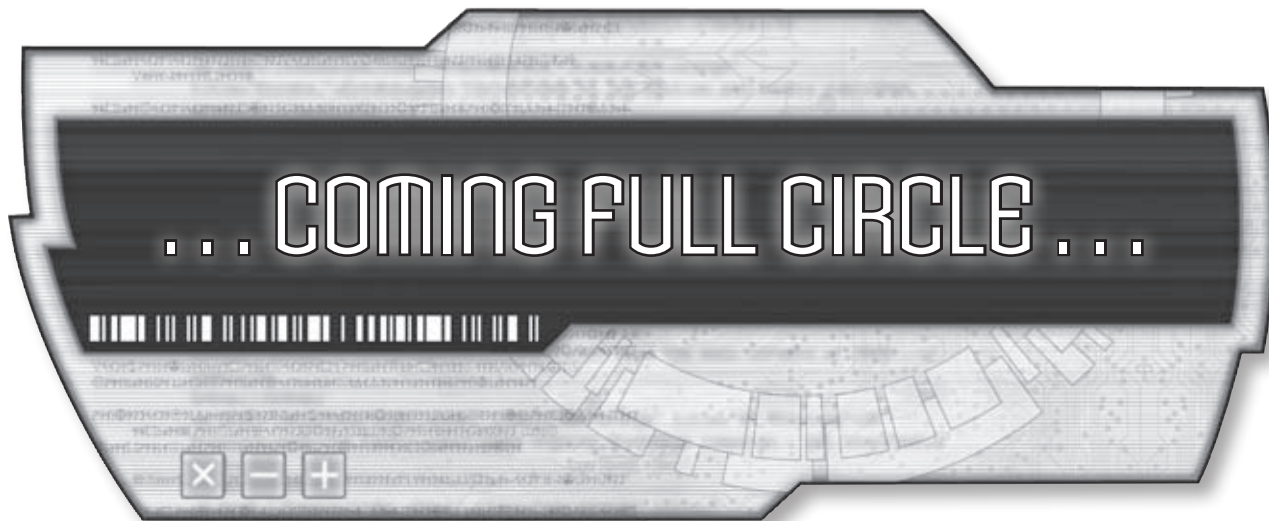
**Gear:** Armor clothing, commlink [Device Rating 3], 3 tranq patches

**Weapons:**

Mossberg AM-CMDT [Shotgun, DV 9P(f), AP +5, SA/BF/FA, RC —, 10 (c)]







**Posted by: Snopes**

Those of you who have been following the artifact known as the Sextant of the Worlds (or Sexton of the Worlds, as some people call it) probably paid close attention to today's press conference in Caracas. But if you didn't catch it or aren't actively following the adventures of the artifacts at all, I'm posting it here for your reference. Oh—and for those who were involved in today's "incident," let me just say: Good use of smoke grenades to cover your asses out there and hide yourselves from the cameras. Way to go in not becoming a part of today's headlines!

**Trid News Conference, Independent Information Network (IIN), July 29, 2073, 1130 hours, Caracas.**

Bienvenidos! I am pleased to see that so many of you are able to attend this news conference despite the regional violence occurring between our neighbors, Aztlan and Amazonia. I hope all of you will be able to enjoy the atmosphere and the hospitality that our humble city has to offer. My name is Cardinal Eduardo Ortega-Nunez, and I am in charge of the Catholic Archdiocese of Caracas.

The Vatican has asked me to hold this press conference to officially announce that as of yesterday, the Catholic Church has reclaimed the Sextant of the Worlds, as displayed in these trid images shown here. This relic was brought to the Vatican during the First Crusade in 1100 AD, and remained in the Church's possession for centuries. This artifact was lost to the Church in recent times, after a member of our clergy took it upon himself to steal it for his own personal gain. The sextant found its way into the wrongful possession of another nation, came into the talons of at least one great dragon and his posthumous foundation, and was illegally bequeathed to a megacorporation, all of which sought to claim it as their own. But in the end, the Catholic Church asserts that it alone has the rightful claim over the sextant, having been its steadfast custodian for nearly a millennium, a claim that no other rival to the sextant can make.

Later this afternoon, the sextant will be shipped out of Caracas under heavy guard and taken to the Vatican. There, His

Holiness Pope John XXV and his advisors will review all reported incidents of unusual deaths that have surrounded the sextant, following it like a plague during its illicit journey around the world. The pope is concerned that the sextant, now that it has become known to all parts of the globe, has become a magnet for fanatics wishing to abuse the artifact and its mystical qualities. As such, His Holiness will review whether or not it is appropriate to preserve such an artifact for the future; an artifact that is not forged in the Judeo-Christian heritage, and therefore provides no useful educational or historical benefit for the Church that can overshadow the artifact's history of bloodshed.

The pope realizes that the Vatican's possession of this artifact will not preclude any further attempts to steal it. The pope feels that it could be in the best interest of all metahumanity for this artifact to be destroyed rather than see more blood shed over it. There is nowhere on this earth that can guarantee absolute security, not even with the vast resources the Church has to dedicate to its protection. His Holiness is expected to reach a decision about the fate of this artifact within six months, and will issue an official edict on the matter. I will now take questions from the media.

*Question from Trent Weaver, IIN News:* You mentioned that the Vatican may wish to destroy this artifact, and you cited the reason for that right is because it has been in possession of the Church since 1100 AD. First of all, could you answer whether or not you feel that the Crusades were actually carried out in a manner that could be considered, by today's standards, a "lawful military action"? If they cannot be held to that standard, how can you say that the Church's claim to the artifact has any legal basis? Can looting and pillaging be considered "lawful acts"?

*Response from Cardinal Ortega-Nunez:* Prior to the First Crusade, the pope at that time, Pope Urban II, received a legitimate request from the lawful Byzantine emperor, Alexios Komnenos, for assistance in defending his empire. The Church responded to that request and provided assistance, and in that strict regard, the Crusade in which the sextant was recovered was a lawful act. Next question, please.

Incoming .....



*Question from Brittany Davero, NBCNN:* Cardinal, you indirectly referred to Aztlan and the Draco Foundation in your belief that they do not have a legitimate claim to the sextant, but both seem to be disputing that assumption. My sources say they are looking into filing lawsuits to prevent you from destroying the artifact, and to ultimately award custody of it to them. What can you say about that?

*Response from Cardinal Ortega-Nunez:* Generally, it is never a good idea to comment about pending litigation. All I will say is that legal ownership of an item is often determined in many legal systems by providing documentation of possession of said item. And the Church has detailed records showing that the sextant has been in our possession since 1100 AD. The Vatican would welcome the opportunity to refute any claims made for the sextant in any court of law.

*Question from Kevin O'Donnell, KSAF Inc.:* Cardinal Ortega-Nunez, do you believe that Israel might have a valid claim for the sextant? From my research, the sextant was removed by crusaders from the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. The artifact in question could be considered a national artifact.

*Response from Cardinal Ortega-Nunez:* That is a good question, Mr. O'Donnell. And not being a legal scholar, I cannot answer that with any authority. But in my opinion, Israel will have a hard time proving that in an international court. The modern state of Israel only reaches back as far as 1948. The sextant, and our claim, clearly predates Israel's existence as both a government and a nation. So, as a nation, I don't think Israel could challenge our claim. Now, if there were an individual or family from Israel that could demonstrate through evidence they had ownership of the artifact before the Catholic Church acquired it, or that someone in their lineage was directly responsible for the construction of the sextant, then that might be a different story.

*Follow-up question from Kevin O'Donnell, KSAF Inc.:* Isn't what you're saying—that you've had the sextant for such a long period of time that you are now the legal owners—the equivalent of UCAS museums saying that because they've had possession of NAN artifacts for a certain period of time, those artifacts belong to them now? Or what about Neo-Tokyo? Could they say that all possessions belonging to metahuman Japanese who had been taken to Yomi Island were now property of the state, and since they have had possession of those items for the years that they were imprisoned, those individuals have no legal right to those possessions? Is that morally justifiable? Isn't that a way of justifying theft? Is that in line with your Church's dogma?

*Response from Cardinal Ortega-Nunez:* That's a very simplistic way of looking at things. The situation's much more complicated than that, as it always is. Next question.

*Question from Ashley Walker, News Net:* If the Catholic Church doesn't want the responsibility of safeguarding this artifact any longer, would the Church be willing to sell or barter the artifact to another organization willing to take that risk? Maybe the Draco Foundation? Could a mutual agreement be reached with another corporation so a historical artifact doesn't have to be destroyed?

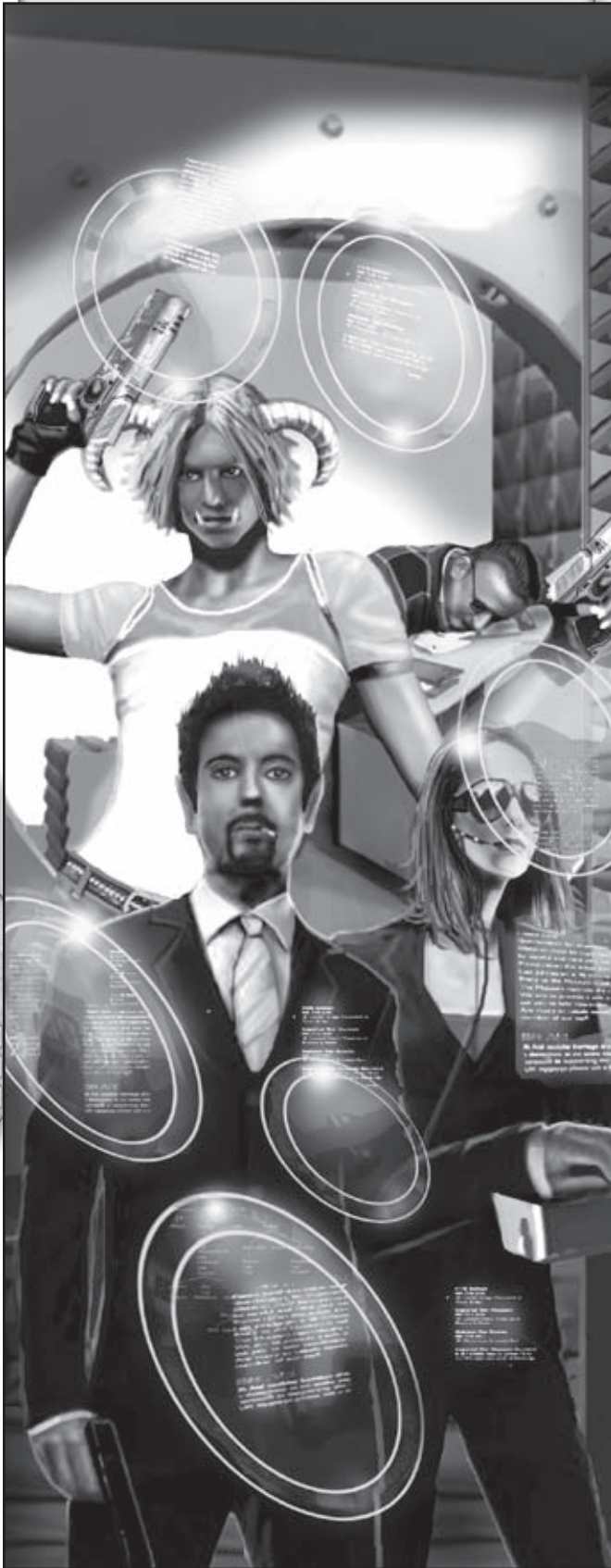
*Response from Cardinal Ortega-Nunez:* Let me respond to that with a question: Could you, in good conscience, sell or trade a potential weapon of mass destruction to another organization who may not have any intention of misusing it but might lose that item to a group such as Winternight? The risk, of course, is too great, which means I personally do not believe His Holiness will consider that option. But we will have to wait and see what comes out in his edict. Next—

*A series of gunshots erupts from the press corps. The camera pans around to see a man ducking down and running through the crowd. The camera pans back, showing the cardinal lying on his side in a pool of blood. Screams erupt from the press corps. "There's a gun! He dropped the gun!" Gunshots ring out from across the parking lot, followed by more shots from an adjacent building. A van pulls up, and still more gunfire sounds. Smoke billows outside the cathedral as the reporters begin to scatter. Several of them get caught in the crossfire and fall. A few seconds later, the feed cuts out.*

- Any ideas about who the assassin was? Or who they were working for?
- Icarus
- It could be any of a long list of people, starting with Aztlan and Aztechnology. They spent so much time and nuyen hunting the sextant only to have someone snatch it from them when they got it. And to add insult to injury, it falls to one of their bitter enemies. It could also have been someone from inside the Church, objecting to the fact that they were considering destroying the sextant, an artifact that, as the cardinal has pointed out, the Church has spent nearly a millennium protecting. Or it could have been someone just wanting to put the sextant back into play again. These artifacts seem to encourage that sort of thing somehow—they don't like to stay in the same place for long.
- As far as who the assassin was, no one knows much except that it was a professional hit. The gun that was recovered had no DNA traces or fingerprints on it, and no serial numbers or RFID tags. They also found the actual reporter that the assassin was impersonating; he was drugged and left tied-up in his hotel room. The assassin had taken his commlink and all his credentials. And thanks to all the violence that the assassination started, he got away clean—he obviously had an escape route already planned out.
- Fianchetto
- All I know for certain is that someone at that damn press conference put four bullets into me and destroyed my right cyberarm. My team provided me with a partial image to go along with the shooter, so I'll be looking to return the favor one day. As the famous playwright once said, "If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge?"
- Picador



INCOMING FEED.....



COMING FULL CIRCLE.....

## OVERVIEW

The player characters' fixers will be contacted by Sibelia, a member of the True Brazilians. She needs a runner team to sneak into the Aztechnology Business Complex and retrieve the Sextant of the Worlds from the Azzies. The Catholic Church will pay the True Brazilians a significant finder's fee for obtaining the artifact. To ensure that the full power of the Aztlán and Aztechnology military machine isn't brought down upon the runners as they leave the facility, the True Brazilians, along with other member groups of the Colombian Liberation Movement and the Amazonians, launch an offensive against the Azzies while the runners break into the Pyramid Arcane Supplies building.

Once the runners have retrieved the artifact, Sibelia offers them the opportunity for more work. The Church needs to have the artifact delivered to Caracas. Because of the nature of the sextant, it would be safer to travel by ground through the rainforest. The runners will also need to take Sibelia and her group with them to Caracas—she makes it clear that where the sextant goes, she goes. Fortunately, Sibelia and her True Brazilians cell are very familiar with the rainforest, and she can help the player characters navigate it to get to Caracas.

Once Sibelia delivers the artifact to Cardinal Eduardo Ortega-Nunez, her role is over. The Cardinal, however, hires the runners to help protect the sextant through to the next day when it is moved to an undisclosed location in Caracas, from which it will be shipped back to the Vatican. He plans on using his press conference as a diversion while the sextant is on the move. He wants the runners to be seen at the press conference to build credibility that the sextant is there and in the shipping container. During the press conference, the cardinal is assassinated—not by anyone after the sextant itself, but by a mysterious group seeking to silence his support for its destruction. The gunshots provoke other groups after the artifact to come out of hiding and begin attacking. The crossfire kills several members of the press, and in the end, the ruse is exposed.

Unfortunately, another party was aware that the sextant was on the move while the cardinal carried out his press conference, and that group attacked the actual transport truck carrying the artifact. By the time the runners locate the transport truck, the attackers are long gone. After investigating the scene, the runners learn that well-known pirates from the Caribbean League attacked the truck and made off with the cargo to the La Guaira port. Having been asked by the cardinal's assistant, Sister Christina Gonzales, to retrieve the artifact, the player characters arrive at the dock, only to be slowed down by the hired muscle that the pirates have put in place to protect the dock. The pirates may succeed in leaving port with the sextant, or the players can recover the artifact and return it to Sister Gonzales. Or, they may wish to take the artifact for themselves and sell it to the highest bidder amongst the many interested parties that are currently operating in Caracas. It should be understood by the player characters that trying to fence the artifact in this manner is a very risky proposition; the groups hunting the artifact in Caracas are very dangerous. They have very wealthy patrons with nearly unlimited resources, and the runners could very well end up losing their lives trying to make some extra nuyen off of an artifact that, by all accounts, is cursed.



## PLOT POINT ONE

### *The First Grab*

The runners' fixers are contacted by Sibelia, a Xapiri Thëpë (elven metavariant) woman who works with the True Brazilians. Their organization has become aware that the Azzies have brought the Sextant into Bogotá. Thanks to their spy network, the True Brazilians are aware that the Azzies have been working with stolen pre-Colombian artifacts for months, looking for ways to recreate the ancient rituals necessary to properly activate the sextant and allow Aztlan to tap into its full powers of manipulating entropy. It is rumored that this artifact has the ability to either enhance or hinder a great dragon's Twist of Fate power, based on the type of ritual used. If true, it would be a tremendous boost to Aztlan's national security to be able to use this artifact against Sirurg in their next encounter.

The recreated rituals are not yet complete, and the new rituals themselves have incorporated aspects of Aztlan's own magical traditions to "fill the gaps," causing them not to be a perfect match for the magical energies that make up the sextant. Within the next few weeks, the Azzies intend to make their first attempt to activate the sextant with their new rituals. The runners are hired by the Colombian Liberation Movement to raid the office building for Pyramid Arcane Supplies in the Aztechnology Business Complex, where the sextant is being secretly stored in one of their laboratories. There may also be a bonus paid out for any Colombian artifacts they recover from Pyramid Arcane Supplies while the player characters are attempting to retrieve the sextant.

The True Brazilians are aware that it could become a suicide mission for the runners to try to get out of the complex with the sextant. Aztlan and Aztechnology have military assets stationed inside the complex that are part of the war effort against Amazonia. Even if the runners successfully evade the military and security forces and escape the Aztechnology Business Complex with the artifact, Aztlan and Aztechnology will pursue them with a vengeance deep into hostile territory (obtaining the artifact was difficult in the first place, and they are willing to absorb significant losses to maintain or regain control of it). The True Brazilians, with the assistance of Amazonia and a number of other member groups of the Colombian Liberation Movement, are planning a significant offensive against Aztlan, which will coincide with the runners' entry into the Complex. Aztlan and Aztechnology should be engaged by the Colombian Liberation Movement and Amazonian forces when the runners retrieve the sextant, meaning the runners will only have to deal with on-site Aztechnology security forces.

The runners may be successful in sneaking into the Aztechnology Business Complex, and they may even make it to the sextant without setting off an alarm. Once the runners steal the sextant, however, something goes wrong. An alarm malfunctions and goes off on its own. Or a guard patrol isn't where it's supposed to be (according to its scheduled patrol route), and it spots the runners. Or a security node glitches and locks down the building. Getting out of Pyramid Arcane Supplies should be a running firefight for the players. Their exit from the Aztechnology Business Complex, however, will not be as difficult as it would be if the Colombian Liberation Movement did not have Aztlan's military resources already engaged.

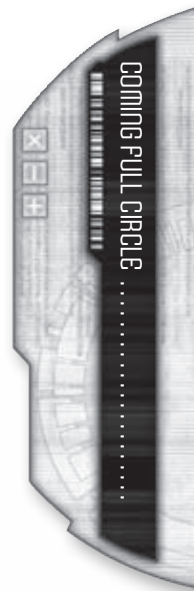
When the runners flee into Bogotá, they are caught up in the crossfire between the Colombian Liberation Movement and Aztlan forces. The fighting is fierce, especially as the sextant moves through the lines of the Colombian Liberation Movement. Both sides suffer significant casualties, as bizarre accidents occur to make the death count even higher as the sextant moves through the streets of Bogotá. In the end, Aztlan suffers the most losses, to the point that a couple of Aztlan-loyal neighborhoods become occupied by the Colombian Liberation Movement. It should be made clear to the player characters that the sextant leaves nothing but death in its wake. While travelling through Bogotá, the sextant attracts many of the city's magical threats (the resident shades and wraiths that are slowly overtaking the population in certain sections; even the sterilist toxic shamans may make a play for the sextant while it moves through the city). Getting the sextant safely to Sibelia should be extremely challenging for the player characters, even without Aztlan and Aztechnology pursuing them.

## PLOT POINT TWO

### *Securing the Sextant*

Once the runners arrive at the safehouse where Sibelia is located, she offers them another job. The sextant needs to be moved out of the city soon and taken to Caracas. They need to take her and five of her men (members of her tribe who are also Xapiri Thëpë), along with the sextant, to the free city of Caracas, where it is to be turned over to the Catholic Church. For their part in the capture of the sextant, the True Brazilians will receive twenty million nuyen from the Catholic Church, as well as ten million nuyen worth of goods (weapons, explosives, survival gear, medical supplies, armor, etc.) to support the group's activities against Aztlan and Aztechnology. After the exchange goes down, Sibelia pays the runners a reasonable amount of nuyen for the job, as well as for the risks and the dangers the runners faced in the rainforest (gamemaster discretion as to the amount), and disappears into Caracas' shadows. The location for the meet is not revealed to Sibelia by the Catholic Church until they are in Caracas. Since it is not a good idea to fly in a plane with the sextant (freak accidents tend to happen around it), Sibelia advises the runners that they should move the sextant on the ground, through the rainforest. She gives the runner team ample time to gather supplies and request special items for the journey. Given how much trouble the sextant brought down on them before, the runners should anticipate a difficult trip. They may wish to try to hire local magical support or cybernetic muscle if they feel what they have will not be enough. Sibelia is also required to make regular contact with Cardinal Eduardo Ortega-Nunez to keep him apprised of the movement of the artifact.

When the runners, Sibelia, and her men enter the jungle with the sextant, it should be made clear that the rainforest reacts badly to its presence (even when the artifact is behind high-level warding). Nearby Sangre del Diablo trees seem agitated and far more aggressive in using their branches and vines to try and ensnare the runners' vehicle(s) and impede their movement through the forest. The unrelenting rain intensifies for the entirety of the runners' trip. The runners will be challenged in crossing raging rivers, as most metahuman-made bridges have





either been damaged or completely washed away. And the vehicles themselves seem to be having more trouble getting stuck in the mud. There is also the possibility that the vehicle carrying the sextant will break down in the middle of the rainforest, or even encounter multiple breakdowns. To complicate matters, if the gamemaster chooses, exposure to the Awakened rainforest and to the artifact can be enough to trigger SURGE in the player characters with the Dormant Metagenics quality (for rules on SURGE, please refer to p. 74, *Runner's Companion*). As a benefit to the runners, Sibelia and her men know the rainforest really well, and their expertise can help them to avoid some of the pitfalls that the surroundings present.

As the runners drive through the rainforest, the sextant attracts the attention of entities that feed off of or are tied to death. Ghosts, primordial spirits, crones, grim reapers, bean shidhe, brocken bows, etc., could all be drawn to the runners. On top of everything else, there is the possibility that the sextant will lead the player characters to stumble upon an active combat zone while in the rainforest, or stumble upon any number of minefields. If Sibelia finds any Aztlan soldiers in the rainforest, she and her tribe are highly motivated to attack them. The runners may need to talk them out of it—or help them.

When the player characters eventually arrive in Caracas, they are given the meet time and location for the exchange: the Caracas East Park, after midnight. They will be meeting Cardinal Eduardo Ortega-Nunez, his aide, Sister Christina Gonzales, and a squad of New Jesuits. At the meet, a mercenary outfit ambushes the group in the open park. For the mercenaries that try to interrupt the meet, use the Guerrilla and the Guerrilla Lieutenant stats from *War!* (reproduced here on p. 141). The runners must take out the opposition to ensure they get paid. The most likely employers of this mercenary outfit include any number of great dragons. SIRRURG wants to obtain the sextant to fuel his Twist of Fate power for use in his campaign of carnage against Aztlan. Hestaby wants to secure the artifact to prevent either SIRRURG or Aztlan from being able to use it, keeping them from escalating an already tense atmosphere between dragons and metahumans. Ghostwalker desires the artifact to reassemble the pieces of Zebulon, the Spirit of Denver, in order to make it whole again. Arleesh acknowledges the dangers inherent in the sextant and wishes to destroy it.

Once the opposition is defeated, the exchange continues uninterrupted, and the runners are paid for their service. Sibelia and her escort depart with the nuyen and the goods from the Church and head back to Bogotá.

## PLOT POINT THREE

### *The Church's Feint*

Once the exchange between the Catholic Church and the True Brazilians is over and the sextant is in Cardinal Ortega-Nunez's possession, the cardinal approaches the runners and makes them an offer of employment. The Vatican is arranging transportation for the artifact back to Vatican City, and he would like to hire the runners to help protect the sextant while it is still in Caracas. Because the runners are known on the streets for bringing the sextant into Caracas, the cardinal believes that they can be

used as an effective diversion, while the sextant is discreetly moved through the city to its point of departure.

If the runners accept the job offer, the cardinal explains what he has planned. The runners will stay with the sextant overnight, stashed away in one of the Catholic Church's many parochial schools around Caracas. During that time, the cardinal will place the artifact in one of six identical, warded (Force 10) armored containers, and will capture trid footage of the sextant being placed in its case. This footage will be shown at the news conference. One of the empty armored containers will be used as a backdrop at the press conference to convince anyone coming after the artifact that the sextant is present. For further misdirection, the cardinal will set up reservations for individuals matching the team's descriptions at hotels throughout Caracas, forcing the hostile groups to spend all night tracking down false leads.

In the early morning hours before dawn, the sextant, and four of the five empty containers are moved to different parts of the city, where they wait for the press conference to begin. The runners escort the last empty container to the Caracas Cathedral for the press conference, where it will be used as a prop. At the press conference, the cardinal announces that the Church has reclaimed the artifact, and that it will be shortly returned to the Vatican.

While the press conference is under way, five vehicles carrying the sextant and four decoy containers leave five different locations around Caracas at the same time. Two of the trucks head out to the La Guaira port; two head to the airport in Caracas; and the final truck travels to a location used by one of Caracas' most capable smugglers. The cardinal intends to draw most of the interested groups to the press conference at the Cathedral, using himself, the runners, and the decoy container as bait, allowing the sextant to make its way safely out of the city. The runners are expected to protect the container as if it actually held the sextant.

At the press conference, during the question-and-answer session, gunshots ring out. Chaos ensues once the bullets start flying, prompting four separate runner and merc groups who were waiting for the conference to end to jump into action prematurely, each believing the gunshots to be their competitors making a play for the sextant. There is a lot of crossfire, as opposing runner teams begin fighting one another over the (empty) shipping container. The cardinal is killed by the initial gunfire, and the lethal shots do not come from the groups waiting to make a grab for the sextant, but rather from an assassin concealed in the press corps. The mysterious assassin disappears into the crowd without making a play for the container—his main objective was not to grab the artifact, but to silence a voice calling for its destruction. Use the Guerrilla and Guerrilla Lieutenant stats (see p. 141) for the runners and merc groups involved in the fighting. The gamemaster can decide how big these four runner or mercenary groups are in order to present an appropriate challenge to the player characters.

The runner teams trying to steal the sextant use smoke grenades to cause further confusion and obscure their identities. If the player characters have any knowledge of well-known mercenaries, they may recognize Picador as being among the opposition. As the fighting continues to escalate, it becomes obvious to Picador that it would cost too much to grab the container; she'll pull her team out, deciding to grab the sextant at a more opportune moment. She will be injured during their egress (see Picador's stats



on p. 49). If any of the groups manage to grab the case and make off with it, it can be recovered a half-hour later, once the thieves discover that it is empty.

## PLOT POINT FOUR

### *Lines Converge*

Sister Christina Gonzales contacts the runners moments after the fighting around the Cathedral has subsided. She is distraught over the loss of the cardinal, but she is also alarmed over the loss of contact with the runner team carrying the actual artifact. She pays the runners the fee that they are owed for guarding the container at the press conference and requests that they look into what happened with the team transporting the sextant. She provides them with the last known coordinates of the transport truck.

It takes the shadowrunners forty-five minutes to reach the location due to the dense traffic of Caracas. The runner team was moving through a favela (a shanty town in Caracas), heading toward the Caracas smuggler, when the transport truck was hit. The vehicle itself is pushed off to the side of the road and is still on fire. The bodies of the runners line the streets; there has been no police or DocWagon response. Most people in the neighborhood simply avert their eyes, not wanting to get involved or even know what happened. The player characters can hack the dead shadowrunners' cybereyes to get images of their attackers from their image links, if they are so inclined.

It takes considerable time and effort to convince anyone in the favela to care enough to risk talking to the player characters. They will eventually learn that the individuals involved in the attack were known pirates from the Caribbean League, brought in for a special job. They seemed to have all the information pertaining to the route the sextant was taking, which indicates that Church security had been compromised. The locals also reveal, for the right price, where the sextant had been rerouted: a pirate-controlled dock at La Guaira port.

If the runners contact Sister Gonzales, she asks the player characters to check out the port and see if the pirates and the sextant are still at the dock. Her prime concern is finding out whether the sextant can be retrieved. When the player characters arrive at the dock, they find not only that it is heavily guarded by the pirates, but also that they have brought in additional help from a mercenary outfit, including a freelancer named Black Mamba. Black Mamba has booby-trapped the dock, making it very difficult for anyone to sneak up. If fighting breaks out, Black Mamba shoots to kill. With her help, the mercenaries should occupy the runners long enough for the ship carrying the sextant (a Zemlya-Poltava Crest speedboat) to depart from the dock. Spirits will be called to conceal the boat and its wake from detection.

If the runners are successful in retrieving the artifact, they have the option of either returning it to Sister Gonzales for payment or trying to sell it themselves. Fencing the artifact themselves or trying to move it out of the city would be the most dangerous options for the runners, as most of the opposing teams have been instructed to remove it by force, and not negotiate with the party in possession of it.

If the runners need to be challenged even further, the dock that the pirates are using can be contested by the Olaya Cartel.

When fighting breaks out, they may take the opportunity to investigate. The Olaya Cartel may choose this opportunity to seize the boat, the sextant, and the dock from the pirates, killing everyone who happens to be in the area at the time.

## LOCATIONS

### PYRAMID ARCANE SUPPLIES

One of Aztechnology's better-known subsidiaries, Pyramid Arcane Supplies operates out of a nine-story office building in the Aztechnology Business Complex. Pyramid Arcane Supplies ensures that Aztechnology interests in Bogotá, Aztlan teocallis, and business partners have access to normal and exotic magical goods. Pyramid Arcane Supplies is believed to be responsible for a sizable portion of the illegal talislegging operations taking place within the rainforest, often conflicting with the Andes and the Olaya cartels, the Colombian Liberation Movement, and Amazonia guerrilla cells. Pyramid Arcane Supplies also possesses the necessary equipment and researchers to analyze and study artifacts, including the stolen pre-Colombian artifacts as well as the sextant, and to recreate the necessary rituals to use them.

All the Pyramid Arcane Supplies building nodes except for the node on the ninth floor have a Device Rating of 6. The node controlling the ninth floor, where the research into the sextant is taking place, is a military node and has a Device Rating of 8. On the first through eighth floors, there are standard patrols of security guards. Use stats for Lone Star Police Squad Members and the Lone Star Lieutenant (Professional Rating 3) (p. 282, *SR4A*). Occasionally, they may use guard animals such as barghests, hellhounds, or naga. On the ninth floor, there is a squad of Jaguar guards and a squad of Leopard guards (Aztechnology Special Forces) guarding the floor the sextant is on.

### JAGUAR GUARDS

(Professional Rating: 6)

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
5	6	5(7)	5	4	4	4	5	3.34	9(11)	1(2)

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 11

**Armor (B/I):** 14/12

**Skills:** Automatics (Assault Rifles) 5 (+2), Dodge 4 (+1), Outdoors skill group 4, Perception 4, Pistols (Semi-Automatics) 5 (+2), Stealth 4, Throwing Weapons 3, Unarmed Combat 4

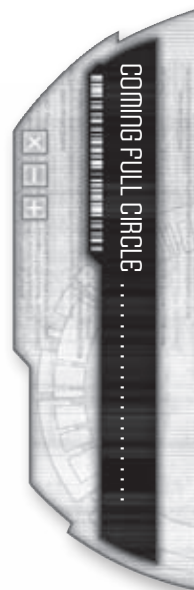
**Augmentations:** (all betaware) Basic immunity (Neuro-Stun), bone density augmentation (Rating 2), cybereyes [Rating 4, w/ flare compensation, low-light vision, smartlink, and thermographic vision], move-by-wire system (Rating 1), spurs (retractable, both arms)

**Gear:** Medium military armor (14/12) with mobility upgrade 2 and non-conductivity (Rating 6) modification

**Weapons:**

AM-884 Mondragón [Battle Rifle, DV 7P, AP -6, SA, 12(c), w/ internal smartgun system and shock pad. Loaded with APDS Rounds]

Nitama NeMax [Heavy Pistol, DV 6P or 10S, AP -2 or 0, SA, RC 0, 10(c), w/ internal smartlink, safe target system





and biometric safety system. Loaded with EX-Explosive Rounds. Jaguar guards also have an extra clip, filled with capsule rounds (Neuro-Stun and DMSO)]  
2 cluster grenades [Grenades, DV 8P, AP 0, Blast 10m radius]

## LEOPARD GUARDS (Professional Rating: 6)

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	M	Ess	Init	IP
4	5	4	6	5	5	4	6	7	6	9	1(2)

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 11 (13)

**Armor (B/I):** 14/12 (16/14)

**Skills:** Blades 4, Clubs 3, Dodge 4, Firearms 5, Outdoors skill group 4, Perception 4, Stealth skill group 5, Throwing Weapons 3, Unarmed Combat 5

**Qualities:** Tough as Nails (2)

**Initiate Grade:** 2

**Metamagics:** Adept centering, somatic control

**Adept Powers:** Astral Perception, Combat Sense (2), Counterstrike (2), Critical Strike (4), Elemental Strike (Fire, 0.5), Killing Hands, Mystic Armor (2), Nerve Strike, Rush

**Gear:** Medium military armor (14/12) with non-conductivity (Rating 3) modification, mobility upgrade 3

**Weapons:**

Victorinox SmartStaff [Variable melee weapon, stats depend on particular shape of weapon. For details, see p. 153, *War!*; the most common configuration is as follows: Mace (Club, Reach 1, DV 6P, AP —)]

Macuahuitl [Reach 1, DV 5P, AP —]

Nitama NeMax [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, RC 0, 10(c), w/internal smartgun system, safe target system and biometric safety system. Loaded with EX-Explosive Rounds]

## CARACAS CATHEDRAL

The Caracas Cathedral is the bishopric for Cardinal Eduardo Ortega-Nunez. The construction for the cathedral originally started in 1666, and the building was completed in 1674. The cathedral has gone through numerous renovations and reconstruction projections. The Caracas Cathedral is also significant for being the location where Simon Bolivar's wife and parents are buried. Although there are a few warded rooms inside the cathedral, including the office for the cardinal, the cathedral itself is not used to house the sextant when it arrives in Caracas. Instead, it is put in the custody of the runners, and both are put up in one of the Catholic Church's parochial schools for the night. The cathedral's node has a Device Rating of 3; it contains no information pertaining to the sextant or to the cardinal's plans. The actual plans for getting the sextant out of town are handwritten in a leather-bound journal that is contained in a wall vault inside the cardinal's office.

## LA GUAIRA PORT

La Guaira port is a major shipping hub for Caracas. Much of the port is controlled by the Olaya cartel. At one time it was *the* tempo shipping port in the world. La Guaira port is dominated by the presence of KondOrchid, the transport

and shipping conglomerate of Jamie Salazar, the head of the Olaya cartel. In addition to the presence of the cartel, there are docks at La Guaira port that are controlled by pirates from the Caribbean League. Many pirates pay the Olaya cartel a cut of their profits to be allowed to operate out of La Guaira port, but they all know that they could be shut them down at any time, should the cartel choose.

## PEOPLE

### SIBELIA

Sibelia is a member of the rare Xapiri Thëpë elven variant metatype. She and her tribe originally hail from the rainforest around Manaus. She and her tribe got involved with the True Brazilians when hostilities between Aztlan and Amazonia started to heat up in 2063, after it was learned that the rainforest was being intentionally seeded with Sangre del Diablo trees. Sibelia is twenty-six years old and has green patches of photosynthetic skin that span her body. She always travels with five other members of her tribe. Sibelia is an expert at navigating the rainforest and makes an exceptional guide. Sibelia is also quite fanatical against Aztlan, and will take any and all opportunities to attack and kill Aztlan soldiers she finds in the rainforest.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
5	5	5(6)	4	4	4	5	4	3	4.32	9(10)	2

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 11/10

**Armor (B/I):** 8/6

**Skills:** Armorer 1, Automatics 4, Blades 2, Climbing 3, Clubs 2, Con 2, Data Search 2, Demolitions 2, Diving 2, Dodge 4, Electronic Warfare 1, Etiquette 3, First Aid 2, Gunnery 3 Heavy Weapons 3, Infiltration 2, Intimidation 3, Language 3, Leadership 2, Longarms 3, Navigation 3, Negotiation 3, Perception 3, Pilot Aircraft 2, Pilot Ground Craft 2, Pilot Watercraft 2, Pistols 2, Running 3, Survival 2, Swimming 2, Throwing Weapons 3, Unarmed Combat 3

**Knowledge Skills:** Amazon Rainforest 5, World Conflicts 2, Arms Dealers 4, Disreputable Establishments of the World 3, Military Unit Recognition 2, Small Unit Tactics 2

**Augmentations:** (all alphaware) Smartlink (alphaware), wired reflexes 1 (alphaware)

**Gear:** Camouflage suit

**Weapons:**

Machete [Blade, Reach 1, DV 4P, AP —]

Ingram Smartgun X [SMG, DV 5P, AP —, BF/FA, RC 2 (3), 32 (c), w/ five clips regular ammo, five clips EX-explosive ammo (DV +1/AP -1)]

## CARDINAL EDUARDO ORTEGA-NUNEZ

Eduardo Ortega-Nunez was born in Managua, Nicaragua, in June 2001, to a devoted Catholic family. In 2025, he left to become a priest. He returned to the area in 2034, where he preached and practiced as a Catholic priest. By the time Aztlan took control of Nicaragua in 2046, Ortega-Nunez had become archbishop of the Managua diocese. He fled the country with several members of his



church and ended up being assigned to Caracas. He was promoted to cardinal in early 2065, after his predecessor died in a car accident caused by a GridGuide failure during Crash 2.0. Cardinal Eduardo Ortega-Nunez has become known as a compassionate man, often rendering aid to those individuals fleeing from Aztlan. Use Sylvestrine stats, p. 145, for the cardinal.

## SISTER CHRISTINA GONZALES

Christina Gonzales was born in Mexico City in 2004. She contracted VITAS when the disease reached epidemic levels in 2010, but she was one of the lucky ones who survived without the intervention of modern medicine. Believing that she had benefited from a miracle, Gonzales dedicated her life to God. She became a Franciscan nun in 2030, at the age of 26. She continued to work in Tenochtitlan, even as the rights of the Catholic Church became more restricted by the Aztlan government. When the Catholic Church was completely banned from operating in Aztlan in 2041, Sister Christina Gonzales remained in Tenochtitlan, supporting the underground religion and working closely with the New Jesuit order. She was arrested by the Aztlan government on at least four occasions, and spent a total of twelve years in Aztlan prisons. By 2056, Sister Gonzales' health started to fail her, and she left her work in Tenochtitlan and made her way to Caracas. There, she served as personal assistant to the cardinal, and later became the assistant to Cardinal Eduardo Ortega-Nunez after his predecessor died. Use Political Intern stats (see p. 10, *Contacts, Adventures, and Sprawl Sites*) for her stats.

## PICADOR

Originally from Lisbon, Portugal, Picador studied literature in Madrid before becoming an active mercenary. Her mentor in military science was Matador, a mercenary who worked for Argus, the intelligence arm of MET2000. When another intelligence operative had Matador taken out to save his own ass, Picador went out of her way to hunt down and kill him. Picador recently started to work in South America when the war between Aztlan and Amazonia broke out.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
4	5	5 (8)	5	3	4	3	4	5	1.1	9 (12)	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10/10 (13)

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 14/12

**Skills:** Automatics (Assault Rifles) 4 (+2), Blades 4, Clubs 3, Cybertechnology 3, Dodge 5, First Aid 3, Gunnery 4, Heavy Weapons (Machine Guns) 5 (+2), Outdoors skill group 6, Perception 4, Stealth skill group 3, Throwing Weapons 4, Unarmed Combat 4

**Augmentations:** 2 full cyberarms [synthetic, customized; Strength 5, Agility 5, large smuggling compartment], cybertorso [synthetic, increased capacity (Rating 3), Armor 4], cybereyes [Rating 4, w/ flare compensation, low-light vision, thermographic vision, and smartlink], reaction enhancers 3

**Gear:** Medium military armor with non-conductivity (Rating 3) modification, mobility upgrade 3

**Weapons:**

Ultimax MMG [MMG, DV 6P, AP -2, FA, RC (6), 40 (c) or belt, w/ detachable tripod]

## BLACK MAMBA

Black Mamba began her life and career in Africa, starting out as an enforcer for Ares and Renraku. Her life philosophy is "survival goes to the fittest ... so be the fittest." She does not believe in fair fights—she is out to win at all costs. Black Mamba is dangerous for many reasons, but most notably for disdain of non-lethal force. She has recently started taking jobs in South America to expand her knowledge and skill set while improving her abilities to work in the most extreme environments in the world. As the unofficial Ares slogan says, "Business is booming" in South America, and Black Mamba is happy to make the most of the opportunities that the war between Aztlan and Amazonia has opened up for mercenaries in that part of the world.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
5	6 (9)	4 (7)	4	3	3	5	4	4	3	7 (10)	1 (4)

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 11/10

**Armor (B/I):** 14/12

**Skills:** Blades 4, Clubs 3, Dodge 5, Firearms skill group 5, First Aid 4, Gunnery 4, Heavy Weapons 3, Long Arms 3, Outdoors skill group 6, Perception 4, Stealth skill group 3, Throwing Weapons 3, Unarmed Combat 4

**Augmentations:** Muscle toner 3, pathogenic defense 6, synaptic booster 3, thermosense organs

**Gear:** Medium military armor with non-conductivity (Rating 3) modification, mobility upgrade 2

**Weapons:**

GE Vindicator Minigun [LMG, DV 6P, AP -1, FA\*, RC —, 50 (c) or belt]

\*The fixed fire rate is 15 rounds per Complex action instead of 10.

Steyr AUG-CSL [Assault Rifle, DV 6P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC 1, 40(c)]

[Rifle, DV 7P, -1, SA, RC 1, 20(c)]

[SMG, DV 5P, AP —, SA/BF/RA, RC 1(2), 25(c)]

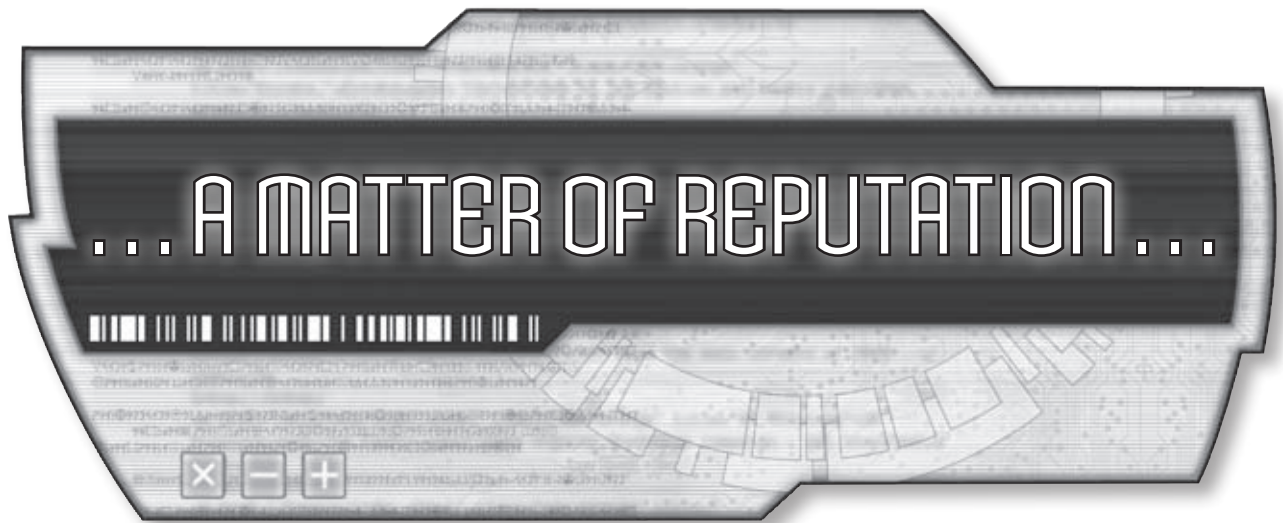
[LMG, DV 6P, AP -1, BF/Fa, RC 1, 50(c) or belt]

## NEW JESUITS

Cardinal Ortega-Nunez uses a squad of New Jesuits to protect him at the exchange with the True Brazilians. These are priests in the Catholic Church who have been trained how to fight and wage an effective military campaign. These are capable bodyguards who can rival experienced shadowrunners. Use the stats for Military Police and Military Police Lieutenant (see p. 143).







### users/blog/Sunshine/Federal Offense Friday

From: <AH.AH.NO PEEKING>

To: <AH.AH.NO PEEKING>

Re: Private Party

We lucked out on this one. The goon squads that shot up the highway to the airport were nice enough to wait until they got out of our building first. We still have a few things to replace—some of them got into it with security drones in the parking structure. That's why we have drones and not real people there.

I am more concerned about our current strategic domestic partner. The events of last week showcased some weaknesses in his support structure. He has supported our directives in the past, but I think we may want to look at his competition. It's a natural progression—organizations rise and fall like the tides. Those in his line of work have a much higher turnaround rate, too.

We may want to loop in our temporary personnel managers to look into this.

- I haven't posted a random e-mail in a while on Friday for everyone to chow down on. Not any paydata here, but I figured it might spur some discussion.
- Sunshine
- I love how "strategic domestic partner" is corpspeak for "scary-ass Nigerian warlord."
- Black Mamba
- Which one?
- Orkce0
- This is about Oni Adegoke. He had an auction at the Global Sandstorm building that got busted up when some of the losing bidders decided on a do-over with the weaponry they left in the car.
- Black Mamba

- Who would want to mess with a guy called Demon Adegoke?
- Mihoshi Oni
- Oni, in this case, means "king." He's one of the bigger sharks swimming in Lagos, and word is he is very unhappy with the way things went down. A few of his rivals have started pushing back on him to see how wounded he is.
- Black Mamba
- Is this the same guy that gunned down a rival gang and sent the spent shell casings to their relatives?
- Snopes
- He has a huge collection of antiques. He keeps anything with a hint of power and sells the rest. If he's not packing mojo, he's got someone on the payroll who has a lot of toys to play with. The stuff that caused the ruckus was magically active, so he definitely wants it back.
- Winterhawk
- I know someone who bought something active from him. Tribal masks end up in some junior veep's office so he can look cultured. Active artifacts end up in the R&D lockdown. Which do you think makes him more money?
- Mr. Bonds
- Adegoke's recent murders are sending a message to whoever busted up his auction after-party. Never. Come. Back. To. Lagos.
- Fianchetto
- Yeah, yeah.
- Frosty
- Never say never, Fianchetto. You of all people should know that.
- Mr. Bonds

Incoming .....



## THE STORY

### OVERVIEW

This adventure deals with the aftermath of the black market auction in Lagos. Chances are the PCs (if they played *Dusk: Dawn of the Artifacts 1*) made a mess in their pursuit of the Piri Reis map. A man in Adegoke's position trades heavily on his reputation. When that reputation is damaged, repairs must be made. Oni Adegoke did not get to where he is by waiting around for people to fix his problems. The runners are exactly the type of people he needs; professional, deadly, and disposable.

If the PCs did not participate in *Dusk*, they hear about the mess in Lagos through shadow channels. Oni Adegoke needs to save face and he needs runners at the top of their game. He needs out-of-town talent that can't be connected back to him. The fixer approaches them about some wetwork elsewhere in the world. This is an excellent fit after a run that requires the PCs to clear out of town for a few days until the sirens and corporate goon squads blow over. Not only does it change the scenery for a few days, but it lets the runner continue to earn some cash while the heat dies down.

Adegoke is using this opportunity to clean house. He believes one of his lieutenants, Issac Olaleye, has begun double-dealing with one of the rival gangs in Lagos. He hires the runners to intercept Issac in Cairo and eliminate him. Adegoke wants the hit to take place out of town so anyone looking into it has more difficulty tracing it back to him. To keep his other soldiers in line, he will spin it as the act of a rival and inspire them to strike back to avenge Issac's name.

He has arranged for Issac to meet with Abigail Bussen, one of his contacts in the legitimate art world. Abigail sells artifacts that Adegoke acquires to legitimate collectors. She also passes word to him on potential targets with lax security. Abigail is actually the one who is selling to both Adegoke and his rivals. She plans to eliminate Issac to pull suspicion away from herself. She happens to have an ace up her sleeve, something she can trade for her life—she knows the location of one of the powerful artifacts. Which artifact is up to the gamemaster. This adventure is easy to slot in between the other plot points and is a great way to point players in the direction of the next artifact. It can also be used to put the players back on track if they let an artifact slip through their fingers.

In this adventure, runners will have a tough choice on their hands. Most likely they will take the time to record Issac's last words in order to obtain the bonus, and Issac will use the opportunity to plead for his innocence. Any assessment spells with show he's telling the truth. Will the runners take the easy money and kill an innocent man? Or will they let Issac live and get to the bottom of who is truly to blame?

### PLOT POINT ONE

#### *The Virtual Vizier*

Oni Adegoke arranges a virtual meeting via the Matrix. The meet goes down in a node sculpted to look like a fantastic Sultan's feast with firebreathers and other fantastic elements. Adegoke asked his friends at Global Sandstorm to whip up the node, and he uses one of their Johnsons to speak directly to the runners. The Sultan on the throne is silent and looming. He looks like part of the sculpting but is actually Adegoke taking a look at the runners

for himself. Observant runners may note that while the other background players go through repeating animations, the Sultan does not. Adegoke lets the Johnson do the talking. The Johnson takes the form of the Sultan's vizier.

If the runners were involved in messing up the auction, the Johnson informs them he is a forgiving man. He understands the nature of the business that they are in, and he arranged this meeting for Adegoke as a professional courtesy. The Johnson reminds them that all actions have consequences, and if they respect this statement, they should be willing to handle what they have earned. He hopes the runners will listen to his offer and consider it. It is a chance for them to broaden their horizons and bring in some big money. It will also allow them to be seen in Lagos without being fired upon by members of the Yoruba tribe. Global Sandstorm will also not deal with the runners until Adegoke tells them its okay, and the corporation may do some work to damage their reputations in areas the Oni is unable to reach.

Striking at someone within Adegoke's organization means finding people unconnected and less willing to succumb to a crisis of loyalty. The Johnson says Adegoke is heartbroken by the betrayal of a member of his organization. One of his lieutenants has decided to take advantage of the chaos and work with his rivals. Issac Olaleye must be dealt with, and Adegoke wants him eliminated. He has arranged for Issac to be out of town in Cairo for a few days and wants the runners to intercept him there.

For those runners who didn't run through that adventure, or for ones who elected not to strike at Medjay while in Lagos, Adegoke has made inquiries about talent outside of his usual influences. The Johnson is discreet enough not to reference any jobs directly, but he should speak positively to encourage the runners to trust him. He mentioned that Adegoke deals in black market antiquities and that one of his auctions was recently destabilized by individuals not unlike the runners. He feels Issac may be responsible, and he must move quickly to save his reputation in Lagos.

Runners not from Lagos can get a rundown of the conditions in either *Feral Cities*, *Dawn of the Artifacts*, or the **Visitors' Guide to Lagos** handout on p. 148. Adegoke offers a lump sum of 25,000 nuyen for the job, as well as travel expenses and lodging in the Tahrir Midan for three days. The runners are on their own if they wish to find other lodging, but Adegoke will use it for their local address so he can ship their equipment to them. He can be Negotiated up to 5,000 more on a successful Charisma + Negotiation Opposed Test (1,000 nuyen for each net hit). He also offers a 5,000 bonus if they bring him back video of Issac confessing to his crimes.

### PLOT POINT TWO

#### *The Train Station*

Ramses Station is the main train hub for Cairo. Issac is arriving by high-speed train around 1 PM local time. His itinerary is very simple. First thing tomorrow morning, he is supposed to meet with Abigail to discuss business. He plans on disembarking with Yabuku (his personal bodyguard), picking up a cab, and heading straight to the hotel. He stops to refresh himself in the restroom, pick up his bags. He then heads out into the Egyptian heat.







INCOMING FEED.....

If the runners hit Issac at the station, they can be on a high speed train to Dubai before Issac's body is cool. The facility is well secured but not impossible to sneak around. Thousands of people come through the station every day. Runners can use that anonymity to their advantage. They can slip next to Issac as part of the crowd and slip away just as easily. If they need a place to stash a body or two, one of the restrooms is a great place or the stateroom on a train. The runners could also disappear into the city. Or, if they are skilled in wilderness survival, a desert blow-off would get them to safety.

The major downside to a train station hit is the need for perfect timing. If the runners make a commotion, Ramses Station will lockdown faster than a subliminal spam ad. All doors and exits will shut down. Any trains en route will either be rerouted or continue on without allowing anyone to exit at the station. Mages will be called in to investigate and disturbances. If a firebreak breaks out, the guards use lethal force immediately—the longer a firebreak continues, the more innocent lives are risked. The security personnel fight to limit collateral damage as much as possible. Their priorities are anyone with obvious magical talent, followed by anyone packing firearms, and finally anyone running a commlink.

Intercepting Issac on the train is one option. The runners might book passage earlier in Issac's trip and hit him even before he gets to Cairo. Issac and Yabuku share a compartment all the way to Cairo. Posing as fellow travellers could get them to let their guard down, especially if the runners act like they might be potential clients for Oni Adegoke's operation. Security on the train is much lighter and less proficient than the guards at Ramses Station.

Picking up Issac while posing as a cab driver is another good plan. The station's network internally is very strong, (Firewall: 4, Encrypt: 2) but the network the cabs use is less so (Firewall: 2). There is a mix of cabs waiting outside the station. Some are drone

rigged, some are not. Travellers have multiple options hailing cabs. Some do it through their hotel as part of a travel package. Some access the cab roster as they pick up their bags. Others do it the old fashioned way, walking outside and haggling with the driver. Even if the runners don't pick up Issac, they may trail his cab and ambush him on the road. This is probably the best place to hit Issac without worrying about security raining down afterward. The streets of Cairo are a chaotic jumble with plenty of blind alleys, dead ends, and excellent ambush opportunities.

Another area of weakness is Issac and Yabuku's familiarity with language. They are native Swahili speakers and have some familiarity with English. Yabuku also knows some Arabic, but Issac relies on his commlink's linguasoft to speak Arabic. Both the commlink and linguasoft are Rating 3. Many people in Cairo speak English, but the more barriers the runners can erect, the more frustrated Issac will get. He is more likely to make a mistake that the runners can capitalize on if he gets frustrated.

## PLOT POINT THREE

### *The Hotel*

Issac spends most of his time at the hotel alone in his room. Yabuku is nearby, but when you've got assassins after you who can put down a security team in seconds, "nearby" isn't good enough. Yabuku may be unable to save his friend and have to console himself by eliminating as many of the killers as he can before he joins Issac in death. The two are a dangerous duo, but they likely will not be able to stop an onslaught from a group of professionals.

If Issac dies on corporate ground, the hotel owners will be furious. Even if the runners make it out, Cairo will offer no

safe haven. Abigail is unwilling to harbor the runners once they become fugitives, and they will have to move quickly to get on a train or airplane before the heat comes down. The lesson here is to have an exit plan, whether it's a secured safe house in the Old City or a survival encampment in the nearby desert.

Issac is not in his room all night—he takes some time after dinner to enjoy the gambling facilities. A savvy social runner might approach him as a fellow gambler and strike up a friendship. Perhaps they invite Issac to their room for a private game. Perhaps they use a little luck and a little cheating to put Issac in debt. They can pull Issac out of position and make their move without Yabuku being any wiser. If they can pull Issac out of position, they can in theory get him to a secluded area where they can conduct their business without interruption.

Runners could also pose as some sort of staff that needs to get into Issac's room. This could mean anything from repairmen to waitstaff to a complimentary joygirl from the hotel management. This method is a little risky, requiring either some convincing fast talk to Issac through the secure door or some hacking of the computer systems to make themselves look legit. Issac views a face-to-face meeting with more suspicion, but if the hotel's automated billing system tells him he gets free room service to compensate them for the inconvenience of the visit, he'll allow the visit to continue. If his suspicions have been aroused, he stays armed when they come in. If his guard is down, he keeps his weapons locked in the room's safe.

## PLOT POINT FOUR

### *Abigail's Gallery*

The last place the runners can make a viable move on Issac is his meeting with Abigail at her gallery. Issac meets with Abigail the next day to discuss business. If the runners don't do anything, Abigail convinces Yabuku to make a move. He eliminates Issac and leaves Abigail to get rid of the body.

The advantage to making a play at this location is that Abigail is more than willing to help them set up an ambush. The gallery is her private property. As long as they don't make too much noise, she can cover things with the authorities. She suggests either taking the body to the desert or perhaps shipping it out in one of her packing crates. She also turns off her security systems so there will be no recording of how things go down. The runners might get suspicious if she is too helpful, which is perfectly fine. They should be.

Of course, the reason why Abigail is so helpful is because she needs Issac dead to cover her own transgressions. If Issac convinces the runners of his loyalty, Abigail tries to finish the job herself. If the runners have weapons out, she goes for one of their guns. Preferably one that isn't smartlinked or shut down. If this isn't an option, she retrieves a Raecor Sting and conceals it on her person. She tries to get Issac alone, but if the runners confront her about her role in things, she pulls the gun and makes a break for it.

## LOCATIONS

### HILTON TAHRIR MIDAN (LUXURY CASINO RESORT)

Adegoke secured lodgings for Issac in the Hilton Tahrir Midan, a five-star casino resort located in the Tahrir section of Cairo. The hotel has a reputation for luxurious service and

excellent distractions from the desert heat. While other hotels in the area play off of Arabian themes ranging from the subtle (Ifrit) to the ridiculous (Aladdin's Lamp Casino), this hotel caters to Western travellers who want western luxuries while they stay abroad. Adegoke sells artifacts and sculpture to the hotel. If the runners make a move on Issac here, the security staff will react immediately, but Adegoke will smooth over things in the long run with the corporate owners.

A top facility such as this boasts heavy security for guests—security rating 4 in the hallways and public areas and 5 inside individual rooms. Room keys are biometrically linked to the person paying for the room. He or she may allow others on guest passes into the room. Guest RFID tags are not biometric, and any damages caused by these guests are put on the room account. Cleaning the room is handled by domestic drones, though they are monitored by a security rigger rather than fully automated. Security on the casino floor is even heavier—Rating 6 across the board. Runners are advised to leave any arms or foci in their rooms if venturing onto the casino floor. Casino security does not take kindly to personal armaments or magical items that may influence the outcome of the games. If the runners had previously taken a shot on Issac and missed, he spends a lot of time in the casino to take advantage of this extra security.

The casino is a top-of-the-line, five-star operation. Runners with excellent social skills could approach Issac playing classic casino games ranging from craps to baccarat. The backers are well-heelied enough to offer more exotic distractions as well. There are weekly battles between paranormal creatures in the casino's arena. Wagers are handled through the casino. Tickets to the event are generally given out as prizes for winning less profitable games, or to high rollers to reward them for their loyalty.

Matrix security for such an operation is very tight. Cairo is a haven for techomancers. An establishment like this can afford to have such unique security measures and employ multiple technomancers to watch the casino system security. The technomancers work in alternating eight-hour-shifts covering the casino floor. The good news for the runners is that if they steer clear of the casino nodes, hacking the nodes to the rooms is simpler. The hotel is more concerned with someone rigging a game in their favor than a malfunctioning security camera. For the stats of the security technomancers, use the Security Technomancer, p. 144.

### RAMSES STATION (TRAIN STATION)

Ramses Station is the largest train station in Egypt. It services everything from ancient steam trains that run to small local stations to high-speed bullet trains that speed across Africa and to major Arabian cities. For many westerners, it is the gateway to the Arab world. Trying to take out Issac here in a grand firefight is not the best idea. The station is very secure. Anti-Western and anti-Awakened factions have tried to bomb the station with no recent success.

Matrix security for the station is formidable. The system is not too tough, but the nodes are crawling with spiders. The train companies employ multiple spiders to make sure the trains arrive on time. Each train is assigned to a spider once it is in the station and monitors that train until it is five kilometers away. The spiders rotate from train to train throughout their shift. As one train leaves their protections, they are assigned to a new one. The node is sculpted to look like a film-noir train station, with dramatic shadows mixing with steam and fog.





The station is full of people from all walks of life. Rich, poor, young, old, corporate, and anarchist all tumble together in a great mass of metahumanity. While most transportation hubs do their best to make sure the haves don't brush against the unwashed have-nots, Ramses Station is not interested in such class notions. Privileged services come from the rail lines themselves, not from station management. First-class passengers are shuttled directly from their limo to their private car by tram drivers so aggressive that they make the cabbies outside look like timid sixteen-year-old student drivers. Issac and Uabuku are not able to afford such service, but a properly hacked tram could cause a useful diversion.

Anyone without a proper ticket is not let onto a platform. Tickets are linked to an individual PAN. If you attempt to get on the wrong platform with the wrong ticket, a message is sent to your PAN telling you where the right platform is. If this message is not acknowledged or the individual is on the wrong platform for more than a minute, a security guard is dispatched to follow up.

This, of course, means the grand concourses are chaotic scenes of weepy goodbyes and relieved hellos. Everyone has to filter through the concourse at some point. The security checkpoints between the concourse and the platforms are where the body scanners are located.

### GALLERIA ALHAMBRA (ART GALLERY)

Abigail's Galleria Alhambra is located near the hotel. She does a decent amount of business with tourists and visiting executives. Her gallery is located in an old Cairene house. The artifacts and art installations are kept in the walled gardens surrounding the main house. The house itself is more of a warehouse, with offices and living quarters on the second floor. The main floor served as a storage and shipping area, with packing materials and drones dedicated to shipping and delivering purchases. Abigail checks her inventory about once a week. She rotates in new items and boxes up items that are sold. Generally speaking, magic artifacts have a lifespan of three months in her shop. If it hasn't sold by then, she dumps it off to one of the many street vendors in Cairo. The gallery has a Rating 4 security system, with biometric access on the doors and windows.

Hacking into the gallery's node renders an important bit of paydata. It reveals that Abigail has been in communication with several of Adegoke's rivals. An adept hacker can also pull up her private correspondence with Yabuku and her attempts to get him to eliminate Olaleye privately. The node has decent security for a private individual (Firewall: 3, Encrypt: 2) but Abigail is not expecting a hacker to access her holdings. The node is barely sculpted, mostly keeping the default settings of someone that doesn't give much thought to their network. Everything in the node is basic shapes on a grayscale—restricted items are black, open areas are white, and anything administrative or relating to the business is gray.

Abigail is aware that Issac is being setup for a hit. She is not aware of the runner's role in the puzzle, and they may set themselves up as potential clients to get a look at her or her operation. The gallery is open by appointment only. Getting an introduction requires a Charisma + Etiquette (3) Test. Failure means that they still get an invite, but Abigail has deduced they are connected to the hit and plans accordingly. She quickly convinces the runners she's on their side. Otherwise, Abigail is aloof but charming, and very knowledgeable about her inventory.

## PEOPLE

### ISSAC OLALEYE (ADEGOKE'S LIEUTENANT)

*Ork male*

Issac has been part of Oni Adegoke's organization since he was twelve years old. He started as a runner who kept his eyes and ears open on the streets of Lagos. He worked his way up through a combination of viciousness and cunning, and he now manages Adegoke's relationships with outsiders who wish to buy artifacts. Issac cleans up well, and his quiet demeanor makes him suitable for dealing with more professional clientele. The rumors that set Adegoke on his course of action are completely unfounded. Issac went from a rat squatting on the streets to a man who spends significant amounts of time in a five-star hotel thanks to Oni Adegoke's organization. His loyalty is intact.

Issac is by no means innocent. He's killed, stolen and beaten for his boss. He is minimally armed, but he has at his disposal a weapon that can traverse security checks easily—his bodyguard Yabuku. The combat mage is constantly at Olaleye's side, though they have separate rooms at the Hilton Tahrir Midan. This is one of the main reasons runners may risk the security at the hotel to strike there. He feels secure in his room and drops his guard a bit more.

If the runners side with Issac, he is eternally grateful. Adegoke is grateful as well, since his lieutenant was proven loyal and the problem was taken care of by the runners. He will consider using them in the future, with Issac as a contact point. Adegoke understands the value of professionals he can trust to track down items, harass debtors, or eliminate rivals.

Privately, though, Issac's loyalty to Adegoke is shaken. He can't believe he was targeted for assassination and wonders how long it will be until the next team is sent to dispatch him. Perhaps when Issac feels he's ready, he will challenge Adegoke's grip on Lagos and become the new Oni, using the runners to bear the message in bullets.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
7	4(5)	4(5)	6(7)	2	3	3	4	4	2.9	7(8)	1(2)

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 12/10

**Armor (B/I):** 8/6

**Qualities:** Guts, Home Ground (Lagos), Toughness, Uneducated  
**Skills:** Close Combat skill group 5, Etiquette (Street) 3 (+2), Firearms skill group 4, Intimidation 3, Pilot Ground Craft (Bike) 2 (+2), Running 3, Shadowing 4, Survival (Urban) 2 (+2)

**Knowledge Skills:** Black Market Dealers 2, Gang ID 4, Gang Turf 5, Lagos Knowledge 2, Urban Brawl Statistics 3, Swahili N, English 3

**Augmentations:** Datajack, muscle replacement 1, wired reflexes 1  
**Gear:** Armor jacket, commlink [Device Rating 3], glasses [Rating 1, w/ image link], medkit [Rating 5]

**Weapons:**

Combat Axe [Blade, Reach 2, DV 8P, AP -1]

Extendable Baton [Club, Reach 1, DV 4P (5P), AP —]

Remington Roomsweeper [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, RC —, 8 (m)]

Survival Knife [Blade, Reach —, DV 4P (5P), AP -1]

### ABIGAIL BUSSEN (THE GALLERY OWNER)

Abigail Bussen was born in Munich to a poor family. She worked hard, put herself through college, and came to the



attention of several corporate headhunters. After spending time further refining her skills and her contacts working for Monobe, Abigail struck out on her own as an independent contractor. She struggled to build a reputation for herself as an art gallery owner, selling pieces for display in offices and lobbies. She couldn't get much help from financial backers, so she turned to the black market and found Oni Adegoke. It was a match made in heaven. Abigail was able to profit more for her sales and Adegoke found a way into the more lucrative world of corporate art sales.

She also has no problems dealing with Adegoke's rivals, either. She passed off her duplicity on Issac, but when he was sent to meet her in Cairo, she knew that one of them wouldn't leave town alive. Her network of contacts extends into the Apep Consortium, which wields a considerable amount of influence in Egypt. She found out about the current location of one of the artifacts from an old lover on the inside. If the assassins sent to kill Issac come after her instead, she uses that information to her advantage. The exact location and artifact are left up to the gamemaster. Abigal is an excellent way to get players into the *Dawn of the Artifacts* adventure series (starting with the second adventure, *Midnight*), or give them another shot at an artifact that they missed the first time around.

If the runners side with her, she severs ties with Adegoke and flees to Europe. Abigail could become a contact for the runners in Europe covering a high-class clientele with a specialized knowledge of art and artifacts. Dealing with her can be quite profitable. But they should also realize that Abigail looks out for herself above anyone else. Runners looking for someone with a high sense of loyalty should probably look elsewhere for a contact. She is useful, though, because she is in a better position to track the other artifacts and may come up with more information should that become a focal part of your campaign. There may be a point in the future that Adegoke finds her. If this happens, she'll use the same tactic she did before—except this time, the runners will take the fall for her indiscretions.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
2	2	3	2	4	4	3	2	2	6	7	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 9/9

**Armor (B/I):** 5/2

**Qualities:** Perceptive (5 BP)

**Skills:** Computer 4, Data Search 5, Etiquette (High Society) 3 (+2), Hacking 2, Hardware 2, Negotiation 3, Perception 3 (4)

**Knowledge Skills:** Fine Arts 5, Cairo Rumors 4, Yoruba Tribal Organization 3

**Gear:** Commlink [Device Rating 3], Zoé Executive Suite Line (short jacket, plain blouse, skirt)

**Weapons:**

Survival Knife [Blade, Reach —, DV 3P, AP -1]

## YABUKU (ISSAC'S BODYGUARD)

Yabuku came up in Oni Adegoke's organization alongside Issac Olaleye. He is five years older than Issac, but he doesn't have the head for business his younger friend does. Yabuku feels he owes Issac his life because Issac convinced Adegoke to pay for his first cyberware. It was a cyberarm that replaced the one he lost from an explosion during a drug deal gone bad. Since then, Yabuku has embraced chrome and spends most of his money looking for upgrades and reading tech blogs. He feels about cyber the way

some people feel about classic cars or vinyl records. Sure, bioware and nanotech might be more efficient, but chrome has style, man.

Cairo is Yabuku's first trip out of Lagos. He is professional enough to stay by Issac's side, but he is also excited to be living the high life. He won't compromise his role as Issac's bodyguard, but observant runners might be able to use his excitement against him to get Issac alone. Yabuku views this as a working vacation. Yabuku is staying in the room across the hall. It was his idea to get separate rooms. The hotel is secure in its own right, but he is close enough to come running should Issac be in danger.

Yabuku is meant to side against the runners no matter which side they choose. If they eliminate Issac, he sacrifices himself in the name of his lifelong friend. If they attack Abigail, her attempts to buy his loyalty are successful. He loves Issac, but the money she talked about would let him get some of the best cyberware that he could only dream about in Lagos. If Yabuku proves to be a worthy adversary the players enjoy, he might be worth bringing back as someone who is willing to go to his Essence limit to gain his revenge. His death could also have long lasting implications for the runners. Adegoke could insist on holding them responsible for the money he spent on chroming up the enforcer, leading to another job or two to stay in the king's good graces.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
5	5(8)	4(6)	5(7)	2	5	2	3	4	1.08	10(12)	1(3)

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 11 (13)/10

**Armor (B/I):** 10/5

**Qualities:** Guts, High Pain Tolerance, Incompetent (Hacking)

**Skills:** Athletics skill group 4, Automatics (Submachine Guns) 5 (+2), Blades 4, Heavy Weapons 4, Infiltration 4, Negotiation 2, Perception (Visual) 2 (+2), Pilot Ground Craft (Bike) 1 (+2), Pistols 4, Unarmed Combat 5

**Knowledge Skills:** Firearm Design 3, Safe Houses 4, Security Techniques 3

**Languages:** Swahili N, Arabic 2

**Augmentations:** Cyberarm [left obvious customized, w/ Armor 2, Enhanced Agility 3, Enhanced Strength 2, small smuggling compartment], cyberarm [right obvious customized, w/ Armor 2, Enhanced Agility 3, Enhanced Strength 2, spur, shockhand], cybereyes [alphaware, Rating 3, w/ flare compensation, low-light vision, protective covers, smartlink, and thermographic vision], dermal plating 1, wired reflexes [alphaware] (2)

**Gear:** Armor vest (w/ Rating 2 Nonconductivity Modification), commlink [Device Rating 3], FFBA (shirt), medkit [Rating 5]

**Weapons:**

2 x Ares Predator [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1 or -5, SA, RC —, 15 (c), w/ 10 clips normal ammo, 10 clips APDS ammo, smartlink]

Ingram Smartgun X [Submachine Guns, DV 5P or 6P, AP — or -1, BF/FA, RC 2 (3), 32 (c), w/ 10 clips normal ammo, 10 clips EX-explosive ammo, detachable folding stack, gas-vent 2, smartlink, sound suppressor]

Katana [Blade, Reach 1, DV 6P (7P), AP -1]

Stoner-Ares M202 [MMG, DV 7P, AP -3, FA, RC 3 (9), 40 (c) or belt]

Survival Knife [Blade, Reach —, DV 4P (5P), AP -]







- A contact of mine came across this, and I wanted to pass it along since I know we're collecting as much information about such events as possible. Athena Tatopoulos is the KSAF editor-in-chief, and Jason Steele is a former UCAS FBI agent who worked out of Washington DeeCee until his retirement early last year. It's a transcript of a virtual meeting between them, and I've verified that it's the real deal. I'd heard a few rumors about this back then, but nothing concrete.
- Pistons

**Athena Tatopoulos:** Thank you for agreeing to speak with me, Agent Steele, even under such unusual circumstances.

**Jason Steele:** You're welcome, Ms. Tatopoulos. I'm not entirely sure what help I can be to your story though. This was a long time ago, and frankly, always struck me as a bit absurd. And it didn't end particularly well. And it's just "Mr. Steele" now. I haven't been an FBI agent in a long time.

**AT:** Mr. Steele, then. And believe me, I think your story makes an interesting connection to this so-called "Artifact Rush." Let's just start at the beginning, shall we? It started with the Year of the Comet, yes?

**JS:** Actually, no. It goes back a bit further. Back to the death of Dunkelzahn. Hell, it goes back a lot further than that, really. Maybe it goes as far back as the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, to some old black & white flatscreen movies. Or maybe back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and a gift to King Charles V of Spain from the Knights Templar. Some of it seems like fiction, even. The lines blur. My final report to my superiors reads like Dashiell Hammett's original novel. Despite the evidence, despite losing one of my team, despite recovering that cursed thing for them, I rode a desk for the next ten years anyway. I took my pension after that and retired. And now, here we are.

**AT:** Here we are, indeed. I've done my research on the known history of the item, so we don't need to rehash all of that. Let's start with fairly recent events—the dragon and his will.

**JS:** Sure. That's as good a place as any. When the Big D died in '57, he left a public will. In the will, he bequeathed the Maltese Falcon—that's right, the one from the movies—to one Lionel George Astor, a classic film buff down in Florida who was head of a project to restore old films and transfer them to simchips. Not a big deal, and one of a thousand such seemingly random will bequests. However, in '61, things get a little interesting. The Smithsonian Institution in DeeCee was putting together a big classic film noir exhibit, and they asked Mr. Astor if they could borrow the falcon for their exhibit.

- The Maltese Falcon? Really? Have we really run out of important things to talk about, and we're down to discussing bedtime stories and boring old movies?
- Slamm-0!
- If anyone would know about bedtime stories these days, it'd be you, eh Slammy?
- Bull
- For those who don't know—or who share Slamm-0!'s willful ignorance—*The Maltese Falcon* was published by Dashiell Hammett in 1930. The film that most folks are familiar with, starring Humphrey Bogart and Mary Astor, was produced in 1941. What most people don't realize is that it was actually the third film based on Hammett's book. In the 142 years since, there have been 17 film versions, including a remake of the classic Bogie film that was released on simchip in 2069 that was a critical flop for Horizon Media.
- Traveler Jones

**AT:** I remember visiting that exhibit when I was in college. It was a fascinating display.

Incoming .....



**JS:** When the Falcon arrived at the Smithsonian, they discovered two things about it. For one, it was the real thing. Actual gold, actual jewels. Not a movie prop.

**AT:** Astor never realized this?

**JS:** No. He was just a movie lover. He simply assumed it was all fake gold and glass gems. He had it insured, of course, but as a valuable piece of movie memorabilia. After all, everyone assumed that Hammett made up the falcon for his book.

- Most historians agree that the golden statue was a fiction invented by Hammett. In reality, it was a live bird that was given to King Charles V, a breed of falcon that was native to the island nation of Malta. Whatever this statue was, it couldn't have been the real thing.
- Snopes
- Don't be so sure. I had a chance to study this briefly while it was at the Smithsonian. The craftsmanship was masterful, and the style and construction were similar to those used during the 1500s, and the Smithsonian followed up with a number of tests to confirm the falcon's age. Every test agreed that the statue was between 500 and 600 years old, leading credence to it being either the real deal, or at least the source of the myth of the Maltese Falcon, anyway.
- Man-of-Many-Names

**AT:** That must have come as a bit of a shock to Astor.

**JS:** It did, as did the second thing the Smithsonian found. The falcon was effected by Halley's Comet passing, and it became astrally active shortly after it was delivered to the Smithsonian Institution.

**AT:** Became? I thought things either were or weren't magical. Did someone enchant the falcon?

**JS:** Because of the nature of many of the exhibits in the Institute, they have some very active sensors and magical security. One moment the Falcon was mundane, the next it was registering as a magical object. The Smithsonian scientists concluded that when the comet spiked the mana levels in the world, it activated some dormant magical properties, or some such. Honestly, I think they were just as baffled as everyone else and inventing explanations.

**AT:** A lot of people during that year were scrambling to find any explanation they could, as I recall.

- Again, I studied the falcon and can confirm this. The change was sudden, happening in a matter of minutes. Magical sensors detected a faint magical aura around the statue, and less than two minutes later it was giving off a strong astral signature. I was never able to determine the exact nature of the magical energy as I've never seen anything exactly like it before or since, but the

closest comparison I could find was to a spirit binding focus, but it didn't match up with any specific spirit type that I could find.

- Man-of-Many-Names
- Could it be a binding focus for some of the more unusual or rare spirits? Toxic or blood or, Ghost help us, insect?
- Ecotope
- Doubtful. It didn't resonate on the same astral frequency as any of those. One theory I had was that it might be universal, able to augment the binding of any spirit. I could never confirm this though, nor could I see any way to attune it to allow one to channel energy through it, as you would a normal focus. I know my way around foci, but I couldn't figure out how to activate this thing, so maybe it wasn't really a focus,
- Man-of-Many-Names

**JS:** Despite the change in status, Astor agreed to allow the falcon to stay in the exhibit, but he wanted the information kept under wraps. He was interested in the item only as a piece of movie history. He was convinced that this was the same item used as a prop in the Humphrey Bogart and Mary Astor film from 1941. Shortly before the exhibit opened, however, the falcon was stolen. And that's where I came into the story.

**AT:** You were working for the FBI at the time, and were assigned to a special task force to retrieve the falcon.

**JS:** Correct. A group of thieves broke into the Smithsonian and stole the falcon, though they weren't the only interested party. The Knights Templar, the Children of the Dragon, and the Atlantean Foundation all were involved as well. The thieves, a group of shadowrunners who weren't local to DecCee, stole the item and handed it off to someone who smuggled it into Denver. My team and I followed the trail there, and eventually tracked down the individual behind the theft. I'm not really sure how much more I should say here, Ms. Tatopoulos. After the incident, my superiors ordered the records sealed and locked down all information about the event.

**AT:** I understand Mr. Steele. But, you came to me, remember?

**JS:** Yeah, I guess. Very well. Maybe you can figure out what was ultimately going on. We never found out. The entire thing was orchestrated by Ghostwalker. We're not certain what he wanted the falcon for. We followed the trail of the item and managed to catch up to it just as Ghostwalker was taking possession of it. One of my team foolishly tried to arrest the dragon. He pulled a gun on him, and the fraggin' wyrm just ... it ate him. Just bent down and ... it was awful. The rest of us were stunned, and there wasn't much we could do. We weren't equipped to fight a dragon. Who ever is?

**AT:** That's horrible!





**JS:** After that, the dragon took the falcon and just stared at it for a minute. Then he simply tossed it to me, like it was a piece of garbage, and said “This is of no use to me. Begone.” He said it in that dragonspeak thing they do, where you hear it in your mind. It gives me the chills even now, thinking about that awful voice and what that thing did to Stevens. All that death. There were 23 dead in DeeCee linked to the theft, you know? Security guards and members of the various groups involved. Another seventeen deaths in Denver, including Agent Stevens.

**AT:** All for nothing, at that. Any idea why Ghostwalker was interested in the Maltese Falcon?

**JS:** No clue. He refused to comment, and who can make a dragon say anything it doesn’t want to? Afterward, the falcon went back to the Smithsonian Institution for the next year, then went back to Astor’s private collection. As far as I know, it’s still there.

**AT:** Thank you, Mr. Steele, for meeting with me and telling me this story. It’s fascinating, and it may have some relevance to the story I’m working on.

**JS:** Thank you. Hopefully it can be of some use. Just remember to keep my name out of things. The FBI wrapped this up tight. It was an embarrassment, and I would rather not risk my pension over this.

**AT:** Of course.

- Yikes. The White Wyrn ate an FBI agent? And then sent the rest of the team running home with their tails between their legs?
- Stone
- I remember hearing some chatter about this on the Denver Data Haven back in the day. There was a lot of curiosity about this, since not only were the FBI running around Denver causing problems, but the Knights Templar, the CotD, and the AF were leaving bodies all over the city.
- Slamm-O!
- So anyone know why Ghostwalker would have been interested in the Maltese Falcon? And for the record, I feel fraggin’ ridiculous saying that. I feel like I’m in a bad trid show. And why were the other groups looking for it?
- Bull
- It’s long been rumored that Ghostwalker is looking for ways to recombine the fractured Spirit of Denver. If the Falcon is indeed a spirit focus of some kind, maybe he hoped that it could be used for such a purpose. Considering that in the end Ghostwalker gave the artifact back to the FBI and that the Spirit is still fractured, it’s safe to say that the Falcon wasn’t the answer.
- Man-of-Many-Names
- During the Year of the Comet, the Children of the Dragon were everywhere. One of my contacts in DeeCee says that local branch

there thought since the falcon was “empowered by the comet” that it would be able to resurrect Dunkelzahn, or some such nonsense. That’s the only reason I can see for them being involved. The Knights Templar have a link to Malta and the original Maltese Falcon legend, as they supposedly sent the Falcon as tribute to the King of Spain. It stands to reason that they’d be interested in recovering their property.

- Pistons
- The Atlantean Foundation is obvious. Anytime anything old and magical shows up, they stick their pointy noses in.
- Ecotope
- Yeah, but usually they’re interested in what they call “dawn” artifacts, things that predate the Dawn of Humanity, i.e., the fifth age. As I mention above, this thing is clearly younger than that, being at best about six hundred years old.
- Man-of-Many-Names
- Is that even possible? Since there was no magic during that period, wouldn’t it be impossible to create a magical item?
- Bull
- There are a number of items kicking around that supposedly were created during the down time, but are resonating magical these days. Many, like the Piri Reis Map, are actually far older than originally suspected. It’s possible that at one point the Falcon was a different item, and reworked in the 1500s into the bird we know now. If it was originally powerful enough, maybe the enchantments survived the reworking.

That might explain why it didn’t “activate” until Halley’s Comet spiked the mana levels.

- Lyran
- Possible. Though keep in mind that we still only understand a fraction of what magic is capable of and how it works. Belief is powerful, and there are a few documented instances of items that couldn’t have been enchanted showing signs of being magically active. Anything related to Christ and his crucifixion, such as the Spear of Longinus or the original Nails from the Cross, for example. The Vatican has these locked down and refuses to let anyone examine them, but enough people saw them prior to this to prove they exist. Both reportedly have incredibly strong magical auras. A minor example of the same effect would be a couple of the items the First Church of Elvis has in their Graceland museum. There is a pair of sunglasses and a white sequin jumpsuit that show faint magical auras for reasons that no one can explain. Well, except the Church’s followers, who say that it’s the Spirit of Elvis.
- Man-of-Man-Names
- Wait, what? There’s a First Church of Elvis? And they have artifacts? What the hell?
- Slamm-O!
- I’ll tell you about it sometime. Ask me later.
- Bull
- Even today, a century after his death, the man has tens of millions of people who effectively worship him. As odd as that may seem. That belief can have a strange effect.
- Man-of-Many-Names

## OVERVIEW

The activities surrounding the artifacts can ensnare the runners in different ways. Each action that is taken causes a ripple of other actions, as parties respond to what has happened and do what they need to in order to gather information about new developments.

While this chapter focuses on the revelation of the magic imbued in the Maltese Falcon, the theft of that item, and Ghostwalker’s ultimate decision regarding the item, the runners will not be the ones actually involved in the item’s theft. Instead, they are given jobs that respond to jobs initiated by others.

The jobs in this chapter generally take place in specific cities, such as DeeCee and Denver, but gamemasters can change some particulars if they want the plot points to be flexible, allowing plot elements to be dropped into any city in which the runners might find themselves. Gamemasters could decide to use all of the plot points in this chapter to build a short adventure surrounding the Maltese Falcon, or they could pick and choose individual elements as side adventures in the course of longer campaigns.

## PLOT POINT ONE

### *Looking for Traces*

The Awakening of the Maltese Falcon as a magical object has caused a lot of curiosity in the magic community. Given Ghostwalker’s eventual interest in the item, other great dragons want to learn about it, if only to find out what they need to know to assist Ghostwalker in his efforts to use it—or to keep him in check.

The runners are contacted by either Lin Yao Chang (see p. 33) or Simon Andrews (see p. 34) to look into the falcon and try to learn more about its powers. This will be difficult, as the object is in Lionel Astor’s mansion and not on public display. Fortunately for the runners, their job is just to get a good look at the falcon’s astral signature, and not steal it—Astor’s security measures (see *Astor’s Mansion*, p. 60) become much more severe if someone attempts to lift one of his items. Getting in and getting out without touching anything is not the easiest thing in the world, but Astor directed far more of his security efforts against thieves, rather than curious uninvited guests.

The falcon is in a special gallery on the second floor of Astor’s mansion. If the runners are able to assense it, they discover that it has an aura like nothing they have ever seen before—unless they happened to assense Halley’s Comet. It seems the aura of the falcon is very similar to the comet, only in miniature. What



this means about the object's power is unclear, but it is a fact that should be of interest to the person who hired them.

If the runners have never assensed the comet, simply tell them they have a good enough image of the comet's aura to describe to their patron. Whoever hired them will recognize what the aura is once it's described.

If the runners decide life would be easier, and possibly more fun, if they take the falcon for themselves, they should have a difficult time getting away with it. Runners can be intrepid, though, and they might be able to succeed. What that means is that either Lin Yao Chang or Simon Andrews—whoever *didn't* hire the runners—will learn about their theft and will mark the runners as a possible enemy in their effort. This means a great dragon has its eyes on the runners, which is usually not a good thing.

## PLOT POINT TWO

### *To Converse with a Thief*

The runners may have been told not to steal the falcon, but not all runners out there are under the same orders. The falcon disappears from Astor's house, and he starts looking for help in getting in back. Astor is inexperienced in the shadows, though, so his efforts are clumsy and make a lot of noise. Other interested parties hear about it, and decide maybe they can use the theft to their advantage. First, the thief has to be found; then it has to be determined if they can be bargained with in a rational way.

Fortunately for the runners, the thieves have not been the subtlest operators, either. They've been a little too open about trying to sell the thing to the highest bidder. The good news is that this makes them easier to find; the bad news is that it makes them easier for others to find the thieves, too. Operatives from the Illuminates of the New Dawn and the Templars (use *Illuminate of the New Dawn Magician*, p. 141, and *Templar Combat Mage*, p. 147 for representatives of these organizations) are hunting for the thief, and word has leaked onto the street that this hunt is underway. The easiest thing for the runners may be to get information on the efforts of the other organizations to find the thieves, then tail the agents to the thieves. Contacts may be able to help them get information that can put them on the tail of the operatives, or they can do some of their own surveillance and espionage to find these agents.

Once the agents lead the runners to the team of thieves (use *Combat Adept*, p. 146, *Sneak*, p. 145, and *Street Samurai*, p. 146, for members of this team), they'll have to stop the agents from killing the thieves so they can talk to them. If they succeed, they find that the thieves are now quite willing to sell, as they have figured they're in over their head. The price the runners have been authorized to offer should be more than the runners have on hand, requiring them to act as middlemen instead of making the buy themselves.

## PLOT POINT THREE

### *Indirect Revenge Is Still Revenge*

The FBI agent that Ghostwalker ate had a wife and friends, and after a long time not knowing what happened to him, they have finally learned of his fate. They know that they have no chance of exacting a full measure of revenge against Ghostwalker,

but they want to wound him some way, even if it's indirectly. They have thought about this long and hard, and have finally come to a somewhat odd decision—they want to irritate Ghostwalker by getting a stronger Aztlan influence in Denver. They have found some textbooks with a decided pro-Aztlan stance; if they can get Anáhuac University to adopt these textbooks, they believe that the pro-Aztlan propaganda spreading right under Ghostwalker's snout will be a fine irritant.

The president and faculty of Anáhuac University are not foolish, however, and they do not want to take any risks that might arouse Ghostwalker's ire. President Jorge Molinera (see p. 69, *Spy Games*) has a long history of political caution, and convincing him to take this chance will not be easy. He also, however, is a good fan of blackmail and is always interested in information that could get anti-Aztlan forces in trouble. If the runners dig up the right dirt, they may be able to convince Molinera to take a risk.

If Molinera adopts the new textbooks, he immediately becomes paranoid, and tries to hire the runners to protect him for a time (he tries to guilt them into doing the job, saying it's their fault that he's in trouble). As it turns out, his paranoia is justified—within a week of the adoption of the textbooks, a Zone Defense Force squad comes to pay Molinera a "visit." The runners will have to find a way of convincing the squad to leave Molinera alone, or take the risk of confronting the squad head on. Alternately, they could decide to let the squad have Molinera while they depart and get on with their lives.

## LOCATIONS

### LIONEL ASTOR'S MANSION

Lionel Astor likes visitors. He has a tremendous collection of film memorabilia, and he very much likes people to come in and see it. Naturally, he likes visitors to be invited and to come at a schedule time, but he is not overly harsh on people who arrive uninvited, as long as they do not touch his belongings—if that happens, his security system kicks into overdrive.

As long as the runners behave themselves, they'll have to deal with an exterior maglock (Rating 5) with an anti-tamper system (Rating 3). Each floor of the mansion is 2,000 square meters with eight rooms per floor. There are two staircases to the second floor, one on each end of the house. Each floor is patrolled by four Fly-Spy drones (see p. 350, *SR4A*) that make regular patrols around place, though the building is so large that their presence is not regular. Each object in his second-floor gallery is on a pressure pad (see p. 261, *SR4A*) that sets off a silent alarm if triggered. Astor also implants RFIDs into each item on display, and sensors at the exits of the gallery trigger the silent alarm if any of these tags leave the room. The silent alarm brings ten security guards (use *Corporate Security Unit*, p. 139) to the complex in ninety seconds. It also brings three Force 5 spirits of air in fifteen seconds. If the security troops encounter any resistance when they arrive, they call in backup, which arrives in the form of ten Roto-Drones (see p. 350, *SR4A*) that each carry an Ingram Smartgun X (see p. 318, *SR4A*).

# ... THE SHADOWS OF PEACE ...

## LA Sunrise: News at Your Pace

**Anchors:** Jan Freeling and Peter Koskin

*<The clip starts in a news studio, the camera focused on a well-dressed woman—Jan Freeling.>*

**Jan:** The residents of Redding were treated to quite the spectacle this morning when the great dragon Aden suddenly appeared in the skies. Peter Koskin, our man on the scene, is getting the download direct from the witnesses. Peter, what's the word?

*<The screen splits, showing the anchor desk on the left and an on-location shot to the right. The on-location camera pans around the downtown Redding area, showing streets crowded with pedestrians watching the skies, before it settles on a clean-shaven dwarf in a suit—Peter Koskin.>*

**Peter:** It's absolutely amazing, Jan. About two hours ago, Aden just appeared in the skies over Redding without warning. No one is quite sure how he got here, or why he came. As you know, Aden is considered the most reclusive of the great dragons and prefers to avoid metahuman contact, his decades-ago destruction of Tehran notwithstanding. He made several passes over the city that many onlookers took to be threatening before flying northward. Local officials overrode GridGuide, forcing all vehicles off the streets for the day, and put emergency services on high alert. Schools have been canceled, businesses shut down, and all citizens advised to evacuate the downtown area. As you can see, *<Peter gestures behind him>* most citizens chose to ignore the evacuation warning.

**Jan:** So he left without causing any damage?

**Peter:** That's correct. He appeared to be searching for something, or someone. No one knows for sure. But dragon fans and dragon haters alike have been waiting for his return—the more militant types armed with shotguns.

**Jan:** Interesting. I didn't think shotguns would have much of an effect on a dragon.

**Peter:** *<laughing>* I doubt they would. Whether these weapons would be effective or not, though, the police have done nothing to discourage the would-be defenders of Redding. And while this might present a perfect opportunity for rioting and looting, the city has been rather quiet. The only incident so far is a case of stolen gas by a group of men posing as medieval knights, if you can believe it. Needless to say, the police have other things on their mind at the moment.

**Jan:** I can imagine. Thank you for that update, Peter. Now, on to the international scene. The Denver Council has been meeting in an all-night secret session. Allegedly, Nicholas Whitebird was not invited, and he gave the Council quite a shock when he stormed into the meeting...

*<Clip cuts off.>*

- Fuck.
- Glitch
- You said it. One of my sources says Aden headed straight to Mt. Shasta right after that.
- Pistons
- I thought Aden and Hestaby hated each other.
- /dev/grll
- Wrong dragon. It's Lofwyr, not Hestaby, that Aden has issues with. Given the way Aden buries his head in the sand, though, maybe he just hates everyone.
- Rigger X
- Here's a worrisome development: My contacts in the Middle East aren't returning my messages. Anyone hear from Goat Foot lately?
- Sunshine
- Not a peep. But a friend of mine says the Islamic Unity Movement closed ranks and mobilized late last night, just about the time Aden would have left his lair to fly to North America.
- FastJack
- Fuck, fuck, fuck. Stop talking about the damn dragons! Don't any of you know who those loons in the armor are?
- Glitch
- Oh, keep your hardware holstered, drekhead. We all about the New Knights Templar, but those posers aren't nearly as dangerous as a dragon with a history of torching cities.
- Bull

Incoming .....





## OVERVIEW

After the reclusive great dragon Aden ventures from his Mt. Ararat home to visit Hestaby's lair, rumors abound about the activities of dragons, and the most powerful organizations of the Sixth World scramble to learn the truth. They discover that the Shroud of Shadows has been stolen from Hestaby, and a race ensues to claim this powerful artifact. The factions involved in this race are the Atlantean Foundation, Ghostwalker's Watchers, representatives of the Islamic Unity Movement (IUM), the Order of the Temple, agents of Hestaby and Aden, and the player characters.

The Atlantean Foundation hires the players to obtain the infamous Shroud of Shadows, sending them on a journey to the Republic of Québec, where the Knights Templar are using the shroud in an arcane ritual. At the same moment the runners go after the shroud, another group of shadowrunners shows up and steals it. After escaping the wrath of the Templars, the players must track down the other runners to obtain the shroud.

There should be several opportunities for the PCs to track down the shroud. The opposing runners may leave datatrails behind to follow. The shroud itself causes anomalies in both the material and astral planes. The Templars may even inadvertently assist the players in their search by chasing off the other team.

The trail leads to Omaha, Nebraska (UCAS), and Offutt Air Force Base, the home of both NORAD and Strategic Air Command. Along the road, the PCs encounter Ghostwalker's Watchers, the IUM representatives, and the agents of Hestaby and Aden. Each of these teams separately attempts to hire the runners away from their current employer or dissuade them from completing the mission.

This section's finale occurs in Omaha, when the players confront the opposing shadowrunning team and the UCAS Air Force. If the players gain control of the shroud, they can choose who gets it.

## PLOT POINT ONE

The runners are called to a meeting with Mr. Johnson. He makes a lucrative offer for the retrieval of a magical artifact called the Shroud of Shadows. While the shroud's powers are unknown to most of metahumanity, the shroud itself is rather famous, having been left to the dragon Aden several years ago by President Dunkelzahn. Any research on the shroud easily comes up with this tidbit from Dunkelzahn's will:

*"To Aden, I leave the Shroud of Shadows. May its shade cool the heat of your desert home as well as the tempers that flare around it."*

There are additional rumors that the shroud was later stolen from Aden, but few know for sure who ended up with it.

Mr. Johnson does not mention for whom he works unless pushed. All the runners need to know is that his employer is willing to pay them handsomely for the shroud. He knows the shroud has been taken to Québec City by the Order of the Temple, a.k.a., the New Knights Templar. The players are provided with transportation, if they do not have their own, and assistance in getting past Québec border security. The rest is up to them.

## PLOT POINT TWO

The New Knights Templar have rented the Vercheres Room in a hotel named Le Château Frontenac, using the name of the Order of St. Sylvester on the reservation. The stated event purpose is a private party to be held at 8:00 p.m.

The Vercheres Room is a ballroom on the hotel's first floor, past the lobby and elevators to the guest floors. This ballroom has marble floors, vaulted ceilings, and a permanent marble dais at one end that holds a flat-surfaced podium. The shroud will sit on this podium during the Templars' ritual. The windows of the room's exterior wall have been covered with thick black drapes. The electric lights are off and candelabras with burning candles are scattered across the room to provide light. The room has been warded by the Templars to prevent astral intrusion.

The runners have several options for ballroom access: attack the hotel, risking a rapid response from the external defenses and on-site Parashield security teams; impersonate hotel employees and wait for the Templars (if the runners get to Québec early enough); or check into the hotel as guests and go to the ballroom after the Templars have started. The shroud cannot be detected or found by any means before this point. The Templars have protected it and will only bring the shroud out when they are ready to begin their ritual.

If the runners lie in wait for the Templars or confront them before the party gets started, they will have to deal with twenty-five powerful and alert combat mages. If they wait until the Templars are engaged in the ritual, they will only have to deal with four guards, as the other twenty-one members will be involved in ritual spellcasting.

Assuming the runners wait, when they enter the room most of the Templars will be in three loose circles around the dais, performing an arcane ritual. Due to the intense nature of this magic, these Templars are distracted for three full combat rounds before they can react. Any player who is Assensing will instantly know that this is high-level and very dangerous magic. Further magical investigation (before the spell breaks at the end of the third combat round), reveals that the Templars are attempting to alter the shroud in some way.

Guarding the doors at each end of the room are a pair of Knights who can immediately react to the players' entrance. While the runners deal with the Templars in an effort to get the shroud, another shadowrun team uses the distraction as cover to steal the shroud for themselves. The Templars will assume both teams are working together. Once the shroud has been taken, the players should escape as soon as they can, because the situation is only going to become more difficult.

## PLOT POINT THREE

The shroud is causing strange weather patterns on both the mundane and astral planes. The players can use meteorological systems, weather news, Matrix rumors, or just plain magical tracking to follow the trail. The source starts in Québec City, right outside the hotel, and heads southwest from there.





INCOMING FEED.....



To follow the trail, the PCs have to escape the Templars, then cross the Republic of Québec–UCAS border. Using the official border crossings, it's more difficult for the PCs to get into UCAS than it was to get into Québec. The UCAS officials will confiscate any unlicensed weapons and arrest anyone with unlicensed cyberware. The players can try to bribe their way past the border or search for a hole in border security.

If the players are having trouble getting past border security, it's time for them to meet Goat Foot and Pharisee. Goat Foot will offer them a way across the border if they talk with her. If the players get past the border, they meet Goat Foot and Pharisee in UCAS territory.

Goat Foot reveals the identity of the players' current employer, the Atlantean Foundation, and makes an offer for the shroud. She cannot offer much money, but she is willing to owe them a favor in addition to the funds she can provide. If pushed, she will mention she is well connected (though she will not mention JackPoint), and she offers herself as a future contact for the runners.

Pharisee is present to keep the players from doing anything stupid. If the players try to hurt or betray Goat Foot, Pharisee happily creates criminal SINS for them or employs other nasty Matrix tricks against them. If the runners need assistance with the border, Pharisee doctors the records to turn the players into a top-secret UCAS military team returning home from a mission, which allows everyone to cross without close examination. This will work well unless the players approach a border guard who previously refused their entry.

Goat Foot does not require an immediate answer to her offer. If the players hear her out, she gives them her contact info and leaves

them on the UCAS side of the border while they decide what they want to do. She will not engage in combat with the players.

## PLOT POINT FOUR

At any time before or after the meeting with Goat Foot, the players are approached by Tweedledee and Tweedledum, agents of Hestaby and Aden. They make the PCs an offer that cannot be refused. The gamemaster should use any of the runners' negative qualities against them (addiction, indebted, etc.), or play on previously expressed character desires. Tweedledee and Tweedledum have done their research on these runners and know anything about the players that is available to be known. The agents will use this information in their initial negotiation attempts to make this a "too good to be true" offer. In return, they expect the runners to deliver the shroud to their employers, not the Atlantean Foundation.

If the players balk, the agents grow more aggressive, reminding the runners that they work for great dragons. The agents may also make vague, implied threats against the players or any of their dependants. Tweedledee and Tweedledum say nothing overt, but they believe themselves to be in a position of power over the players.

At the end of this encounter, if the players do not agree to their demands—or at least agree to contact them later—the agents take their leave, convinced the runners are enemies of the dragons.



## PLOT POINT FIVE

If further complications are needed, or the players are having trouble tracking the shroud, the Templars appear again. One way for them to appear is to confront the runners directly and attempt to interrogate them about the theft of the shroud, inadvertently dropping information about how to track the shroud while they do so. Alternately, Templars could be spotted by the runners as they chase after the other group.

## PLOT POINT SIX

As the runners close in on Omaha, they encounter Ghostwalker's Watchers, who offer the players a piece of the action for their assistance in obtaining the shroud for Ghostwalker. If the runners refuse to work with them, or to turn the shroud over to them later, the Watchers become violent. They will not negotiate beyond an initial, vague offer of "wealth beyond your wildest dreams"—they want the runners to either accept their offer or get out of the picture.

If the players agree to work with them, the Watchers help them get into Omaha and continue with them to the end of the adventure. At the end, the players can let the Watchers take the shroud, or they can choose to betray them. If the players steal the shroud without being noticed, or if all the Watchers die in the encounter, then they do not have to worry about Ghostwalker being added to their list of potential enemies.

## PLOT POINT SEVEN

The opposing shadowrun team takes the shroud to Offutt Air Force Base and uses it to infiltrate that station. This military base is highly defended. The runners can choose to sneak into the base, attack one of its gates, or forge legitimate access passes. Whichever method the players use, getting out will be harder than getting in.

The other runner team is heading to one of many unmarked buildings. They have a large transport truck in their possession. These runners are attempting to steal nuclear warheads for their employer, and they are using the shroud to keep the military police (MPs) from fighting back.

This encounter should give the players a shot at the shroud before the opposition reaches the nukes. If the runners are losing, the Templars or Ghostwalker's Watchers can make an appearance to accidentally assist them. As soon as the players have the shroud, they should probably leave Offutt quickly—the MPs are shooting to kill and will not take prisoners.

## PLOT POINT EIGHT

The finale should involve the runners' decision regarding disposal of the shroud. They can surrender it to Ghostwalker's Watchers, deliver it to Mr. Johnson, give it to Goat Foot, or sell it to Tweedledee and Tweedledum. Encourage the players to be subtle about their decision. If the other groups believe the shroud is lost, then the runners will have less pressure on them.

Make it clear to the players that keeping the shroud is not in their best interests. Too many powerful people, and three great dragons, are interested in this artifact. Any attempts to keep the shroud for their own personal use will result in retaliation from one of these groups.

## THE SHROUD OF SHADOWS

The Shroud of Shadows is a filmy black material shot through with gleaming silver threads and embroidered along its edges with silver stitches reminiscent of twining vines with tiny flowers. The shroud barely weighs anything, being incredibly lightweight and sheer, but it is virtually indestructible. Weapons, mundane or magical, cannot damage the shroud, nor can it be torn or burned. Astral examination shows the shroud to be a powerful, dual-natured magical item that suppresses negative emotion-related background counts in the area it covers. This suppression only lasts as long as the shroud covers the area. It reduces the background count at a rate of 1 point per minute, until the background count reaches 0. When the shroud is removed, the background count returns at the rate of 1 point per hour until the count reaches its normal level.

Any person who touches the shroud is affected by a Force 12 Control Emotions spell, which calms any violent or disruptive emotions. This spell even affects the mentally ill or those with addictive personalities, granting them a measure of peace and serenity. Those in contact with the shroud find it difficult to take violent action or indulge in arguments and verbal outbursts.

After the Templars' ritual, the shroud's sphere of calming influence randomly expands past the area it covers, causing severe background count fluctuations. When this happens, it disrupts spells and magic of any nearby mages. It also causes local temperature changes, and creates minor weather and astral space anomalies, all of which makes the shroud easier to track. Cold fronts suddenly appear where they are not forecast. Thunderheads gather across a previously clear sky. Expected storms are quelled as both high and low pressure fronts unexpectedly dissipate. Minor mana storms and ebbs appear out of the blue. These changes are not destructive, but they are traceable by both magical and mundane means.

## LOCATIONS

### QUÉBEC CITY METROPLEX

A mixture of modern and historical design, Québec City is the capital of the Republic of Québec. The architecture varies between anachronistic structures reminiscent of medieval Europe and the high-tech cityscape of Neo-Tokyo. City geography is a series of hills, bluffs, and narrow, winding streets. Half the city is built along the shores of the St. Lawrence River while the other half stands on a bluff overhanging the river. The Latin Quarter is the city's highest point, boasting cobblestone streets and antique-like buildings. The **Hôtel du Gouvernement**, where the National Assembly meets, is in this sector.

Down below is the downtown area, containing the city's corporate offices and modern buildings. The **Citadel**, the historic old fort with the latest in defense technology, is Gendarmerie

headquarters. On the river, the once-foresaken slum of the **Old Port** has undergone considerable revitalization in recent years, though there are still pockets of SINless and gangs hanging around.

Though it is now legal to speak and do business in English, most Québécois speak only French. The Québécois also tend to discriminate against most metahumans, with elves being the sole exception. The Québec government has outlawed shapeshifters and paracritters, and the law provides a bounty for their pelts.

## LE CHÂTEAU FRONTENAC

Le Château Frontenac stands on a bluff in the heart of Old Québec, looming over the St. Lawrence River. Dating back to the 19th century, this first-class, four-star hotel has given nightly refuge to the most famous personalities of the past two-and-a-half centuries. Currently, the majority leaders of Québec's parliament reside at the hotel when parliament is in session.

Le Château Frontenac is within easy walking distance of Québec's most memorable historic sites and boasts luxurious guest suites, exquisite dining experiences, and a discreet staff to fulfill every guest's needs. There's also a rigger-staffed valet service for those who bring their own vehicles instead of arriving by taxi.

Surrounded by a low brick fence, the hotel appears to have minimal security (cameras and motion sensors). Closer examination reveals watcher spirits and mini-drones with MAD scanners and enhanced visual and audio sensor packages patrolling the grounds. The watcher spirits ignore anyone just walking around, but they react to spellcasting or sabotage on hotel property. The spirits astrally follow the offender, alerting their summoner. Likewise, the hotel's security node—an isolated network with Rating 5 for all attributes—has dozens of agents scanning cameras and sensors input for suspicious activity. A Force 5 ward is embedded in the exterior hotel walls.

At the front are three main entrances for customers. At the rear are a staff entrance and two loading docks disguised by faux brick paneling. The back entrance, the docks, and all "Staff Only" areas use magnetic keypad locks in conjunction with employee RFIDs. The RFIDs of terminated employees are immediately deactivated and removed to prevent them from sabotaging hotel property.

Inside the lobby, cameras cover all entrances, staff areas, and public hallways. Only the guest rooms and ballrooms are exempt from monitoring. Physical and magical hotel security is contracted out to Parashield. The number of on-site guards, mages, and patrol critters is up to the discretion of the gamemaster. Hotel security will not prevent the players from checking in as guests if they have the proper IDs, clothing, and credit.

## OMAHA

A large UCAS city that long ago overwhelmed the neighboring towns, Omaha sprawls along the western shore of the Missouri River as far north as Tekamah and as far south as Plattsmouth, crossing the Platte River. Its hilly, floodplain terrain can make road travel hazardous during the occasional winter ice storms or summer flooding. Strategic Air Command (SAC) and NORAD HQ are located at Offutt Air Force Base, in the former town of Bellevue, which is southwest of the Omaha city center.

Omaha is predominantly a military town, serving as the home for many UCAS Air Force and Army soldiers and their families. While there are SINless living in this city, they are much

less noticeable here than in other sprawls. Offutt MPs serve as the Omaha city police force and use the SINless roundups as training for the new recruits. The city's few remaining SINless live in the Fontenelle Forest, a former nature preserve within the Bellevue suburb.

## OFFUTT AIR FORCE BASE

Nestled between Fort Crook Road and the Missouri River, Offutt AFB is a marvel of military engineering. Its top-secret facilities are underground buildings under ordinary warehouses. The base is surrounded by double-layered razor-wire fencing and has four gates—the Kennedy gate to the northwest, the Bellevue gate to the northeast, the East gate to the southeast, and the SAC gate to the southwest. Each gate has a guardhouse manned by three guards, one of which is always a hermetic mage, with canine units nearby to sniff out contraband. Canine units patrol the base's perimeter, and the interior twenty meters of the fence is mined with explosives and alarm wards.

Offutt operates off its own power grid; its generators are shielded both physically and magically within their own set of bunkers. The base network is a private, hardwired grid (Rating 6). A set of public, wireless nodes (Rating 5) exists for airmen in base housing, but it does not connect to the private grid. Offutt AFB is a self-contained city with its own fire stations, public eateries, shopping centers, and recreation facilities. Access to the base is restricted to those holding proper military, military-dependant, or civilian contractor IDs. Occasionally civilians are allowed on base if they are on the guest list and their SIN passes a security check.

The roads are wide, flat, and regularly patrolled by mobile MP units. No trees grow on base, allowing an unobstructed view of the roads, buildings, and sidewalks. Security towers, armed with anti-aircraft weapons and the latest in milspec sensors, are spaced at every thousand meters around the fence. Tower personnel are authorized to destroy any approaching, and unauthorized, hovercraft or aircraft crossing into Offutt's airspace.

## PEOPLE

### GHOSTWALKER'S WATCHERS

Ghostwalker's Watchers are led by an experienced gang-banger (see *Gang Leader*, p. 141). This man will attempt to negotiate with the runners, but he is more than willing to take the runners on in combat if negotiations fall through. Their numbers (see *Gang Bangers*, p. 141) should equal the numbers of the players' team, with one more to serve as the Watchers' mage (see *Street Shaman*, p. 147). These people aren't nearly as professional as they think they are, but they are loyal to Ghostwalker and will do anything to serve his interests.

### GOAT FOOT

*Female Satyr*

Goat Foot is a female Muslim scholar and JackPointer who is trying to obtain the Shroud of Shadows on behalf of the Islamic Unity Movement (IUM). She will encounter the players with her technomancer ally Pharisee in the course of her attempt to obtain the shroud using peaceful methods. Goat Foot is not looking for





a fight, and she is usually skilled at fighting only on the fields of her choice.

Goat Foot wears a full hijab in dark colors. Her eyes are a striking violet color and she has a Mediterranean complexion, though it's hard to tell since not much of her skin actually shows. To most Assensing tests, her aura is that of a mundane human. Since she is clothed head to toe, it will be nearly impossible to tell that she is a satyr if she stays out of combat.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	M	Init	IP
4	4	3(5)	3	5	6	4	4	5	6	11(5/6)	9(11)	3

**Skills:** Assensing 3, Clubs 2, Dodge 2, Etiquette 6, Exotic Ranged Weapon (Sling) 5, Gymnastics 5 (+2), Instruction 3, Leadership (Persuasion) 3 (+2), Negotiation 4, Perception 4, Sorcery skill group 3, Unarmed Combat 2

**Innate Powers:** Low-Light Vision, Satyr Legs

**Adept Powers:** Astral Perception (1), Combat Sense 2 (1), Great Leap 2 (.5), Increased Reflexes 2 (2.5)

**Qualities:** Analytic Mind, College Education, Mystic Adept (Islamic Tradition), Photographic Memory

**Initiate Level:** 5

**Metamagics:** Adept Centering, Ally Conjunction, Cognition, Masking, Psychometry

**Spells:** Analyze Device, Analyze Magic, Armor, Catalog, Detect Magic, Mindlink, Translate

### MR. JOHNSON (SUBTLE)

Mr. Johnson (see p. 144) represents the Atlantean Foundation, hiring the PC runners to find the Shroud of Shadows and deliver it to him at a secure location. Well-dressed and soft-spoken, he offers an exorbitant sum for this job and will warn the players about the high level of danger. He will not betray the players unless they betray him first. If he has to, Mr. Johnson will pull strings with the runners' contacts to get them onboard.

### NEW KNIGHTS TEMPLAR

A secretive Catholic military organization, the New Knights Templar are Catholic warrior mages. They hide behind the publicly known Order of St. Sylvester, whose mission is to protect God's children and teach that magic is God's gift, not the curse of the Devil. The Templars' mission is much more sinister. Not only are they sworn to protect the Holy Land (Jerusalem, Israel) like their predecessors, they are intent on bringing the entire world back under the sway of the Catholic Church and bringing peace to the Earth in the process, whether anyone wants it or not. Each Knight is an expert combat mage and spirit summoner. The Templar Combat Mage on p. 147 can be used as a base for these characters.

Spirits summoned by the Templars take the form of angels and are Force 4 spirits of fire. Four Knights are required in order to complete the summoning ritual.

### PHARISEE

Pharisee, member of the cult of Isis and Skilled Technomancer (p. 145), is an old friend of Goat Foot. She takes care of all Matrix- and rigging-related tasks. She follows Goat Foot's lead in all things and will support her friend to the best of her abilities.

### OPPOSING RUNNERS

For the team stealing the shroud, use the sneak (the one who actually gets the shroud), the combat adept, the street samurai, and the street shaman.

### TWEEDLEDEE AND TWEEDLEDUM

Tweedledee and Tweedledum are two humans who serve the whims of Hestaby and Aden, approaching the runners on the dragons' combined agenda. Use the Corporate Headhunter template on p. 139 to represent the agents' stats.

Publicly, the two agents present a united front, but their body language suggests (to one who can read it) that they are uncomfortable working together. They keep a distance of two paces between themselves and do not make physical contact with each other. At times, they may even seem to contradict each other. Each agent wants to one-up the other. The PCs may be able to work the agents against each other in the negotiations, providing they can convince the agents to separate for talks.

### UCAS BASE GUARDS

Except for the mages, the Offutt AFB gate guards can use the Corporate Security Unit template (see p. 139).

### UCAS MILITARY MAGE

The Offutt AFB gate guard mages can use the Combat Mage template on p. 146, with any spell adjustments the gamemaster feels appropriate.

### UCAS MILITARY POLICE

The Lone Star Police Squad template (see p. 143) can be used to represent the Omaha/Offutt AFB Military Police officers.



# ... THE LITTLE DOGS ...

- Ok. My curiosity finally got the best of me. Hey Bull, what the hell is the First Church of Elvis?
- Slamm-O!
- Surely a *hacker* of your caliber would be able to dig up some dirt on these guys, Slammyp?
- Bull
- I'm sure I could. But you brought it up earlier, I'm feeling lazy, and I don't just want the ordinary Aetherpedia crap. So, what's deal?
- Slamm-O!
- All right, chummer, you asked for it. As I mentioned before, Hound Dog is an old shaman I know, but he doesn't talk too much about his religion or totem or whatever. He'll tell you how great the King is all day long, but the rest seems to be a personal thing for him. Met him back in '62, but it wasn't the first time I'd heard of the First Church of Elvis. That came back in '57, from a posting on Shadowland. Capt. Chaos vouched for the poster, a runner named Shade, so the info was apparently at least semi-valid. If you're lucky, you can find uncorrupted versions of the post kicking around ShadowSEA and the Denver Data Haven. Fortunately, I save everything, so I still have it stored away somewhere. Let me dig it up.
- Bull
- You guys are ancient! I was *born* in '57!
- /dev/grrl
- Don't remind me. Of how fraggin' old I am, or how drekkin' young you are. Ghost preserve us. Anyway, found the file. I'm stripping out the old comments, as most aren't really relevant, helpful, or all that clever. But I'm leaving Cap's intro in. R.I.P, mon capitaine. \*salute\*
- Bull

## FIRST CHURCH OF ELVIS

Posted: by Shade

- This file came through recently, and although I can't verify all the facts, it fits the existing facts known about the First Church of Elvis. Shade himself is somewhat known in the shadows, and I can vouch for him personally. This is an interesting file, chummers. Enjoy.
- Capt. Chaos

Transmitted: 10 April 2057 at 12:02:46 (PST)

### HISTORY

In the year 2020 in Mobile, Alabama, a man by the name of Moses Presley gave the first sermon in what was soon to become a small but persistent religion in the deep South, and later throughout the CAS and reaching into the UCAS, several of the NAN lands, and even into the California Free State. Moses Presley told his small congregation that his great-great uncle, the late Elvis Presley, had come to him in a vision and proclaimed to him that he was creating a new Heaven, and that Moses was his first Apostle.

- I had a vision of Elvis once, but it came after eating too many soy-chips during one of his old movies, *Jailhouse Rock*.
- Clockwork
- At last count, the First Church of Elvis has about 10,000 members worldwide, though most of those are in the CAS. Maybe ten percent of those, however, are magically active. An inordinately high percentage.
- Plan 9
- The PCC has the second highest membership, most of them in and around the greater Las Vegas area. No surprise there.
- Sunshine
- Elvis was an only child, so Moses' claim of relation is highly suspect.
- Kat o' Nine Tales

Incoming .....





Moses gathered several friends and members of the local Elvis Fan Club and began preaching to them on the glories of the King of Rock and Roll. Whether due to his unique message, his charismatic nature, or the undying popularity of Elvis Presley, the Church of Elvis grew rapidly and within three years, John Stoa, the second Priest of Elvis was spoken to by the King. Stoa took over the Mobile Church, and Moses Presley moved to Nashville, Tennessee, where he started a church that became, in time, the largest single congregation of any kind in North America.

- I visited the Nashville Church once, and let me tell you, that was one strange experience. Almost everyone—men, women, and children alike—were all dressed up like Elvis impersonators, and there were a dozen Priests of Elvis on hand, all of whom looked and sounded identical to Presley. Two of the priests were women, but you'd never know that from talking with them.
- Kat o' Nine Tales
- I've heard that it's part of the ritual they undergo to become Priests, or whatever. I've never gotten any Priest to confirm how it was done, but some rumors claim it's plastic surgery, others that it's a magical transformation by their totem. Either way, it's fascinating.
- Plan 9
- We're sure there's some payoff coming, right? We're not just going weird for the sake of weird here, right? RIGHT?
- Pistons

The church, as you would assume, is centered on Elvis. Members of the church often see visions of Elvis, speak in songs (similar to tongues, but it involves singing old Elvis hits in his voice), are visited by the messenger spirits, and in general are considered fruitcakes by the general public. Worshipers often build shrines in their front yards, using large ceramic Elvis statues and loudspeakers playing his music 24–7.

Services are held twice a week, on Monday and Friday, and they consider three dates to be religious holidays (and these are the only holidays they will observe). These are: his birthday, January 8; the anniversary of his death, August 16; and the day he cut his first album for his Momma, July 5. His birthday they celebrate like Christmas, by giving gifts and singing his “carols.” On the anniversary of his death they have a day of mourning. And on the Day of First Song, as it is called, they have parties in the streets and celebrate riotously.

- You should see these guys on the Day of First Song in Memphis, near Graceland. They almost make Mardi Gras look tame.
- Kat o' Nine Tales

Members of the Church of Elvis become Priests only after having seeing a vision of the King and being told to begin a new congregation, usually in a city that doesn't have one yet. They also Awaken, and it's assumed they are latent magical talents being contacted by their Mentor Spirit for the first time. They receive the full blessing of the current Church and after performing the Ritual of Elvis (the details of which are not known), they are sent off to begin a new Church, and are funded by the parent Church for the first year.

Becoming a member of the Church involves total devotion to the King. One may attend the Church without becoming a member, but you are required to become a member before you can participate in Church events or be admitted into the inner Council of Elvis, the rulers of the church. Usually, a large tithe is required as part of the membership process, although what else goes on is not known. The members never talk about it, and no one is known to have quit the church.

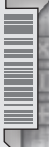
- Sounds more like a cult than a church to me.
- Netcat
- Often the only difference between a church and a cult is the tax breaks.
- Plan 9
- Most congregations of this fairly harmless, though there's a minority sect that calls its leaders “missionaries” instead of priests. They're a bit more militant and have been known to attack and kill anyone they hear disparaging the church or Elvis. There was a small church-war in Atlanta a few years ago between members of the local Church of Elvis and the Catholic Church that left a number of dead, and several of the churches involved burned to the ground.
- The Smiling Bandit
- While this is all very amusing, why is this flagged in the “Artifacts” discussion area?
- Thorn
- Partly because Slammy asked so nicely about the Church of Elvis. But also in part because they're one of a dozens of smaller groups poking their noses into this artifact hunt that's been going on. The big dogs, the Atlanteans, the Draco Foundation, the dragons and the megacorps, they're getting all the attention from everyone. There are a number of other players on the field though that no one's paying much attention to, however. The little dogs, so to speak. In our line of work, it's dangerous to overlook anyone, no matter how minor. So, with that in mind, who—besides Elvis' acolytes—has shown up to the party so far?
- Bull
- The Catholic Church, for one. Both the Order of St. Sylvester and the Knights Templar have been involved. The Sylvestrines have several times intervened to help contain objects of power that have been dangerous, while the Templars have been militantly hunting anything they deem “heretical”. Mostly it seems to be an excuse for them to cut loose finally after the Vatican reined them in a while back.
- Snopes
- I have difficulty thinking of the Catholic Church as a “little dog.”
- Fianchetto
- The Church doesn't have the power it once had, but that's beside the point. Snopes isn't talking about the Church as a whole, but rather some sects and other groups associated with them. Whatever power the Catholic Church might have, the Sylvestrines and Templars wield only a small fraction of it.
- Goat Foot



- The Sylvestrines aren't entirely selfless here. Like everyone else, they're interested in researching the artifacts to see what they can learn. They've been active mostly around Europe, and have intervened into at least three artifact chases so far. On all three occasions, the artifact was turned over to the Order for safekeeping. It's a safe bet that these items are being sent back to Rome.
- Elijah
- One of those artifacts the Sylvestrines supposedly gained possession of showed up again in Seattle about a month ago, smuggled in through the Ork Underground. So either your intel is wrong, Elijah, or the Order of St. Sylvester has a traitor in their midst and is selling the artifacts on the black market.
- Frosty
- Or the Vatican just put the artifact to use. Most likely story: They took a look at the artifact, decided it didn't have any truly compelling features, and elected to sell it to get at least some value on the thing. They do it subtly, off the books, and the money goes to help the Templars' more secretive operations.
- Plan 9
- The Church of the Dragon has been nosing around Denver again. I don't know if they're specifically looking into artifact activity or if their presence has something to do with Ghostwalker, but it wouldn't surprise me if they're stirring something up. Ghostwalker seems to have an interest in some of these artifacts, and if he's interested, CotD is, too.
- Traveler Jones
- Speaking of which, I ran into some jokers not too long ago calling themselves the Knights of the Dragon. These guys were fairly badass, basically cyber-ninja physical adepts. Poking around, it seems they're an offshoot of the Children of the Dragon who have gone into for chrome upgrades. Anyone know what's up with that?
- Bull
- The Children of the Dragon have always been a bit whacked out, but the Knights are a splinter faction that has gone completely around the bend. They're an order of adepts that believe that cybermancy is the key to resurrecting Dunklezahn, and they are trying to cram as much cyber into their bodies as possible, with the end goal to become cyberzombies themselves. Their current goal is to find some way to locate Dunkelzahn's spirit and summon it so they can bind it to a body. Supposedly, they have a dragon corpse cryogenically frozen for whenever they manage to hunt Dunkie's ghost down.
- Kane
- And just how do you know all that? I've never even heard of these guys.
- Netcat
- Ran into one of them on a job a little while back. I got curious, so I tortured him for a bit. Spilled his guts before he, well, spilled his guts. They're pretty small still, only a few dozen members. Minus one now.
- Kane

- Oh yeah. Uncle Kane is going to be a great role model for the little spriteling, 'Cat.
- Bull
- The Aleph Society popped up in Seattle not too long ago as well, trying to get their hands on something that was being smuggled into the city for the Draco Foundation. Rumor also has it that they got their hands on another artifact, a companion tome to their Book of Gaf, titled the Book of Tak.
- Haze
- Does that sound just as silly to everyone else as it does to me?
- /dev/grrl
- It may sound silly, but don't dismiss it. The Aleph Society believes that everyone has the potential to become magically active, but their core focus is helping burnt-out magicians who have lost their magic due to cyberware implantation or severe injury and trauma to regain their connection with the mana flow. Everything we know about how magic works says that this is impossible, but supposedly they made it work thanks to a ritual they learned through the Book of Gaf. Rumor had it that Gaf was a powerful free spirit that was letting the magicians of the Aleph Society borrow portions of his magical abilities in exchange for ... something.
- It had a lot of folks talking in thaumaturgical academia in the early '60s, but after a couple years the Aleph Society faded from the public eye. No one's really heard from them in a while. If I had to guess, I'd say that if Gaf really was a free spirit, they were making some kind of spirit pact with it. It's normally unheard of for a spirit to make a pact with more than one or two magicians. The Alephs must have reached the limits of how far Gaf could stretch, and so the cult fizzled out. Hard to attract new members if you can't deliver on your promises.
- Winterhawk
- So Tak is another spirit?
- /dev/grrl
- I would assume so. Which means the Alephs are recruiting again. They were fairly public the first time around, but I haven't heard anything recently about them, so they must be operating under the radar this time. That begs the question of whether they are just being more cautious, or if Tak has different powers or different requirements. I think I'll have to look into this some more.
- Winterhawk
- The Illuminates of the New Dawn have been making noise as well, claiming that some of the artifacts are theirs, having been lost or stolen from the Illuminati in ancient times.
- Ethernaut
- Good to see they're starting to believe their own press.
- Kat 'o Nine Tales

Incoming .....



THE LITTLE DOGS .....





## PLOT POINT ONE

### *Riding with the King*

Sometimes you take a run for the money, sometimes for the fame, but sometimes there are jobs you take on just because it sounds like a lark. When word comes your way that the Rome, Georgia, congregation of the First Church of Elvis is looking for help, it sounds like a good opportunity to go someplace warm and experience some southern hospitality.

The runners are requested to visit the church building in Rome, and when they get there the service is in full swing. Gamemasters should play up the weirdness of the ceremony— young Elvises dance with older, jumpsuited Elvises, people sing old songs with voices full of religious conviction, and many of them twitch oddly when they sing as if they are in the throes of some strange ecstasy. They hope that the runners will be intrigued by this display and will possibly desire to learn more about the church.

Once the service is over, a oxford-shirt-and-jeans wearing impersonator approaches the runners and introduces himself as Elvis Johnson. He says that his group has been in a long-time dispute with the Gainesville congregation, and they were willing to deal with it internally, but the Gainesville church recently crossed a significant line. A wealthy and eccentric Elvis fan passed away recently and left a good portion of his estate to the Rome Church of Elvis. One item, though—a harmonica believed to have been used by the King—was recently stolen from the church, and the Gainesville church is the leading subject. The Rome church asks the runners to look into this and to get their item back if possible.

Lifting a harmonica from a church is not the most difficult job the runners have ever faced, but there's a hitch—the brass reeds were made from an organ that had once been in a Templar church in Baldungan, in current-day Tír na nÓg, and the Templars want it back. In order to get the harmonica, the runners will need to beat the Templars to the punch. If they are successful in obtaining it, the next decision is whether they should turn it over to the Rome church or see if the Templars—or anyone else—will pay them more for it.

Use Templar Combat Mage (p. 147) for the Templars. Most members of the church should be low-level people, though the leader of the congregation is Awakened—used Street Shaman (see p. 147), adjusted with the King mentor spirit information in the sidebar.

## PLOT POINT TWO

### *Nipping at the Heels*

The organizations mentioned in this chapter will never out-muscle the big boys like the Draco and Atlantean Foundations, so their best hope generally is to be faster and more nimble than they are. The Templars are after the harmonica, and that's alerted the Order of St. Sylvester to the existence of the artifact. Since it has roots in a church, they suspect the item could be of use to them. They want to study it, and they are interested in acquiring it legitimately. They reach out to the runners (possibly before the harmonica is sold at the end of the first plot point) to express their interest in the item.

Their interest in acquiring the item legitimately disappears if the Templars have it. There is a considerable rivalry between the two groups, and either side will do what it takes to get the upper hand on the other. The gamemaster can build an escalating conflict that leaves both sides looking for a little extra help—the other groups listed in this chapter may be willing to pitch in here if it means that the Sylvestrines or Templars owe them favors. The way the world is going, the time to cash in those favors might come very soon.

## PLOT POINT THREE

### *The Currency that Matters*

... And the time for cashing in on favors has arrived. The little dogs don't expect to be able to spend a lot of time with the major artifacts everyone else is chasing, so they have to do the next best thing—protect themselves from them. Like everyone else, they're not exactly sure what the artifacts do, but they suspect that the artifacts will allow those who possess them to do unpleasant things on the astral plane. They need protection there, and they have decided that the best way to do that is to get some spirit allies. They can—and have—bound some spirits to keep an eye on their astral affairs, but they'd also like some spirits who are on their side without having to be bound with a limited number of services.

One of the groups described in this chapter—gamemaster's choice—calls on either the Sylvestrines or Templars to repay a favor earned in the second plot point. The runners are in turn enlisted to lend a hand, as the task assigned to repay the favor is not as easy one.

There is a free spirit known as N2O who has been a constant thorn in the collective side of corporations and other large organizations. He doesn't seem to have any particular agenda other than causing chaos and disrupting the efforts of any organized group of humans. That means getting him to side with any organization, even one of the little dogs, won't be easy, but in the end it's all about what many jobs are about—figuring out how to provide what someone wants.

N2O is a nihilist. He doesn't have any larger purpose behind his activities, or any system he wants to put in to replace existing systems. He simply wants things to be broken down. The runners, then, must figure out what to give the spirit who wants nothing. They could make a gift of Karma, making N2O stronger and better able to accomplish chaos, but that comes with risks (a stronger nihilist free spirit could eventually turn around and bite just about anyone in the ass), as well as a considerable cost in Karma.

Alternately, they could act as N2O's eyes and ears. A free spirit can get himself into many places, true, but he can't be everywhere. If the runners are able to give him information on things like important shipments of merchandise or the travel plans of high-ranking individuals in various organizations, then he might consider keeping an eye on one of the little dogs' astral assets for a time. They'll have to produce some good intelligence in advance, though, before he trusts them enough to make a deal.

Another option is subduing him. N2O is not an easy mark, but he's not overwhelming. The runners could try to force him to do what they want—though that is not always the best way to guarantee loyalty when they're not around.

**NEW MENTOR SPIRIT: THE KING**

The King is a performer, a showman. His followers love an audience, love being on stage, and dislike working in secret because they crave attention. Followers are almost always musicians and dancers, and are always members of the First Church of Elvis. They have had simple cosmetic surgery to look and sound like Elvis Presley, and they always dress like their King.

**Advantages:** +1 dice for Illusion spells, +1 dice for Health spells, +1 dice for Performance Tests.

**Disadvantages:** -1 dice to Combat spells, -10 percent to all income (they always tithe 10 percent to their local church).

**ORGANIZATIONS****ALEPH SOCIETY**

The Aleph Society claims to have been formed in 2056 under the guidance of magical self-help guru Dr. Michael Nickson. Nickson had the Book of Gaf, an item he claimed was a lost artifact of Atlantis, and that through its teachings he had unlocked the secrets of magic. The cult preaches that magic was something that everyone could learn to access, allowing the most mundane person to become a magician. The cult initially attracted a large number of followers who were intrigued by Nickson's promises. The cult's true power, however, came from its inner circle of mages and adepts who had burned out their magic due to cyberware implantation, stress, or other physical damage. Nickson preached that not only could the mundane learn magic, but those who had lost their abilities could reclaim it.

The secret behind the cult lay in the Book of Gaf, which is a tome that contained the ritual to summon up a powerful shade, a type of shadow spirit (p. 146, *Street Magic*). The inner circle of the cult is comprised entirely of hermetic magicians and adepts, all of whom have lost some or all of their magical abilities. They are all members of an initiatory group who have entered into a Shared Potency Spirit Pact, a pact unique to Gaf. Gaf is also able to give initiates whose magic had fallen to zero a single point of magic, giving them use of their abilities once more. Non-Awakened members of the cult are sometimes called upon to sacrifice themselves to the Aleph Initiates using the sacrifice metamagic, and members go willingly, believing that the sacrifice was a step along the path to Awakening (they very rarely kill members in the course of the sacrifice).

Gaf is very powerful, but it had its limits, and after a couple of years it began to refuse anymore pacts. Without the ability to grant new members power, the cult stagnated and stopped gaining new members. Nickson became frustrated and tried to force Gaf to accept new members again, and in 2069 Gaf convinced Sierra LaGuardia, Nickson's chief lieutenant, and a former shadowrunning adept who suffered from cyberware addiction to take over the Aleph Society, sacrificing Nickson to the spirit in the process.

LaGuardia immediately moved to increase the society's power. She began by sacrificing a number of the old initiatory

group to Gaf, increasing his power and freeing him up to accept new initiates. She then began to covertly recruit new hermetic mages and adepts. With Gaf's help, she also began searching out additional sources of power and began funding arcanoarcheological digs in secret, hoping to uncover other ways to gain and increase the group's power.

In early 2072, a dig in Pueblo territory uncovered a book similar to the Book of Gaf. This one contained a ritual to contact another shadow spirit, this time a wraith known as Tak. With Gaf's blessing, LaGuardia successfully contacted Tak and entered into another pact, this one granting a unique variation of the Power Spirit Pact that granted initiates access to the spirit powers of Regeneration and Immunity to Normal Weapons making them virtually indestructible. While Gaf is willing to take whatever power is offered to it by the members of the cult, Tak is much more aggressive and demands death and violence from those who share a pact with it.

LaGuardia also found references to a third book as well, and has become much more active in the artifact hunt hoping to uncover it.

**THE ALEPH SOCIETY**

**Purpose:** The Aleph Society recruits and trains burnout hermetics and adepts in their techniques in order to grow more powerful.

**Members:** 40

**Strictures:** Attendance, Belief, Exclusive Membership, Exclusive Ritual, Fraternity, Limited Membership (initial Magic Rating 4 or less and have suffered at least 1 point of magic loss), Oath, Secrecy

**Resources/Dues:** Low Resources. Most members support themselves or band together in small cooperatives and do magical freelance work to pay the bills.

**Description and Customs:** The Aleph Society is primarily concerned with finding and training burnouts. At one time they also had a political agenda, but under Sierra LaGuardia this has been discarded. The group is now dedicated to growing in power, both through recruiting new members and finding additional ancient artifacts and tomes. While they have thus far been acting in secret, the members of the inner circle are becoming more and more violent, no doubt influenced by Gaf and Tak.







## GAF AND TAK

Gaf and Tak are unique and powerful free shadow spirits. Gaf is similar to a shade and Tak is similar to a wraith, but there are differences as well. The exact Force of the spirits is left to the gamemaster's discretion, though something in the Force 12 to 15 range would be appropriate. They possess all the powers and abilities that a free shadow spirit would have, but they also have several unique abilities as well.

**Grant Magic:** If an initiate attempting to undergo Initiation has a magic rating of zero, but previously had the ability to cast magic, both Tak and Gaf can sacrifice a point of Force to raise the Initiates magic rating to 1. This makes the spirits "hungry," and they often demand donations of Karma from the initiates, a Sacrifice from the Aleph Societies followers, or (in the case of Tak) acts of extreme violence for it to use its Drain Energy power through the initiate.

**Sacrifice Energy Drain:** Gaf does not have the normal shadow spirit power of Energy Drain (p. 148, *Street Magic*). Instead it can absorb the pain of the sacrifice metamagic (p. 139, *Street Magic*). It gains 1 Karma for every physical box of damage done to a metahuman participant. Usually the sacrifice requires a willing participant in the ritual who is hurt but not killed, though Gaf has required exceptions on rare occasions.

**Violence Energy Drain:** Tak has the normal shadow spirit Energy Drain power (p. 148, *Street Magic*) but can only utilize it through initiates (using his Shared Power pact) who commit acts of violence, torture, and murder. For every physical box of damage the Initiate deals, Tak can draw 1 Karma from the victim.

**Shared Potency:** Gaf has the ability to enter into a Shared Potency Spirit Pact with Aleph Initiates. This pact is similar to the Magic Pact (p. 108, *Street Magic*) and allows an Initiate to temporarily increase his magic attribute by half of Gaf's Force.

**Shared Power:** Tak has the ability to enter into a Shared Power Spirit pact with Aleph Initiates. This pact is identical to the Power Pact (pp. 108-109, *Street Magic*) and allows an initiate to access one of Tak's free spirit powers. Tak's full list of powers is up to the gamemaster's discretion, but Regeneration should be included.

**Shared Pact Limitations:** Both Tak and Gaf have a limit of how many initiates he can be actively share with at any given time. Any turn that the initiate taps into the Shared Potency or Shared Power, he must make an Edge (1) test. If he fails this test, he cannot access the ability for this turn. If he glitches the Edge test, he loses all magical ability for the turn. An Initiate may call on both Tak and Gaf in the same turn (this is a free action), but must make a separate Edge test for each pact.

## ORDER OF ST. SYLVESTER

In 2024 Pope John XXV released *In Imago Dei* ("In the Image of God"), a set of doctrines designed to deal with the Awakening, the emergence of metahumans, and the rise of magic and spirits. The most important doctrines stated that metahumans had souls and could be saved, that magic was not evil but was instead simply a tool, and that while spirits were not evil they touched on too many areas of faith, so the conjuring of them was limited to only those individuals the church approved. While magic is an irrefutable part of the Sixth World, the church wanted to study it and be very careful in how it dealt with something that had been deemed heretical for so many centuries. So in 2025, the Order of St. Sylvester was founded.

The mission of the Order of St. Sylvester is to study magic and help members of the Catholic Church deal with it. Composed almost entirely of hermetic magicians (though there are a few members who are shamanistic in nature, including several who claim to have angels or saints mentoring them) and adepts, the Order steps in to help members of the church who Awaken learn to cope with their new power and find ways to use their abilities responsibly. They are also the first line of defense against any magical or supernatural threats against the Church.

The emergence of pre-Fifth World artifacts has raised a large number of questions with regards to Church history and doctrine, and the order has recently been given an additional task of studying and researching these artifacts to determine if they pose a danger to the Church and to figure out how they fit in with their view of God. The order has also begun offering its help to contain and dispose of artifacts that turn out to be dangerous. The main group of Sylvestrines who lead the investigation into the Atlantis artifacts is based out of Zurich, Switzerland, and is headed up by Bishop Andreas Gottschalk.

## ORDER OF THE TEMPLE

The Order of the Temple, also called simply the Knights Templar, is a splinter faction of the Order of St. Sylvester as well as a resurrection of the ancient Knights of the Temple of Solomon (the original Templars). After the Euro-Wars when Italy fragmented, the Vatican quickly scrambled to reclaim as many of its ancient Papal States as possible. The church decided that it once again needed a military, something it hadn't had in centuries. The Order of the Temple was designed to be a secret military, hidden from the world and operating in secret. It used the Order of St. Sylvester as a smokescreen and a cover, operating from within the ranks of an organization that was very public and generally regarded as trustworthy.

Eventually the truth about the Templars came out as they grew bolder and bolder. Following several public incidents in the early '60s, the Holy Roman Church officially chastised and sanctioned the Templars, and many believed they were disbanded. In reality, they were simply reined in and put on a short leash, their activities once again confined to the shadows. During the conflict between Aztlan and Amazonia in Bogotá, the Templars have once again become more active. Their primary goal is to expand the Church's influence, though their fanatical nature also leads them to directly fight anything they consider heresy as well. The





INCOMING FEED.....

appearance of so many so-called Atlantis artifacts has spurred the Templars to take action, since many claim these predate Christianity and the Catholic Church.

### CHILDREN OF THE DRAGON

The Children of the Dragon started out as a cult that sprang up following President Dunkelzahn's assassination in 2057. It was founded by David Emerson, who changed his last name to Dragonson when he launched his new sect. He claims to have been mundane, but following Dunkelzahn's death he Awakened as a full-fledged magician, becoming a shaman and one of the first followers of a new totem, Dragon.

The cult preaches that Dunkelzahn was a divine being, and that he sacrificed himself for the good of mankind. Their churches, called crèches, preach peace, harmony, and brotherhood. The first and largest of their crèches is on Prince Edward Island. The cult was fairly small until 2061 and the return of Halley's Comet. The chaos of that year drove many to seek a higher power to make sense of the changes that swept the land, and membership in the Children of the Dragon skyrocketed. Crèches were founded across the UCAS and the world.

The appearance of Ghostwalker from the astral rift in DeeCee caused a schism in the church, however. Joshua Keller, who changed his name to Joshua Morningstar, was an influential leader in the Children of the Dragon, and after Ghostwalker appeared he fell into a coma for three days. When he awoke, he began claiming that it was Ghostwalker and not Dunkelzahn who was the true savior of humanity, and he began to urge his followers to worship the white wyrm. Based in Denver, Morningstar calls

his faction the Church of the Dragon Reborn and he is a lot more aggressive and in-your-face than Dragonson.

Both groups have an interest in any artifacts that may have ties to the dragons. Dragonson is peacefully trying to obtain artifacts for study, believing they will lead to a greater understanding of Dunkelzahn and his sacrifice. Morningstar, however, has begun preaching that the artifacts rightfully belong to Ghostwalker, and has been actively seeking them out, even going so far as to hire shadowrunners.

### KNIGHTS OF THE DRAGON

One of the earliest elven infants born following the Awakening, Michael Howard was a child of wealth. His parents had gotten rich in the computer and tech market at the turn of the century, and investments in the companies that would eventually form Ares led them to become one of the richest families in the UCAS. Michael continued his family interest in technology and invested heavily in numerous bleeding-edge cyberotechnology firms. Born mundane, he believed that mankind could use technology to transcend their limitations. He also had a deep spiritual side—he was an active member of the Church of the Dragon and was one of the founding members of the Seattle crèche.

In September 2068, Michael was overseeing testing at one of the companies he worked with when a catastrophic failure caused a prototype to explode. He was critically injured in the explosion, requiring massive cybernetic reconstruction of his shattered body. His mind, however, didn't recover so quickly, and he lapsed into a coma for the next three years.





Upon awakening, Michael immediately called a meeting of the leadership of the Seattle crèche. During his coma, he claimed to have contacted the spirit of Dunkelzahn. Dunkelzahn awoke latent magical talent within him and revealed that he would return some day—the dragon, according to Michael, would some day be reborn into not only flesh but also machine, just as Michael himself had been. Cybermancy, the fusing of machine and magic, was the answer Michael said he had been given to the question of how Dunkelzahn would return.

The crèche leadership scoffed at Michael, but his message attracted a small following. Changing his name to Michael Wyrmcaller and declaring his followers to be Knights of the Dragon, he has dedicated his sect to the pursuit of magical and cybernetic perfection. Using his vast wealth, he has each of his Knights upgraded with delta-grade cyberware. Each knight strives to be worthy to one day earn the right to undergo cybermancy, which Wyrmcaller claims is the highest state of metahuman perfection. Neither Morningstar nor Dragonson are happy with Wyrmcaller's actions and have denounced his sect, but thus far the Knights of the Dragon are small enough that neither feels it necessary to take action against him yet.

The Knights are also searching for a way to locate and summon the spirit of Dunkelzahn, which Wyrmcaller believes is lost on the astral plane. He is also researching ways to use cybermancy in dragons, and he has procured a dragon corpse that he keeps cryogenically frozen. He claims it's a great dragon corpse, though in reality it is simply the corpse of an adult western dragon. The Atlantis artifacts are targets for the Knights as they represent vast and ancient power. Like the Children of the Dragon, the Knights believe that the artifacts have a connection to the dragons, and Wyrmcaller hopes to use this connection to locate Dunkelzahn.

## CHARACTERS

### N2O

*Free spirit of man*

N2O believes in chaos. Chaos was the starting point of the universe and it will be its ending point, and he sees anything in between as an aberration. He attacks order and organization because it's unnatural, and also because it's fun. His outlook may seem grim, but N2O is anything but. He is laughter, cheerfulness, and a regular stream of practical jokes. It's just that behind the jokes, there is nothing.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	M	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
7	6	8	4	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	12	2

**Astral Init/IP:** 12/3

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 12/11

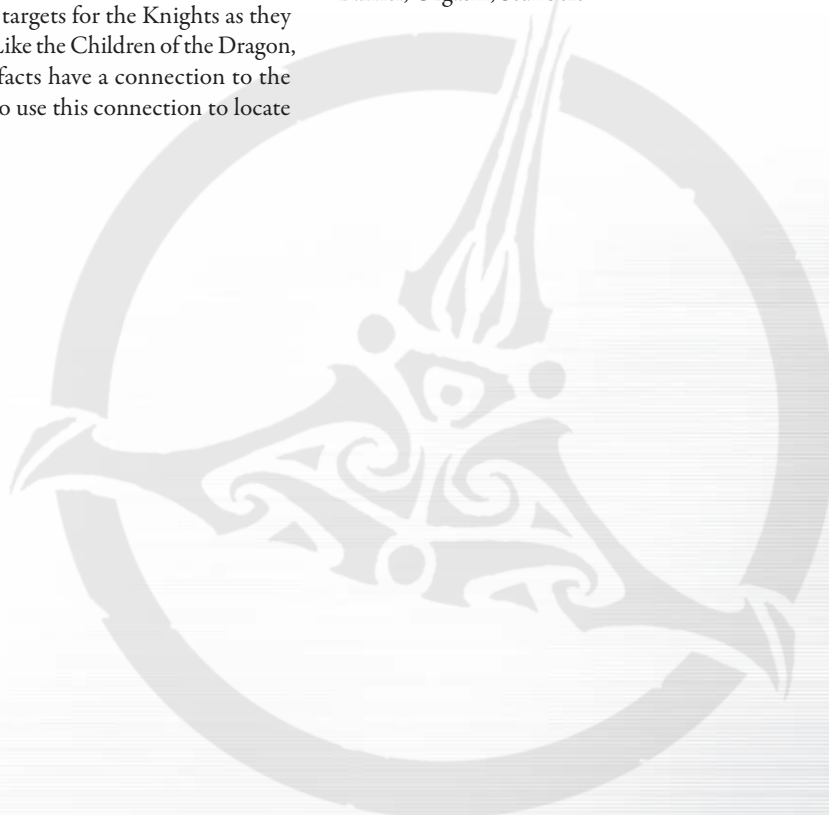
**Movement:** 10/25

**Qualities:** Magician

**Skills:** Assensing 6, Astral Combat 6, Dodge 6, Perception 6, Spellcasting 6, Unarmed Combat 6

**Powers:** Accident, Astral Form, Banishing Resistance, Concealment, Confusion, Enhanced Senses (low-light, thermographic vision), Guard, Influence, Innate Spell (Mass Confusion), Materialization, Psychokinesis, Sapience, Search

**Spells:** Chaotic World, Control Emotions, Entertainment, Mana Barrier, Orgasm, Stunbolt





## METAPLANAR SHUFFLE

Posted by: Ethernaut

There are more and more people every day who seem interested in anything that may be tied to telesma, and that does not stop here on Earth. There is a particularly active region of astral space in western New York that has always been a bit *different*. I've visited the area repeatedly over the years, but there is something disturbing about activities now. The spirits that reside in the area have become more hostile both to each other and to metahumans visitors. As much as it pains me to say this, the metahumans seem to have brought this upon themselves. The big magical institutions have all stepped up their activities, but instead of getting what they want the spirits have cannily led them around in circles. So consider this briefing from the ASPS to be wise, but also understand that it serves as fair warning.

// upload Uniformat text file :: user Ethernaut :: 05/01/73 //

**To:** Office of the Executive Director, Astral Space Preservation Society

**From:** Jasmina Siegel ThD

**Subject:** Western New York Metaplanar Nexus, aka "Burned-Over District"

Ever since metahumans learned of the metaplanes, magicians have traveled the planes that intersect at and correspond to this particular region of the UCAS. Because of the area's historical significance as a site of religious and mystical evangelism and the creation of different types of worship and interpretations of the Bible, the area has drawn both devotees to the belief that magic and God work hand-in-hand. It has also, however, attracted a number of people who want to use this correlation as a cudgel to bludgeon each other with the belief that magic is evil, or that God is just another relatively insignificant magical figure. Meanwhile, astral explorers are excited by the idea of metaplanar intersection and have spent years studying the situation as a means to increase their understanding of the rest of the metaplanes. The Astral Space

Preservation Society opened our office in the Hudson Valley in early 2059 specifically to protect the astral and metaplanar space as more and more people felt compelled to visit the area.

It will never be known for sure, but the history of the area that has been known as the "Burned-Over District" and the "Psychic Highway" has been one of auspicious movement of people and ideas during a time when that movement was already rather high in the early United States. As an area for western expansion, and later one of exploding commerce due to the Erie Canal, people have long passed through this area on their way to the rest of the continent. This made it ripe for the exchange of ideas from itinerant preachers who drew the attentions of people especially open to the next new idea. It also served as an area pivotal in the creation and evolution of Christian sects from the Shakers and Seventh-Day Adventists to the Latter Day Saints. Free ideas were not limited to just Christian religion, as ideas based in European mysticism and Egyptian, classical, and pagan beliefs took hold in communities where aspects could already be seen in the Catholic faith or the Freemasons. That latter group held sway as a political force for a time until a rising Antimasonic movement took them on, deriding them for being a symbol of political corruption. The area spread the temperance and abolition movements, and utopian communities arose and fell based on all manner of political models (such as socialism). Some even engaged in free-love ideas the country would not see again for over a century.

The mysticism that ran through the area came from people such as the Mesmerists and Swedenborgians like George Bush (a distant relative of the eventual United States presidents), as well as spirit mediums like the Fox Sisters. Local lore has always been a part of the fabric of everyday life, and it's even more so now—the Headless Horseman is no longer a tale but a known free spirit roaming the region. This lore includes ideas of pre-Iroquois occupants (which has drawn the attention of groups like Warpath) ranging from pre-Columbian Masonic colonists to a reputed lost tribe of Israel, and the relatively new idea that there existed a pre-Awakening community of spirits that was somehow wiped out or exiled by the Iroquois. After the Awakening, people seized

Incoming .....





on these ideas, and their ideas of the relationship between magic and past stories and experiences has led to a world where magic is used to reflect these and other realities (though which cart came before which horse in this relationship is unclear).

There happens to be a metaplanar nexus that exists over the area where worlds reflect these realities. One such plane has spirits appearing as shades of a muddle of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century archetypes. Figures who have come to exhibit these different effects for visitors, and they have developed an enterprise of providing visitors with “real” mystical experiences. Others reflect aspects of pre-Columbian Native American Iroquois and other tribal societies. These are all different sections of what is believed to be one part of the plane of man. Planes touch on the shifting nature of nature, where something like an ethereal Erie Canal actually intersects and moves people through “time” and “space” to parts of the arboreal and flora planes. There is also a deeply haunting “wild” plane we have sought to protect from others—and to protect others *from*. It is a dark wood, a reflection on the old belief of wild nature as being unholy and evil. It is not clear whether that realm is inhabited by shadow spirits, or simply wild and mischievous spirits (likely to include fey folk), or even if it's a collection of spirits who just figured out how to scare us into action. It has worked, and we have been in cooperation with certain authorities because it seems prudent to leave the area as it is for now.

- I know there is a story of a Seneca leader, Red Jacket, who wore what are considered Masonic symbols before he should have encountered anyone who'd dare to show them to an Indian. I posit that if the area has been the sight of pre-Awakening magic that perhaps he encountered those symbols not through shifts in time but in metaplanar space.
- Axis Mundi

- So because time and space work differently on the metaplanes, he could have encountered them on the metaplanes by experiencing something or someone associated with the Freemasons?
- Haze
- Indeed.
- Axis Mundi
- There are interesting pools of mana in astral space, but most areas like this tend to have or develop special geomantic identities. This area, however, is just chaos. Nothing sustained itself long enough to link things like burial mounds or routes other than the main “Psychic Highway” that follows Route 20 through the area as it crosses North America.
- Jimmy No
- I saw an old windup clock in my dream last night. A pale white hand inserted an ancient key to wind it up, and the clock began to run. I could sense something was not right with the clock, but I don't have the technical skill to recognize what that feeling meant.
- Arete
- Did anyone notice that the old US Route 20, the “Psychic Highway,” has its western terminus in the heart of Tír Tairngire? After crossing the continent you can veer onto Route 97 at Bend, PCC, and head south to Crater Lake. It's not perfect, but it's damn close after thousands of kilometers. Just make sure you get off Route 20 before you hit Corvallis, a.k.a. Ghost Town.
- Turbo Bunny

## OVERVIEW

The Phaistos Disc may be the most curious of the four major artifacts that have been fought over in recent times. While the other three clearly define their metaphorical purpose as astral navigation items, the disc does not necessarily suggest any particular navigational purpose, let alone a magical/astral one. As it so happens, the disc is multi-function. Part of its role is to be a guide to unlocking the powers of the other artifacts, but it also serves as an astral chronometer that allows the user to maintain a sense of time and timing within astral space, including the metaplanes. It also can be used to measure the time it takes as the planes shift on their own in relation to astral space and Earth. The Phaistos Disc tracks what is known as Astral Mean Time, which according to astral navigation is the longitude that intersects the Dragon Line convergence in Aberdeen, Hong Kong between the two poles: Ayer's Rock and the convergence site of the planes of earth, fire, water, and air.

As a navigational metaphor for time measurement, the disc is used to determine astral longitude in conjunction with the other artifacts. The Phaistos Disc has been rendered inoperable in this

respect, however, due to a lock placed on the piece by a powerful spirit long ago. The key to unlock the device was left in the hands of a group of spirits that had traveled until they settled into a secluded piece of metaplanar space tied to the Hudson Valley region of New York. Over time, whatever drove them to choose this location attracted human settlers: first the Iroquois and later Europeans pushing westward from New York City. Other metaplanes began to form, reflecting the changes to physical and astral space as the region was transformed. When magic returned, the strongest astral impressions in the area came from around the early nineteenth century, when a flurry of religious activity and faith led to the region being called the Burned-Over District to reflect the flames of belief sweeping over the region.

This is where the runners come in. All of the major players who would have an interest in discovering the planes' connection to these artifacts and other concurrent magical disturbances and activities have been around long enough that the spirits do not particularly welcome them anymore. People with connections to the major magical institutions are all seen as “tainted,” and while some of the spirits have welcomed the opportunity to interact with and possibly gain something from metahuman visitors (that

“something” being karma), there is no expectation that someone with the taint of the Draco or Atlantean Foundations, the Apep Consortium, or corporations like Manadyne, Aztechnology, or MCT will be tolerated as part of the actual spiritual activities of the area. Even some spirits that these institutions have recruited have been expelled or otherwise neutralized from acting on behalf of these groups.

As it happens, centuries ago the formula that serves as a “key” to unlocking and activating the Phaistos Disc was whisked away through the metaplanes by some unknown metahuman who never completed the journey. Spirits have, over time, moved it around until a group decided to settle into this part of the metaplanes. As humans inflamed the astral space corresponding to the physical space, the area became a nexus for other similar planes that grew more and more like the human world and the ideas that humans had about this piece of Earth. To safeguard what seemed like a critical piece of *telesma*—something that could help measure the passage of “time” along with certain metaplanar and mana movements and fluctuations—the spirits hid it in time and space. To recover the key requires a specific set of steps to access the right planes and prove one’s self worthy of possessing that key. The runners have to prove that they have a proper understanding of time, faith, and wisdom. At the same time, they are being pursued by others, one covertly and one through deception, who need that key for their own ends.

## PLOT POINT ONE

As the adventure begins, Ms. Johnson approaches the runners. She is actually a fixer who is being used as an intermediary between the runners and their employer, Manadyne. If the runners do a search on her, they will find that she goes by Giulia Bowdin, and she specializes in magic-focused activities: kidnap a magician, find a talisman, extract some *telesma*, or recover a formula in the metaplanes. She does not, however, hire for jobs within the Seattle region. While she is a mundane human, she can discuss even the most esoteric magical theories and studies. Giulia meets the runners at an independent coffee shop in Auburn and makes them a fairly lucrative offer. For ten thousand nuyen each, the group has to travel to central New York and make their way into the metaplanar nexus. From there, the runners are to find a “key,” a spell or spirit formula of sorts that is important to the proper use of the Phaistos Disc.

In most instances, the runners will probably not have any significant taint on them that is connected to the individuals most unwelcome in these planes. On the other hand, there is the possibility that the runners have been around long enough that they have accumulated the presence of many of these groups to the point where there is nothing to discern one type of influence from another. If the players are very active or if they perform this job after having completed many of the other adventures in this book, the spirits will have heard about their adventures. Even in the metaplanes gossip travels faster than light, and doubly so in this area. As in history, where the passions of faith were inflamed by the rapid distribution of information, information within the planes is important and widely distributed. This is part of the reason why so many metahumans and their spirit allies have

been discovered and shut out. It is also something the runners may notice as they travel through the planes. Spirits may know or become more aware of the runners’ more interesting astral or magic-based adventures, and react in varying ways.

The Phaistos Disc is important to this run. If the runners took part in *Dawn of the Artifacts: Darkest Hour*, having that experience will alter the spirits’ perception of the runners. Spirits will treat them differently (generally in a favorable way) since they have been in direct contact with the disc. If the runners investigate Giulia and try to trace back the origin of the job, it appears that she has been working closest with Manadyne, Lone Star, and SpiriTech. All of these companies have studied the area, but like the larger firms they are also not particularly welcome within the metaplanar nexus.

## PLOT POINT TWO

There is no shortage of intrigue among the various factions already present in the area. There is also a much more pressing issue: Getting into the metaplanes. Giulia directs the runners to visit the town of Niskayuna, which is one of the areas where the divide between the mundane and astral planes is weakest. Across the area, there are “weak spots.” Astral rifts to the metaplanes exist around the area, and they appear similar to the way the countryside looked in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early-19<sup>th</sup> centuries, when the area was at the height of its influence. In fact, some spirits and many magicians have come to make the area a sort of tourist trap where mundanes can experience the more peculiar effects of the transcendentalism and mysticism that swept across the area. This is a place where people can and do come to commune with spirits, experience trances and inhabitations, go on limited “vision quests,” and if one is willing to find the right person and pay the right price, to experience the higher mysteries of the metaplanes.

The problem is not finding a rift or a free spirit offering passage—there are plenty of them. Rather, the difficulty comes from the fact that the spirits are being monopolized. Initiates (and their less-capable assistants) from the major thaumaturgical research institutions have become more active in the area, and their activity has closed off a number of spirits and rifts because they want to limit the spirits that are around. They especially want the spirits that show up to be ones loyal to them and their goals. Their control over access puts the runners at a disadvantage, especially if they have any reputation or notoriety that is going to make them targets for magicians and mundane watchers. Each of the big groups like the Atlanteans and Apep have hired teams to try and throw the spirits off their trails, so they are looking to recognize and co-opt any strangers who fit the profile of a shadowrunner team.

This is to its core an espionage mission with a MacGuffin hunt. If the runners have gone through the *Dawn of the Artifacts* runs, especially *Darkest Hour*, they might get some help. Due to the favorable impressions many spirits have of those who have contacted the disc, some of them might be willing to help get them into the planes.

This is where the runners will meet Abobo and Stands-in-the-Rain. Both free spirits are massive “personalities” in different ways. Abobo will approach the runners, especially if they are having a





hard time trying to work with a particular spirit, or if they come into conflict with some institution's security people, and offer them a hand. He is a rather gregarious and dominant spirit of man from Texas, and he lives that exaggerated persona to the fullest. He is a known quantity, in that he works for Lone Star. The fact that he works for Lone Star, however, might be a negative for most runners, as they likely don't have the best relationship with the police corporation.

Stands-in-the-Rain is another matter. He may approach the runners and offer information, but he will not serve as a gateway to the metaplanes. He is an overwhelming presence whose form is earthen, but who radiates an aura of elemental struggle and force of will. Most magicians and spirits don't really know just what it is that Stands-in-the-Rain wants. His information is good, and he will do enough to be useful (whereas Abobo can get the runners into the metaplanar bar brawls), but he often gives the impression of holding something back.

### PLOT POINT THREE

Once the runners are in the metaplanes, the first stop is a reflection of the most active time, the era from which the area gets its name. This plane's activities are reflected in the high concentration of spirits of man and guidance that want to study or experience the world of metahumanity. For the most part this plane is a reflection of the time, and so spirits will take on the appearance of (typically Caucasian) humans like those first or second-generation Americans who were living or traveling through the region. Some spirits take on other appearances, but there is an understanding that is not the norm. If the runners encounter a "person" who seems out of place, they may not even be from this metaplane. There are Hermetic spirits visiting from elemental planes, and spirits with a religiously-inspired motif who are also curious about the area as a crossroads: spirits that look like angels, demons, ancient Egyptian and Greco-Roman gods, and even a couple of Aboriginal animal spirits who keep to themselves.

The runners' mission is to find their way to the key, which means this part of the adventure is about legwork. There is a general hierarchy to the area where the most powerful and knowledgeable spirits oversee the plane and serve as leaders and adjudicators. They are responsible for the general edict against dealing with the Atlanteans in particular, but also the other major firms. They do not trust these large groups for various reasons that aren't necessary to the mission. Rumors will abound among locals and visitors about ancient grudges between the spirits and old masters. There is also a sense that the Atlantean and Draco Foundations have never sent anyone to their council who has proved worthy.

Upon reaching the metaplanar mirror of the village of Penn Yan, the runners will be confronted by this council. The group enters a slightly surreal version of a village meeting house containing seven spirits, one each of man, guidance, fire, plant, air, water, and task (all Force 5). The spirits will test the runners, giving them a decent number of chances to pass. The spirits demand a test of wisdom, faith, and determination. The questions are meant to test their allegiance, their understanding of the gravity of their search, and their understanding of what the spirits seek to achieve.



Mechanically, these are Teamwork Tests (see p. 65SR4A) with a threshold of 6 each against Intuition, Willpower, and Logic. The spirits will allow two chances to retry. As a matter of roleplay, this is a serious endeavor. The spirits want to know what the characters truly believe in, and how much they are willing to compromise versus how much they are willing to be open. That has been the failing of the Atlanteans and Black Lodge, especially in that they have not shown any moral or dogmatic flexibility. It is a matter of their belief in themselves, in each other, and in their world. Characters with certain biases should be confronted about them directly, and it may affect the threshold at the gamemaster's discretion depending on the severity and type of bias. On the other hand, if runners manage to make a particularly strong argument to the spirits about how intuitive, strong willed, or logical they are, allow them bonus dice on the relevant test.

There is another component of this mission. This is a matter of espionage in a way, and the spirits appreciate knowledge of the outside worlds. None of them have seen the Phaistos Disc, but they know of it. If the characters are willing to divulge knowledge of it, or seek out knowledge from the mundane world about the disc, the spirits are willing to take that into consideration. They also appreciate the exchange of new ideas, and not simply matters of magical or religious theory. Characters who are willing to participate in such exchanges would be benefited by a reduction in the threshold of the test. The spirits appreciate mental flexibility and wisdom more than hardness of dogma and certainty.

Karma may also be valued by the spirits. Metahuman spies have been spreading it around the metaplanes recently, and some spirits wouldn't mind a taste. Note, however, that element-based spirits are insulted by such offers.

Once the spirits are satisfied, they will provide a map and access to a gateway to the next metaplane. If the characters are unable to convince the spirit council, there are alternatives. Other spirits, or even a rogue member, will help them get to the next plane without any guidance. Doing so, however, incurs the displeasure of the spirits on their return, and emboldens Stands-in-the-Rain to become more belligerent against the runners even if he is helping them.

## PLOT POINT FOUR

The next metaplane reflects the 17<sup>th</sup> century Iroquois lands and contains a group of spirits who take on more animistic or floral forms. There are also spirits who don't adhere to the plane's motif and who are either visiting or have simply resisted the urge to assimilate. Some are emigrés from other metaplanes who have taken residence here. It is a large plane, and there are also metahumans in the area.

The guidance left by the spirit council directs the runners to a community near Lake Cayuga. Along the way there should be a growing sense of unease among bystanders. Other spirits ignore or run from the players. Once there, the runners meet a chief with a strange collection of Iroquois symbols and inverted or defaced Masonic symbols, as well as symbols from other faiths, e.g. different crosses, ankhs, ancient Greek lettering, etc. The chief, Crimson Sun (Force 6 guardian spirit), tells the runners that there is a conflict within the plane. Internal and external

agitators have sought to disrupt the relative calm of the plane, and it isn't helping anything that there are metahumans and foreign spirits intruding. He says he appreciates the runners task, though he believes that their search has provoked the increase in activity.

In return for their assistance, he will lead them through the subterranean labyrinth to the appropriate metaplane, which is guarded on both sides because of concerns of metahuman presence to that plane. He cannot, however, wage a war and help the runners at the same time. As a sign of good faith, the runners can help gather information on the attackers and later help him make a stand at Hill Cumorah. There is supposedly an encampment near Keuka Lake and another on the shores of cross-planar "Erie Canal." Simple reconnaissance would be of use, but Crimson Sun would be especially grateful for any combat assistance at Hill Cumorah or against the forces at Keuka Lake.

Abobo, if he is with the runners, will offer assistance to sneak through the area. He can infiltrate the area using his powers. The runners, being human, are outsiders, which ostensibly makes them neutral. The characters can sneak around, or they can attempt to con and deceive the occupants as to their intentions. What they will find is that Crimson Sun is almost the polar opposite of the spirit council. He is xenophobic and belligerent, and he does not brook the idea of new spirits encroaching on his land. The community at Keuka Lake is a group of spirits of an indeterminate possession tradition who simply want to find a peaceful place for themselves, but who were driven from the first metaplane and are afraid of most of the others. The people on the banks of the cross-planar canal are a team of metahuman mages from the ASPS. They don't mean any harm, but they also have not shown proper tribute to Crimson Sun or anyone else on this metaplane.

That isn't to say the threat Crimson Sun is worried about doesn't exist. There are spirits and metahumans affiliated with the Black Lodge and the Apep Consortium who first arrived as treasure hunters looking for spirit formulae and arcanae buried within the burial mounds and tunnels of this plane. Since the confrontation with Crimson Sun, they have been attempting to undermine him and other spirits. Stands-in-the-Rain knows this, and has chosen this site to hinder or even put an end to the runners by covertly meeting with Crimson Sun and providing limited evidence that paints them as double agents. The runners have to convince Crimson Sun otherwise, and perhaps offer to deal with these intruders beyond the metaplanes. The spirit council sent them to him to stop a war, not assist in escalating it. If the runners cannot convince Crimson Sun, then Stands-in-the-Rain will approach them later and say that he heard of their misfortune, presuming the runners do not know he was responsible. He will offer to guide them to the next metaplane, but for a price. Abobo, by contrast, will take the runners' side every time, but if it comes to a confrontation between him and Stands-in-the-Rain, the decision is simple—Stands-in-the-Rain can take them to the next plane; Abobo cannot.

The journey through the labyrinth set of tunnels and chambers is one that defies any known physics on Earth. There will be blind spots, three-dimensional movement, improbable geometry, and flat-out deceptive walls and structures that are not





what they seem—all designed to defeat metahuman presumptions of space. In fact, the threshold between the metaplanes is a chamber where the runners have to take a “leap of faith” into a tiny pool that ejects them upside-down into what seems like outer space until they realize that they are within a copse of pitch-black trees with bioluminescent leaves.

## PLOT POINT FIVE

The final level is the 5<sup>th</sup> century where plant and beast spirits feel comfortable roaming freely as themselves. The key is down here, and it will only be given upon convincing the guardians that the runners mean no harm to their world. There are no metahumans or humanoid spirits here. Everything is either a plant or beast spirit, though not necessarily reflective of anything on Earth. Trees and plants are not always made of wood or plantlike substances, but may seem ethereal or made of substances such as living metal, amber sap, or even blood. Some beast spirits look like wolves, deer, or other animals, but there are also chimera that look like a cross between a giraffe, a dragon, and a lynx. Other spirits are even weirder, including those that resemble insect spirits. There are wild and fey creatures that take odd forms such as rocks and dervishes of leaves. Giant birds loom overhead, or maneuver through the forest of uneven density with unnatural grace and speed.

All of them know the runners are present. There are signs across the forest floor that metahumans have visited (Perception (3) Test to notice): footprints, torn synthetic material, and possibly small pieces of metahuman remains. Stands-in-the-Rain, or an indigenous spirit, will direct the runners towards their final destination: A meeting with Delduwath, a massive shadow spirit who holds domain over this area. It does not care for metahumans, and consumes almost all who dare venture into its area. That is why it is the guardian of the key—because it is quite skilled at keeping metahumans away from it, or killing them if they come close. When the runners are lucky enough to get an audience with it, instead of being eaten, Stands-in-the-Rain makes a heel turn and offers them to Delduwath in return for him being given the key to the Phaistos Disc.

If the runners confront and attack Stands-in-the-Rain, Delduwath and its court of shadow and other spirits simply watch and wait for a winner to emerge. Stands-in-the-Rain is not stupid, and he will not fight to the death. If he is on the verge of defeat, he will simply vanish back to his home metaplane. If he is destroying the runners, then Delduwath may intervene before he kills some or all of them. After all, it cannot use its energy-drain power on a corpse. It will grant Stands-in-the-Rain a boon, but it does not give the spirit the key.

Delduwath is the final test, and before it consumes the runners it makes them face a series of challenges based on it being a nightmare shadow spirit. The spirit will use all of its powers to see that the runners confront their deepest fears, alone. The runners have to survive and/or outwit the use of these powers. Failure means doom.

Actually, it doesn't. Being willing to die for the key is the test. Once the runners understand this and let Delduwath's nightmares consume them, they return to his presence, successful. Delduwath

reluctantly hands them the key and sends them directly back to Earth, where Abobo is waiting.

## PLOT POINT SIX

Once the runners are back in Western New York, Abobo is the first face they see. He congratulates the runners, and seeks to get at least an impression of the key from them. It is not a physical item, but rather a very polished, translucent blue stone, oval in shape. Even in mundane space there is a sense of movement within the stone. By assensing the key, Abobo is able to get an impression of the formula, which is what he has been after the whole time. The idea is that a figure like Frosty or someone else may want it to safeguard the true nature of the disc. Abobo, however, has been in league with other forces—forces that have or may soon possess the disc.

Even once he has learned the formula, Abobo would prefer to have the stone. He makes a counteroffer of between 125-150 percent of the amount Giulia offered, with a reminder of what he does and who he works for. Given everything that has transpired, this can lead to Abobo becoming an enemy of the runners. On the other hand, he can simply have a Lone Star SWAT team or two on hand to attempt to take it from them by force.

## PEOPLE

### DELDUWATH

The spirit has no gender identification. It appears only within the Court, and does so as a massive black tree made of shining petrified wood, veins of blackened sap, and pulsing with the erratic movement of something that does not need to move, breathe, or exist in any way with which metahumans are familiar. When it changes forms, it does so to fit its nature, but also to fit the circumstances. It will take on a slightly smaller humanoid tree form, or it will become an emaciated, bone-white human. Being a creature that sustains itself and grows thanks to the fears and thoughts of metahumans, it has developed an interest in them (though if asked by its subjects, it would deny such a thing). It enjoys probing the minds of its victims and testing all of their fears, common reactions (hence the Accident and Confusion powers), and beliefs instead of just going for the obvious kill.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	M	Init	IP
12	10	13	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	23	2

**Astral INIT/IP:** 20, 3

**Movement:** 10/25

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 14/13

**Armor (B/I):** 20/20

**Skills:** Assensing 10, Astral Combat 10, Con 10, Dodge 10, Intimidation 10, Perception 10, Unarmed Combat 10

**Powers:** Accident, Astral Form, Banishing Resistance, Confusion, Engulf (as Guidance Spirit, p. 100 *Street Magic*), Energy Drain (Karma, LOS, Stun damage; see p. 148, *Street Magic*), Fear, Immunity (Age, Pathogens, Toxins, Normal Weapons), Influence, Magical Guard, Materialization, Mind Link, Mutable Form, Sapience, Shadow Cloak, Silence, Storm



## ABOBO

Spirit of man and spy for Lone Star, Abobo comes off as a large, extroverted Texas Ranger most of the time. He is a Caucasian human with the cowboy hat, boots, shield, and so forth. All that, though is an act. He is a spy, having been freed and recruited by Lone Star in Austin from the control of an Azzie mage. He has spent almost all of his time as a free spirit learning skills to take information from metahumans and spirits alike. That is his trick. He warms up to his mark, flatters them, helps them, and then uses them even if it means betrayal and/or death. He's good to his assets until he is not. Given what he can offer, a lot of people and spirits are willing to take the ride.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	M	Init	IP
6	5	7	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	12	2

**Astral INIT/IP:** 10/3

**Movement:** 10/25

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 11/11

**Armor (B/I):** 10/10

**Qualities:** Magician, First Impression

**Skills:** Assensing 5, Arcana 4, Astral Combat 5, Close Combat skill group 5, Cracking skill group 2, Dodge 5, Electronics skill group 2, Influence skill group 3, Intimidation 3, Instruction 3, Perception 5, Pistols 1, Spellcasting 5, Stealth skill group 3

**Languages:** English 3, Aztlaner Spanish 3

**Initiate Grade:** 3

**Metamagics:** Extended Masking, Masking

**Powers:** Accident, Astral Form, Astral Gateway, Banishment Resistance, Concealment, Confusion, Divining, Enhanced Senses (Low-Light, Thermographic Vision), Guard, Immunity (Age, Pathogens, Toxins, Normal Weapons), Influence, Materialization, Movement, Mutable Form, Psychokinesis, Realistic Form, Sapience, Search, Spirit Pact (Dream), Spirit Pact (Friendship)

**Spells:** Analyze Truth, Chaotic World, Compel Truth, Improved Invisibility, Magic Fingers, Manabolt, Manaball, Mind Probe, Stunbolt, Shattershield, Trid Phantasm

## STANDS-IN-THE-RAIN

No one knows who or from where Stands-in-the-Rain comes from. It/He exhibits the characteristics of a spirit of earth, but it was created and existed in an area where Earth and Water intersect. He has not shown any ability beyond what is expected, yet. It doesn't like metahumans, but it has to interact with them. Stands-in-the-Rain has access to strange telesma and assets, which make him a valuable fixer and handler, but it is in this for itself to hunt down whatever it is after. Its common form is a hyper-real metahuman who happens to be composed of strata of Earth. Its other more conventional form is of a dark-skinned ork, possibly of Indian or South Asian descent.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	M	Init	IP
8	4	6	7	6	5	5	5	4	8	8	11	2

**Astral INIT/IP:** 10, 3

**Movement:** 10/25

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 12/11

**Armor (B/I):** 16/16

**Qualities:** Magician

**Initiate Grade:** 4

**Skills:** Arcana 4, Assensing 5, Astral Combat 5, Close Combat skill group 5, Cracking skill group 2, Dodge 5, Electronics skill group 2, Influence skill group 3, Intimidation 3, Instruction 3, Perception 5, Pistols 1, Spellcasting 5, Stealth skill group 3

**Languages:** English 3, Aztlaner Spanish 3

**Powers:** Astral Form, Banishment Resistance, Immunity (Age, Pathogens, Toxins, Normal Weapons), Materialization, Sapience

**Spells:** Analyze Truth, Chaotic World, Clairaudience, Clairvoyance, Control Actions, Control Thoughts, Improved Invisibility, Magic Fingers, Manabolt, Mind Probe, Shattershield, Stunball, Trid Phantasm







## WASHINGTON GETS WEIRD

Posted by: Pistons

There is some strange business going down in DeeCee, especially with the increasing weirdness that seems to be related to the Watergate Rift and some of the magical disturbances that have popped up here and there in the last couple of weeks. I don't have all the dirt—no one does—but here's some of the latest happenings.

## CORCORAN VENTURES DOWN THE SILK ROAD

By Robin Bakterev

In the wood-paneled rotunda of the Corcoran Museum, Evan Corcoran was surrounded by a bevy of Washington movers and shakers as he announced that the museum has entered into a joint venture with the Apep Consortium. The effort is part of a long-term project to develop deep inroads into central and west Asia that would explore the historical, artistic, and cultural expressions that have developed along the old and new Silk Roads. Apep has long had interests in southwest Asia and Africa, while Corcoran has been involved in central Asia and Russia. The venture seeks to build on their mutual expertise, and Corcoran especially hopes to benefit from Apep's thaumaturgical expertise.

The arrangement is part of a larger venture between Apep and George Washington University, which took over the Corcoran's museum and art school in 2062. In the hundred years before that, the Corcoran family and the university had worked together to cement the university's cultural reputation and place in the large Washington-area business community. The museum's interests in Russia coincide with a much larger and longer legacy of GWU's academic programs that began as the Sino-Soviet programs that now encompass programs and research throughout the Chinese states, Russia, Turkestan, the Middle East, Black Sea region, and into eastern and central Europe. Apep's increasing collaborations with certain institutions make this business arrangement crucial

as they strike eastward into areas that GWU and Corcoran are well-versed in exploring, culturally and politically.

The Apep Consortium has been investing in research in and around the Federal District of Columbia about other activities that have ties to magical incidents involving expatriate communities in the regions it is now exploring, including Russia, Central and Southwest Asia, and China. This has brought them into conflict with the many other thaumaturgical institutions, including the Draco Foundation and the Atlantean Foundation. In an interesting twist, Mr. Corcoran has used his connections with George Washington University and the Colloton Administration to smooth over ruffled feathers and turn federal interest in these matters to Apep's benefit.

The press conference comes two weeks after Mr. Corcoran, CEO and Chairman of the UCAS branch of the United Bank of Panama, announced a financing program to spur developments in Arlington. The district was the subject of intense but failed cleanup efforts in the late 2050s, until Crash 2.0 nearly caused the FDC and UCAS governments to write off the district wholesale. Shedim activity in the area, especially in Arlington, has also hurt the effort. Corcoran has stated that he knows all about the problems, and that is why he has spent much of the past three years proving that he can do the job better than the government—or anyone else. His initial efforts have been successful, and that is why the United Bank of Panama indicates that they are eager to be on the ground floor in the event that Corcoran's efforts pay off.

Arlington Regional Commissioner Marissa Legeis has expressed optimism for the revitalization efforts. In a candid interview, she opened up about the government's concerns over the shedim activity concentrated in her district. She noted that FCP and FBI figures have shown a marked decrease in activities over the last few months, and that has freed up resources to address other issues such as the sudden appearance of magical disturbances throughout the federal district—disturbances that, for the most part, have avoided much of Arlington. In spite of the shedim activity and the ongoing fallout from the blood dust incidents of the forties, much of the older defense and security

Incoming .....



sectors continue to maintain a presence in Arlington, but the investments made under the Military Recovery Act and similar investments have avoided Arlington, instead favoring Howard and Montgomery. Legeis suggested that this revitalization could bring back industries that have been run off because of their concerns about magic and shedim.

- Did anyone else notice that the director of DARPA was at that event?
- Plan 9
- That's just how things go in DeeCee.
- Kay St. Irregular
- Dr. Finger is brilliant and visionary, so he could be trawling the room for new ideas. Apep, GW, and all their associates and hangers-on constitute a rich variety of interesting scumbags. As it happens, there are people in the government who really like them.
- Elijah
- I forgot. *You're* the magical hooker with a heart of gold.
- Am-Mut
- Dr. Omar al-Masri was at the event as well, representing GWU's King Mohammed V Center for Islamic Studies. I understand that Aden has become increasingly concerned over Apep Consortium stomping around his dominion.
- Goat Foot
- That whole clan has been in bed with the CIA for nearly a century. I'll never understand why they'd serve Aden.
- Thorn
- Corcoran is a very powerful shedim spirit. He—it—is uncannily manipulative, which is probably why none of the powerful mages in the city have tried to put it down yet.
- Frosty
- There is a small team of American soldiers—or at least everyone assumes they are Americans—that has been operating for a while now. I ran across them in Tbilisi, but I've heard of sightings in Bilbao, Indonesia, Kittimat, and in the Yucatan border region. These guys were not normal, and my mage nearly had a heart attack when she scanned one.
- Picador
- Those shades will be the death of many people to come.
- Man-of-Many-Names

## OVERVIEW

Not every party interested in the artifacts and related matters is benevolent to metahumanity. In this instance, the runners find themselves pitted between insect spirits and a powerful master shedim. For them, the artifacts are a summons to conquest—a tool to help wage a war between the spirits. However, some of their kin on both sides have their own agenda, or are simply opportunistic, and have joined forces through the Apep Consortium and some of its primary backers like the United Bank of Panama. In the UCAS, the most powerful person associated with the Apep Consortium is Evan Corcoran. He is the CEO and Chairman of the United Bank of Panama, the “independent” UCAS subsidiary that controls most of the banking in the southern UCAS from North Virginia to Indiana. He also happens to be dead, and the body of Mr. Corcoran is inhabited by one of the most powerful shedim spirits in North America, which is master of almost all of the shedim in the DeeCee Sprawl. This is especially important since the DeeCee sprawl has until recently been the second most active area for shedim activity in the world after Tehran. Corcoran is so powerful that he has brokered a sort of détente between the shedim and the UCAS government.

To start this adventure, Corcoran reaches out to the runners and brings them to Washington to have them steal the black heart that they may have encountered in *Dawn of the Artifact: New Dawn*. He introduces them to their backup, a group of shedim soldiers (with UCAS ties), reminding the troops that they are his agents and should support his goals. The whole crew ventures to

Istanbul, where the runners are cut loose to find the clandestine meeting between the Karavan suppliers and the mysterious buyers of the heart. The runners have to find the meeting and take possession of the heart. Another group of operatives, however, descends upon them before they can leave Istanbul. These attackers are in fact members of the N'dranghetta Mafia family from Italy, a family that is at least partially a secret hive of flesh-form insect spirits. The insect spirits have their own agenda, and they intend to trade the heart to another party back in Italy. A fight in the Grand Bazaar draws all sorts of unwelcome attention from 10,000 Daggers members, random bystanders, and even other runners and mercenaries (such as the Kurdish mercenaries who seem far too interested to be mere observers). It should make for an exciting chase as the runners try to escape through a crowded, claustrophobic environment. The runners should eventually lose the heart to the N'drangheta or to the mercenary army policing the Grand Bazaar.

Corcoran's expediter will insist that the runners finish the job and hunt down the bugs if they stole the heart from the runners, forcing them to travel through the Balkans to the GeMiTo Sprawl and eventually retrieve the heart from another strange market, The Pile. The bugs are making their own deal, and this is when the Kurds show up again. They contact the runners and tell them they are also after the heart. The Kurds offer the runners twice as much as Corcoran's man if they help take the heart from the bugs and turn it over to them. The leader will let the runners go if they refuse, but he reminds them that they never give up.

Eventually a more reasoned insect spirit reaches out to the runners at their safehouse and tell them of the stakes. Synthia



Schroeder, a contract lawyer working for Stark, Thiessen, and Van der Mer, contacts the runners at some point before or after they move on the heart. The law firm represents the N'drangheta and is a founding organization within the Apep Consortium. Schroeder approaches the runners and inform them as to Corcoran's true identity. She has been sent to broker some sort of an arrangement between component organizations in the consortium. They can take her offer as a third party, they can strike out on their own and finish the job, or they can make other arrangements.

If they betray Corcoran, they will make a powerful and politically connected enemy who still has shedim soldiers to send at the runners. The Kurdish assassins will still be after them as long as they have the heart. The bugs will also continue to hunt them so long as they have the heart, as will the buyer in GeMiTo, which is the Black Lodge. If the runners try to deal with anyone else, no one wants to do business, since the heart is not something anyone wants to officially possess. But they will draw the attention of people willing to take the heart and make it vanish, such as agents of both Tirs, the Atlantean Foundation, and independent actors like Lugh Surehand.

## PLOT POINT ONE

The runners are contacted through their usual fixer and told that a powerful DeeCee businessman named Evan Corcoran wants to meet with them. Corcoran is a major business fixer in the DeeCee sprawl and has deep ties to the Apep Consortium. He invites the runners to meet with him in Washington as his guests, flying them in on a private plane that avoids any scrutiny from the hordes of police, corporate security, and military personnel who work in DeeCee. He meets with the runners in a United Bank of Panama office that overlooks the armed camp known as the White House Complex just to remind them what kind of man they are meeting.

He has been led to understand that the runners have encountered the heart (see p. 21, *DOTA: New Dawn*), and they are familiar with Karavan (see p. 22, *DOTA: New Dawn* and p. 121, *Feral Cities*). If the players have not run *New Dawn*, then he tells them that because they haven't been to Karavan and didn't encounter the black heart, they are untainted by the schemes of the various actors from whom they are being asked to steal. He provides information that the heart is on its way to Istanbul's Grand Bazaar (see p. 132, *Runner Havens*). Corcoran also introduces the runners to Joanna Krstic, a civilian spy for the UCAS military (see p. 128, *Spy Games*). Her role is to provide them intelligence support and a means of getting into and hopefully out of Istanbul. She is in command of a five-man commando unit that is already on-site in the sprawl.

## PLOT POINT TWO

The runners are sent to find the heart before it is to be sold at the Grand Bazaar. They should know what it looks like, but the clandestine nature of the sale has kept it a secret. There are no secrets at the bazaar for long, and the runners must do legwork to find the location of the meet before the other buyers arrive. The

runners are members of Karavan's Pjelykost tribe (see p. 23, *DOTA: New Dawn*). They are a group of four mages who have traveled to the Grand Bazaar to make this secretive sale. The fact that they are Karavanli magicians draws attention to them, which gives people in the Spice Bazaar reason to anticipate their arrival. Word is that they are in Istanbul to trade in some rare Awakened flora or some sort of rare earth from Afghanistan with strange magical properties. The buyers are more difficult to identify because there is no shortage of strange figures lurking around the bazaar. As the meeting time approaches, however, people in the Spice Bazaar notice a group of cybered-up mundanes from northern Africa of Arabian descent. People whisper that they are Kharijites, a small sect of exiles from the former Oman who are rumored to have ties to Aden. In the course of asking around, the runners may also encounter a group of Kurdish mercenaries who are looking for opportunities and keeping their eyes out for trouble—which they could either stop or enhance, depending on their evaluation of the situation and who involved might be willing and able to pay them.

The gamemaster can have them find the location before one or both parties arrive. This will allow the runners to set up a classic ambush or fake-out where they stand in for the buyers. They may even be able to intercept the sellers before they reach the meet and engage them on the runners' terms. If they miss the sale, then they could take on the buyers alone and reduce the numbers of hostile smugglers and focus on either a magic-heavy conflict or a melee with cybered-up fanatics.

Either way, the runners will be tracked down by the bug spirit Mafiosi while they are still in Istanbul. They are attacked by up to a dozen of flesh-form wasp soldiers. These bugs work frighteningly well in small unit tactics thanks to their hive-mind telepathic connection. If the gamemaster is feeling particularly sadistic, they could use the bonuses that tactical AR software (Rating 4) can give (see p. 126, *Unwired*) to reflect the spirits' unit cohesion and tactical awareness. This is especially encouraged if the runners are proving to be too difficult for the spirits. If the runners have a hard time in this conflict, then Krstic's commandos could arrive, and for added measure the 10,000 Daggers mercenaries who protect the city will be drawn into the fight against both sides. Insect spirits are especially hated in Istanbul, and the Brotherhood of the Iron Crescent mages will eventually recognize the spirits for what they are and focus on them.

## PLOT POINT THREE

Once in possession of the heart, the runners are to deliver it to Joanna in the Janissaries' Bazaar, which is in another part of the Grand Bazaar, once the heat has died down. She is protected by her commando unit, which gives the runners an opportunity to get a good impression of them. If they break the masking, they will determine that the soldiers are shedim, led by a master shedim. At or just after the handoff, the runners are ambushed. The Kurdish mercenaries, more N'drangheta flesh form ant spirits, and whatever Kharijites that are left all try to obtain the heart. If the first fight didn't attract the attention of 10,000 Daggers, then a battle in the arms/mercenary market with this many actors definitely brings down hell on the runners and everyone around them. If 10,000 Daggers doesn't contain the fight, it will

envelop the entire Jannissaries' Bazaar. The shedim will not use their powers at this time unless it is to carry out their duty to protect and evacuate Joanna with the heart. The 10,000 Daggers are peacekeepers, and they will give everyone an opportunity to give up, but then they will move in for the kill.

## PLOT POINT FOUR

If the runners make the handoff, then Joanna contacts them and informs them that the heart was taken from her in the process of everyone making their escape. If the runners have assented the commandos and realized that they are shades, then they might be concerned about what it was that defeated them. Joanna will insist that the runners finish the job and hunt down the thieves who stole the heart. This forces them to travel to the GeMiTo Sprawl (see p. 117, *Feral Cities*), and retrieve the heart from another strange market, the *Fiere* in Milan. If the GM is feeling so inclined, the runners may have to make their way through the Balkans, with side adventures in Sarajevo (see p. 123, *Feral Cities*) before they arrive in Italy. As soon as the runners arrive, the Kurds show up again. This time the mercenary leader, Hamid, contacts the runners. He informs them that his group is also after the heart, but he has been authorized to pay the runners twice as much as Corcoran is paying them. In return they must help his team retrieve the heart from the bugs. Hamid will let them go if they refuse, but he will remind them that he will get the heart himself or die trying.

Joanna sends the shades to assist the runners, and they show up after the meeting with Hamid claiming that there was a detour they had to make in Sarajevo. The runners need to explore the *Fiere* to find out where the insect spirits may be; in the course this action, they learn that a section of the abandoned and collapsed subway tunnels is being cleared of people. There are also rumors that there are Europol agents in the area. If the runners are able to find any Europol Matrix nodes and penetrate the security, they will learn that Paul Borden, an Arcane Misuse and Magical Threats (AMMA) task force chief, has a small unit in the area. Ostensibly they are doing routine talislegging sweeps, but he has an hour of "personal time" blocked out in the middle of the sweeps in the *Fiere* above the same tunnels being cleared.

## PLOT POINT FIVE

At this point, the bugs take a different tack, and Synthia Schroeder approaches the runners. She is able to find their safehouse, and while she is there, she lays out the truth behind Corcoran. She tells them that he is a powerful shedim spirit, and (if they don't already know) that the commandos are shades of dead soldiers who will kill the runners at Corcoran's first command. She claims to be an intermediary acting on behalf of the Apep Consortium, not any particular faction in this fight. Her offer is 150 percent of Corcoran's offer. She's a lawyer, and she uses her skills to lay out a compelling case that the runners should just walk away. She tells the runners that they can have the money, and they don't have to fight the insect spirits, Europol, or the Kurds. They also won't draw the attention of the locals, including whatever wild technomancers

and other entities may be roaming the area. She concludes by saying that the sooner they act, the sooner they can be separated from the shades. The downside to betraying Corcoran, however, is that their reputation will take a hit for shifting clients in mid-run, and that Corcoran, the person they turned on, is a very powerful man with ties to Apep, the UCAS government, and various corporations. They should be aware that at this point, the only evidence they have that Corcoran is a shedim is Schroeder's word.

## PLOT POINT SIX

The runners have no shortage of options, most of which end with a lot of dead people. In the long term, they are going to make enemies of entities and organizations that have no regard to destroy them and everyone they care about it. The runners have to figure out how to appease the many devils that are all drawn to this black heart. If they take Synthia's offer, then they will lose whatever arrangements Corcoran had made to let them back home, and may even be actively targeted and put on various watch lists (Interpol, FBI, etc.). That is after the shades are sent to kill them; this time, the shades will use all of their powers.

If the runners decide to hit the bugs' meet with Borden, then they will have to contend with two-dozen flesh form spirits providing protection, as well as a group of four true-form wasp spirits and a wasp shaman. Borden is also secretly a powerful Hermetic mage who will break his cover to call in Europol support if he deems the runners to be a threat to his safety. The Kurds will make a move on the meet as well, and then immediately turn on the runners if they get their hands on the heart before the Kurds do. The Kurds will, in fact, fight and/or pursue the runners until their last man is dead in an effort to retake that heart. If they end up giving chase, they can over time draw more mercenaries and resources to take possession of the heart so long as the runners have it.

## LOCATIONS

### MILAN FIERE

Milan is a crowded, industrial sprawl of over five million people. It is the epitome of an industrial wasteland. The *Fiere* takes place in the city's *tendopoli*, a massive tent city of over half a million people. The *Fiere* is a massive outdoor market, a sprawling network of smaller markets where one can find everything from fresh food to weapons (along with the people who can use those weapons). There is a large tram and subway system under the city, but sections of it have been bombed-out and collapsed due to gang warfare. These half-abandoned, rotting, partially collapsed tunnels are where Agent Borden and the N'drangheta spirits with the black heart are making the handoff. Parts of this tunnel network are just big enough for an elf or human to crawl through, and much of the tunnel system is inaccessible to large orks or trolls. In addition to whatever was abandoned but not deactivated, fetid water sits in pools collecting biomass and/or pollutants, and critters such as devil rats scurry about at will.







INCOMING FEED.....

## ISTANBUL GRAND BAZAAR

The Grand Bazaar is far more permanent than the *Fiere*. It covers a complex web of streets filled with shops, housing, and other businesses mixed around a large area where commerce runs nonstop. There are permanent shops, ramshackle stands that are erected and removed daily, alongside people with no more than their wares on a blanket. The whole neighborhood is alive with commerce, and it is divided into areas like the Spice Bazaar, which sells spices, drugs, and bioawakened drugs and other teslas. There is also the Jannissaries' Bazaar where one can buy weapons, cyberware, and other gear. One can also purchase the services of mercenaries or shadowrunners in this bazaar.

The city realizes a good income from the bazaar, so they work to keep it secure—which is not easy, considering the chaotic nature of the bazaar's design and the crowds that throng its streets. After many experiences where security officers couldn't push their way through a crowd fast enough to get to the scene of an emergency, they started leaning more on astral security. They have escalated this effort to the point where there is an average of one watcher spirit for every three blocks of the bazaar. If there is any sign of trouble, the watchers first call on the bound sprits of man (Force 3) and spirits of earth (Force 3) that city security makes sure are constantly available. The job of the spirits of man is to herd people in a particular direction, either through encouragement or force, either to clear a particular area, to get victims to the help they need, or to push suspected perpetrators into the arms of physical security officers (use Lone Star Police Squad Member, p. 143, for the guards here). The spirits of earth, on the other hand, are usually charged with grabbing a person of interest and holding them in place until physical security arrives.

The Grand Bazaar has a wide variety of items available. To reflect this, for any item with an Availability rating of 8 or lower, add two dice to a player's Negotiation + Charisma Extended Test to find the item in question. Costs and items with a higher Availability are not affected.

## PEOPLE

### PAUL BORDEN

An agent of the EuroPol criminal intelligence section assigned to the Arcane Misuse and Magical Threats (AMMA) task force, Paul is secretly a member of the Black Lodge. Paul is ethnically Korean, but he was born and adopted into an French family where he grew up in Normandy. He showed an aptitude for magic and was groomed to be a public servant while practicing the Hermetic tradition. At university he was recruited into the Black Lodge, where he has acted as an inside man for them within the AMMA task force. He has been tasked with reaching out to the insect spirits to purchase the black heart from them once they decide to steal it.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	M	Init	IP
3	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	6	8	8	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S):** 10/10

**Armor (B/I):** 6/4

**Skills:** Athletics skill group 3, Automatics 4, First Aid (Combat Wounds) 3 (+2), Pistols 3, Piloting Ground Craft 4, NEEC Politics 3, Sorcery skill group 5, European Religious History 3, Law 3, Police Procedures 4, Summoning 5, Survival 4, Tracking

4, Unarmed Combat 3

**Languages:** French N, English 4, German 4

**Qualities:** Magician, Focused Concentration [1], Sensitive System

**Initiate Grade:** 4

**Metamagics:** Centering, Masking, Shielding, Reflecting

**Gear:** Armor vest, Europol fatigues

**Spells:** Clairvoyance, Flamethrower, Heal, Increased Reflexes, Mana Ball, Mind Probe, Offensive Mana Barrier, Physical Barrier, Ram, Stun Bolt, Trid Phantasm

**Weapons:**

H&K 227-S [SMG, DV 5P; AP -4, SA/BF, RC 5, 28(c) w/ adv. safety, folding stock, gas-vent 3, personalized grip, smartgun, APDS ammo]

Savalette Guardian [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P; AP -1, SA/BF\*, RC 2, 12(c) w/ advanced safety, personalized grip, smartgun]

\*Burst fire requires a Complex Action

## EVAN CORCORAN

On the surface, Evan Corcoran is a successful local businessman in the Washington area. He comes from an important local family most recognizable for the Corcoran Museum of Art located across the street from the White House complex on 17<sup>th</sup> Street NW. In addition to chairing the museum's board of directors, Corcoran is a community leader whose influence ranges from being a member of the *Washington Post* board of directors and a trustee for George Washington University to running a tailgate for every Chieftains game, home and away, where any SINner living in FDC can attend for a small fee.

Corcoran is also secretly the most powerful master shedim in FDC. Washington has the largest shedim population in North America, and Corcoran is the de facto leader over all local and many east coast master and normal shedim spirits. He has given many of them focus, and he polices things so that while the shedim are many in number, they have not drawn sufficient attention for the UCAS government to crackdown on the spirits infesting its national capital.

B A R S C I L W Edg Ess M Init IP  
9 9 12 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 21 2

**Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S):** 13/13

**Armor (B/I):** 18/18

**Astral Init/IP:** 18/3

**Movement:** 10/25

**Skills:** Arcanoarchaeology 5, Assensing 9, Astral Combat 9, Banking 4, Business 6, Close Combat skill group 9, Counterspelling 9, DeeCee Politics 5, DeeCee Culture 6, Dodge 9, Influence skill group 6, Mystic Secrets 5, Perception 9, Spellcasting 9, UCAS Politics 4

**Languages:** English N

**Powers:** Astral Form, Astral Gateway, Aura Masking, Banishing Resistance, Compulsion, Deathly Aura, Energy Drain (Karma, Touch range, Physical damage), Fear, Immunity (Age, Pathogens, Toxins), Possession (Dead or Abandoned Vessels), Regeneration, Sapience, Search, Shadow Cloak, Silence, Spirit Pact (Dream)

**Weaknesses:** Allergy (Sunlight, Mild), Evanescence

**Qualities:** Magician, First Impression

**Spells:** Analyze Truth, Armor, Control Thoughts, Improved

Invisibility, Lightning Bolt, Magic Fingers, Mind Probe, Manabolt, Stunball, Trid Phantasm

**Gear:** Blue Berwick three-piece suit

## SYNTHIA SCHROEDER

Synthia is a human changeling who possesses the Glamour and astral sight abilities. She also acquired follicle bioluminescence, and her eyes are now dull but reflective silver. Her bioluminescent hair usually appears as a light violet color but can alter in intensity and spectrum depending on her mood. When she is excited her hair tends to turn dark orange. Standing at just under two meters tall, she is a dominating presence for a human.

She knows how the law works from creation to execution (literally), having been a corporate lawyer doing everything from Contract Court extraditions (repatriating fugitive wageslaves) to prosecuting runners and even serving as a judge advocate in the field during the Desert Wars, bringing suits and engaging in mediations on behalf of her corporation before government courts and Corporate Court representatives. She is currently in private practice and works as a contract lawyer on behalf of global firms like Stark, Thiessen, and Van der Mer. She also works as a political and legal fixer for special clients, mostly in Europe. Stark hired her for this case because she is truly neutral in the conflict and could approach the runners and the other factions with clean hands and a clear head.

B A R S C I L W Edg Ess M Init IP  
3 3 3 3 7 6 6 5 4 6 6 9 1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S):** 10/11

**Armor (B/I):** 4/1

**Skills:** Computer 3, Data Search 5, Dodge 2, Influence Skill Group 6, Perception 5, Business 3, Law 6, European Politics 4, Megacorporate Politics 4, Police Procedures 5, Psychology 4

**Languages:** German N, English 6, French 6, Russian 4, Italian 4, Spanish 3, Japanese 3

**Qualities:** Astral Sight, Bioluminescence, Exceptional Attribute (Charisma), Glamour, First Impression

**Gear:** Moonsilver line cocktail dress w/ scarf

## JOANNA KRSTIC

Joanna Krstic is a Serbian-American spy who works for the UCAS Defense Protective Intelligence Field Activity. She runs all of their offensive foreign counterintelligence operations in Africa and the Middle East out of her clandestine base in Dubai. Her boss knows which way the wind blows and knows how important it is to keep a friend like Evan Corcoran. Before she became the head of PIFA Middle East operations, Joanna had been a major in Army intelligence but was given a general discharge for undisclosed reasons in 2065. She worked as a private spy for SIS for a while before being handpicked by the director of the field activity in 2070. She carries an air of suspicion and mistrust around her at all times, but she is a good tactician and leader and also has a keen sense of how to make political connections that can help her future. She is not, however, well suited to most espionage activities that require social interaction. Ms. Krstic has dark Balkan features with black hair and nearly black cybereyes. While the cybereyes are mostly black, on some occasions the irises will glow a bright blue for just a second or two.





B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
3	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	3.88	8	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S):** 10/10

**Armor (B/I):** 6/4

**Skills:** African Politics 3, Athletics skill group 3, Automatics 4, Close Combat skill group 3, Cracking skill group 4, Electronics skill group 4, Etiquette (Middle East) 3 (+2), Intelligence Procedures 6, Intimidation 4, Leadership 3, Middle Eastern Politics 4, Pistols 3, Perception 3, Survival 2, UCAS Politics 3, Stealth 4, Tactics 5

**Languages:** English N, Serbian N, French 4, Arabic 4

**Augmentations:** Attention coprocessor 2, cybereyes [Rating 3 (alphaware), w/ low-light vision, smartlink, thermographic vision, vision enhancement 3, vision magnification], cerebral booster 2, commlink (implanted), datajack, mnemonic enhancer 2

**Qualities:** Bilingual, Deep Cover, Bad Rep

**Gear:** Armor vest

**Software:** Tactical AR software 4, Browse 3, Command 2, Decrypt 5, Edit 4, Encrypt 5, Exploit 3, Purge 4, Scan 2, Sniffer 4

**Weapons:**

H&K 227-S [SMG, DV 5P; AP -4, SA/BF, RC 5, 28(c) w/ adv. safety, folding stock, gas-vent 3, personalized grip, smartgun, APDS ammo]

Ares Predator IV [Heavy pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, 15(c), w/ smartgun]

## GRUNTS AND MOVING TARGETS

### KURDISH MERCENARY

(Professional Rating 3)

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
4	5(6)	5(6)	4(5)	3	4	3	4	3.2	9(10)	2

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

**Armor (B/I):** 8/6

**Skills:** Athletics skill group 3, Blades 3, Dodge 4, Etiquette (Military) 3 (+2), Firearms skill group 5, Infiltration 3, Perception 3, Unarmed Combat 4

**Qualities:** Toughness

**Augmentations:** Cybereyes [Rating 3, w/ flare comp, low-light, smartlink], muscle augmentation 1, muscle toner 1, wired reflexes 1

**Gear:** Armor jacket, medkit (Rating 6), commlink (Device Rating 4, with Analyze 4 and TacNet 2)

**Weapons:**

Vibro knife [Blade, Reach —, DV 4P, AP -2].

HK G12A3z [Assault Rifle, DV 6P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 32(c), w/ smartgun]

2 fragmentation grenades [Grenade, DV 12P, blast -1/m, AP +2]

2 thermal smoke grenades [Grenade, blast 10m radius]

### HAMID, KURDISH MERCENARY TEAM LEADER

(Professional Rating 4)

Hamid is a professional soldier who happens to be a mercenary. He has spent his entire life serving the cause of the PKK and the Kurdish people. As a younger man he started out his mercenary career in Istanbul that followed the eruption of the Chicago Hive.

He was a grunt with the Kurdish unit that provided backup for the Knight Errant assault in Istanbul on a hive nearly as large as the one in Chicago. He has a distinct hatred of insect spirits and deep, unbending love for his people. He is a professional and will do his job regardless of the consequences to the lives of his men and himself. He is a dedicated, proud man who will risk his life to drag a wounded subordinate out of fire not because he would sooner accept death than the dishonor of having one of his soldiers left behind.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
5	5(6)	5(7)	4(5)	4	4	3	4	2.2	9(11)	3

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 11

**Armor (B/I):** 8/6

**Skills:** Athletics skill group 3, Blades 3, Dodge 4, Etiquette (Military) 4 (+2), Firearms skill group 5, Infiltration 3, Leadership 4, Perception 3, Unarmed Combat 4

**Qualities:** Toughness

**Augmentations:** Cybereyes [Rating 3, w/ flare compensation, low-light vision, smartlink], muscle augmentation 1, muscle toner 1, wired reflexes 2

**Gear:** Armor jacket, medkit (Rating 6), commlink (Device Rating 4, with Analyze 4 and TacNet 2)

**Weapons:**

Vibro knife [Blade, Reach —, 4P, AP -2].

HK G12A3z [Assault Rifle, DV 6P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 32(c), w/ smartgun]

2 fragmentation grenades [Grenade, 12P -1/m, AP +2]

2 thermal smoke grenades [Grenade, 10m radius]

### SHADE SOLDIERS

(Professional Rating 5)

The shades are shedim who've inhabited the bodies of dead soldiers and who retain their skills as soldiers. They never speak in the presence of metahumans, and when they do it is not in a human tongue. They obey the orders of Corcoran or Krstic without hesitation and exactly to the letter of the command.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	M	Init	IP
6	6	8	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	14	2

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 11

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 12/9

**Astral INIT/IP:** 12, 3

**Movement:** 10/25

**Skills:** Assensing 6, Astral Combat 6, Dodge 6, Perception 6, Close Combat skill group 6, Firearms skill group 4, Stealth 4

**Language:** English 3

**Powers:** Astral Form, Aura Masking, Deathly Aura, Energy Drain (Karma, Touch range, Physical damage), Fear, Immunity (Age, Pathogens, Toxins), Paralyzing Touch, Possession (Dead or Abandoned Vessels), Regeneration, Sapience, Search, Shadow Cloak, Silence

**Weaknesses:** Allergy (Sunlight, Mild), Evanescence

**Gear:** Full body armor, helmet [w/ flare compensation, image link, smartlink, thermographic vision]

**Weapons:**

Vibro knife [Blade, Reach —, DV 4P, AP -2]

Ares Predator IV [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, RC -, 15(c), w/ quick-draw holster]



HK 227-X [SMG, DV 5P, AP —, SA/BF/FA, RC 2(3), 28 (c), w/ gas-vent 2]  
 Mossberg AM-CDT [Shotgun, 9P(f), AP +5, SA/BF/FA, RC —, 10 (c)]  
 3 Flash bangs [Grenade, 6S, AP -3, 10m blast]  
 3 Thermal smoke grenades [Grenade, impairs visibility, 10m radius]  
 Fists [unarmed, DV 3S, AP 0, Reach 0]

## SHADE MASTER SHEDIM LEADER (Professional Rating 6)

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	M	Init	IP
6	6	9	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	15	2

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 11

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 12/9

**Astral INIT/IP:** 12, 3

**Movement:** 10/25

**Skills:** Assensing 6, Astral Combat 6, Close Combat skill group 6, Counterspelling 6, Dodge 6, Firearms skill group 4, Perception 6, Spellcasting 6, Stealth 4

**Language:** English 3

**Powers:** Astral Form, Astral Gateway, Aura Masking, Banishing Resistance, Compulsion, Deathly Aura, Energy Drain (Karma, Touch range, Physical damage), Fear, Immunity (Age, Pathogens, Toxins), Possession (Dead or Abandoned Vessels), Regeneration, Sapience, Search, Shadow Cloak, Silence

**Weaknesses:** Allergy (Sunlight, Mild), Evanescence

**Qualities:** Magician

**Spells:** Analyze Truth, Armor, Control Thoughts, Improved Invisibility, Lightning Bolt, Magic Fingers, Manabolt, Mind Probe, Stunball, Trid Phantasm

**Gear:** Full body armor, helmet [w/ flare compensation, image link, smartlink, thermographic vision]

**Weapons:**

Vibro knife [Blade, Reach —, DV 4P, AP -2]  
 Ares Predator IV [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, RC -, 15 (c), w/ quick-draw holster]  
 Mossberg AM-CDT [Shotgun, 9P(f), AP +5, SA/BF/FA, RC —, 10 (c)]  
 3 Flash bangs [Grenade, 6S, AP -3, 10m blast]  
 3 Thermal smoke grenades [Grenade, impairs visibility, 10m radius]

## N'DRANGETA LIEUTENANT/NYMPH (Professional Rating 6)

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	M	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
8	9	9	8	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	11	2

**Astral INIT/IP:** 10/3

**Movement:** 10/45

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 12/11

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 16/12

**Skills:** Assensing 5, Astral Combat 5, Dodge 5, Etiquette (Street) 3 (+2), Firearms skill group 3, Flight 5, Intimidation (Torture) 3 (+2), Leadership 4, Perception 5, Spellcasting 5, Stealth skill group 6, Unarmed Combat (Boxing) 5 (+2)

**Qualities:** Magician, Martial Arts 2 [Boxing, Unarmed DV +2],

Maneuvers [Full Offense, Finishing Move, Set-Up, Vicious Blow]  
**Powers:** Animal Control (Wasp), Astral Form, Aura Masking, Dual-Natured, Enhanced Senses (Smell, Ultrasound), Fear, Hive Mind, Immunity to Normal Weapons, Inhabitation (Living Vessels), Realistic Form, Sapience, Venom

**Weaknesses:** Allergy (Insecticides, Severe), Evanescence

**Spells:** Control Actions, Control Thoughts, Improved Invisibility, Manabolt, Manaball, Offensive Mana Barrier, Physical Barrier, Powerbolt, Trid Phantasm

**Gear:** Armanti suit, FFBA (full suit), Smartglasses (w/ smartlink, flare compensation, vision enhancement 2)

**Weapons:**

Savalette Guardian [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P; AP -5, SA/BF\*, RC 2, 12(c), w/ smartgun, 2 clips APDS]

Franchi SPAS-22 [Shotgun, DV 8P, AP -2, SA/BF, RC 1, 10(m), smartgun, EX-Explosive]

Fists [Unarmed, Reach —, DV 6P\*\*, AP —]

\* Burst fire requires a Complex Action

\*\* The Lieutenant always uses the Vicious Blow maneuver.

## N'DRANGETA ORK SOLDIERS (Professional Rating 5)

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	M	Init	IP
7	7	7	9	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	7	2

**Astral INIT/IP:** 6/3

**Movement:** 10/45

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 12/10

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 12/8

**Qualities:** Magician, Martial Arts 2 [Boxing, Unarmed DV +2],

Maneuvers [Full Offense, Finishing Move, Set-Up, Vicious Blow]  
**Skills:** Assensing 3, Astral Combat 3, Athletics skill group 4, Blades 3, Clubs 3, Counterspelling 3, Dodge 3, Flight 3, Perception 3, Pilot Ground Vehicle 2, Pistols 3, Stealth skill group 6, Throwing Weapons 2, Unarmed Combat (Boxing) 4 (+2)

**Powers:** Animal Control (Wasp), Astral Form, Aura Masking, Dual-Natured, Enhanced Senses (Smell, Ultrasound), Fear, Hive Mind, Immunity to Normal Weapons, Inhabitation (Living Vessels), Magical Guard, Realistic Form, Sapience

**Weaknesses:** Allergy (Insecticides, Light), Evanescence

**Gear:** Armanti suit, FFBA (full suit), Smartglasses (w/ smartlink, flare compensation, vision enhancement 2)

**Weapons:**

Savalette Guardian [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P; AP -5, SA/BF\*, RC 2, 12(c), smartgun, 2 clips of APDS]

Cougar Fineblade long blade [Blades, Reach —, DV 7P, AP -1]

Telescoping staff [Clubs, Reach 2, DV 7P, AP -]

3 flash bang grenades [Grenade, 6S, AP -3, Blast 10m Radius]

3 thermal smoke grenades [Grenade, impairs visibility, Blast 10m Radius]

Net [Thrown, DV -]

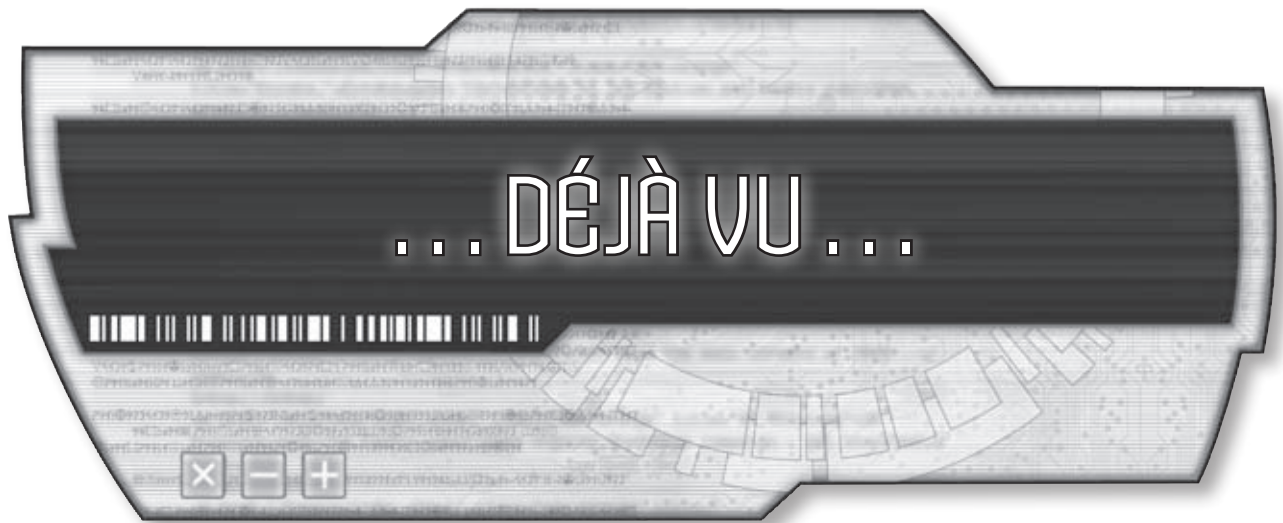
Fists [Unarmed, Reach —, DV 7P\*\*, AP —]

\* Burst fire requires a Complex Action

\*\* The Soldiers always use the Vicious Blow maneuver.







**Posted by: Clockwork**

Sometimes, it's good to know people in high places. I was given these recordings as an insurance policy for Mr. Banks. Apparently, with all the mistrust and the espionage going on behind closed doors at NeoNET, he wanted to make sure he has paydata that can be used to burn certain people should anything ever happen to him. He told me I could share this information with people on JackPoint, with the expectation that it cannot be used against NeoNET or against any of the players in this affair unless something happens to him. So, unless you hear specifically from me, view but do not use.

**Recording 1. Timestamp: July 12, 2073, 0930 hours.**

**Location: NeoNET Headquarters, Boston, Massachusetts.**

*Cybereye and Cyberear recording:*

*Banks:* Mr. Villiers. Security Chief Arthur Banks reporting as requested.

*Villiers:* No need for formalities, Arthur. Please, have a seat. [Villiers makes a few motions toward AROs and the armored glass windows for the penthouse office suite become opaque, white noise generators activate in the room, and a commlink display on the cybereye recording shows that wifi signal in the room have been lost]. Anything unusual I should know about this week?

*Banks:* The only thing worth reporting is that Ms. Villiers has called three members of T99 to Seattle. The official line she has given is that her division recently acquired some intel on bleeding-edge magical research Aztechnology is conducting in its Seattle pyramid, and she wanted to consult with representatives from T99 in person.

*Villiers:* And what is your take on it?

*Banks:* I've checked with Cara. She is not aware of any expendable assets being used by the Seattle division to gather covert intelligence from the pyramid for the past quarter. Which means if there was any such intelligence

gathered, she went outside of the proper channels to obtain it. In addition, the two T99 representatives she summoned to Seattle tend to swing more toward her ways of thinking when it comes to office politics.

*Villiers:* You are referring to her allies inside T99. Do you believe this meeting to be about the artifacts?

*Banks:* Yes, sir. I do.

*Villiers:* That damn woman! I told her I didn't want our corporation getting drawn into that mess. It's a waste of resources for a fool's game. Did you know the average time that any one group has with any of these artifacts is eighteen and a half days? Less than a month! Besides, there are so many people coming after those artifacts that the chance that any will ever become a significant threat to NeoNET is less than five percent. But nonetheless, I suppose I need to know what she's planning. Is there any way you can make your way to Seattle? Without spooking her?

*Banks:* It won't be a problem for me to travel to Seattle without Ms. Villiers knowing it. When the real meeting takes place between Ms. Villiers and these members of T99, you will receive a recording of it."

*Villiers:* Very good. I knew there's a reason I've kept you around as head of security for all these years. Good luck, Arthur. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

*End Recording*

**Recording 2. Timestamp: July 14, 2073, 2230 hours.**

**Location: Seattle Hilton, suite 2835.**

*Drone Recording:*

*ARO Tags:* Identities Confirmed: Samantha Villiers, Executive Vice President, NeoNET Northwest Division; Dr. Angela Vaughn, T99 Think Tank researcher; Dr. Scott Forester, T99 Think Tank researcher.

*Ms. Villiers:* So, what does T99 know about the artifacts' locations?

Incoming .....



*Dr. Vaughn:* The sextant has gone completely off of the grid. The last time it was seen was in Caracas. The last ones we knew had it were pirates from the Caribbean League, but we don't know what they did with it, or even if it reached its intended destination. Our spies last identified the compass as traveling through Manhattan on July 8th. Its final destination is still unknown. I must note that we have lost track of the key to the disc. As far as we know, the last group to possess the key was the UCAS FBI. It could very well be travelling to DeeCee as we speak. And as far as the Phaistos Disc is concerned, our sources tell us that it was last seen in the custody of one of Ghostwalker's Watchers. It is very likely Ghostwalker has already gained custody of the disc, which puts it out of our reach for now.

*Ms. Villiers:* And that leaves the map. It is more accessible to us than the others now because it still appears to be in play, we have a reasonable idea where it is, and any expendable assets we hire will likely find it easier to obtain. And hopefully in a shorter period of time than going after the other artifacts at the moment. From the intelligence my own division has developed, the map is somewhere in the Republic of China. They are trying to narrow it down, but they simply aren't fast enough to keep up with its movements, especially when they are forced to operate under Richard's radar. Dr. Vaughn, while you are in town, would you mind hiring a few expendable assets to help us track down the map?

*Dr. Vaughn:* I'll be happy to. So, the map is the definite target of our interest then?

*Ms. Villiers:* Absolutely. Richard is just too short-sighted when it comes to these damn magical trinkets. We don't know with any certainty what these artifacts can do once they are all brought together, but many of these groups seem hell-bent on finding out. For all we know, they can wipe out civilization as we know it, and send us all back to the dark ages. Frankly, it's irresponsible of Richard not to protect our corporate interests by trying to prevent that from ever happening. Especially with what Novatech experienced during '64. Fanatics like Winternight must never again be allowed to acquire that much power.

*Dr. Forester:* I feel I must call this to your attention, Ms. Villiers. Recently, I have come to be aware that Celedyr is once again using his Knights of Rage to pursue the map.

*Ms. Villiers:* Again? This is the second time he has gone outside of normal protocols to try to obtain the map for himself. And the second time he has failed to notify anyone in the company administration about what he is doing. I don't trust him. With everything going on with Sirurg and the anti-dragon sentiment he has stirred up, I especially don't trust him with any artifact as powerful as the map. How long have the Knights of Rage been hunting for it?

*Dr. Forester:* To my knowledge, just a few days.

*Ms. Villiers:* Dammit. That means we are a few days behind him. Doctor Forester, could you hire runner teams to be on standby to go after the map once its location is ascertained? They will need to have the capability to travel internationally on a moment's notice, and be willing to work with other teams to retrieve it.

*Dr. Forester:* I'll start my search here in Seattle. If I don't find enough capable teams here, I'll head back to Boston, and start recruiting there. Which accounts should we draw funds from regarding this project? If we touch any of the traditional slush funds for expendable assets, it will alert Cara, who would alert Richard.

*Ms. Villiers:* Here are three accounts that I have set up that neither Richard nor Cara know about. They have significant balances that should more than meet your needs.

*Dr. Vaughn:* And what happens when we get the map?

*Ms. Villiers:* Bring it back to Seattle. I have quietly established a facility off the grid that can be used to destroy the artifact without raising suspicion. Only I know of its whereabouts. I will, however, need your help to siphon off a small amount of NeoNET's supply of FABac Three and have it delivered to me. I'll take care of the rest.

*Dr. Forester:* That can be arranged, but it could take a few days to ensure the necessary discretion.

*Ms. Villiers:* That is acceptable, given that it will most likely take our assets that long to locate and retrieve the map. Here is the location where I would like the FABac delivered. I will take it from there.

*End Recording*

### Recording 3. Timestamp: July 15, 2073, 0030 hours.

*Recorded commlink call.*

*Arthur Banks:* What would you have me do about this unsanctioned action, Mr. Villiers?

*Richard Villiers:* Hire our own assets to sabotage my ex-wife, of course. Make sure her runner teams fail in all of their tasks. She will either have to expend even more funds from those hidden accounts to continue her pursuit, or give it up entirely.

*Banks:* And what of the map?

*Villiers:* I don't give a damn what happens to that map, as long as my former wife doesn't touch it, and she can't use it to make herself out to be some kind of hero from the aftermath. I'm not interested in helping her make more allies than she already has in NeoNET. The deniable assets could grab the map and sell it for themselves for all I care. No—wait, I have a better idea. How much did the map originally auction off for in Lagos, about a year ago?

*Banks:* Slightly above two million nuyen.

*Villiers:* And that was before the other artifacts made it onto the market. If we can obtain the map, and hold our own





auction, we can easily ask ten times as what it originally sold for. And, with our own auction, we can make sure we invite only the people that we want bidding on the artifact. No elves, no dragons. They're just too ... problematic. Only other friendly corporations without those complicated ties ... perhaps a few universities and a few trusted magical groups. Groups that didn't have a shot at the artifact previously that can have a shot at it now. Yes ... the more I think about this, the more I think we leverage a significant profit for NeoNET, and still ensure that our long-term corporate interests are protected by putting the map into the right hands, people who won't misuse it. When you hire the assets, tell them we need to have them recover the map for us. We'll also need them bring it back to Seattle. We'll auction it off there, in Samantha's own back yard.

*Banks:* How will we be able to organize an international auction, in Seattle no less, without Samantha or Celedyr noticing?

*Villiers:* The assets will need to act as our intermediaries to

make the arrangements on the down-low. None of the arrangements can be made internally. We'll have to assemble a list of contacts within the organizations we wish to invite; contacts that we know are trustworthy and can make sure information about this auction is kept confidential. On my end, I'll have Cara arrange for us to use Dante's Inferno—the Hell level—for this auction. Yes, I do believe that will work nicely.

*Banks:* And I will see to the rest of the arrangements.

*Villiers:* Keep me in the loop on this, Arthur. If anything unexpected happens, let me know ASAP.

*End Recording*

- How positively Machiavellian.
- Picador
- I wonder how these people even sleep if they can't trust anyone and see daggers coming at them from every direction. They see plots within plots, and sadly, they're generally right.
- Snopes

## OVERVIEW

In *Déjà Vu*, the players can work for either Samantha Villiers (via her representatives, Dr. Angela Vaughn, and Dr. Scott Forester) or for Richard Villiers (via his representative, Arthur Banks). Samantha's agenda is to do what she believes her ex-husband, Richard, is unable to do: address the significant magical threat that the four artifacts pose to the future corporate interests of NeoNET. She employs a runner team to locate the Piri Reis Map, capture it, and bring it back to Seattle where she can secretly destroy it, thereby denying any group the ability to use all four artifacts together to fuel some powerful form of ritual magic that could be used to damage NeoNET's long-term interests.

Richard's first instinct is to oppose his ex-wife and sabotage her efforts to destroy the artifact, but he quickly sees a way to turn a profit from the situation. The artifact frenzy began when the Piri Reis Map surfaced at an auction in Lagos, where it sold for

two million nuyen. Now, with all four artifacts in play, its value has increased tenfold. Through Arthur Banks, Richard contracts a runner team to intercept the map, bring it back to Seattle, and arrange another auction for the right bidders—specifically excluding Samantha. The auction will be held in the lowest circle of Dante's Inferno: Hell.

For those players who played *Dusk*, this chapter may give them a feeling of déjà vu. They helped Jane Foster secure the Piri Reis Map from the original auction in Lagos; now they're involved in setting up the next opportunity for the map to change hands and the hunt to begin anew.

The Piri Reis Map will be tracked down to Neo-Tokyo. Ryumyo obtained the artifact by using his shadow resources to raid a Triad chip plant and steal it from those loyal to Lung. The player characters not only have to worry about runner teams sent by the other Villiers, but they also have to worry about getting caught in the crossfire between the Yakuza and Ghostwalker's

Watchers, who have also arrived in Neo-Tokyo in pursuit of the map. As if the situation in Neo-Tokyo weren't complicated enough already, Medjay and the Knights of Rage come looking once again to secure the Piri Reis Map for Celedyr, who had originally lost the map in Lagos. Medjay and the Knights of Rage will be highly motivated not to fail Celedyr again. Add to that the danger of potentially running into the dragon Naheka—or worse, Naheka's master Ryumyo—and you have the makings of an epic confrontation in Neo-Tokyo.

## PLOT POINT ONE

### *The Hunt Begins*

Angela Vaughn hires the player characters to confirm the current location of the Piri Reis Map, intending to send another runner team in to grab it. Since Samantha's NeoNET intelligence network has to keep a low profile to avoid Richard's attention, they have fewer resources than usual, and they're having difficulty getting up-to-date intel on where the map is located. The most recent information that NeoNET intelligence has on the map is that as of twenty-four hours ago it was in the Republic of China. Without hiring additional outside help, Vaughn believes that NeoNET intelligence will soon fall further behind in tracking the map's location. He believes the best place to start looking for the map is the shadow community in Beijing. When the player characters arrive there and begin asking questions about the map, they soon encounter Medjay and the Knights of Rage, who are on the same trail.

After their encounter with the Knights of Rage is over and they are able to resume their legwork, the runners receive information directing them to a Chinese nightclub called Diamond Age, which is owned by the Yellow Lotus Triad. For a substantial fee, the club owner informs the runners that the Yellow Lotus' rivals, the Red Dragon Triad, took the map to the city of Shenyang, in the country of Manchuria. There, it is being stashed inside a heavily guarded chip manufacturing and distribution plant, until the Red Dragon Triad decides what to do with it. By the time the runners arrive in Shenyang to confirm that the map is still there, they discover that runners working for Ryumyo beat them to the plant and took the map three hours before their arrival, leaving dozens of Triad soldiers dead or injured in their wake. The Piri Reis Map is now believed to be in transit to Neo-Tokyo, where it can be put under guard with the Yakuza. There is no specific location for where the artifact will end up that the runners can confirm; only that it will be in Neo-Tokyo in a couple hours' time. Ms. Vaughn directs the runners to head to Neo-Tokyo, where they will be working with another corporate Johnson (Scott Forester) to find and recover the map.

Players working for Arthur Banks are hired to spy on the NPC runner team that Angela Vaughn has hired to locate the Piri Reis Map and to steal the location of the artifact from them. The players should realize that the runner team hired is a professional one; meaning that they do whatever they can to limit the possibilities of being tailed. They change SINs and commlinks regularly, change vehicles frequently, use crowds to their advantage to make it more difficult to follow them, and use the Pulse spell (see p. 174, *Street Magic*) to eliminate any sort of tracking devices.

Tracking the opposing runner team requires a hands-on approach. So, like the runner team they are hired to spy on, the players are required to travel to the Republic of China, and then follow them to Manchuria. Once the runners inform Mr. Banks that the map and the rival team are believed to be heading to Neo-Tokyo, Mr. Banks directs them to follow the other team to the capital of the Japanese Imperial State.

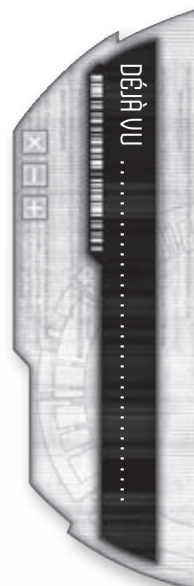
## PLOT POINT TWO

### *In the Land of the Rising Sun*

As the players make their way to Neo-Tokyo, Scott Forester contacts them again and instructs them to rendezvous with four additional runner teams that he is bringing in to help scout out the city and make inquiries about the physical location of the Piri Reis Map. The ultimate goal for them is to successfully acquire the map. Because it changes locations so frequently, Mr. Forester asks whether the runners would be willing to risk grabbing the map should they find it. If they are, Scott Forester will pay them a considerable bonus for going beyond their original assignment. Given how many groups are coming after the map, the five runner teams will need to work together to successfully obtain the artifact before the trail goes cold. The NPC teams should be used to keep rival groups away from the player characters, allowing them the time to do the necessary legwork while the opposition is distracted, engaged in combat, or are otherwise deceived by misdirection. The longer it takes for the characters to locate the map, the more casualties their allies will start taking. One team should be completely taken out by operatives from Aztechnology, another team should end up being taken out by the Mystic Crusaders, and a third team should be taken out by runners working for Arthur Banks, putting even more pressure on the player characters to find the map quickly.

When the Piri Reis Map arrives in Neo Tokyo, the Yakuza keep it on the move, not allowing it to stay in any one place for longer than a few hours. The original runners hired by Ryumyo are standing by as hired guns to help protect and transport the map. To make it harder for foreign runners, the map is mostly kept in Kabukicho, a section of Neo-Tokyo that is off-limits to foreigners. The runners need to find a way to get into Kabukicho undetected to have a chance at getting to the map before it is moved again. Being identified as foreigners in Kabukicho provokes violence from the locals and could get the runners arrested by the Imperial authorities. If there is a violent confrontation in the neighborhood, word spreads quickly and the map is transported to another destination: Sub-Tokyo. The map will always be held in Yakuza strongholds, making it that much more difficult for the players to access it.

If they are working for Arthur Banks, he asks the players to sabotage the teams working for Forester and to get to the map's location before they do. Due to the fierce competition for the map, Banks is willing to pay the runners additional nuyen for putting themselves at greater risk and grabbing the map themselves instead of simply reporting its location back to him. Once the runners start sabotaging and taking out their competition, the NPC runner teams will adapt to the situation by hiring local talent to assist them (making it easier for them to get at the map as well). The players should eventually learn that the Yakuza have been





spooked by the increased violence happening around Neo-Tokyo and are having the map moved deep into the subway tunnels and utility shafts of Sub-Tokyo.

## PLOT POINT THREE

### *Going Underground*

Sub-Tokyo is the Japanese Imperial State's version of the Seattle Ork Underground. Japanese metahumans and other outcasts live in the underground tunnels, away from public view. Many of the survivors of Yomi Island found their way here. Outsiders are shunned, if not outright attacked by the close-knit communities. No matter whether the player characters are working for Scott Forester or Arthur Banks, they must minimize violence by negotiating their way through the neighborhoods and the gangs that reside in Neo-Tokyo. And since the runners will be unfamiliar with Sub-Tokyo, they will need to negotiate for a map or directions to where the map is being taken.

There are a lot of abandoned tunnels in Sub-Tokyo. If the runners are not careful and do not have decent directions, they can end up getting lost—or worse, end up near the flood prevention system, where large populations of shokushiki (ghouls) are believed to live. During this time, as the players race through the tunnel systems, they should be pursued by members of the Knights of Rage, Ghostwalker's Watchers, as well as by NeoNET runners working for the other side.

Information obtained from the locals points the runners to an abandoned subway station, four kilometers into Sub-Tokyo. There, the Yakuza have set up a chokepoint to allow the Piri Reis Map to continue traveling (while blocking any potential interference) and to eventually make it out of Sub-Tokyo. This chokepoint could include anything from cybered Yakuza soldiers to Ryumyo's drakes, right up to the dragon Naheka (depending on the power level of the player characters). This chokepoint should be designed to significantly delay the player characters. It might even be severe enough to force the competing teams to work together to simply survive.

After defeating the opposition, it will be a foot chase between the player characters and the Yakuza, looking to get the map back to street level and once again have it disappear into Neo-Tokyo.

## PLOT POINT FOUR

### *Getting Out of Hostile Territory*

Once the runners have the map, they are informed by the appropriate Johnson (Scott Forester or Arthur Banks) that they cannot expend corporate resources to bring the map back to Seattle, as doing so would tip off the opposing NeoNET faction about its location and inevitably lead to an ambush. To get back to Seattle safely, the players need to hire a smuggler to take them out of Neo-Tokyo. The difficulty for the players is finding a smuggler who is trustworthy, not connected to the Yakuza, and not likely to turn on them or report their location to Ryumyo. At this stage, after all that has happened in Neo-Tokyo, if the player characters choose the wrong smuggler, it may very well be the great eastern dragon himself who comes to reclaim the map.

## PLOT POINT FIVE

### *The End Is in Sight*

The runners return to Seattle. Teams that were working for Angela Vaughn and Scott Forester will be given a private room number in Cocoon, a coffin club for the Awakened in Snohomish. They can drop the map off in the coffin-sized room and pick up their payment on certified credsticks from the manager of the motel. Scott Forester informs the players that there could be one last job for them if they wish to accept it, but they won't find out about it for a few more hours. If the runners agree to take another job, Scott Forester calls upon them five hours later. There is one last loose string that has to be taken care of before the mission can be considered a complete success. There is only one more group that knows where the Piri Reis Map is: Samantha Villiers' personal security detail who accompanied her to the secret location where she dropped it off to be destroyed. Samantha Villiers has assigned the security detail that was guarding her at the time to her decoy, and the runners would be hired to hit the decoy and the security detail. The attack needs to look like Samantha Villiers was the intended target, but the real target is the security detail.

If the runners worked for Arthur Banks, as soon as they return to Seattle they are told to set up the international auction for the map, and to do so in such a way that neither Samantha Villiers nor the rest of the international community finds out about it. They are given the names of contacts for various corporations, universities, and magic groups that NeoNET wants to invite to the auction. This list includes: Wuxing, Mitsuhama, MIT&T, Renraku (the Locus Elementum magic group), Oxford University, Brokerage X, Seer's Guild, Doctor Faustus Society, and Manadyne. If the runners do not check the backgrounds of the contacts that they are given, a few of the "trusted" contacts sell the information to other parties. The auction will have to be canceled, and the runners will not be paid. The auction will be held on the Hell level of Dante's Inferno in Seattle.

## LOCATIONS

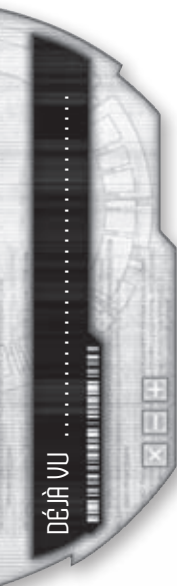
### **DIAMOND AGE**

Diamond Age is a trendy nightclub in downtown Beijing. It is owned and run by the Yellow Lotus, rivals of the Red Dragon Triad. For the right price, the Yellow Lotus is more than happy to sell information to the shadowrunners about their rival's operations.

Diamond Age is a six-story club that is often frequented by China's celebrity figures, sports figures, executives from Wuxing, and other VIPs. BTLs are commonplace in this nightclub. Security at Diamond Age should be considered at the veteran level, if not higher (use Corporate Security Unit, p. 139). If security at Diamond Age is not sufficient, the Yellow Lotus is capable of bringing its soldiers to the club at a moment's notice (use Organized Criminal, p. 144). The Diamond Age Node has a Device Rating of 6.

### **RED DRAGON TRIAD CHIP PLANT COMPLEX**

The Red Dragon Triad has a chip plant complex in Shenyang that produces an enormous supply of addictive BTLs for the Triad's worldwide distribution. This particular plant puts out close



to two percent of the world's supply of BTLs annually. This large manufacturing complex also produces a much smaller supply of BADs, in addition to SIN forgeries. This plant employs hundreds of workers and is guarded by a significant Triad presence. By the time the runners arrive, the facility has already been raided. The Triad's reinforcements are on the ground, trying to contain the damage. Player characters will be able to get information from the reinforcements' commlinks that runner teams from Japan raided the factory and made off with the map, and that it is believed to be heading to Neo-Tokyo.

## PEOPLE

### ARTHUR BANKS

Arthur Banks has been with NeoNET—and before that Novatech—for a combined twenty-six years of service. He is the current head of security for NeoNET. Banks is devoted to Richard Villiers, but is also pragmatic about protecting himself. He makes certain to have insurance policies in the event they are necessary. Banks is often called upon to monitor and spy on Richard's ex-wife, Samantha, and he has been trying to keep her in check ever since she had certain IPs transferred into her name, instead of the company's control. Use Mr. Johnson (High-Ranking) stats, p. 144.

### ANGELA VAUGHN

Doctor Angela Vaughn works in NeoNET's T99 magical research division, in Boston. She is a close ally to Samantha Villiers and has been with NeoNET for five years. She has demonstrated an extraordinary understanding of various summoning traditions and is a leading researcher into manatech. Angela Vaughn is a strong asset for NeoNET, and many in the corporation believe that her research is vital to the future of NeoNET's magic division. Angela Vaughn will hire the player characters to initially locate the map. When it becomes clear that the map has been moved to Neo-Tokyo, and that more parties are becoming involved, she will ask the runners to work with her colleague, Doctor Forester, to retrieve the map. Use Mr. Johnson (High-Ranking) stats, p. 144.

### SCOTT FORESTER

Doctor Scott Forester is an accomplished researcher. Doctor Forester's field of study is Magical Compounds. He is a leading expert on the drug called Tempo. Doctor Forester has been working with NeoNET for nearly sixteen years. Like Angela Vaughn, Forester is a close ally to Samantha Villiers. He is given the task of retrieving the map, once it is located. Use Mr. Johnson (High-Ranking) stats, p. 144.

### MEDJAY

Medjay is a senior member of the Knights of Rage who has been trained to be one of Celedyr's top spies and espionage agents. He led the original expedition to obtain the Piri Reis Map in Lagos in 2072. In many ways, this new operation is a way for him to redeem himself in the eyes of Celedyr for his previous failure and to prove his worth to the Knights of Rage. He will be highly motivated to obtain the artifact by any means necessary. He should prove a difficult challenge for the player characters. Medjay was first seen in *Dawn of the Artifacts: Dusk*. If he was

killed during the events of *Dusk*, feel free to use the female agent known as Sulawyo instead (p. 132, *Corporate Guide*).

**B A R S C I L W Edg Ess Init IP**  
5 6 5(8) 5 5(8) 5 4 5 6 2.745 10(13) 1(4)

**Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S):** 11/11

**Armor (B/I):** 6(9)/2(5)

**Skills:** Athletics skill group 6 (7), Blades 5, Dodge (Melee) 4 (+2), First Aid 3, Influence skill group 5, Intimidation 4, Perception 6, Pistols (Semi-Automatics) 6 (+2), Stealth skill group 5, Unarmed Combat 6

**Qualities:** Blandness, Magic Resistance 4

**Augmentations:** (all betaware) Enhanced articulation, cybereyes [Rating 3 w/ flare compensation, low-light vision, smartlink, thermographic vision, vision enhancement 2], orthoskin 3, skillwire expert system, skillwires (Rating 5), synaptic booster (Rating 3), tailored pheromones (Rating 3)

**Gear:** Commlink [Firewall 6, Response 5, Signal 3, System 5] w/ sim module (hot sim), form-fitting body armor (full-body suit); 11 skillssofts (all Rating 4): Automatics, Blades, Computer, Data Search, Demolitions, Hacking, Hardware, Pilot Aircraft, Pilot Ground Craft, Pistols, Software; 8 Linguasofts (Rating 5, including Yoruba)

**Weapons:**

Cougar Fineblade Knife (Short Blade) [Blades, Reach 0, DV 4P AP -1]

Cavalier Scout [Hold-Out Pistol, DV 4P, AP —, SA, RC —, 7(c)]

Cavalier Deputy [Heavy Pistol 5P, AP -1, SA, RC —, 7(cy)]

### NAHEKA

Naheka is an adult dragon (a feathered serpent) who is centuries away from great dragon status. His lair is in Hawai'i. He was once a vassal for Mujaji before switching allegiances to Ryumyo. He serves the great eastern dragon, hoping that Ryumyo will assist him in establishing a power base for himself in the modern era. Although Naheka is forced to ride Ryumyo's coattails, that does not make him any less dangerous than any other feathered serpent. And he will do whatever is necessary to maintain his patron's favor to secure his future fortune in the world of both dragons and metahumans.

**B A R S C I L W Edg Ess M Init IP**  
17 5 9 32 6 7 5 10 6 10 10 16 2

**Condition Monitor (P/S):** 17/13

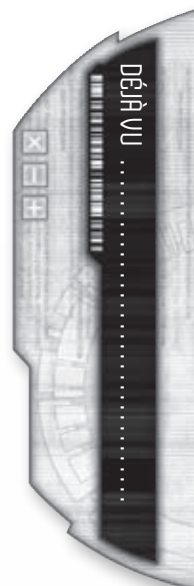
**Armor (B/I):** 8/8

**Movement:** 15/50 (30/100 Flight)

**Reach:** +2

**Skills:** Arcana 4, Assensing 8, Astral Combat 4, Conjuring skill group 6, Etiquette (Tribal) 4 (+2), Exotic Ranged Weapon 6, Flight 6, Interrogation 6, Leadership 5, Negotiation 6, Perception (Smell) 6 (+2), Sorcery skill group 8, Unarmed Combat 6

**Powers:** Animal Control, Dragonspeech, Dual Natured, Elemental Attack (Blast), Enhanced Senses (Enhanced Smell, Fear, Low-Light Vision, Wide-Band Hearing), Hardened Armor 8, Mystic Armor 8, Natural Weapon (Bite/Claws: 10P, -2), Noxious Breath, Venom





**Qualities:** Magician

**Initiate Level:** 4

**Metamagics:** Absorption, Flexible Signature, Masking, Shielding

**Spells:** Acid Stream, Analyze Truth, Blast, Chaos, Death Touch, Fireball, Flamethrower, Heal, Mana Barrier, Manaball, Manabolt, Mask, Mind Probe, Petrify, Poltergeist, Powerball, Shadow, Stunball

**Spirits:** 3 x Force 6 guardian spirits (5 services)

## KNIGHTS OF RAGE

(Professional Rating 5)

The Knights of Rage started as a street gang in London. In 2043, the mixed-race gang encountered the great dragon known as Celedyr and discovered that they shared common interests, including the areas of ancient mystical relics and tomes. Celedyr, feeling a special bond with the group, decided to start sharing his collection of ancient Nubian tablets. The great dragon also began training the street gang to become his elite group of agents. Today, the Knights of Rage have their headquarters in Caerleon but still span London and other British Sprawls, Egypt, and Australia. The Knights of Rage are believed to have hundreds of members worldwide, all of them willing to serve the needs and the desires of their patron, Celedyr.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
4	5 (8)	3	4 (7)	3	4	3	3	1.85	7	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 6/2 (9/5)

**Skills:** Athletics skill group 3, Blades 3, Dodge 4, First Aid 2, Intimidation 3, Perception 4, Pilot Ground Craft 3, Pistols 4, Stealth skill group 5, Unarmed Combat 4

**Qualities:** Blandness

**Augmentations:** Cybereyes [Rating 3, w/ flare compensation, low-light, smartlink, thermographic vision, vision enhancement 2], muscle replacement 3, orthoskin 3

**Gear:** Form-fitting body armor (full-body suit)

**Weapons:**

Cougar Fineblade Knife (Short Blade) [Blades, Reach 0, DV 3P (5P), AP -1]

Cavalier Scout [Hold Out Pistol, DV 4P, AP —, SA, 7(c)]

Cavalier Deputy [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, 7(cy)]

## RYUMYO RUNNER TEAM

The runner team hired by the great dragon consists of anywhere between four and six Veteran Street Samurai (see p. 146), two Veteran Combat Mages (see p. 146) and two Veteran Combat Adepts (see p. 146). All members of the team are local runners, all are human, and all are of Japanese descent. As such, Ryumyo's team has the advantage of knowing the streets and the people of Neo-Tokyo, of knowing the shortcuts and the people that they can trust, and of blending in much more easily than the foreign runners. This team should prove to be a strong challenge to the player characters. Also, Ryumyo would have hired a runner team with a significant street reputation, capable of handling high-profile missions and succeeding under pressure.

## RYUMYO DRAKES

(Professional Rating 4)

**Oriental Drakes (Human metatype)**

	B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	M	Init	IP
Drake	7	8	4	6	3	3	2	5	6	1	7	1
Human	5	6	4	4	3	3	2	5	6	1	7	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 11 (12 in Dracoform)

**Armor (B/I):** 8/6 (4/4 in Dracoform)

**Skills:** Assensing 3, Astral Combat 4, Athletics skill group 5, Blades 4, Clubs 3, Dodge 5, First Aid 3, Intimidation 4, Perception 3, Pistols 4, Stealth skill group 4, Unarmed Combat 4

**Qualities:** Drake, Martial Arts (20 BP, Aikido; Advantages: +1 die for Full Dodge; +1 die for Full Parry, +1 die for subduing, +1 die on attacks to knockdown).

**Maneuvers:** Blind Fighting, Break Weapon, Disarm, Disorient, Finishing Move, Herding, Iaijutsu, Kick Attack

**Powers (Human form):** Shift (Drake)

**Powers (Dracoform):** Dual Natured, Elemental Attack (Electricity), Enhanced Senses (Hearing, Low-Light Vision, Smell, Thermographic Vision), Hardened Armor 4, Mystic Armor 4, Natural Weapon (bite/claws: DV 5P, AP 0)

**Gear:** Armor jacket, commlink (Device Rating 3)

**Weapons:**

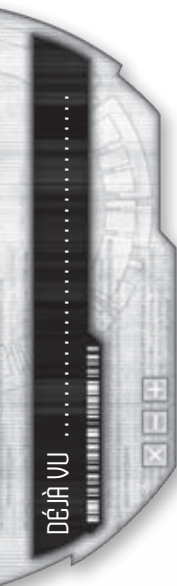
Victorinox Smart Staff [as Mace, Reach 1, DV 6P, AP —]

[as Polearm, Reach 2, DV 5P, AP -2]

[as Staff, Reach 2, DV 5P, AP —]

[as Sword, Reach 1, DV 6P, AP -1]

Nitama NeMax [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, 10 (c), w/ internal smartlink system, basic safe target system, biometric safety system]



# ... SOMETHING DARK IN THE WOODS ...

Incoming .....

- A friend of a friend infiltrated Humanis and swiped some interesting paydata off their private servers. This is a segment of the keynote speech for their planned annual meetup. It will be news soon enough, but given the nature of its content, I thought it appropriate to share in the hopes someone might shed some light upon it.
- Ecotope

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//add cut out //  
// in-text references and bibliography removed //
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## KEYNOTE ADDRESS: HICUP

### Humanis International Conference for Universal Purity

Brothers and Sisters. Friends and family. Welcome.

Every year we come together to share our stories and show our research. Every year, for the past forty-two years, we have met to discuss our problems, seeking solidarity in our beliefs and strength in our numbers. Every year we renew our purpose and our faith in our cause, to right the wrongs that have destroyed our world. The wrongs that are still destroying our world. Famine, disease, and poverty were horrors enough to contend with. We could have solved these problems, as a species, if only we could have banded together right at the very beginning.

But we did not. Instead, we chose to bury our heads in the sand, ignoring the evil that ripped apart our nations, sold government into the hands of the greedy corporate sharks, and nearly destroyed our planet. We chose war over peace, individuality over the greater good, and money over morality.

I say “we,” but every person in this room is shaking his head at me, proclaiming innocence in this matter. “I stood up,” you want to say. “I warned the world of the corruption that now invades it.” And this is my reply to you.

No, Brothers. You shouted words into the darkness to listen for echoes, not to incite change.

No, Sisters. You hoisted signs into the air to get on the news, not to heal the blind.

First there was VITAS. Then UGE. After that came Goblinization. If those catastrophes were not enough, volcanoes destroyed large swaths of our planet, floods wiped out entire cities, and nations collapsed. Mages and magic and dragons and vampires invade our daily lives. Now we have children—normal, human children—born with voices in their heads, corrupting them with images of a living Matrix. Shapeshifters and snake people try to make their homes alongside us. Changelings steal our spouses and murder our families in some grotesque vision of justice.

And if that were not bad enough, because you think none of this could possibly be bad enough, now the elves of Tír Tairngire are trying to wipe out the human race!

Look, my brethren, my comrades-in-arms. Link to our private conference node and see the images we have gathered. //Link :: Upload Available Images: Y / N?//

See Arcdotus, the short-faced bear.

Look upon the American lion.

These are dire wolves and dire cats.

Extinct creatures, all of them! And flora never seen upon our planet by human eyes. Giant flowers that eat mammals. Thorny vines as massive as bridge cables. Redwoods thick and tall, as if Mt. Hood had never exploded some fifty years ago. This forest crawls with prehistoric plants and vicious creatures who died, by God's Own Hand, to make way for our species. The one true species, the Human Race!

For too long, we have allowed this corruption free run across our planet. For too long, we have ignored the signs that warn us that humanity is facing extinction. Brothers and Sisters, it is time to act.

Our first task is to root out the heart of evil living in Tír Tairngire, and to prevent the infection from spreading.

Who is with me?

```
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//Timestamp: 10/07/73 //
```



- Sounds like the usual drek those boneheads spout. I don't see why you're so worked up about it.
- Bull
- Truth will hide in the unlikeliest of places. Use the wrong thread to weave your blanket and the pattern will be unrecognizable, twisted, and unusable.
- Man-of-Many-Names
- Do you even *try* to make sense anymore?
- Slamm-O!
- I've heard rumors of new types of paracritters coming out of Tír Tairngire. The people who told me aren't very reliable though. Otherwise, I'd have investigated it.
- Glasswalker
- A lot of eco-friendly elves are congregating in Mt. Hood National Forest. They think Teheronshay has returned. I'm going up there to investigate, as soon as I recover from my last little misadventure.
- Frosty
- Am I the only one amused by the fact that the conference acronym sounds like hiccup?
- /dev/grll
- Yes.
- Bull
- And suddenly a conversation I overheard is making a little more sense. I won't say where I got it since I'm still working on this story. So I'll just call our participants Pete and RePete.
- Sunshine

// upload audio file :: user Sunshine//  
 // Sperethiel Translation Agent engaged//

**Pete:** ... without any compensation. I'd say "poor Z" if I actually felt a centimeter of sympathy for the bastard.

**RePete:** Do you thing he's in on it, then?

**Pete:** Possibly. I wouldn't put it past him.

**RePete:** What the hell does this have to do with that damned prince?

**Pete:** (chuckling) Home sweet home.

**RePete:** Shit! Don't even joke about that crap. She wouldn't dare. Nerdal wouldn't be a party to this. He's too damn respectable. Hell, the Doomsday Ark was his fuckin' idea!

**Pete:** Puh-leaze. Fucker probably sold out the instant the prince made the offer. I've seen it a million times before. There isn't a corp wageslave alive who would ignore the chance to have royalty beholden to him.

**RePete:** You didn't know Nerdal. He believes what he's preaching and would never sell out.

**Pete:** Damned idealists. There ain't no place for people like that in this world.

**RePete:** So what you gonna do?

**Pete:** Are you kidding? Take the creds and run, omae. What the hell else is there to do? What about you? You going to refuse her offer?

**RePete:** Too many familiar faces have gone missing from Cara'Sir. Forest-fever, the streets say. Maybe I'll take a vacation, see how this plays out. Oh, don't gimme that look! I won't breathe a word. Let the prince have her fuckin' forest home. Me, I like smog.

// Sperethiel Translation Agent disengaged//  
 // End Uniformat text file :: user Sunshine//  
 //Timestamp: 09/28/73 //

- Dr. Nerdal Ziusudra is alive? That is good news. Thank you, Sunshine.
- Ecotope
- Who's alive? And it's good news why?
- Ethernaut
- Dr. Nerdal Ziusudra. He did more than just study the looming extinction of many animal species—he did something about it. The concept of a seed bank, which helps you preserve a variety of seeds to ensure those plants do not disappear, has been around for a long time, and of course the story of Noah's ark tells you that the idea of preserving animal species in the event of a disaster is even older than that. Dr. Ziusudra began the Doomsday Ark, as RePete mentions here, which preserves the genetic material of a whole host of animals. If a disaster occurs, you go to the bank, activate the right genetic material, and you've got your species back.
- Now, it's not as easy as just preserving two samples from every animal. That doesn't give you enough genetic diversity to get a species to breed sustainably. He's trying to get hundreds of samples from various species, and he's checking to make sure he's not getting close relatives in there.
- I say all this to make a simple point—Dr. Ziusudra is a visionary. I'd been worried about him since he seemed to fall off the map a few years ago when he was spirited away just as he was in the middle of making a speech.
- Ecotope
- As I pointed out a few years ago, Ziusudra was supposedly on the brink of a major discovery when he was extracted. In fact, I'm convinced that's why he was taken away. I've had some time to think—and do some asking around—about this breakthrough, and I believe it's the beginnings of a program that can generate original and complete strands of DNA on command. You want a strand of zebra DNA? Tell the program, and it will code up a strand for you. His Doomsday Ark could be replaced by the program and the raw material needed to make proteins. That's it—or at least, that would be the case once the program is fully developed. I have no idea where it stands right now.
- The Smiling Bandit



- That doesn't sound like Dr. Ziusudra to me. That kind of power could lead to all sorts of genetic accidents or other difficulties, and it also encourages laziness in preserving what we have. I don't believe that's his breakthrough, and now that I know he's alive, I'll look forward to tracking him down and talking to him about it directly.
- Ecotope
- So who wants to bet which Tir prince this piece is talking about. Maria Cinebal, Jenna Ni'Fairra, or Hestaby?
- Slamm-O!
- Don't bother. It's Jenna.
- Frosty
- Damn, Frosty. At least let me collect a few wagers before you ruin my fun.
- Slamm-O!
- Why, Slamm, need some cash for all those babysitting bills?
- Sticks

Incoming .....

## OVERVIEW

In a bid to restore the Tsimshian Protectorate to its natural glory, the Salish-Shidhe Council is looking into extraordinary solutions. They've heard of the extraordinary growth spurt in Mt. Hood National Forest, in Tir Tairngire, and the rumors that Dr. Nerdal Ziusudra may have something to do with it. The Council hires the runners to extract Dr. Ziusudra and to steal any pertinent data, mechanical schematics, or magical formulae that may be the cause of this miracle. While the Council would like the runners to do both jobs, if they have to make a choice, Dr. Ziusudra is expendable as long as the runners can deliver up the Tir's miracle device to them.

At first blush, the job is just another snatch-n-grab. But the job takes a twist when Ziusudra refuses to leave without the infamous Book of Leaves, which Jenna Ni'Fairra is using to recreate the Teheronshay, the elven homeland from a previous Age.

Mt. Hood National Forest has turned from scenic retreat to monstrous nightmare. Disfigured paracritters and monstrous plants roam the area, attacking intruders. At the center of the forest is a half-built city where Jenna uses the magic and life force of her volunteers to power her magics. The runners must obtain the book and escape from Jenna's surprised forces, but they will find themselves in a fight to keep their paydata while forces from the Draco Foundation and the Atlantean Foundation confront them. In a final bid to get the Book of Leaves, Ghostwalker's Voice, Nicholas Whitebird, shows up to make a last-minute offer.

If that weren't bad enough, Jenna and her paladins are chasing the runners to indulge in a little payback.

## PLOT POINT ONE

The runners are approached by Mr. Johnson, a representative of the Salish-Shidhe Council. Mr. Johnson doesn't hide who he's working for, but he doesn't advertise it either. He hires them to travel to Cara'Sir (formerly Portland), in Tir Tairngire and extract Dr. Nerdal Ziusudra from a safehouse where he is being held. Mr. Johnson's primary goal, however, is to investigate the extraordinary regeneration of Mt. Hood National Forest and steal the secret from the elves. In fact, if the runners have to choose between the two objectives, Mr. Johnson's employers much prefer the secret over Dr. Ziusudra's rescue. And if the runners bring back the device or magical formulae responsible, they will get a bonus above and beyond their initial payment.

## PLOT POINT TWO

The runners can choose to enter Tir Tairngire by land, waterway (river), or air. When they arrive at the safehouse, they find it under surveillance by a group of eco-terrorists who also want to extract Dr. Ziusudra. The runners must defeat both the elven guards and the eco-terrorists in order to get Ziusudra, but they have multiple options: team up with the eco-terrorists, start a fight between the two groups as a distraction to their own activities, or sell the eco-terrorists out to the elves in order to get on the elves' good side.

Even if the runners chose an option not listed here, they should be able to take Dr. Ziusudra alive and relatively unharmed.

## PLOT POINT THREE

Dr. Ziusudra was forcibly recruited by Jenna some time ago to assist in her quest to restore the old elven homeland of the Fourth World. She gave him ancient botany books showing various flora and fauna that he could not recognize, and she asked him to document everything in Mt. Hood National Forest that might be related. He initially agreed because he believed her intentions aligned with his goal to rescue plants and animals from extinction. Though he could not read the books (they were in a language he'd never seen and could not translate), he used the pictures to great effect during his research. Until the day he suddenly realized the forest itself was changing.

Dr. Ziusudra is quite friendly and more than willing to go with his would-be rescuers, until he finds out they intend to leave Tir Tairngire. The good doctor digs in his heels and refuses to go with the runners until they've "rescued" the Book of Leaves. He is quite insistent about it and will explain, when asked, that Prince Jenna Ni'Fairra has been using the magical artifact to alter the Patterns of the forest. Her quest is to restore the old elven homeland, and she's exterminating entire species of wildlife to do it.

If the runners allow him, Dr. Ziusudra will lead them directly to Jenna's half-built forest city. Along the way, they will encounter a number of paracritters and strange plant life not native to Tir Tairngire. The deeper the runners go into the forest, the stranger everything becomes. Dual-natured plants and animals can be seen.

SOMETHING DARK IN THE WOODS .....



Some critters flee before the runners, while others may attack. Random encounters with these creatures should show the runners just how dangerous Jenna's magic can be.

## PLOT POINT FOUR

After the runners escape the forest's predators, Ziusudra takes them to Jenna's city. The city looks as if it's growing out of the forest floor and is, in fact, made of living trees. If the runners take the time to scout around, they find several armed elves, some of them paladins, wandering around the area. Jenna stands in the center of a clearing using powerful magic to grow trees or alter them according to her needs. Several of her volunteers are pooling their own magic, and their own life force, for her use. In her hands, Jenna holds the Book of Leaves. The negative background count of the forest temporarily increases with the use of her magic, forestalling the use of any other magic.

When Jenna is finished with her spell, her volunteers collapse to the ground, many of them dead. Jenna appears exhausted. The armed guards, including paladins, assist with body cleanup, feeding the dead to the hungry carnivorous plants a short distance off.

Jenna seals the book in a warded chest in her chambers, a fancy tree house located approximately one hundred meters off the ground, then falls into a coma-like sleep. The runners must sneak into the house without alerting the guards and without waking Jenna. While they can try to penetrate the magical locks and wards on the box, Jenna is a powerful sorceress, and such an attempt would likely give the runners away before they succeeded in their task. Also, Jenna's bedroom is warded and watched by two powerful spirits who attack anyone who tries to kill Jenna in her sleep.

Once the runners obtain the Book of Leaves, they head to Vancouver to deliver the paydata. They must smuggle the artifact, along with Dr. Ziusudra, across the Tír Tairngire border and into Salish-Shidhe. If Tír Tairngire customs officials notice the warded chest, they demand that the runners open it for inspection and present appropriate documentation for all of its contents—if they refuse (or are unable), the chest is confiscated and the runners arrested for smuggling unlicensed, possibly dangerous magical artifacts. If the runners have managed to open the chest and get rid of it, the customs agents still notice and confiscate the book. The runners must get past customs themselves and rescue the book if they lose it. They must also try to keep Dr. Ziusudra from telling everyone about the horrors in Mt. Hood National Forest, since he will want to warn everyone the instant he has a chance.

## PLOT POINT FIVE

At some point in the runners' travels, agents of the Atlantean Foundation ambush them in an attempt to steal the book. The AF team chooses a location where the runners will be distracted by other events, and if the runners make the mistake of turning their back on the chest, the AF team attempts to steal it out from under their noses.

Again, if the runners lose the book, they must retrieve it if they expect to get paid for this job. While Dr. Ziusudra is expendable at this point, the runners should get bonus points if

they manage to get him out of Tír Tairngire and keep him alive for the rest of the journey.

## PLOT POINT SIX

It is evening when the runners reach Vancouver. They receive a message on their commlinks from Frosty, on behalf of the Draco Foundation. She invites the runners to meet her at a warehouse, saying it is urgent she talk with them. Frosty even offers a small sum of money if they just take the time to meet with her (if the runners met her during any of the *Dawn of the Artifacts* adventures, play up that connection with them). If the runners meet with her, she makes her pitch for the book. Her argument is that the Book of Leaves does not belong to the runners or the Salish-Shidhe Council. Since the Draco Foundation is the executor of Dunkelzahn's will, it has the right to the book. She will not mention whether the book will be returned to Jenna or be kept by the Foundation. She also will not offer any money for the book itself.

## PLOT POINT SEVEN

Jenna Ni'Fairra is angry, and she's brought an armed squad of elves with her. These are her paladins and they are very good at what they do. If the runners did not meet with Frosty, they will have to deal with Jenna on their own. Otherwise, Jenna and her paladins will attack the runners before any deal with Frosty can be reached.

While it may be tempting to have Frosty save the runners' lives without warning, the gamemaster should avoid that temptation. The runners may try to play Frosty off of Jenna, causing the two elven mages to square off in a magical battle royale. Or perhaps the runners choose to flee. They could even decide to fight everyone, but it should be made clear this is perhaps not their best option.

The runners may decide to hand the Book of Leaves over to Frosty at that moment. If so, Jenna will attack Frosty while the paladins go after the runners. Surrendering the Book of Leaves does not let the runners off the hook. They will have to either fight or flee.

## PLOT POINT EIGHT

If the runners keep the book and make their rendezvous with Mr. Johnson, they find Nicholas Whitebird waiting with him. Whitebird ignores the discomfort of Mr. Johnson, offering the runners a princely sum of money and promising to make all their problems with Jenna "go away" if they hand the Book of Leaves over to him. The runners get a chance to decide whether they will stick with their original contract or betray that contract for a greater sum.

Whitebird will not openly retaliate against the runners if they honor their original contract, and may even seem impressed by their loyalties, depending on how they act in this final confrontation.

On the other hand, if the runners do give the Book to Whitebird, he gives them everything he's promised, but Mr.





INCOMING FEED.....



Johnson will remember the betrayal, and the runners will most likely not work for the Salish-Shidhe Council ever again.

Either way, the runners cannot profit from holding onto the Book of Leaves for themselves, nor will they be able to truly understand or activate the book's powers. If the runners return both Dr. Ziusudra and the book to Mr. Johnson, the Salish-Shidhe Council authorizes Mr. Johnson to give them extra incentive for a job well done.

## THE BOOK OF LEAVES

Upon first glance, the Book of Leaves appears as a fifteen-centimeter-thick mega-tome from an earlier era. Assensing the book reveals it to be an ancient magical artifact of unspeakable, and indiscernible, power. A successful Assensing (5) Test reveals layers upon layers of Patterns wrapped within the physical shell of the book—too many layers to count or understand. If a mage decides to fight past this initial impression and try to understand it, they become overwhelmed by the Patterns. They must make a Willpower (4) Test or else suffer 14S damage (which will likely cause immediate unconsciousness).

The book's color appears brown with spots of green, yellow, red, and orange. Close examination reveals the cover is actually made of hundreds of pressed leaves, bound together with some unknown resin. The pages within the book are made of thin, almost sheer leaves whose veins and edges form geometric and asymmetric shapes upon the pages. These shapes could be interpreted as an unknown language, unfamiliar diagrams, or

just plain beauty evoked from nature. Anyone, besides Frosty or Jenna, who attempts to read the book for any length of time will get headaches and become exhausted. Willpower Tests should be made for every hour the runners have the book open to avoid the Stun damage described above.

## LOCATIONS

### CARA'SIR

Cara'Sir is easily the Tír's most cosmopolitan city. Formerly known as Portland, the city is based at the juncture of the Willamette and Columbia Rivers. Thirteen bridges connect the city across these rivers, and Mt. Hood can be seen from almost any point in the city. The highest points of the city are West Hills, which is home to the richer residents, and Forest Park the biggest Awakened wilderness park inside a North American city.

Cara'Sir is the capital of Tír Tairngire and the center of its tourism industry. Downtown is designed for walking tours with attractions for even the most jaded tourist. Mounted peace officers patrol this area, making crime difficult but not impossible. Travel within the city itself is not difficult, but getting in and out of the city is complicated if you are coming in by air or sea. While the Princes no longer run Tír Tairngire, access to this country is restricted to visitors who have a passport, medical records proving they have the most recent inoculations (depending on the country of origin), and a Visitor's Authorization Visa.

Morningstar Field (formerly Portland International Airport) brings in tourists and business travelers and can accommodate

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sub-orbital and semi-ballistic flights. Cara'Sir is also one of Tír Tairngire's two major ports, with a high volume of ships coming in through the Columbia River every day. Cara'Sir can also be accessed by land routes, but all ground traffic entering or leaving the city must go through one of seven border posts in the city wall.

Like any city, Cara'Sir has its upscale districts and its dilapidated areas. It has a larger proportion of non-elven citizens than do other parts of the nation, and there is plenty of political intrigue occurring on its streets. Information brokering is big business in Cara'Sir.

Most residents avoid traveling to or through Mt. Hood National Forest. Rumors abound about the strange goings-on in the forest, including stories of the sudden influx of unnatural creatures, the impressive growth of the trees, and the curious individuals who enter but never to return. One popular rumor is that the forest hates, and consumes, non-elf metahumans. Everyone knows someone who knows another person who traveled into the forest and either didn't come back or met something horrible and were lucky to escape with their lives. It's not quite an open secret that Prince Jenna Ni'Fairra has made a new home in the forest and has something to do with its sudden re-growth. No one knows exactly what she's doing, though, and only the foolish dare ask.

## MT. HOOD NATIONAL FOREST

Mt. Hood National Forest begins approximately thirty-two kilometers east of Cara'Sir, and spreads across a large chunk of Tír Tairngire. Back in 2017, Mt. Hood erupted, burying a great deal of the forest in ash and denuding many of the older trees of their growth. In the intervening years, the forest slowly grew back, but the trees were stunted, the wildlife surviving in the few pockets of recovered green.

In recent years, the forest appears to have revived, experiencing a record growth that amazes the few who have watched it from the outside. The outer edges of the forest appear somewhat normal, with oaks and pines and redwoods. But deep inside the forest lives a wild tangle of unnatural fauna. Thick thorn hedges grow wildly out of rocks. Tree trunks are twisted, weeping red sap as they tower into the sky. Living vines and dual-natured plants cover the ground, consuming every bit of available earth. Paths are hard to find in this jungle-like forest, and it takes an expert tracker to navigate these wilds.

Matrix access is sporadic in the forest. Something unknown is intermittently jamming wireless signals. The background count of the forest is high with occasional mana pools and mana ebbs. Any Awakened character who looks at the astral plane will be shocked at the amount of corruption in the forest, though it should be noted the forest is not toxic in nature.

The half-built city is being formed out of the living plant life. Jenna's tree house is one hundred meters off the ground, with rope ladders leading up to it, which she pulls in after herself. The house itself is burrowed into the trunk of a tree and contains three rooms: a living space, a kitchen, and her bedroom. A Force 7 ward prevents any entry by astral-aspected beings into her home.

## THE SAFEHOUSE

The safehouse where Dr. Ziusudra is being held is a three-story apartment complex in the middle of a lower-class neighborhood. The building is surrounded by three other apartment complexes of the same height with a two-meter-high fence surrounding a yard on the sides and the back of the building. The fence is a privacy fence of reinforced steel with old-fashioned bolts and locks on the gate. A flight of six steps leads up to the front entrance, which is the only building entrance that faces the street. Two elves armed with submachine guns guard this door.

The first-floor windows are boarded up, and lights can be seen in the second-floor windows. The third floor is dark, but a Perception Check can reveal hints of movement to the players. Two elves with sniper rifles patrol the third floor to shoot any intruders before they break into the building.

The elves are running a private wireless comm network (Rating 3) to keep in touch with each other. There are seven PANs in the building, all belonging to the elves. One elf guards the stairs to the second floor with two shotguns (for close combat) and a sniper rifle (to kill intruders). Two other elves patrol the second floor with shotguns while the last elf watches Dr. Ziusudra.

The safehouse has a minimum of furniture so the elves don't trip over anything. One of the apartments is full of pillows and sleeping bags. This is where the elves sleep when off duty. They've also been ordering delivery from the local Chinese deli and a pizza palace so they don't have to leave their posts to get dinner.

## TÍR TAIRNGIRE CUSTOMS AGENCY

The customs agency is located in a busy building on the border between Tír Tairngire and Salish-Shidhe, and security at the agency consists of cameras and audio recording devices. The security node is Rating 4, and there are more customs agents than there are guards. Confiscated items are locked in a shielded room with maglocks and cameras. The walls are four-foot-thick concrete, and the door is two-foot-thick steel plate. All the security guards are watching the people coming into and out of the building, though, and not paying much attention to the storeroom. An interrogation room sits off to the side of the building, segregated from both the storeroom and the open customs lines.

## VANCOUVER WAREHOUSE

This building is where Frosty leads the runners. It is a one-floor warehouse with a twenty-five-meter ceiling. While the warehouse is used by a small business, none of the employees are currently here. Security consists only of a few cameras (Rating 2), a set of old-fashioned locks on both the front door and the loading docks, and a few dogs inside who can easily be bribed with food. The warehouse contains several dusty crates and a few forklifts, and it has an office off to the side. There's nothing of value here, and no one around when Frosty pulls the runners aside.

The buildings around this warehouse are a combination of other warehouses, industrial production facilities, and abandoned husks.



## PEOPLE

### THE ATLANTEAN FOUNDATION TEAM

The team from the Atlantean Foundation should be on the same power level as the PCs and contain the same archetypes. Use two Combat Mages (p. 146) and two Street Shamans (p. 147) for this team.

### ECO-TERRORIST CELL

The eco-terrorists are fanatics dedicated to their cause. They want to free Dr. Ziusudra and bring him back to their boss so Dr. Z can help them save Mother Earth. They welcome any assistance for their cause so long as they believe the runners to be loyal to Mother Earth. Any hint of deception on the runners' part will cause the eco-terrorists to turn against them. Use the Gang Bangers stats on p. 141 to represent the eco-terrorists. The number of eco-terrorists is left up to gamemaster discretion.

### ELVEN SAFEHOUSE GUARDS

These seven elves are dedicated to their duty of protecting Dr. Ziusudra. They are good at combat, but probably not the brightest when it comes to keeping a low profile, as evidenced by the fact that they have their food delivered to them instead of going out to get it. Use the Duelist Adept stats (see p. 139) to represent them.

### FROSTY

Frosty (see p. 140) is an elf and a powerful mage in her own right. She has previously run all over the globe to obtain powerful artifacts on behalf of the Draco Foundation and may have run into the runners before. Her interference in this matter is nothing personal, and she is all business unless the players attempt to attack her. If Frosty is forced to fight, she will incapacitate rather than kill the runners.

### JENNA NI'FAIRRA

Jenna Ni'Fairra (see p. 142) is an elf, a former Tír Prince, and an enigma with no concrete background information available. While Jenna is not the most famous of Tír Princes, she is well known for her racist attitudes and her immense magical abilities. Jenna will not talk with non-elves, and she looks down upon any elf who associates with other races. She is also very intense and rabid about getting back the Book of Leaves.

Jenna is exhausted from performing a seriously high magic ritual. So while she is a very powerful mage in her own right, her perception and reflexes are not quite what they should be. Therefore, Jenna should be temporarily assigned the negative qualities Bad Luck, Gremlins, or Mental Handicap as needed. This will give the runners a chance to survive their encounter with her.

### JENNA'S PALADINS

Jenna's paladins are represented by the Red Samurai Detachment stats (see p. 144). Because these characters are so strong, they should be balanced against the runners by either adjusting their stats or by cutting the squad's numbers to less than the number of runners being encountered.

Some of Jenna's paladins are Awakened—for them, use the Tír Mage stats (see p. 145).

### MR. JOHNSON

The Mr. Johnson for this chapter uses the Mr. Johnson (Basic) stats (see p. 143). He is an Amerindian of middle age, dresses in a business suit, and is in decent shape for his age. He has a limited amount of cyberware. Any Matrix research on him reveals that he is one of many nameless aides for the Salish-Shidhe Council, a fact he will not deny, but not expand upon either.

### NICHOLAS WHITEBIRD

Whitebird is an ork shaman of Ute descent and is the Voice of Ghostwalker. While his very presence can be intimidating, Whitebird's demeanor is calm and business-like. He never raises his voice and never threatens. Then again, as Voice to a great dragon, he hardly needs threats to get his work done. The Veteran Street Shaman stats (see p. 147) can be used for Whitebird.

### TIR CUSTOMS AGENTS

Tir Customs Agents are represented by the Antiquities and Oddities Dealer stats (see p. 138), while any security forces at the customs agency are represented by the Corporate Security Unit stats (see p. 139). There are two Tír Mages (see p. 145) on staff to stop the smuggling of Tír artifacts and impound any magical contraband.

### VARIOUS PARACRITTERS

The paracritters in Mt. Hood National Forest will be corrupted versions of devil rats (see p. 299, *SR4A*), barghasts (see p. 299, *SR4A*), hell hounds (see p. 300, *SR4A*), and merrow (see p. 300, *SR4A*). The behavior and appearance of these critters will not follow the norm listed in *SR4A* and should be adjusted to reflect the twisted nature of their new reality.

SOMETHING DARK IN THE WOODS . . . . .





Incoming .....

## MANATECH WARS

Posted by: Thorn

An associate of mine in ERLA passed along an interesting memorandum he found while conducting due diligence on an Atlantean Foundation transaction. It details their research into the manatech engineering programs in Albuquerque, specifically one that is directly linked to the current artifact fever.

// upload memo attachment :: user Thorn :: 05/02/73 //  
Memorandum: AF13135  
Subject: SpiriTech Progress Report

As per recent discussions, special assets ascertained that SpiriTech is moving with extraordinary speed on their manatech research into the items we have been pursuing. In spite of your concerns, the influx of Ute magicians into the corporation's ranks and some breakthroughs in Pueblo's spirit relations have unlocked some of the more complex aspects not only of those pieces but also of pieces that we have heretofore been unable to procure.

Current discussions with Project Clarke's director, Dr. Renee Suarez, have indicated that SpiriTech has access to much more comprehensive information on a significant cache of artifacts than we previously imagined. The source and value of this database is unknown, though plans are in motion to gather copies of that information via multiple independent channels.

Given their current progress, it is imperative to ensure that the program continues unimpeded. Obtaining exclusive rights to the materials is easily within our capabilities, especially given the Mojave situation. If necessary, I would request approval of additional resources in order to see this through to completion.

// end attachment //

This was interesting enough, but at the same time I received information from independent intelligence sources within the Magical Security Task Force that the TRC and the UCAS military have a mutual interest in the development of manatech

in Albuquerque. SpiriTech is not the only firm working in this area—Phoenix Biotechnologies is also competing with SpiriTech.

- Of course it is. Most manatech breakthroughs come from an interface between science and various biological resources, such as Deus' astrally sensitive leeches. Current manatech research is working to replicate various types of magical effects that are innate to paranormal animals, which begs the question of what abilities are tied to these artifacts.
- The Smiling Bandit
- PBT has been in contact with Genetique, and both corps' researchers have been shuttling back and forth between Tenochtitlan, Calgary, and Phoenix. Aztechnology must have something quite valuable, but extremely perplexing to bring in an old rival like Phoenix.
- Glasswalker
- They possess the remains of Dzitbalchen.
- Man-of-Many-Names

Those sources have also informed me that their interest lies in a specific set of artifacts that, physically, carry navigational symbolism. That fact makes a lot of sense given the correlation between symbolism and function—specifically when applied to astral space. I am not an astral specialist, but I know that there have been numerous attempts over the years to successfully map and navigate astral space and the metaplanes. Every attempt to do so has met with resistance, complications, or outright disruption, even when the work is being done by ostensibly benevolent groups like the Astral Space Preservation Society. Given that one of the pieces that has passed through more hands than a Bangkok whore is the Sextant of Worlds and another is Shantaya's Compass, there is some credibility in that idea.

- The Sextant of Worlds has one major drawback in that it carries the taint of death and chaos, as events in Caracas and elsewhere

have shown. If someone could replicate it without those effects, the resulting item would be extremely valuable.

- Frosty
- So is that it? It's just to explore the metaplanes?
- Kane
- Imagine being able to map the routes to all the most dangerous planes; the homes of the most dangerous things imaginable, like insect spirits and shedim. That kind of information is priceless. It is at least worth the price of killing anyone who stands in the way of those to whom that information matters. So yeah, that's it.
- Winterhawk

If my source knows this, then it is likely that others do as well. After all, the MSTF has become little more than a haven for spies and thieves representing the Tirs' magical institutions, NAN, security corporations, and the UCAS government to masquerade as a magical defense force. In fact, I know that the activities of Felicia McGuinness, the expediter who's been in the UCAS for a while, are being monitored by at least five different organizations. Of course, being a Tír na nÓg assassin makes that hard to do with much consistency. Since this first came to my attention, I did spend time doing my best (we have a history, Felicia and me) trying to learn more about whom she was seeing. As it happens, she was meeting with General Benjamin Miller.

- I'm surprised Miller's security let you get close. He can practically smell adepts like you.
- Kay St. Irregular
- An FBI agent shadowing McGuinness for me did that bit of dirty business.
- Thorn

## OVERVIEW

Some people see magic as an aspect of science, something measurable to be controlled and manipulated similar to any other form of matter or energy. One such group works on manatech at SpiriTech, an Albuquerque magical research and applications firm. Using copious amounts of data provided by an anonymous client, they have been attempting to replicate the artifacts as high-end manatech. Their work, however, has upset and intrigued a number of organizations and individuals. Some want the manatech for their own purposes, but others want to destroy the prototypes and materials because it is too dangerous or simply beyond the province of most people. While the Atlantean Foundation knows of this research and may even be behind some or all of it for their own purposes, there are others who are very much devoted to keeping this under wraps and everyone in the dark. One such person is Samantha Villiers, who already tried to destroy some of the artifacts in *Déjà Vu* (see p. 90). Others are far more mysterious and secretive. It is not clear who is hiring the runners, but they

Those two met just once in DeeCee. The rest of the time she was meeting with a civilian contractor working for Miller on covert intelligence missions as well as the DIA. It makes sense since this operator has a long history with Miller, but working in the private sector with multiple clients affords them some deniability. As far as I could tell, there is no connection or program within the DOD that explains why these two are connected. Granted, the UCAS has enough problems with metaplanar threats that it would see such tools as immensely valuable in dealing with insect spirits or the shedim in DeeCee. None of the other components of the UCAS government, however, had any idea of this until recently.

Meanwhile, the technology focus Albuquerque is known for has buried most interest in this field. Besides that, the nature of local corporations being part-owned by the PCC itself means that going after SpiriTech or PBT (though PBT is an extraterritorial AA corp, the Corporate Council is still a minority shareholder) means picking a fight with the PCC on their turf. Given that the NAN Truth Dancer representative, Robert Loreto, is a Pueblo competition operative, the SecForce is sure to know about this sudden interest and should be expected to take precautions accordingly.

- "Competition operative?" Seriously?
- Pistons
- The Competition Awareness and Management Office is a special offensive counterintelligence program that operates independently of External Affairs' intelligence division and answers to the Kachina Society.
- Fianchetto

Urgent Message.....

### THE OTHER MILE-HIGH CITY

Like Denver, Albuquerque has an average elevation of more than 1.5 kilometers above sea level, with some locations substantially higher. This and its mountain desert climate are likely to be substantially different than players' home setting (such as Seattle), making physical activity more difficult for those unaccustomed to the environment. To reflect that fact, the gamemaster may consider applying a -2 dice pool modifier for all Body-related tests related to strenuous activities (e.g. Running Tests).

want this information wiped from the Earth and will insist that the runners do just that, no matter the cost.

### PLOT POINT ONE

The runners are asked by Mr. Johnson to meet in a deserted office park over the weekend. The offices are empty and up for sale, and he uses the privacy of the location to make his pitch. He offers the runners a rather substantial amount, almost twice as much as they usually earn per run, to engage in a major destructive action

Incoming.....

RIVER CITY SHOOTOUT .....



in Albuquerque, PCC. He wants the runners to break into and destroy all of the research, prototypes, and people associated with an astral-navigation project within SpiriTech's Manatech Division. They have been working on a research project with information gathered from some unknown source on certain telesma with which the runners may be familiar, along with other materials. In addition, PBT has been covertly working with Aztechnology on this manatech project thinking that they can only replicate the effects with certain biological resources, i.e., dragon parts. SpiriTech has been working with PBT on the project without knowing about Aztechnology's involvement because the telesma have displayed an unknown reaction to the dragontech, which intrigues Aztechnology.

It should be made clear that SpiriTech takes its name literally. It was formed by a group of physicists, engineers, and theoretical magicians who wanted to integrate magic and technology to improve technological processes and outcomes. There is measurable science to magic, and by exploring and quantifying it they believed they could further the advancement of thaumaturgical science and applications for the Pueblo Corporate Council and its customers. The company has a dual focus, in that it acknowledges that important breakthroughs sometimes come from non-traditional research outside of the lab, and there is a shamanistic aspect of their work where they cooperate and engage with spirits as equals in order to understand and appreciate the facets of magic that have not been quantified within multidimensional quantum physics.

This is perhaps why this manatech project has been foisted upon this small, A-level corporation. Their plans to meld and integrate magic and technology into functional manatech are far more focused on end results than projects being carried out in their Denver offices, but they also have the opportunity to explore the functions and meanings of the items they are trying to replicate, both individually and as gestalt magical devices. Their relationships with spirits and metaplanar exploration have allowed them a more detailed study of the metaphor of magic than others have been able to accomplish.

## PLOT POINT TWO

The raid requires the runners to strike at two separate targets almost thirty kilometers apart. The SpiriTech headquarters is in the Sandia foothills above Tramway and Paseo del Norte in a large adobe-style building that is in fact a massive bunker of integrated magical, physical, and Matrix (this is PCC after all) security. There is another site within the heart of the city, the University of Pueblo Advanced Materials Labs on the south campus near the UPCC sports complex with their arenas and stadiums, which makes it pretty public. The UPCC labs are where SpiriTech and associated university researchers have been constructing prototype simulacra of the artifacts individually, in an attempt to combine their possible functions into one magical object. Given the intensity of the work and the complicated science with which they are working with, UPCC is the only location with the nanotechnology construction abilities needed to build these prototypes.

The mission requires the runners either to hit both simultaneously or to carry out the jobs within a short enough

period of time that they can destroy everything they are hired to destroy without having SpiriTech and the Pueblo Security Force come down on their heads. As the runners prepare to make their move, a team of Telestrian-hired runners, led by a Telestrian mid-level exec, is planning on extracting as much of the data and materials as possible. Over the course of gathering information on the sites and making plans of attack, there should be an opportunity for the runners to observe that there are others interested in the same matters. In fact, Telestrian is not the only other party. The Atlantean Foundation is interested in their research, and may even be the source of their information, and they have a team of Mystic Crusaders keeping watch on SpiriTech's progress. There may even be multiple Crusaders working undercover within the program, which would make killing it a bit more difficult. Aztechnology is also keeping the program under surveillance for its own reasons, and they definitely have people undercover within SpiriTech.

If the runners are able to uncover this information, they will have to take it in account when planning their attack. Aztechnology is not welcome in the PCC, but the runners themselves aren't exactly a benevolent presence. Indeed, some of these infiltrators are on the hit list, and there is a question of how to deal with them in a way that does not raise suspicion on anyone else's part before the runners make their full move. This requires quite a bit of legwork and judgment on the part of the runners to determine how best to accomplish this mission.

## PLOT POINT THREE

No matter which method the runners choose, the Telestrian runners are able to strike at both locations simultaneously. They are after information on the Aztechnology application of paranormal biotech, and they have no qualms about using lethal force against anyone who gets in their way. Ideally, they should hit the sites about when the runners make their initial strike. At the same time that everyone is doing their job, SpiriTech security will be doing theirs, trying to stop both teams of runners while calling for backup from the PSF. This means having to get through the security systems, breaching passive magical security including wards and a rather extensive spirit presence, especially at the SpiriTech headquarters. Many of these spirits are either free or are very familiar with the magicians on campus and will come to the aid of the people under attack. Of course, some will just wander off, and some bound spirits that go free (due to a summoner's death or other causes) may turn out to be hostile to SpiriTech and anyone else nearby.

If the Mystic Crusaders and/or Aztechnology respond to the attack, it is in the guise of a heavily armed PSF Quick Response Team. The SecForce response is threefold. First, they send in aerial drones that patrol the entire sprawl. Second, they send in combat spirits accompanied by astrally projecting SecForce magicians. Finally, they arrive at the scene physically and in force. Their regular officers are better armed and armored than most police elsewhere, and a high percentage of them have military/paranormal experience from serving in the wilds of California. It will not be long before PSF also responds to the runner's actions with military force in the form of one or more QRTs arriving in a



t-bird. Response times for various stages of PSF response are 1D6 minutes at either location.

Remember that these locations are thirty kilometers apart and separated by an entire city of millions. If more than half an hour elapses between the assaults on the two locations, SpiriTech and the SecForce harden the rest of their facilities, including the other site that the runners are supposed to hit. This means that the security level is elevated and the personnel on hand are far better equipped to deal with an assault from the runners.

## PLOT POINT FOUR

At least some of the Telestrian runners are able to escape with their quarry, and the scorched-earth policy Mr. Johnson demanded requires that the runners pursue them, even if it means sneaking into Tír Tairngire and infiltrating the Telestrian Habitat in downtown Cara'Sir. The Telestrian personnel are not going directly to the habitat, but that is the ultimate goal of Moire Ferguson, the company woman leading the operation. If the runners are not able to stop them before they reach Cara'Sir, then they will have to break into the arcology and destroy whatever they didn't get to back in Albuquerque. Once inside the Tír, it becomes clear that there is someone else after these materials (and other objects from Telestrian that they might be able to acquire while they're in the area).

It turns out that Felicia McGuinness is one of the feared Tír na nÓg Reach Fuileach, and a team of UCASan mercenaries are on a search-and-destroy mission of their own. They want whatever information Telestrian recovered from Albuquerque, but they are also after a wholly separate set of Telestrian biomagical research. They know of Aztechnology's research interests into applying bioscience and manatech, and they are aware of the materials that they sought specifically for that end. McGuinness and the mercenaries want that information for their own purposes. As it happens, the mercenaries are all former UCAS Navy SEALs or Delta operators (use Military Police Lieutenant, p. 143), led by John Kelley, an ork who was in Delta for almost twenty years.

Within the Telestrian habitat, Moire Ferguson is responsible for defending the materials that they just stole from being taken or destroyed by anyone else. Telestrian has a lot of pull in the Tír in spite of rumors of a falling out, and they will call in Peace Force backup (use Corporate Security Unit, p. 139). Moire can and will call in some favors and have a local Ghost team respond as well (use Templar Combat Mage, p. 147).

## PLOT POINT FIVE

McGuinness' team is supposed to be a bunch of badass fighters, and they also have brains. If they see an opportunity, they will tell her to attempt to negotiate with the runners and come to some sort of an arrangement so that they can walk away with the materials. She insists that as far as anyone is concerned, including their employer, it will be like whatever they steal from Telestrian will have never existed. These are people hired to get results—and that doesn't always mean fighting. If it seems like the runners are going to succeed in destroying the last of the SpiriTech materials, then Ferguson's people will simply back off and leave the runners

to it. They aren't going waste their lives for it, but the runners may not have seen the last of them.

## LOCATIONS

### SPIRITECH HEADQUARTERS

SpiriTech maintains a large campus in the Sandia foothills on the far northeast edge of the city. It appears to be a massive compound with adobe-style walls and buildings. While the design may be classical Pueblo, similar to the type of buildings still standing in the Taos Pueblo after centuries, looks can be deceiving. The construction is reinforced ferrocrete and laced with a state-of-the-art, Matrix-based security system. The building also integrates passive security measures such as wards (Force 4 or higher) and Awakened ivy. Given the dry-and-sunny nature of the high desert, the entire compound is surrounded by haven lilies (see p. 127, *Street Magic*) to control access into and out of the area for everyone's benefit. In addition to passive measures, SpiriTech relies on the heavy spirit presence of both free and summoned spirits of every type, but especially dedicated guardian and air spirits.

There is a professional security force on staff overseen by a veteran spider, but they have a close relationship with the Pueblo Security Force. PCC corporations are all partially owned by the Council itself, and so the Council takes special interest in its most successful assets such as SpiriTech. There is a PSF area command a few kilometers away from the compound, and the headquarters is always within the surveillance footprint of various unmanned combat drones. Physically, it is isolated from other buildings in the area on a hill that overlooks the rest of the city.

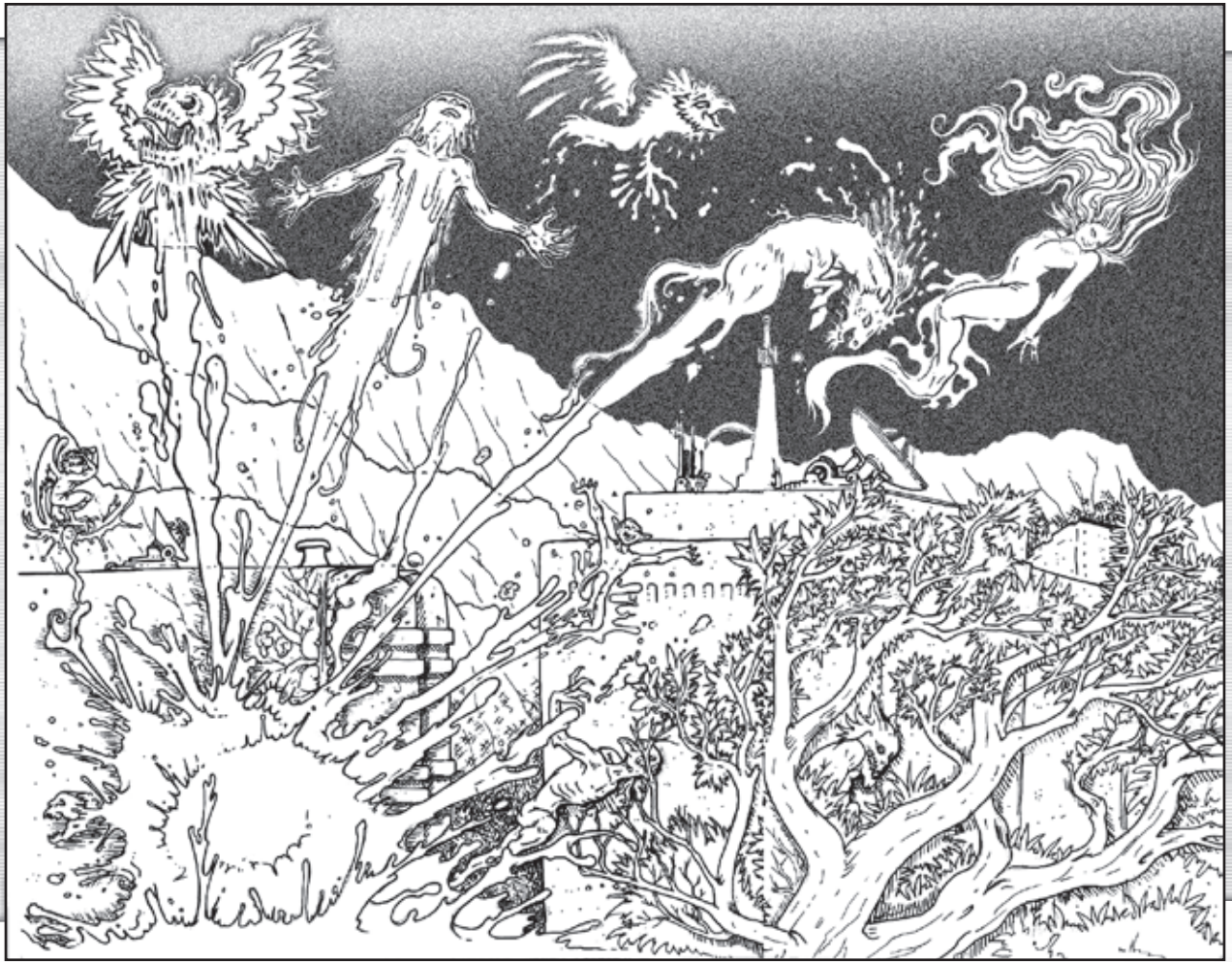
### UNIVERSITY OF PUEBLO ADVANCED MATERIALS LABS

Located near the intersection of University and Cesar Chavez Boulevards, the Advanced Materials Lab is a five-story building on top of a bluff overlooking I-25 and the Barelas neighborhood to the west, and across the street from University Arena the sports complex and the Albuquerque Dukes stadium. It lies in the heart of the University of PCC south campus Applied Sciences Complex, which is where many advanced engineering labs are located (including those for Advanced Materials, Applied Metallurgical Research, and Nucleo-isotope Sciences). As a result, it would generally not be a conducive place for manatech research. Everything around it is pure science and very sterile—almost enough to affect the background count from the sheer lack of humanity. Much of the complex's other projects are dominated by robotics due to the potential for harm if something went wrong. It is generally not a place where people mess around, and there is a sort of unspoken agreement that certain shadow activities are not allowed, regardless of the value of the scientific efforts ensconced in the buildings. The runners' client, of course, places no value in said agreement.

The complex is protected by an array of technical security measures, from man-traps and spider overwatch to fixed and independent drone patrols. In many ways, however, the security guards are more concerned with keeping things inside the complex than with keeping people out. Matrix security is especially heavy







given the sheer amount of operations that are conducted or supervised remotely. Everything is heavily encrypted, and the UPCC has been given license by PSF to use the blackest of IC. It does so freely.

The SecForce maintains a relatively significant presence in the area given its importance. The fact that it's in an area that's busy thanks to the constant sports and other activities that are occurring nearby is another factor keeping the SecForce presence high.

### TELESTRIAN HABITAT

The TIC Habitat is a classical pyramid arcology located in eastern Cara'Sir. Its boundaries are Glisan St NE, Sandy Blvd NE, Davis St NE, and 15<sup>th</sup> Ave NE. It also encompasses Buckman Field, which is directly west of the building. Like the Tír Civic Center that houses most civilian administrative offices, the Telestrian Habitat is a mix of post-industrial, Pacific Northwest Indian, and neo-Celtic designs. This strange mix of influences breaks up what would be a series of sheer surfaces with "inside-out" features like external elevators and HVAC (armored to the teeth, of course), seams in the otherwise flat surfaces, and ornate designs above and below unbroken rows of windows that circle the entire building. Inside it is even weirder, with a combination of natural stone and wood, sculptured ferrocrete that resembles ancient Celtic structural materials, and glass and metal in either exaggerated designs or sterile

modernist offices, depending in which hallway one walks down.

Security-wise, the building incorporates many of the biotech achievements of Telestrian. It has all manner of passive magical barriers, active flora and parafloa, a large contingent of mundane and magical security guards patrolling in groups of three or four, and spiders constantly patrolling the habitat's PLTG. Wheeled drones and biodrones (dogs, mostly) are also used.

## PEOPLE

### FELICIA MCGUINNESS

One of the six "operational" members of the TRC's feared Reach Fuileach not assigned to protect Tír na nÓg's ruling Council of Stewards, Felicia is an extremely dangerous warrior and assassin, a power adept who also possesses augmentations and SOTA warfighting gear. Being expected to destroy the Tír's enemies solo, Felicia has to operate as a spymaster, Ms. Johnson, and fixer in order to accomplish her missions. This is why she has teamed up with John Kelley's mercenaries in a covert alliance arranged with the UCAS military.

Her twin brother Sean was also a TRC intelligence officer and an assassin for the Order of Cu Chulainn. Sean was killed in Seattle shortly after Crash 2.0 while engaged in some unsanctioned operation with Alexander Tintagel (see p. 134),



who now carries Sean's broadsword focus. She and Tintagel have come to some sort of understanding, but for the most part she holds a lot of people from the Tír and Seattle area with a certain amount of scorn. Given the necessities of her role, Felicia is a confident and personable person, but at the same time is utterly ruthless in accomplishing her mission.

**B** **A** **R** **S** **C** **I** **L** **W** **M** **Edg** **Ess** **Init** **IP**  
4(7) 7(10) 6(9) 4(8) 8 5 5 6 10 6 4 11(14) 1(4)

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 12/11

**Armor (B/I):** 14/12

**Skills:** Artisan (Acting) 3 (+2), Athletics skill group 6, Close Combat skill group 6, Cracking skill group 2, Diving 4, Electronics skill group 4, Demolitions 4, Dodge 5, Firearms skill group 5 (6), First Aid (Combat Wounds) 3 (+2), Forgery 3, Heavy Weapons 4, Influence skill group 6, Intimidation 4, Outdoors skill group 4, Perception (Visual) 6 (+2), Pilot Aircraft 2, Pilot Ground Craft 4, Pilot Watercraft 2, Stealth skill group 6,

**Knowledge Skills:** European Politics 2 (NEEC +2), History 4, Literature 5, Magic Background 6, Philosophy 4 (Path of the Wheel +2), Espionage Tradecraft 4, Security Procedures 6 (Close Protection +2), Security Design 3, Tír na nÓg Politics 5, UCAS Politics 2

**Languages:** Irish Gaelic N, English 6, Sperethiel 6, French 3, German 5

**Qualities:** Adept, Ambidextrous, Prejudiced (Non-Elves, Outspoken)

**Initiate Grade:** 6

**Metamagics:** Adept Centering, Cognition, Flexible Signature, Infusion, Masking, Somatic Control

**Adept Powers:** Cloak 4, Combat Sense 4, Commanding Voice, Cool Resolve 4, Counterstrike 3, Enhanced Perception 2, Improved Ability: Infiltration 2, Improved Ability: Negotiation 2, Kinesics 3, Linguistics, Multi-Tasking, Spell Resistance 3

**Augmentations (All Delta Grade):** Bone density augmentation 3, muscle augmentation 4, muscle toner 3, reflex recorder (Firearms skill group), synaptic booster 3

**Gear:** Light military armor [w/ holster, mobility upgrade 3, ruthenium polymer coating, skinlink], military helmet [w/ flare compensation, image link, smartlink, thermographic vision]

**Weapons:**

- FN HAR [Assault Rifle, DV 6P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 35(c), w/ personalized grip, smartgun, 7 clips APDS ammo]
- Ares Predator IV [Heavy Pistol, DV 6P; AP -2, SA, 15(c), w/ personalized grip, smartgun, 3 clips EX-explosive ammo]
- Short sword [Blades, DV 7P, AP -1, Reach 1, Weapon Focus 5]
- Cougar Fineblade Long Blade [Blades, Reach 0, DV 6P, AP -1]
- 3 fragmentation grenades [Grenade, DV 12P(f), AP +2, Blast -1/m]
- 3 high explosive grenades [Grenade, DV 10P, AP -2, Blast -2/m]
- 4 thermal smoke grenades [Grenade, DV —, AP —, Blast 10m Radius]

## JOHN KELLEY (Professional Rating 6)

Sergeant Major Kelley retired in 2065 after more than twenty years in the UCAS Army, almost all of which was spent as a Delta operator. He fought in the shadow wars against the NAN, CAS, and nations with which the UCAS would never admit having conflicts; battled insect spirits in Chicago, Banded in the SCIRE, and terrorists of all stripes up to and including the counteroffensive in DeeCee following the New Revolution insurrection.

A massive black ork, Kelley is a soft-spoken man with a genius for tactics and intelligence who can still perform a two-meter standing leap like he could during his days as high-school superstar. He enlisted because it wasn't enough to be great or smart if you were born an ork in 2024 Texas. He is currently a civilian contractor and team leader running intelligence support missions in aid to the DIA and JSOC. In truth, he and his team are actually deniable assets for especially sensitive missions for both agencies, especially in support of politically sensitive battles in and beyond DeeCee.

**B** **A** **R** **S** **C** **I** **L** **W** **Edg** **Ess** **Init** **IP**  
7 5 3 8(11) 3 3 4 4 5 2.05 7 1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 12/10

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 14/12

**Qualities:** Martial Arts [Krav Maga: Take Aim is a Free Action; Ready Weapon is a Free Action], Maneuvers [Disarm, Finishing Move, Riposte, Vicious Blow]

**Skills:** Armorer 1, Athletics skill group 5, Automatics (Assault Rifles) 5 (+2), Blades 3, Demolitions (Improvised Devices) 2 (+2), Diving 2, Etiquette 4, First Aid (Combat Wounds) 2 (+2), Heavy Weapons 3, Intimidation 3, Leadership 3, Longarms (Shotguns) 2 (+2), Outdoors skill group 4, Perception 4, Pilot Ground Vehicle 2, Parachuting 3, Pistols 6 (Semi-Automatics) 6 (+2), Stealth skill group 5 (6), Throwing Weapons (Grenades) 2 (+2), Tactics (Small Unit) 5 (+2), Security Procedures 4, Military Procedures (UCAS) 4 (+2), Tradecraft 3

**Languages:** English N, Aztlaner Spanish 3, Lakota 3, French 2, Hopi 2

**Augmentations:** Bone lacing (aluminum), muscle augmentation 4, muscle toner 4, reflex recorder (Stealth skill group), synaptic booster 3

**Gear:** Commlink [Device Rating 5 w/ Tacsoft 4, Encrypt 5], contacts [Rating 3, w/ flare compensation, image link, smartlink], hardware kit, light military armor [w/ hydraulic jacks 2, mobility upgrade 2, ruthenium polymer coating, strength enhancement 3], military helmet [w/ ultrasound sensor, audio system, audio enhancement 1, vision enhancement 1], maglock passkey [Rating 6], wire clippers

**Weapons:**

- Nitama Optimum II [Assault Rifle, DV 6P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC 5 (6), 30(c), w/ auto-adjusting underbarrel weight, gas vent 3, personalized grip, smartgun, and 4 clips APDS ammo]
- Underbarrel Shotgun [Shotgun, DV 8P, AP -1, SA, RC 1, 5(m), w/ 2 clips explosive ammo]
- Ares Predator IV [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P; AP -5, SA, 15(c), w/ personalized grip, smartgun, 3 clips APDS ammo]





Cougar Fineblade long blade [Blades, Reach —, DV 6P, AP -1]  
 3 flash bang grenades [Grenade, 6S, AP -3, Blast 10m radius]  
 3 thermal smoke grenades [Grenade, impairs visibility, Blast 10m radius]  
 Fists [Unarmed, Reach —DV 6S, AP —]

## MOIRE FERGUSON

Moire is a Telestrian Industries Corporation company woman and fixer, and also an experienced Hermetic combat mage. She goes by the handle Banshee on the streets. The elf saw her fortunes wax and wane with those of Telestrian until the mid-2060s when her personal and professional relationship to Knight Errant Colonel Lloyd Ritter helped facilitate his grand insurgency strategy to successfully unite all of the opposition forces to oust General Saito from Sacramento. She is still very active in the shadows as a fixer, having used the experience to amass social capital from a large and diverse group of resources.

Telestrian still maintains close ties to the conservative elements within the Tír government, especially the Peace Force and Information Secretariat, but also to the interests of the ousted Princes. She has a distinguished reputation within TIC and the conservative elven circles that still compose much of the security services. This includes holding onto favors from former Tír Ghosts like Colonel Eric “Black Rain” Johnson and certain nobles like the former shadowrunner Black Dagger, and Count Evan “Blackwing” Parris—men who can wreak hell on their own or move a Ghost team with a phone call.

<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Edg</b>	<b>Ess</b>	<b>Init</b>	<b>IP</b>
2	5	4	2	5	5	4	6	9	4	6	9	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 9/11

**Armor (B/I):** 8/6

**Skills:** Arcana 5, Artisan (Singing) 2 (+2), Assensing 4, Conjuring skill group 3, Electronic skill group 2, Etiquette 4, Negotiation 5, Leadership 3, Pistols (Semi-Automatics) 2 (+2), Pilot Ground Craft 2, Sorcery skill group 5, Unarmed Combat 2

**Knowledge Skills:** Corporate Politics (Telestrian) 4 (+2), Elven Society 3, Psychology 3, Security Procedures (Magical Security) 2 (+2), Tír Tairngire Politics 2, 20th Century Rock Music 3

**Languages:** English (Cityspeak) 3 (+2), Sperethiel N

**Qualities:** Magician, Perceptive [2]

**Initiate Grade:** 5

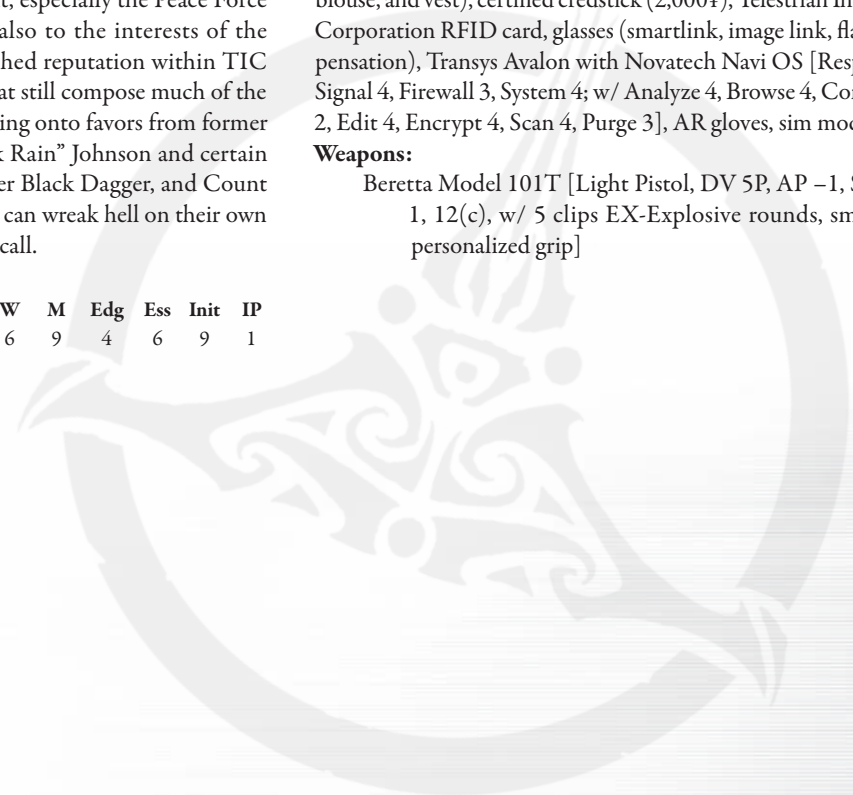
**Metamagics:** Absorption, Centering, Masking, Reflecting, Shielding

**Spells:** Analyze Truth, Armor, Control Actions, Combat Sense, Detect Enemies, Detect Magic, Deflection, Fireball, Heal, Increase Reflexes, Invisibility, Magic Fingers, Manabolt, Mind Probe, Physical Barrier, Powerball, Stunbolt

**Gear:** Armor jacket, Lyric of Portland clothing (Neo-Celtic jeans, blouse, and vest), certified credstick (2,000¥), Telestrian Industries Corporation RFID card, glasses (smartlink, image link, flare compensation), Transys Avalon with Novatech Navi OS [Response 4, Signal 4, Firewall 3, System 4; w/ Analyze 4, Browse 4, Command 2, Edit 4, Encrypt 4, Scan 4, Purge 3], AR gloves, sim module

**Weapons:**

Beretta Model 101T [Light Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, RC 1, 12(c), w/ 5 clips EX-Explosive rounds, smartgun, personalized grip]





## THE ENEMY OF MY ENEMY

Lucas Reading strolled through the wood-paneled halls of the private club—an icon of St. James’s Street for centuries—and admired the styling and classical trappings of gentlemanly leisure these paragons of English aristocracy afforded themselves. His escort glided ahead of him, far enough away to be polite, but close enough to sense even the slightest misstep if Mr. Reading were to deviate from the path toward the sitting room where he was to meet this afternoon’s quarry.

Every so often, members would catch a glimpse of him; servants wouldn’t dare. Were it not for his adept abilities, Reading would draw unwelcome attention for his pointed ears. Elves, especially Irish or Tír elves, were generally not favored by the men of status and titles who were members of this club. Even those who might otherwise have been favorable or just indifferent toward him understood the policy and attitudes that prevailed within these walls. While they were bigots, they were also gentlemen who would never be so uncouth as to say something out loud. It would not do to let guests or other outsiders know how the club worked internally. Words were not necessary, though—Reading was more than able to register the unconscious reactions of those around him. His entire life was spent risking his neck based on his ability to read those reactions.

The escort finally stopped in a remote sitting room that was empty save for an older man sitting in an overstuffed chair. An identical chair sat next to his at an angle, and between them was a table made before the Great War, on top of which rested a serving tray with two glasses, an ice bucket, and a bottle of sixty-year-old blended scotch.

“Sir,” the escort said. “Mr. Lucas Reading.”

“Thank you.” Reading took the empty seat as the escort vanished back into the club, closing the room’s door behind him. He then turned to his host, a man who was obviously continental and not English; one who’d seen much of the life that the Sixth World had to offer. “Is it secure?”

“Of course. You can put away that face.”

Reading smiled, and his facial features changed instantly. Rory Caolain was himself again. The elf plucked three ice cubes

from the silver bucket and dropped them into a glass in rapid succession. He then popped the top off of the bottle and poured himself a generous amount.

“Nothing but the best for Signora Dell’Otto’s boy,” Rory said.

“Indeed. I don’t trust alcohol younger than me,” Fianchetto replied as he fixed himself a drink.

“To the Blessed Virgin,” Rory said with an exaggerated Irish brogue. Fianchetto nodded, and they took a drink. “If these old farts knew a couple of Papists were besmirching this venerable institution ...” Rory shook his head and smirked before taking a drink of whiskey that was almost older than the Awakening.

“So what is so important that I had to come all this way? I have business to complete.”

“Friday,” Fianchetto said, in a solid and serious tone. The small time allotted for verbal repartee was over.

“Fucking hell,” Rory replied.

“She’s out there, and I know you were out there recently. So I figured it would be useful for both of us to discuss and share what we know. The boy had been tracking her; one of his many little projects. I’ve got some assets pursuing leads following an encounter they had with a cell in Bilbao last night.”

“How the in the nine hells did she get to North America?”

“That’s a very good question, and one I don’t have an answer for. Whoever’s helping her, though, is someone to worry about.”

Rory knew that his compatriot did not make such comments lightly.

“Not only that, but she, or someone as good as her, has upped their game,” Fianchetto continued as he reached into his jacket pocket and tossed some small items to Rory, who caught them in midair. The elf then examined the damaged remains of a trio of skillsoft chips. “This is an upgrade, but it’s based on the original design from that nasty business in the SCIRE some years back—business that involved someone combining tech from Winternight’s God chips and Deus’ Blues into a mesh network that operated, God help them, like the kind of intuitive gestalt network only seen before in insect spirits and Aztechnology’s *guerreros*. The information I have says that

Incoming .....





these chips were supposed to be headed to Albuquerque, and to Omaha after that.”

Rory made a series of mental calculations. The only thing those cities had in common was that both were near military bases. Before the Ghost Dance, Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque was home to the U.S. tactical nuclear weapons depot. Now that supply lay outside of Omaha.

“Why didn’t you tell any of this to Kay? He’s tight with the Yanks.”

“I have some doubt that the Americans are fully capable of stopping these madmen.”

“Then what am I doing here?”

“I don’t trust Kay with this, but José Montes has been reconstructing some data for me that was corrupted to hell, even within the Realms. It ties back to Anton Gage, one of Ghostwalker’s top Watchers, and one of Kay’s best friends in Denver.”

Rory stifled a brief chuckle. “Kay doesn’t have friends. Treacherous little shite.” His brogue started to poke through as he spoke. “It makes sense, though. These maniacs are just another chess piece to the white wyrm, especially against Lofwyr, given their predilections for European action. There’s something else, though. Gage and the Smokers have been involved in their own thing, especially involving that dustup in Albuquerque.”

“The artifacts. I didn’t want to tip my hand at the time, but all the information those mad scientists were using to reverse engineer them as manatech came from Ghostwalker’s people.” Rory was mentally connecting the dots, but that wasn’t his thing. If he needed someone to do that, Kay would be able to find the right person.

“Friday. Nukes. And an astral GPS guiding her to Heaven knows where. The wyrm must be out of his bloody mind.”

“Indeed. I need to go back and have some folks scour the mess left back in Pueblo and Portland. That’s where that particular trail of destruction ended.”

“And where your old friend McGuinness was.”

“Yes, well, that matter aside I am most concerned about how Friday knows about this. No one really knows that much, and we only know as much as we do because we know where to look.”

“Well, if we’re talking about astral navigation and nukes and apocalypse cultists, I can imagine what they think that they can accomplish. She’s probably trying to get her magicians to find and conjure frost giants or dark elves or some other Norse nonsense.”

“Nonsense or not, they nearly succeeded last time. Here’s a random thought from my list of worst-case scenarios: Nukes, sacrificing blood magic, and a Great Ghost Dance. If these artifacts really can help people track things in astral space, wouldn’t that be the brass ring? Access to magic that can make the earth shudder.”

“Ten years ago I would say that idea is beyond the pale. Now ... but the questions is, what does Ghostwalker get out of all of this?”

“Guinea pigs? He has a much stronger affinity for spirits than any of the other dragons or other players that we know about. Perhaps he wants something found, or unleashed. If it requires any kind of sacrifice, then who better to use than people who are already willing to die for a cause and can also be manipulated?”

“That’s terrible.”

“That’s what makes its possible.”

## OVERVIEW

During the events in **Shadows of Peace** (see p. 61), the players encountered another team using the Shroud of Shadows to attempt to steal several nuclear weapons from the Air Force Special Weapons Depot at Offutt AFB. Those runners were able to make off with seven weapons, and they are now on the run. In response, the UCAS military and law enforcement has scrambled everything they have in order to recover those nukes before they can be used. When it becomes clear that the team was composed of Winternight terrorists, the Corporate Court Crisis Coordination Committee (“C5”) takes charge. The Court throws their considerable resources toward settling accounts with Friday and the rest of Winternight once and for all. Thanks to the combined resources of the Big Ten and UCAS intelligence, the terrorists are identified as being en route to Chicago, where it is suspected that the area’s magical environment will be able to hide the weapons until they can be smuggled out safely and secretly.

## PLOT POINT ONE

### *I Can Make You Famous*

The runners are contacted and hired by Samantha Roth, who says she has a high-paying, high-profile job that should be

fun. While she escorts the runners to the O’Hare sub-sprawl and into Chicago, she briefs the runners on Friday, Winternight, and the mission profile. If they were involved in **Shadows of Peace**, she also interrogates them on the terrorists they encountered at Offutt. Her job on the flight is to tell the runners what they need to know, but she is also gathering information at her end, and she is quite good at what she does. She has spent decades getting information from people who don’t want to give it, specifically people associated with threats like Winternight—including runners. She is looking for information about the artifacts people and organizations are chasing across the globe. She has gathered enough information to know that the situation with the shroud suggests that the other parties involved in the chase know more about the bigger picture than most other people, but many of them, including Friday, may not know how their actions fit into a larger plan. Roth knows she has a captive audience, so she is going to make her case strongly. She also knows she has a load of surveillance equipment on board the jet to make sure no information slips by her.

The crux of her sales pitch (which she can make very forcefully given that the runners were infiltrating a UCAS Air Force base filled with nuclear weapons) is that since the runners know whom they’re fighting and what to expect, they are going to be offered the opportunity to finish the job. Brennan “Heavy” O’Dell and his trid show, *Toxic Hunter*, are broadcasting a special episode

featuring an effort to track down these terrorists and, ultimately, their leader—Friday. This trip will require the runners to travel into the Chicago Containment Zone and engage Winternight terrorists who have several tactical nuclear weapons in their possession and the will to use them if they can. It should be noted that Winternight is notorious for their use of chipped-out mercs and shadowrunners (as was the case in *Offutt*), but they are also able to field groups of toxic shamans, who are notorious for being loners, as part of their organization. If Friday is with a cell, then there will be at least two toxic shamans there as well. In the case of Chicago, there is no shortage of toxic magic and other threats, but Roth tells the runners that they're up against a wall—they can go in, or they can languish in a cell forever. Heavy O'Dell is happy for more help, since he knows something that he's not anxious to let the runners know about—there is a contingency plan in place in the event his team fails. The UCAS and Corporate Court have sanctioned the use of their own weapons of mass destruction. Friday is not leaving the CZ alive, even if the CZ has to go to hell (again) with her.

## PLOT POINT TWO

### *The Tower*

Once Roth and the runners arrive at the C5 forward operating base on the edge of the O'Hare International Aerospaceport, they are introduced to Heavy O'Dell and his team—both the hunters and the production unit. The runners are given enough time to gear up, packing weapons and recording equipment (simrigs and trid cameras/mics) before the runners and the six-man *Toxic Hunter* cast are loaded into a pair of Hawker-Ridley HS-950 Skytrains to fly into the Containment Zone. The initial plan is to fly into the CZ and assault the old Truman Tower at the southern edge of the zone in the heart of the old Elevated Core. The Tower is not hard to miss, as it stands at over 1.5 kilometers tall (it was taller, but Ares destroyed the top fifty stories during Operation: Extermination). Even among the other skyscrapers in the old Elevated Core, Truman Tower looms largest and most ominously, dwarfing the older Spire in the Noose to the north.

At the last minute, Roth climbs into the SkyTrain with the runners. It wouldn't be a problem, except for the fact that she's changed from tridstar to Kevlar Cowgirl with war paint covering her entire head and face under her Ballistic Mask (see p. 164, *War!*).

The mission is to fly to the tower, and then perform a wingsuit (see p. 164, *War!*) jump from the tilt-rotor aircraft into the building to confront the Winternight element that intelligence has indicated is holed up somewhere in the top third of the building. The jump is itself dangerous because, while tall, the Truman Tower has a relatively small footprint (it's less than half a square kilometer at its base, and it tapers rapidly). In addition to the small landing footprint, the Landing Zone (LZ) is the ruined remains of the upper floors. Ares was not kind to the tower, battering the wasp nests inside with FAB Strain III-Beta-filled cruise missiles before launching a high-explosive fusillade to finish them off.

It doesn't get any safer for the runners once they land. The FAB is still lingering throughout the tower, and the building is a vertical death trap of collapsed floors and dead-ends that the

runners must climb down in order to find the terrorists. Luckily, the team has the external intelligence support of the Joint O'Hare Police Force, UCAS Army, and others. That isn't, however, going to help them with anything that they may encounter in the building, including squatters; feral, possibly mutant, critters; the biological remains of insect spirits and their worshippers looking for telesma; insect spirits; and (for magicians) floating clouds of FAB Strain III-Beta still lingering throughout the tower. Winternight knew what they were doing when they took up positions in this building. They don't fear death, so they don't worry about these obstacles—they're only impediments to people hunting them.

And when they do find Winternight, they will be somewhere on the 265<sup>th</sup> through 268<sup>th</sup> floors. There is a lot of room for movement between these floors, and they include a number of fairly defensible positions. The team is also hindered by the fact that this is a media spectacle (Roth's and Heavy's appearances and actions as they parachute in and sneak downstairs should help emphasize this). That affects how they can take on these terrorists.

To make things worse, the attack can contain some surprises for the runners and the *Toxic Hunter* cast. For added complications, the toxic magic slung by the Winternight terrorists can attract the attention of a wasp or other flying spirits from elsewhere in the building if not the other towers nearby, or they could even draw the notice of the Chicago wyvern. Additionally, Winternight has long preferred to use drone support for their missions, and they have a number of these that are controlled by Friday as they battle the runners and make their escape.

Friday's main strategy is to get away rather than confront the runners head on, and she makes her escape as early as necessary. She should lead the players and *Toxic Hunter* runners on a chase throughout the lower floors. Two of her men, either large orks or small trolls, carry cases the size of small washing machines on their backs. These are nukes. As they evade the hunters, around the 260<sup>th</sup> floor the three terrorists leap out of one of the gaping holes in the building, and their drones are there to catch them. Depending on the situation, the runners have three primary options as their quarries descend rapidly past I-90/94 towards the Wind Transit Terminal: If they still have the wingsuits, they can follow the terrorists that way. A hacker (either the team's or Heavy's) can take over and use some of Winternight's own drones, or they can wait for the SkyTrains to pick them up (either dangling from the aircraft off heavy ropes or making a ballsy leap into the rear cargo bay).

Heavy and Roth use their wingsuits in the pursuit.

## PLOT POINT THREE

### *The Terminal*

The remains of the Wind Transit Terminal occupy a square kilometer of aboveground space, along with an underground complex that used to be the primary bus terminal for Chicago. Beetle spirits took control of the terminal, and Ares flooded the complex with FAB-tainted water before imploding the complex with massive thermobaric and fuel-air explosives, dropping the neighborhood above the terminal into a massive crater littered with the wreckage of buildings and vehicles (the terminal held up





INCOMING FEED.....

to five hundred buses and thousands of cars). It is now home to toxics, squatters, and bugs. And now, Friday, who has descended into what can accurately be described as the Seventh Circle of Dante's Hell.

Friday and her crew have planned this escape route. Their plan is to ambush the players and the Toxic Hunters, making a stand in an area of their choosing. Battling them during the airborne chase is possible, but the most likely situation is for them to avoid hostile fire by taking shelter in the transit terminal, which is so big and chaotic that the number of possible hiding spaces is nearly infinite. Once they are on the ground, the team has to track down Friday and avoid any ambushes, booby traps, and IEDs left for them. They also have to contend with the normal residents of the terminal area, which include most of the same threats as in the tower, but also people who couldn't care less about stopping Friday (or may even welcome oblivion at this point, even if they aren't affiliated with Winternight) such as scrappers and other scroungers, squatters, the Human Brigade and Horde infiltrators, and Anarchist Black Crescent do-gooders.

Winternight isn't going to make their last stand in the terminal. Friday and her nukes are headed north to Cermak. Once it became clear to her what was happening, she decides that her last stand will be at Cermak, if she can make it there. She cannot truly succeed in her apocalyptic goals, but she believes that another nuclear detonation or two in the crater would hurt whoever is left after she dies.

Being that this was a transportation hub, there was no shortage of vehicles. All the usable ones have long been removed, and others have been stripped. The location can hide the smugglers'

vehicles long enough to get Friday and others to Cermak. The runners should be able to keep up to some extent, and then watch as a group of jury-rigged vehicles suited for the post-apocalyptic wasteland of the Containment Zone roar out of the terminal.

## PLOT POINT FOUR

### *Twenty Klicks and Running*

The Cermak Crater is approximately twenty kilometers north of the Truman Tower/Wind Transit Center, and the chase takes the Toxic Hunters and the runners across more than half of the Containment Zone. There are two train tracks near the Core, and both lines have numerous stations. Much of this area is suburban, low-profile residential and commercial buildings with some light industrial zones. The overgrown forest of the Dan Ryan Woods is along the way, as is Midway Airport. In between the Truman Tower and the Wind Transit Terminal is I-94/I-90, the former highway that has been blown into uselessness.

The main issue here is that the runners are pursuing a group of people with no regard for their own lives. That means any standard of safety, such as being careful about attracting FAB clouds, insect spirits, or anything else—gangs, madmen, or even the Chicago wyvern—holds no weight with them. Their only goal is for the bombs to make it to the Cermak Crater. If many of them fall by the wayside in that effort, so be it.

The runners and Toxic Hunters have air support in the form of the SkyTrains. Tracking and interdicting Winternight isn't easy, though. The entire CZ sits between them and Cermak, and

since I-90/94 have been bombed to oblivion, they're going to be taking side streets. For faster movement, Winternight might travel along the train tracks that run north-south through the CZ. One problem with hunting Winternight by air is that corporate attack aircraft aren't exactly welcome in the Containment Zone, and it's entirely possible for gangs like the Human Brigade or the Horde to have rockets or other explosive weapons to use against the SkyTrains. This is especially true with regard to the Chicago Anarchist Collective smugglers at Midway Airport, who most certainly have the weaponry to make life difficult for anyone in the air that they decide to target.

The worst-case scenario is that word spreads, and everyone—the gangs, the Anarchists, the madmen, etc.—quickly hears about what the runners are doing. There are people with nuclear weapons hauling ass through the CZ, and there are plenty of dregs in the CZ who would like a piece of that action. Once word spreads, the entire CZ is going to descend on Friday and/or the runners, with a whole variety of motives—to help the runners and Toxic Hunters, to help Winternight, but mostly to help themselves become a nuclear power. This is really a good opportunity to cut loose and throw the runners into any sort of melee, either at Midway or the Dan Ryan Woods, the train depots, and the many destroyed and/or deserted neighborhoods in the heart of the Zone.

Roth, being a social adept manipulator, is especially helpful in attempting to deflect unnecessary hostilities or even forging brief alliances in an effort to force Friday into a chokepoint. This may require the team to trade the SkyTrains for CAC ground vehicles or some other options. This may drag others into the operation, ranging from “observers” to do-gooder “backup” whose actions actually help Friday. During this entire chase, Heavy insists that they cannot create unnecessary collateral damage (primarily since the whole thing is being broadcasted), and bystanders can make that more difficult. This means he's hesitant to call on extra support. If the runners or Toxic Hunters are able to get Friday in their sights, some gangers can try to intervene—and end up being used as human shields by Winternight.

## PLOT POINT FIVE

### *Armageddon*

*And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. —Revelation 16:16*

The final showdown comes on the southern banks of the Chicago River in sight of the Cermak Crater. Heavy and Roth have been given an ultimatum: If Friday crosses the river, the entire area is getting carpet-bombed. Given the danger of the location, along with the physical and astral harm the radiation from the bombs would cause, the gamemaster is encouraged to tailor this scene for maximum drama. The battle can take place anywhere along the river, but would be especially climactic on the south banks of the river across from the Cermak blast site.

Contractually, Heavy gets top priority to kill Friday, followed by the rest of the Toxic Hunters. Only if the Toxic Hunters are taken out, or if they actively defer to the runners, are the players allowed to take Friday out (though they can wound or

otherwise impede her to help finish her off, however). Given the circumstances, it would probably be in the runners' best interest to go after the terrorists carrying the nuclear weapons.

To keep things interesting—and real—there must be a chance that everything will go wrong and the bombs will go off. With all the parties and interests involved, there is the chance that the situation will explode in every way possible. Runners should feel the tension of the escalating chaos.

## PLOT POINT SIX

### *One Thousand Years of Peace*

Once Friday is dead and the last bomb is secured, Roth takes control of the scene and is intent on collecting as much intelligence as possible in a short time—this is still the Containment Zone, and no one wants to be inside any longer than possible. Any material collected from Truman Tower, the terminal, or en route during the chase through the Zone is collected along with whatever Friday and her people possess. As it happens, there is a disturbing amount of intelligence in her possession on the artifacts that have been chased across all parts of the globe, including those discussed in other chapters.

Roth works for Samantha Villiers, who has already shown interest in these pieces elsewhere in the book (see *Déjà Vu*, p. 90), and has interests with C5 and the UCAS government because of her prior experience with Winternight. They want answers and will go to any ends to find them. Clearly the runners have some understanding of the stakes and players involved. C5 and others will pursue their own ends, but Roth makes an offer to the runners that they can of assistance—they will become intelligence assets, in effect—to keep the situation from further exploding given the dangers already faced. Investigating these leads takes them into the world of Dunkelzahn's old Watchers, who have now been split into factions loyal to the Draco Foundation, Ghostwalker, themselves, or a few who've taken new masters (corporate, government, or draconic). Specifically the sources seem to overlap among all groups and men like Anton Gage, who seem to be more loyal to someone else entirely. This is when Corinna, a doppelganger of Nadja Daviar turned fixer, confronts the runners. She proposes an arrangement similar to Roth's—one that would actually use them against Roth and the corps. The runners have options, but possibly the most important one is whatever gets them out of Chicago.

## LOCATIONS

### DAN RYAN WOODS

This is a forest preserve in the heart of the Zone that also borders and incorporates the Beverly Country Club and Evergreen Golf Club. Insect spirits, mainly beetle and cicada spirits, reigned over the park for years until Operation: Extermination. It has been overrun in the last eighteen years by warlords and gangs seeking a place with renewable resources, e.g. firewood. Its toxic nature from the FAB bombardment has made it virtually impossible for any group to maintain consistent, let alone permanent, presences. Bees and bee spirits still hold some influence over the northeast corner of the woods, but it is a wild place that doesn't seem to want anyone to reside in it; in effect it has become aggressively feral woods.



## MIDWAY AIRPORT

Midway was in the heart of the Chicago sprawl, and it was placed within the boundaries of the Containment Zone in 2055. Early on the UCAS and Ares used it for some military operations, but they soon realized that it was too dangerous and pulled out when the Wall went up. As they left, the military bombed the terminals and cratered the tarmac and runways into irrelevance. The Chicago Anarchist Collective has a cell of smugglers and Anarchist Black Star operatives based out of the airport now. They've repaired some of the terminals and hangars as well as some of the runways now that the army and Ares aren't constantly shelling them to keep them in a state of disuse. The airport is near the turf of the Human Brigade, and while they'd like to control Midway, the CAC has both the arsenal and the will to keep them at bay.

## TRUMAN TOWER

Located at 1000 West 107<sup>th</sup> Street in the northeast corner of the old Chicago Core, the Truman Tower was the most impressive symbol of Chicago's strength as a UCAS city. The 1,850m, 352-story-tall monolith used to loom above the Core, including the smaller Spire. It traces a massive isosceles triangle that formerly held a helipad to accommodate VTOL flights for Truman Technologies upper management and their families, including the Trumans themselves. Daniel Truman commissioned its construction in 2052 (it was completed in 2055) to serve as the crown jewel of Truman Technologies' Chicago empire. The entrance was a three-story-tall glass façade that welcomed people into an eleven-story-tall atrium that was filled with massive pools—long since emptied—of engineered color-shifting carp. The frames are all that remain, giving the atrium entrance the impression of a gnarled, gaping steel maw ready to swallow anyone or anything foolish enough to enter.

Over the eighteen years since the Containment Zone walls went up, the pseudo-arcology has been thoroughly looted by both internal refugees and "recovery operatives" from Truman, Fuchi, and other corps. The upper floors were taken over by nests of wasp spirits that could look down over the rest of the Chicago CZ, and during Operations: Extermination Ares pounded these floors with cruise missiles and guided bombs and missiles, rendering the top fifty stories virtually uninhabitable.

The only Matrix activity currently in the tower is conducted by PANs of people wandering in with active commlinks; nothing built-in remains.

## WIND TRANSIT TERMINAL

The Wind Transit Terminal was once a massive multilevel underground hub for the buses of Chicago. It is nearly a square kilometer stretching from Western to Vincennes Avenues and from West 103rd to West 107th streets. The terminal's northern boundaries are delineated by the SkyTrack line that runs along 103rd between California Avenue and Racine Avenue. Running underground for most of its length, it held thousands of cars and hundreds of buses, including their maintenance facilities. Beetle spirits took over the terminal when the Wall went up, but during Operation: Extermination Ares attempted to flood and then implode the hives while burying them with buildings from street level. The water vector used for Strain III dried, but it still collects

during downpours in the hulking mess of collapsed buildings and vehicles from above and below. It is a labyrinth of collapsed tunnels and chambers, and a nightmare to navigate. Magically, the area remains a mana ebb from the FAB Strain III still floating around, giving it a background count of 2. As is the case with the Truman Tower, no built-in nodes remain at this location.

## PEOPLE

### CORINNA

The first thing to notice about Corinna is that she looks *exactly* like Nadja Daviar. At one time she was a French DGSE spy, but then she was bio-sculpted and gene modified to incorporate Daviar's genetic and physical makeup. She also had Daviar's psychological profile imprinted on her; a rather sadistic program by some unknown party to create and use the most perfect simulacra of Daviar as exclusive bunraku-puppet slaves. Corinna was based in DeeCee, and since going free she has remained there as a fixer.

She is the de facto leader of a group of a dozen fixers made up of Daviar doppelgangers like herself. Acting as a fixer for runners, politicians, and everyone in between, Corinna has applied her espionage skills, her experiences as the meat puppet, and the profile of Nadja Daviar to carve out a niche for herself. Either before or just about the same time the real Nadja Daviar re-appeared in the world, Corinna was the lead in interfacing between Daviar and the network of doppelganger fixers. They don't work for her, but there is a business relationship between the fixers and Daviar.

**B A R S C I L W M Edg Ess Init IP**  
3 5 4(5) 3 8 6 6(8) 7 6 5 5 10(11) 1(2)

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10/12

**Armor (B/I):** 6/2

**Skills:** Athletics skill group 4, Cracking skill group 2, Dodge 3, Electronics skill group 4, First Aid 2, Influence skill group 5, Intimidation 3, Outdoors skill group 2, Perception 4, Pilot Ground Craft 2, Stealth skill group 4, Unarmed Combat 3

**Knowledge Skills:** Espionage Tradecraft 5, High Society (DeeCee) 5 (+2), History 3, Law (UCAS) 2 (+2), Literature 4, Politics 4 (UCAS +2), Psychology 3, UCAS Politics 6 Languages: English 5, French N, German 4, Russian 3

**Qualities:** Adept, Exceptional Attribute (Willpower)

**Initiate Grade:** 3

**Adept Abilities:** Analytics (2), Astral Perception, Cloak (2), Eidetic Sense Memory, Enhanced Perception (2), Improved Ability: Etiquette (3), Improved Ability: Negotiation (1), Improved Ability: Intimidation (1), Improved Ability: Infiltration (1), Kinesics (3)

**Metamagics:** Masking, Infusion

**Augmentations:** (all betaware) Cerebral booster 2, mnemonic enhancer 1, synaptic accelerator 1, tailored pheromones 2

**Gear:** Chocolate colored Berwick suit

### FRIDA KOHLMAN, AKA FRIDAY

Friday was one of the three Norns, who were named Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. They founded and

controlled the apocalyptic Winternight terrorist network until she and Wednesday were captured, and Thursday killed himself by detonating a nuclear bomb as a global strike force attempted to prevent them from causing Crash 2.0. Wednesday killed himself in custody, but Friday's attempt failed and she was tortured in an attempt to gain information to limit the effects of the Crash. She recently escaped from Europol custody and has been on the run trying to rebuild the terrorist network and gather up esoteric tesmas and other magical artifacts and materials that could be used as weapons to wreak global destruction. Since she was detained, all of her cyberware was removed save for the datajacks that her doctors used in their failed attempts at VR therapy.

Frida suffered the loss of her family, her job, and virtually her entire life during the Crash of '29. This made her extremely Matrixphobic and paranoid, and eventually she was driven towards an Asatru cult where she met Wednesday. She was and remains a genius simsense and drone engineer, and she used that knowledge to create the drones and BTL "God" berserker chips that served as two pillars upon which Winternight rests (the third being toxic magic, which was Wednesday's forte).

During her confinement, Frida went catatonic. At this time she Emerged as a Dissonant technomancer. Her expertise and affinity for drones, especially her custom drones, and this development created a skilled Dronomancer who isn't entirely sure if the drones she can control are real. In fact, she has often compiled Machine sprites and their entropic Meltdown counterparts without realizing they aren't "real." This can frighten her to the edge of incapacitation when she is confronted with that fact.

**B A R S C I L W Res Edg Ess Init IP**  
2 3 3 2 6 6 6 4 5 5 1.2 9 1

**Matrix Initiative/IP:** 14/4

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 9/10

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 10/8

**Qualities:** Gearhead [1, McDonnell-Douglas Nimrod], Hallucinations, Juryrigger, Phobia [Moderate, Non-Rigging Matrix], More Than Metahuman, Technomancer, Tough As Nails [1]

**Skills:** Chemistry 4, Demolitions 2, Dodge 5, Electronic Warfare 4, Gunnery 3, Hardware 6, Leadership 4, Mechanic skill group 5, Medicine (Neuroscience) 2 (+2), Negotiation 4, Perception 3, Pilot Aircraft 5, Pilot Ground Craft 4, Pistols 3, Tasking Group 5, Unarmed Combat 2, Psychology 5, Simsense (BTL) 6 (+2), Tactics 3, Norse Mythology 5, Smuggler Routes 3, Arms Dealers 3

**Languages:** Swedish N, English 4

**Augmentations:** 3 datajacks [betaware]

**Living Persona:** System 6, Response 7 (VR 8), Firewall 4, Signal 3

**Complex Forms:** Armor 4, Attack 5, Biofeedback Filter 6, Command 5, Encrypt 5, ECCM5, Sniffer 4, Tacsoft 4

**Submersion Grades:** 4

**Echoes:** Contaminate, Malfunction, Overclocking, Siphon

**Gear:** Ear buds [Rating 3, w/ audio enhancement 2, spatial recognizer], full body armor [w/ climbing gear, chemical protection, fire resistance 3], goggles [Rating 6, flare compensation, image link, smartlink, thermographic vision, vision enhancement, vision magnification], micro-transceiver [Rating 6, w/ Encrypt 6]

## Weapons:

Ares Predator IV [Heavy Pistol, DV 6P; AP -2, SA, 15(c), w/ personalized grip, smartgun, 3 clips EX-explosive ammo]

Fists [Unarmed, DV 1S, AP 0, Reach 0]

McDonnell-Douglas Nimrods:

Climbing Harness mounts

Ingram White Knight [Light Machine Gun, DV 6P, AP -5, BF/FA, RC 5, 250 (ammo bin), w/ APDS ammo]

Fleche Hail Barrage Rocket Launcher [Rocket Launcher, DV 14P, AP -2, Blast -2/m, 20 (tubes), High Explosives]

Self-Destruct System [DV 14P(f), AP +5, Blast -1/m]

## BRENNAN "HEAVY" O'DELL

Brennan O'Dell is the star of Truman Distribution Network's trid series *Toxic Hunter*, where he and his team travel the globe combating various magical threats: toxic shamans, insect spirits, shedim, etc. His show is very popular, but aside from O'Dell there is heavy turnover due to the extremely dangerous nature of the show. In addition to his crew, the show often hires mercenaries and shadowrunners to assist the crew in taking down various targets.

O'Dell is a retired Knight Errant Firewatch captain and a survivor of the original Chicago outbreak. He was brought on because he has considerable experience with threats such as the insect spirits. He's heavily cybered, all of it top-of-the-line wares, and he has had numerous reconstructive surgeries.

**B A R S C I L W Edg Ess Init IP**  
5 4(8) 3(9) 4(8) 3 3 4 6 7 0.53 6(12) 1(4)

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 11/11

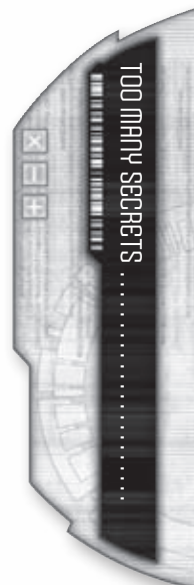
**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 14/11

**Qualities:** Martial Arts [Krav Maga: Take Aim is a Free Action; Ready Weapon is a Free Action], Maneuvers [Disarm, Finishing Move, Riposte, Vicious Blow], Guts, High Pain Tolerance 2, Toughness, Flashbacks [Insect Spirits], Mild Addiction [Painkillers], Weak Immune System

**Skills:** Athletics skill group 5, Automatics (Assault Rifles) 5 (+2), Blades 4, Dodge 5 (8), Etiquette 4, First Aid (Combat Wounds) 2 (+2), Heavy Weapons 3, Intimidation 4, Leadership 4, Perception 4 (+3), Pilot Aircraft 2, Pilot Ground Vehicle 2, Pistols (Semi-Automatics) 6 (+2), Stealth Group 4, Throwing Weapons (Grenades) 3 (+2), Tactics (Counter-Magic) 6 (+2), Security Procedures (Knight Errant) 4 (+2), Military Procedures (Ares) 4 (+2), Tradecraft 4, Magical Threats 4 (Insect Spirits +2)

**Languages:** English N, Lakota 4, Japanese 4

**Augmentations:** (all deltaware) Adrenal pump (Rating 1), Attention coprocessor (Rating 3), cyberears [Rating 4, w/ audio recording unit (to datajack), audio enhancement 3, damper, increased sensitivity spatial recognizer, select sound filter 6], bone density augmentation (Rating 4), cybereyes [Rating 4, w/ eye recording unit (to datajack), flare compensation, image link, low-light vision, radar sensor 3, smartlink, thermographic vision, vision enhancement 2], Fairlight Caliban implanted commlink [hot sim; programs: Analyze 5, Tacsoft 4, Command 3, Armor 5], datajacks [2], encephalon 2, move-by-wire system 3, muscle augmentation (Rating 4), Muscle Toner (Rating 4), orientation system, orthoskin (Rating 2), simrig





**Gear:** Ballistic mask [w/ camera, integrated Steyr TMP], light military armor [w/ hydraulic jacks 2, mobility upgrade 2, ruthenium polymer coating, strength enhancement 3], infrared flashlight, 3 x stimulant patches (Rating 6), hardware kit, wingsuit, wingsuit jetpack, wire clippers

**Skillsofts:** Parachuting 5, Navigation 5, Tracking 5, Area Knowledge (Chicago CZ) 5, Demolitions 5, Hardware 5, Longarms 5, Negotiation 5

**Weapons:**

- Ares Alpha [Assault Rifle, DV 6P, AP -5, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 42(c), w/ personalized grip, smartgun, 6 clips APDS ammo]
- Underbarrel Grenade Launcher [Grenade Launcher, DV -, AP -, SS, 6(c), High Explosive: 10P, AP -2, Blast -2/m, 3 clips; Fragmentation: 12P(f), AP +5, Blast -1/m, 2 clips]
- Ares Predator IV [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P; AP -5, SA, 15(c), w/ personalized grip, smartlink, 3 clips APDS]
- Helmet-integrated Steyr TMP [Machine Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC -, 30(c), w/ 2 clips EX-explosive ammo]
- Vibro-Sword [Sword, Reach 1, DV 8P (max boosted DV 10P), AP -2]
- 3 flash bangs [Grenade, 6S, AP -3, Blast 10m Radius]
- 3 thermal smoke grenades [Grenade, impairs visibility, Blast 10m radius]
- 1 Ringu grenade marked "Ultima Ratio Regium" [Grenade, 20P, AP -4, Blast 10m radius]
- Fists [Unarmed, DV 4P (Max Boosted DV 6P), AP -, Reach -]

**SAMANTHA ROTH**

Colonel Samantha Roth (Ret.) is a middle-aged human who spent twenty-five years as a UCAS spy before becoming a NeoNET media figure. She is a contributor to NeoNET news and information programs and sites where her specialty is political and security affairs. Samantha also hosts her own show, *Beyond the Wire*, on Erika Global News. While maintaining this public persona, she is secretly a fixer for Samantha Villiers, her boss in Seattle. Her experience in fighting threats like the Banded, Ex Pacis, and Winternight has made her a consulting shadow adviser to the Corporate Court.

Colonel Roth became famous in 2064 during the New Revolution's failed insurrection. She was nearly killed during the attempt on Vice President Nadja Daviar's life, but what made her famous was the revelation that while the DIA intelligence officer for JTF-Seattle, Samantha was deeply involved in supporting the insurgent movement against Tir Tairngire and Seattle's NAN neighbors. She is a master manipulator thanks to decades of espionage experience combined with her adept powers, and she parlayed her connections and skills into becoming a media figure and corporate operative rather than being hanged as a traitor.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	M	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
4	4	3	3	6	6	6	6	14	8	6	9	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10/11  
**Armor (B/I):** 10/7

**Skills:** Artisan (Oratory) 4 (+2), Assensing 6, Astral Combat 4, Athletics skill group 3, Close Combat skill group 4, Demolitions 2, Diving 2, Dodge 3, Electronic Warfare 3, Electronics skill group 2, Firearms skill group 4, First Aid (Combat Wounds) 3 (+2), Heavy Weapons 2, Influence Group 6, Instruction 4, Intimidation (Interrogation) 7 (10) (+2), Locksmith 2, Parachuting 2, Pilot Ground Craft 2, Outdoor skill group 3, Stealth skill group 4, Tactics 4, Psychology (Morale) 5 (+2), Magical Threats (Insect Spirits) 4 (+2), UCAS Politics 5, Law (UCAS) 2 (+2), Media Culture 3, NeoNET Politics 4, High Society 3, History 3, Espionage Tradecraft (Counterintelligence) 6 (+2), Conspiracy Theories 4, Military Procedures (UCAS) 4 (+2), Security Procedures (Information Security) 4 (+2)

**Languages:** English N, Irish Gaelic 3, French 3, Lakota 3, Latin 2, Navajo 3, Hopi 2, Sperethiel 4, Salish 2, Cascade Crow 2, Spanish 4

**Qualities:** Adept, Lucky, Aptitude (Intimidation), Enemy

**Initiate Grade:** 8

**Metamagics:** Adept Centering, Centering, Cognition, Infusion, Masking, Somatic Control

**Adept Powers:** Analytics 3, Astral Perception, Attribute Boost: Body 2, Attribute Boost: Agility 2, Attribute Boost: Strength 3, Cloak 2, Combat Sense 3, Cool Resolve 4, Commanding Voice, Eidetic Sense Memory, Enhanced Perception 2, Enthralling Performance, Improved Ability: Con 1, Improved Ability: Etiquette 3, Improved Ability: Intimidation 3, Improved Ability: Negotiation 3, Killing Hands, Kinesics 3, Kinesics Mastery, Linguistics, Multi-Tasking, Piercing Senses 2

**Gear:** Armor jacket [w/ Chemical Seal, Fire Protection 3, Flashlight, Flashlight], ballistic mask [camera, flare compensation, image link, low-light vision, smartlink], wingsuit, wingsuit jetpack

**Weapons:**

- Ares Alpha [Assault Rifle, DV 6P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 42(c), personalized grip, smartgun, APDS ammo (6 clips); Grenade Launcher, DV Special, AP -, SS, 6(c), 6 HE grenades, 6 fragmentation grenades]
- Savalette Guardian [Heavy pistol, DV 5P; AP -1, SA/BF\*, RC 2, 12(c) w/ advanced safety, personalized grip, smartgun]
- \* Burst fire requires a Complex Action
- Cougar Fineblade long blade [Blades, Reach -, DV 4P, AP -1]
- 2 flash-bang grenades [Grenade, DV 6S, AP -3, Blast 10m Radius]
- 2 thermal smoke grenades [Grenade, DV -, AP -, Blast 10m Radius]
- 2 white phosphorous grenades [Grenade, DV 8P/4P, AP -half, Blast -1/m]



# ... ALL-SEEING EYE ...

## Posted by: Sunshine

I have some bad news for everyone here on JackPoint. It looks like we've been officially scooped by ShadowSea on a major news story. To my recollection, that hasn't happened to us in quite a few years. I was poking around on ShadowSea, and I learned of this salacious, audio-only recording and was immediately surprised that something so explosive hadn't already been posted here on JackPoint for all of us to comment on. It looks like this particular recording has been on ShadowSea for a couple of hours now. If it's authentic, it appears to be a recording involving some of Washington's most powerful political figures. Kay, may I ask how you, in your specific field of expertise, got beat to this story by a bunch of no-names? And may I ask why we are hearing about this from ShadowSea and not from you directly? Why didn't you post this story?

In any event, voiceprint analysis has confirmed the identities of six of the seven members of this small cabal of conspirators. They are: UCAS Congressman Thomas Lincoln (Voice 1), UCAS Speaker of the House Joseph W. Ellis (Voice 2), UCAS Senate Majority Leader Jennifer Henry (Voice 3), UCAS Senate President Pro Tem Nathaniel Sherman (Voice 4), UCAS House Majority Leader Samantha Payne (Voice 5), and UCAS House Intelligence Committee Chairman Richard Franklin. There was a seventh member who was referred to in the conversation, but never spoke in the meeting. That person is believed to have been UCAS Congressman Samuel Ruthledge, but of course there's no hard evidence for that. Without further ado, here's the recording—take a listen, and see why I thought we should have had it first.

## Begin Audio Recording

Timestamp: 1700 hours, July 18, 2073

*Electronic voice:* Identity confirmed, Speaker of the House Joseph W. Ellis. One moment please. [*Static and a series of electronic chirps are heard for the next thirty seconds*]. Clearance Granted, Mr. Speaker. [*There is a sound of a large door, likely a security door, sliding open. There is thirty seconds of relative silence, with only the sounds of footsteps walking down a hallway, followed by*

*the sound of a doorknob turning, and another door opening*].

*Lincoln:* Mr. Speaker. [*There is an audible distortion in the recording; some sections of the recording are more comprehensible than others, likely caused by the presence of white noise generators*].

*Ellis:* Please do not use that title in this meeting. Impromptu as it may be, this is still a formal meeting of the Lodge of Morgana, the Lodge of the All-Seeing Eye.

*Lincoln:* My sincerest apologies, Judge Ellis. I meant no disrespect.

*Ellis:* No offense is taken, Novice Lincoln. I have called this brief meeting to order because one of our members, Master Henry, has important news to impart to the rest of our lodge; news too sensitive to be transmitted electronically. Master Henry, you have the floor.

*Henry:* Judge and fellow lodge members; our couriers from [*recording garbled*] and [*recording garbled*] have made contact with me in the last hour. They have successfully accomplished their tasks and have recovered the Phaistos Disc and Shantaya's Compass. They are on the move now, and will be in DeeCee [*recording garbled*]. At the appointed hours, they will each be taken to Union Station, where our liaisons will rendezvous with the couriers and will make the exchange for the artifacts. Our liaisons will then take the artifacts the rest of the way to Mount Vernon to be secured in the arcane vaults. The key for the disc is in the possession of our friends over at the FBI right now, and they will be delivering it to Mount Vernon within the hour.

*Ellis:* Master Henry, you have done an exceptional service for this lodge in hiring these reliable courier teams. As such, your service to our organization will be recorded by my hand in the archives, and will be brought to the attention of our revered, Penultimate Master. I am certain [*recording garbled*].

*Henry:* Thank you, Judge, for the kind words.

*Sherman:* With all due respect, Judge Ellis, I must disagree with storing both artifacts together at Mount Vernon. With so much global interest in these artifacts, it would be more prudent to store only one of them there, with the other kept at Monticello, or Georgetown University, or even [*recording*





INCOMING FEED.....

*garbled]* where most people do not suspect that we have active operations.

*Ellis:* Are you questioning the wisdom of the Lodge, Warden Sherman?

*Sherman:* No, I am not, your honor. Mount Vernon is one of our strongholds of power. Anyone foolish enough to break in there will likely die. But I also believe there is no such thing as being too careful. Especially with these artifacts, which have proven elusive even to the great dragons. We should not be tempting fate by keeping these two artifacts together.

*Ellis:* As I mentioned before, the Lodge of Merlin has already given your request due diligence, and has denied it. Mount Vernon is considered the best choice for storing these artifacts, and the arcane vaults will suppress that particular arcane defense of the artifacts.

*Sherman:* Than I offer my sincerest apologies and I will speak no further on this matter, honored Judge.

*Ellis:* And what of the other two artifacts that you were responsible for acquiring for us, Master Payne?

*Payne:* The two teams I hired have both failed to check in at the requested hour, Judge. Regrettably, I am forced to conclude that they have failed.

*Ellis:* Master Payne, I am deeply disappointed. It was your duty to hire capable assets, and since they have apparently failed this Lodge—whether by incompetence, accident, or mere chance—by extension, you too have failed us. As such, you must be punished. I am ordering that this will be your last

term in the Congress. You will retire because you wish to spend more time with your family. You shall remain with the Lodge, and you may seek out employment with any megacorporation of your choice that has offices within North America, but you are being demoted to the Lodge of Mordred. I will contact your former Lodge, and have them nominate your successor. You will also be stripped of your title of “Master,” and will be made a “Warden” until such time as you can make reparations for your shortcomings.

*Payne:* I acknowledge and accept your ruling, Judge. And I thank you for your show of leniency.

*Ellis:* Because of Warden Payne’s failings, the responsibility of obtaining the sextant and the Piri Reis Map falls to you, Warden [*recording garbled*].

*Franklin:* Thank you, Judge. I look forward to the challenge, and I will succeed in this task.

*Ellis:* Should you succeed in this, upon your next initiation, you shall be granted the title of Master. I hope you shall prove yourself worthy of that title. Now, with the arrival of the first two artifacts, we must begin preparations for the master ritual. The Lodge desires to be ready to move with the master ritual quickly once we have obtained the final two artifacts. The Mace of the House of Representatives has already been moved to the White House bunker, and is in position for the ritual. Warden Sherman, you will be responsible for notifying the other North American lodges of our success here today, and to begin summoning their members to Mount Vernon.

With any luck, our wait will be no longer than a few more days. Novices Lincoln and Ruthledge, you will head to Mount Vernon as soon as this meeting is over. When the artifacts arrive, you shall prepare to use their individual powers to decipher the tomes and the scrolls we have preserved from the Library of Alexandria, and obtain from the metaplanes the true names of the spirits we seek. I will head to Monticello to retrieve the scrolls containing the master ritual. When we have the last two artifacts, our revered, Penultimate Master will arrive here in DeeCee to oversee the master ritual himself. This will mark the beginning of a glorious new age for [recording garbled].

[A buzzer sounds]

*Ellis:* It would seem as though the next series of votes will be taking place in five minutes. We must quickly adjourn this meeting to attend to our mundane duties. Master Henry and Warden Payne, you will be responsible for making sure all security trideo of us coming into and departing from this conference room is altered to show that this meeting never happened, and that the guards themselves have no memories of being rendered unconscious.

*Henry and Payne:* It shall be done, Judge.

#### [End of Audio Recording]

- Despite the UCAS no longer being the superpower that the United States once was, there are still a great many foreign government and corporate interests that are highly motivated and determined to steal paydata from its closed-door congressional committee meetings. These meetings cover topics ranging from intelligence and defense briefings to black ops budgetary hearings. It would seem, from what I heard on this recording, that this meeting took place in one of the Hill's highly guarded and secure committee rooms. That these runners were able to obtain data from this secured room takes talent and skill. The theft of this information could have been authorized by a great many DeeCee players who possess nearly unlimited resources. Since I'm no longer as involved in that scene as I once was (Denver has been taking up my attention lately), I couldn't say with any certainty who carried out this operation.
- Kay St. Irregular
- Even if these runners had the skill to pull this off and had some backers with deep pockets, would they have had the same connections and intimate knowledge of Capitol Hill as you do? This operation has all the feel and flavor of one of yours and Pistons' patented ops. Just admit it. We're all friends here.
- Sunshine
- It wasn't us, Sunshine. There's no other location more secure than JackPoint (if we disregard the anonymous poster that none of us seem to know anything about). If it were us, why wouldn't we want to post this? Whoever pulled this off, they're obviously afraid of the reach this society has. I mean, as you pointed out, this was on ShadowSea for a few hours, and it would seem no media outlet with the connections to get onto ShadowSea has dared to touch

this story. Even Horizon's own news nets, which aren't afraid of anything or anyone, aren't touching this. And this from a nation that suffered an attempted coup-d'état from a secret organization about a decade ago? All the media outlets with access to this recording should be jumping all over this story. But they're not; they're treating this like it's radioactive. There's got to be a reason for it. Besides, I'm sure whoever pulled this off doesn't want to give away any trade secrets about how they obtained this data, so they could pull the same trick again at a later date. Hence the reason why this may be only an audio recording, and not a full trid recording.

- Pistons
- So, which conspiratorial group could it be this time? Is the New Revolution back?
- Cosmo
- No, this group is too magic-based to be the New Revolution. Besides, the last I heard, that group was defunct. If I had to render a guess, I would have to say the Illuminates of the New Dawn.
- Lyran
- Close. You're very close, but not there. The emphasis on lodges (as opposed to circles), the formal titles (Judge versus Magus), and even the name of this specific lodge, the "Lodge of the All-Seeing Eye," gives it away as the Black Lodge. The Illuminates of the New Dawn shares similar symbols, imagery, and resources to the Black Lodge, but they are still very separate groups. The Black Lodge has been around in various incarnations for centuries and has its roots based in many of the secret societies found throughout history, especially the Freemasons. Compared to the Black Lodge, the Illuminates of the New Dawn are a cheap knock-off. Though both groups are very dangerous, the Black Lodge is much more so, with a rumored number of members close to ten thousand initiates, as opposed to several hundred members of the IOND.
- Man-of-Many-Names
- I find it interesting that these seven politicians have been up on the Hill for an average of twenty-four years. During all that time, these politicians have portrayed themselves as having no magical talent whatsoever. They've even supported anti-magic legislation (admittedly, those bills never left the sub-committee level). None of them indicated they were Awakened on any of the electronic paperwork they filled out to become a part of the UCAS government.
  - Setting aside the fact that failing to disclose that information to the UCAS government is a felony, I find it odd that these individuals have been able to conceal their magical talent for so long without someone exposing their dark secret. That's kind of scary.
- Snopes
- You know what else is scary? Considering what these individuals may have been doing up on the UCAS Capitol Hill for all those years. I knew a few of these people on the Hill when I was working up there. And I never suspected any of them of being a part of a secret society, especially not the Black Lodge.
- Kay St. Irregular





## OVERVIEW

In the Federal District of Columbia, a clandestine meeting of a chapter of the Black Lodge takes place between seven high-ranking members of Congress in a committee room that has been used for decades to host top-secret congressional hearings and briefings. This meeting is secretly recorded by two JackPoint users, Kay St. Irregular and Pistons, looking to score paydata from a congressional intelligence briefing that happened earlier that same day. It becomes clear from the audio recording of this meeting that the UCAS Speaker of the House, the Senate Majority Leader, and the Senate President Pro Tem, as well as four other prominent members of Congress, are involved in this conspiracy. On the night of July 18, 2073, it will be revealed that the Black Lodge has succeeded in obtaining two of the most highly prized artifacts in the world, the Phaistos Disc and Shantaya's Compass, and are actively searching for the remaining artifacts to carry out their "master ritual" using a five-point star that has been meticulously carved into the streets of Washington DeeCee by the Freemasons centuries ago.

Two runner teams were sent out by the Black Lodge and are in the process of bringing the Phaistos Disc and Shantaya's Compass back to DeeCee. Representatives of the Lodge will meet the teams at the DeeCee mass transit hub, Union Station, then take the disc and compass through the subway system before driving them back to Mount Vernon, George Washington's former estate. At Mount Vernon, the artifacts are stored in ancient and powerful Masonic vaults until the Black Lodge is ready to perform its master ritual.

This recording will set off a race for the artifacts in the UCAS capital involving a wide variety of interested parties, ranging from the Black Lodge and the Illuminates of the New Dawn to the Draco Foundation. During transport, both the Phaistos Disc and Shantaya's Compass are exposed to the astral environment of DeeCee. Proximity to the Dunkelzahn Rift makes them activate (along with the sextant, which is also in town at the same time). For details on the events surrounding the Sextant being in DeeCee, see **A Tale of Two Princes** (p. 127). The activation of these artifacts triggers an event that threatens DeeCee, which serves to fuel the voices of those who seek the destruction of the artifacts.

After the player characters have completed their tasks with the artifacts and have delivered the compass to the Draco Foundation, Ghostwalker intervenes. With the Piri Reis Map already in his possession, he strips the sextant and the disc from the Black Lodge and the compass from the Draco Foundation. With Knight Errant and the other local security firms distracted by their efforts to maintain order in the UCAS capital, Ghostwalker gathers the artifacts for a ritual that he believes will reconstitute Zebulon, the Spirit of Denver. This won't directly affect the runners, but the gamemaster should be aware of what is happening so that they can expose the runners to some of the fallout.

As far as the potential for public exposure for the Black Lodge members at the end of this adventure, the Black Lodge has the political influence to make sure the story about their members on Capitol Hill goes nowhere. It will not become public

knowledge, and the story spreads no further than ShadowSea and JackPoint. Should, by some extraordinary means, this story get leaked publicly, there will be a UCAS Department of Justice investigation, which will be quietly killed weeks later, after the publicity dies down. If necessary, there will also be a significant PR campaign launched to convince the public that the audio recording was merely a PR smear campaign by the political enemies of those involved in an attempt to deliberately destroy and discredit these "honorable" Members of Congress.

## PLOT POINT ONE

### *The Set Up*

Two JackPoint posters, Kay St. Irregular and Pistons, hire a runner team to assist them with a sensitive operation on Capitol Hill. There is a closed-door congressional intelligence briefing that the two JackPoint users need to acquire paydata from, as requested by their Mr. Johnson. For most runner teams, this would be a nearly impossible task to pull off. The intelligence briefing is held in a heavily guarded and secure conference room that is regularly swept for surveillance devices. Prior to entering the room, members of Congress are treated with nanite hunters to seek out and destroy any covert listening devices. Any commlinks brought into the room for committee work are under heavy guard by committee staff, as well as by Capitol Police and Knight Errant. In addition to all these security measures, there is the construction of the committee room itself, which is designed to negate wifi signals. Any unauthorized wifi signals that occur inside the committee room will be detected by the room's smart walls. With all these security measures in place, it is practically impossible to bug these committee rooms. While many runner teams have failed in the past, Kay St. Irregular and Pistons have found a way to succeed, and it involves the special lapel pins that all members of Congress are required to wear while on Capitol Hill.

To be able to circumnavigate certain security protocols to facilitate rapid transit for members of Congress on Capitol Hill to arrive on time for meetings, hearings, events and votes, members of Congress wear lapel pins that identify who they are to security personnel, allowing them to bypass security checkpoints that could consume valuable time. Kay St. Irregular and Pistons have obtained advanced nanospies that are capable of recording events for a twenty-four hour period, require less surface area to function, and can record in a larger area than other nanites. These nanites also have special countermeasures in place to deal with the UCAS nanite hunters, allowing one of the congressional members to unwittingly bring in with him the devices necessary to record the classified briefing. It is the runners' job to gain access to the lapel pin worn by the Speaker of the House and treat it with an application of these advanced nanites. These nanites are also programmed to not transmit the data until prompted to do so by a specific wireless signal. So even after the nanites have been applied, the runners have to go back after the final votes are cast on Capitol Hill for the evening in order to retrieve the data. In addition to the intelligence briefing Pistons and Kay St. are targeting, the nanites also record a clandestine meeting between the members of the Black Lodge.

To gain access to the Speaker's lapel pin, the player characters may need to fast-talk his congressional staff, break into his office (which is on the UCAS Capitol and not in the traditional congressional office buildings), gain access to his schedule, and find him at a private event that is away from Capitol Hill. Alternately, they could pay off congressional interns and pages to deliver specially designed messages to the Speaker to lure him to a location of their choosing. The Speaker of the House is usually escorted by his own detachment of four Knight Errant guards. The Device Rating for the Speaker's commlink is 8.

## PLOT POINT TWO

### *The Proper Lever*

Kay St. Irregular knows that the UCAS Congress and its staffs at the various levels are always changing, and he needs to keep his paydata on Capitol Hill updated on a regular basis to keep himself in the loop. There have been recent changes in the staffs of the Speaker of the House, the Senate Majority Leader, and the Senate President Pro Tem (in both their congressional and committee staffs). He needs to verify the identity of the staff members of each of these congressional members and then find dirt on the new staffers (e.g., which lobbyists they hang out the most with; who has the most influence over them; who is being paid under the table; which congressional members are the strongest allies to the Speaker of the House and the Senate Majority Leader; if there is any existing blackmail material on the staffers that he should know about and possess himself; and so forth). With the right blackmail material for leverage, the runners can use this information to make it easier for them to gain access to the lapel pin of the Speaker of the House. Kay St. Irregular may also have the runners check out the backgrounds of the Capitol Police and the Knight Errant guards assigned to Capitol Hill. His intention would be to discover which security personnel are truly dedicated to their mission and pose a threat to their operations and which ones may be willing to perform certain favors for Kay St. Irregular (and the runners) in the future. Again, digging into the backgrounds of key security personnel may help the runners gain additional access to Capitol Hill, and make their larger mission, access to the lapel pin, much easier to accomplish.

## PLOT POINT THREE

### *Getting the Word Out*

After obtaining the raw recording from the runners and analyzing the footage, Kay St. Irregular and Pistons hire the runners again and gives them the audio recording of the clandestine conversation to post on ShadowSea. They will be hired to keep it there for as long as possible. As soon as the recording hits ShadowSea, there is an immediate response to take it down. The team's hacker(s) will have to aggressively defend the recording from enemy hackers and their agents, who not only try to take down the file but also actively seek out the location of the runners. Kay St. Irregular and Pistons only need for it to be up for a few hours to allow another JackPoint user to notice it and re-post it to JackPoint. The runners may notice that despite several parties (including journalists with contacts on ShadowSea) reviewing

the recording, no national or international media outlets pick up the story—not one. This scandalous story is being completely ignored, which is out of character for a nation that was rocked by an attempted coup-d'état from a shadow organization (the New Revolution) a decade ago. If the hacker(s) of the runner group does any digging, they find out that any media outlet that has shown any inkling of interest in the recording has been contacted by a mysterious personality on the Matrix who has applied significant political influence and pressure to kill the story. Even Horizon-owned media outlets are intimidated by this mysterious individual. If the hackers attempt to trace any of this opposition back to its source, they find nothing. He has been using a sophisticated method of node-hopping throughout the world, and the web of nodes that he is using to communicate is shut down before they can successfully trace him.

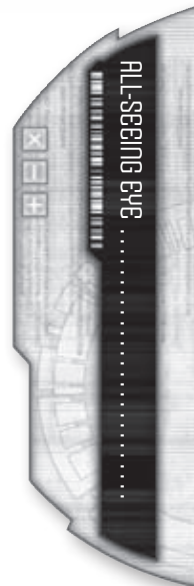
## PLOT POINT FOUR

### *The Compass Arrives*

After the recording is posted on JackPoint, Pistons and Kay St. Irregular contact the runners and pay them for accomplishing their objective. They then have another job they would like to offer them. While the runners were busy keeping the recording posted on ShadowSea, Kay St. Irregular and Pistons were negotiating with the Draco Foundation (a new Johnson) for the retrieval of Shantaya's Compass.

Pistons and Kay St. Irregular have learned that the Phaistos Disc is already en route to Union Station, and that it would be almost impossible for the player characters to catch up to the courier team (the disc is expected to arrive at Union Station within ten minutes). Shantaya's Compass, however, is still very much in play. The Black Lodge, not wishing for the two artifacts to be in the same place at any given time while they are in transit, has chosen to stagger the hand-off times. Shantaya's Compass is expected to arrive at Union Station in two hours. In addition, their contacts have learned where the compass' courier team is currently located—they're holed up in a coffin motel in Twinbrook, on the outskirts of DeeCee, keeping the artifact stashed while they wait for the meet time to arrive. It would be easier to ambush the courier team at the coffin motel before they take to the road, alter their route to Union Station, and escape.

What Kay St. Irregular and Pistons are not aware of is that the Phaistos Disc has been delayed for the meet with the Black Lodge contact. That courier team has come under repeated attacks from other groups seeking the disc. They have to evade their attackers by taking indirect routes through city streets to reach Union Station, consuming a lot of time. They are eventually forced to stop and engage some of their attackers in a firefight. Additionally, one of the couriers has been bought off by someone other than the Black Lodge, paid to perform one simple task: Open the disc's warded container at some point after it arrives in DeeCee. The courier chooses his moment during the confusion of the firefight, exposing the artifact to the outside astral environment. Proximity to the Dunkelzahn Rift activates the disc, and it remains active even after the courier team defeats its opposition and meets its Black Lodge contact. Only an initiate with a high enough magical talent and







knowledge of the proper rituals can deactivate the Phaistos Disc, and one such individual is nearby at Mount Vernon.

In the meantime, an unseen force removes the warding from the container holding the compass, without the knowledge of the courier team. The container is unprotected by the time the player characters arrive to take it from the courier team. This means that Shantaya's Compass is already active. Its proximity to the Phaistos Disc and the Sextant of Worlds causes the Dunkelzahn Rift to expand and destabilize. With no hand to guide the power of the artifacts, and with only three of the four artifacts in the city, DeeCee is in jeopardy. This occurrence causes gravitational shifts, damaging or destroying buildings and structures, vehicles, roads, etc. City blocks are leveled. Nearby people and objects are sucked into the Rift. Spirits from the Civil War, the American Revolution, and other historical events are seen on the physical plane, at spots ranging from the UCAS Capitol Hill and the Arlington National Cemetery to the Lincoln Memorial. And prominent UCAS national moments, such as the Washington Monument, are placed at risk by the unstable Rift. Even once all the artifacts are deactivated, significant damage remains.

After defeating the courier team, the runners must get the compass back to the Draco Foundation. Kay St. Irregular and Pistons provide the appropriate contact. On their way to meet the Draco Foundation contact, the runners will come under attack by the Illuminates of the New Dawn, who attempt to steal the compass. The Illuminates try to kill any non-Awakened members of the group and employ non-lethal force against those members who are Awakened. While facing the Illuminates, the runners must also avoid and survive all the disasters and the upheaval being created by the destabilized Dunkelzahn Rift. The runners are paid by Kay St. Irregular and Pistons once they receive their payment from the Draco Foundation.

## PLOT POINT FIVE

### *The Aftermath*

After they deliver the compass to the Draco Foundation, the runners have a few hours of relative peace. This may allow them time to rest—and answer their calls, since one is coming in from one of the team's fixers. It seems as though the chaos from the artifacts has generated several potential job opportunities. Other Johnsons are looking for the runners to break into the UCAS Internal Revenue Service and steal tax data for thousands of UCAS citizens (most likely to help create high-quality fake SINs). Still more Johnsons are looking to take advantage of the ravaged electrical grid to break into the Smithsonian to steal any number of high-profile treasures contained within the museum. There are still other Johnsons looking to break into the UCAS treasury to steal codes for electronic currency. Knight Errant is approaching runner teams to support their stretched numbers and help maintain order on the streets. DocWagon is even calling upon runners to help in rescue operations. There is plenty of work to be done for any group looking to earn a little extra nuyen.

## PLOT POINT SIX

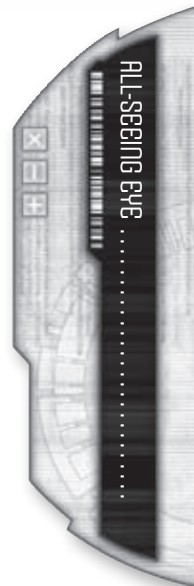
### *Next Steps*

Even after all the action involving the artifacts settles down, the runners could still be hired by Pistons and Kay St. Irregular (on behalf of the Draco Foundation or the DIMR) to obtain the actual "master ritual" that the conspirators on Capitol Hill were referring to in their conversation. Pistons and Kay St. Irregular tell the runners that they have learned that the scrolls containing the actual ritual are maintained at Monticello, Thomas Jefferson's estate. Should the runners carry out this job, they will retrieve seven scrolls, written in Latin and dating back to the time of the Inquisition, which would reveal the Black Lodge's plans. They intend to use the occult symbolism laid down by the city's founders to turn Washington DeeCee into a massive power site for the Black Lodge. The four artifacts, along with a fifth already in their possession (the erstwhile Mace of the United States House of Representatives), are meant to be placed at the points of a pentagram shaped by city streets—one at each of the following locations: Dupont Circle, Logan Circle, Washington Circle, Mt. Vernon Square, and the White House. More importantly, these scrolls show how the ritual is preformed.

## LOCATIONS

### THE UCAS CAPITOL BUILDING

The UCAS Capitol building remains one of the most recognized and famous landmarks in the UCAS capital. The government building, originally built in 1793, is inspired by Greco-Roman architecture and houses the two branches of the UCAS Congress: the UCAS House of Representatives and the UCAS Senate. The building is steeped in history and symbolism from the old United States; there are several references to the thirteen original colonies, as well as imagery borrowed from the Freemasons. Inside the Capitol building, one can find the world-renowned Rotunda, the Old Senate Chamber, the Old Supreme Court Chamber, and a star-shaped marker in the Crypt that was once meant to be the physical center of Washington DeeCee. It is often debated by the DIMR, the Draco Foundation, MIT&T, and Georgetown University as to whether this star-shaped marker holds any magical significance. There is also the Old Hall of the House, which features statues of notable UCAS citizens, including statues from Canadian providences that became UCAS states. The Old Hall of the House also includes statues of prominent corporate figures, many of whom have contributed significant amounts of nuyen to the restoration and continuous upkeep of the Capitol Hill campus. Many famous names are memorialized here in stone, including Damien Knight, Dunkelzahn, Richard Villiers, and Nadja Daviar. The Capitol Hill grounds are protected by two police forces: the Capitol Police and Knight Errant. Most locations in Capitol Hill are accessible to the general public, provided they have an authorized tour guide. There are many other sections of Capitol Hill that are off-limits to the general public, and there are sensors to scan for House or Senate IDs or other appropriate security clearances. Anyone violating those secured areas is immediately arrested and removed from the grounds.



Along with the public locations inside Capitol Hill, there are secret areas never seen by the general public. Among these areas are committee rooms where the UCAS House and the UCAS Senate meet to conduct closed-door, top-secret hearings. Only Congressional Members and their staffs with appropriate security clearances are allowed access to these committee rooms, which are hidden underneath the Dome. In recent years, the rooms have been upgraded with durasteel and plascrete. Smart walls with highly sensitive sensors are in place to detect any unauthorized electronic transmissions. Biometric locks (Rating 7) ensure that only those cleared for access to the committee rooms can enter. At least four high-ranking Knight Errant guards are on duty near the committee rooms at any given time. The committee rooms are also heavily warded (Force 12) and equipped with white noise generators (Rating 6).

## UNION STATION

Union Station is the historic transit hub for the Federal District of Columbia. The building is the central station for the DecCee Metrorail, a subway system that effectively connects all parts of the city for mass transit. It is the central hub for the bus system. Maglev commuter trains and long-haul trains such as UCASRail that run up and down the east coast run through Union Station. The building itself contains three floors, many of which contain restaurants and souvenir shops designed to appeal to tourists and commuters. Several hundred thousand people pass through Union Station on a daily basis, millions on a yearly basis. Because the Metrorail has dozens of stops throughout DecCee, and a person can easily switch between several different lines, Union Station makes the ideal location for a clandestine exchange, allowing conspirators to disappear quickly among the masses.

## MOUNT VERNON

Mount Vernon is the estate of the United States' first President, George Washington. Many of the buildings on the estate were designed by George Washington himself, who was also a member of the Freemasons. Mount Vernon is a plantation originally spanning over 3,200 hectares. The plantation was divided into five individual farms, creating a self-contained community. The Washington family stayed in what is called the "Mansion House Farm."

Beyond the "tourist" side of Mount Vernon are the areas that serve the Black Lodge. Hidden on the modern-day, 202-hectare estate are secret magical lodges and libraries (Force 12) where Lodge members can study and perform ritual magic in secrecy. In addition, there are hidden arcane vaults, built with secret arcane techniques known only to the Black Lodge. These underground vaults are believed to be powerful enough to contain and suppress the magic energies of the four artifacts. Mount Vernon is located in the CAS.

Since the Black Lodge is a major magical threat, their security measures are primarily magic-based. Hidden passageways to reach to the arcane vaults are protected by anchored spells (Foreboding, Force 6, Confusion, Force 6, and Physical Camouflage, Force 6). These anchored spells are linked to two quickened spells (Detect Life, Force 6, and Detect Guns, Force 6) that act as triggers for the anchored spells. Both quickened spells must be triggered for the anchored spells to be released. Guards are uninitiated adepts who

are not quite full members of the Black Lodge. The guards generally have Astral Perception, Killing Hands, Cloak, Spell Resistance, and Mystic Armor adept powers. They use bladed or blunt weapons, but do not use guns, as firearms will set off the anchored spells. Freemason symbols, such as the square and compass, are always used as anchor points for the warding (Force 12). The Black Lodge uses a number of spirits to protect its grounds.

Since the Black Lodge is a mixed-tradition magical group, spirits can be from any tradition or type. Spirits of man are the most common found patrolling and will manifest as figures relevant to American history, i.e., Union or Confederate soldiers or Minutemen. Spirits used to patrol and guard Mount Vernon ranging in Force from Force 5 to Force 7. Force 7 spirits of man are typically great form spirits. Mount Vernon has a Rating 3 Matrix node, but nothing of significance for the Black Lodge is found on it. The node is only used to maintain the public sections of the estate. None of the private sections of the plantation are listed or mapped out on the node.

## MONTICELLO

Monticello is the estate of the United States' third president, Thomas Jefferson. Like George Washington, Jefferson is alleged to have been a member of the Freemasons. While the truth of Jefferson's membership is still debated, the Black Lodge has since assumed private control of Monticello. Publicly, Monticello is run by the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Fund, which was taken over by Manadyne in 2067.

Monticello's estate boasts forty-three rooms contained in the three-story main house, the pavilions, and the south terrace.

In the estate, there is a Dome Room, which is used as a magical lodge (Force 12). Hidden amongst the library archives of Thomas Jefferson's papers is the Black Lodge's private collection, which contains scrolls from the Library of Alexandria, many of which are written in code or written in lost languages, and tomes from the time of the Inquisition, when the Catholic Church was seeking to purge the world of what they saw as heresies and blasphemies. Many of those tomes contain mystical secrets lost to the rest of the world. Monticello utilizes magical security similar to Mount Vernon.

## PEOPLE

### JOSEPH WILLIS "J.W." ELLIS (P. 142)

J.W. Ellis was born in Saint Louis in 1996, and he was among the first people to Awaken in 2011. Ellis went to Harvard in 2014, and then to Harvard Law, where he received his law degree. It was at Harvard where he was initially recruited into the Black Lodge. He was made a Novice of the Lodge of Nostradamus in Indianapolis in 2021. Ellis practiced corporate law in Toronto after Canada and the United States joined together as the UCAS, while also working to develop his mastery of thaumaturgy, which helped him advance to the next tier in the Black Lodge, the Lodge of Rasputin. After another six years of faithful service in the Lodge of Rasputin, Ellis was promoted again in 2036, this time to the Lodge of Mordred. During his tenure in the Lodge of Mordred, J.W. Ellis ran for the UCAS House of Representatives from his home district of







St. Louis, Missouri, in 2046, and with the Black Lodge's support, he won the election. Ellis has been in office since 2046, and he rose to the position of Speaker of the House in 2070. He became a member of the Lodge of Morgana (Lodge of the All-Seeing Eye) in 2054. It would take him well over twelve years to achieve the rank of Judge for the Lodge of Morgana. His position as the Judge for the Lodge of Morgana also makes him a Novice in the Lodge of Merlin, which is based out of Georgetown University.

### KAY ST. IRREGULAR

Kay St. Irregular is the political expert on JackPoint. His father was a two-time governor of the Kansas City Metroplex. He graduated from the University of Denver with double bachelor's degrees in UCAS political science and international and mega-corporate affairs, all while maintaining a 4.0 GPA. He served on Capitol Hill as a legislative assistant and worked his way up to a chief-of-staff position with the chairperson of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (utilizing shadowrunners along the way to open up opportunities, and using back-door deals to raise his profile). During that time, he met the combat hacker named Pistons. They worked well together in the shadows, selling intelligence and classified documents from the UCAS government to their various employers. Kay St. Irregular now works and lives in Denver, but keeps a close eye on DeeCee, and occasionally still takes jobs in the city, putting his intimate knowledge of DeeCee politics to work. For Kay St. Irregular's stats, use Sneak, p. 145.

### PISTONS

Pistons is a member of JackPoint who works in the DeeCee area. Pistons met Kay St. Irregular sometime between 2059 and 2060. Whereas Kay St. Irregular had the hands-on experience to maneuver around Capitol Hill, Pistons had the technical skill and experience in the Matrix as a combat hacker. In DeeCee, Pistons and Kay St. Irregular developed a strong friendship, and have been involved in many shadowruns in the DeeCee area. Although their joint operations are no longer as frequent, the two still maintain contact and do, on occasion, join forces on jobs, such as the one outlined in this section. For Pistons stats, use Corporate Headhunter, p. 139, but raise the Cracking skill group and Electronics skill group by one point apiece.

### COURIER TEAM

The courier team carrying Shantaya's Compass that the player characters will encounter is made up of one Skilled Technomancer (p. 145), two Veteran Street Samurai (p. 146), one Veteran Combat Mage (p. 146), and one Veteran Face (p. 146).

### ILLUMINATES OF THE NEW DAWN TEAM

The Illuminates of the New Dawn send a team to recover Shantaya's Compass from the player characters. This team should consist of three magicians (members of the IOND; see IOND Magicians, p. 141), and two great form spirits of fire (see below). The magicians are all hermetic mages. They will use non-lethal force against Awakened player characters. They do not care about the well-being of the non-Awakened members of the party and will do whatever it takes to get the compass away from them.

### GREAT FORM SPIRITS OF FIRE (Force 5) (Professional Rating 5)

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	M	Ess	Init	IP
6	7	8	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	13	2

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 11

**Astral Init/IP:** 10/3

**Reach:** +1

**Movement:** 15/40 (Flight)

**Skills:** Assensing, Astral Combat, Dodge, Exotic Ranged Weapon, Flight, Perception, Unarmed Combat

**Powers:** Accident [LOS (A)], Astral Form, Confusion [LOS (A)], Elemental Attack [LOS (A)], Energy Aura, Engulf [LOS (A)], Materialization, Sapience. Search, Storm

**Weaknesses:** Allergy (Water, Severe)

**Note:** +5 dice to resist Banishing



# ... A TALE OF TWO PRINCES ...

## KINGS WITHOUT KINGDOMS

Posted by: Arete

There has been considerable talk of late as to the whereabouts and activities of the deposed Tír princes in light of recent political events in North America, and the recent increase in artifact-related runs. The former princes have all been maintaining low profiles, especially the ones who seem to have lost the most: High Prince Lugh Surehand and Information Secretary Jonathon Reed, who were both exiled in 2064.

### JONATHON REED

Reed is an interesting case. He was born in Finland in 2011 as UGE started making its mark on the world. In 2035, Lugh Surehand announced that Reed, Maria Cinebal, and Dar Varien had joined the Council of Princes along with the original four Princes. In the twenty-four years between his birth and ascension to the position of Tír Tairngire Prince, Reed led a remarkably anonymous life outside of a stint in the Finnish military, which he joined just after the Crash of '29 ground Finland's high-tech economy to a halt. During the military buildup preparing for a Russian invasion that never happened, he was attached to a signals intelligence unit working hand in hand with what would become Erika and the corporate state surveillance system. The skills he learned would serve him well when Lugh Surehand made him operations director of the Information Secretariat.

As operations director, Reed ran the Tír intelligence service from inception to catastrophe, after which he was unceremoniously shown the door just slightly ahead of Surehand. But I'm getting ahead of myself. Before we get to the end of Reed's tenure, we need to go back to the Information Secretariat's murky beginnings. It did not seem like a body that needed to exist—the Tír Police Force already served as the nation's military and police agency, and they reported to Surehand. They also handled intelligence operations, so these things were under Surehand's control. Yet in 2055, Surehand and Reed secretly established the Information

Secretariat, which would seem to be a redundant organization. There is no clear explanation for this action.

- Perhaps I can help explain. Stories have made the rounds for decades about all of the plots each of the Princes formed in their private fiefdoms. Everyone had their own pet paladins and groups like the Moonlight Thorns that operated with Princes' official sanction. There were nobles with their own agendas and loyalties supposedly tied to specific Princes, but really they operated in their own interests. Finally, there were the shadow activities that the Telestrian family conducted through their corporation, and the Peace Force ran ops through Telestrian and Andalusian Light Industries. Everyone had their fingers in the Peace Force, Ghost, and paladin pies.

The Information Secretariat was Lugh Surehand's attempt to ensure that the police state remained his police state by controlling one agency that answered to him and watched all of them.

By the way, your information is wrong. The IS was created in 2048, and some people didn't appreciate its birth.

- Thorn

Reed's time at the head of the Information Secretariat was filled with strife. It was a secret police force that answered only to itself, and other Princes objected to that strongly, especially since it spied on other Princes and their interests. When the Rinelle ke'Tesrae became a threat to the status quo in the 2060s, Reed proposed a desperate gambit, a feint in the hopes that apparent weakness would prove to be a long-term counterintelligence success. It was a daring move, but ultimately it was seen as a stupendous failure of policy. The failed uprising by government agents within the Peace Force and the IS cemented Reed's doom within the Land of Promise. When the Council met in an emergency session following Crash 2.0, the first matter of business was Surehand calling for Reed's expulsion from the Council and the Tír. The subsequent vote was unanimous. Reed had already fallen out of favor, but when it appeared that he had been involved in the attempt to take Royal Hill and oust Surehand, any prior

Incoming .....





belief that he was Surehand's favorite or protégé died with the failed insurrection.

- For a parallel situation, consider what happened when Belial took over from Sting in running the Ancients' Seattle chapter. He'd been Crown Prince for a while, biding his time, then Sting started talking about getting leonization and having a nice long reign. Belial was out of patience then, and he took out Sting, and Green Lucifer for good measure. Belial had waited long enough and wasn't going to wait any longer—like Rinelle. Remember, all the Tír intrigue began with the suspension of the Rite of Succession. Patience is not a common virtue, even with those who are long-lived.
- Riser

Unlike Surehand, whose exile was clouded in failure and shame, Reed's disappearance was clearly borne of some grasp of reality. Given the secretariat's actions, how could he expect not to be threatened with criminal prosecution? An international warrant would make him a hunted man in all but the most desperate of nations. He vanished like the spook he is, expecting a manhunt that never materialized. Then, two years later, he showed up in his native Finland for Christmas. Since then, there have been various sightings of him, always after the fact, and often in the wake of a visit by Surehand. Reed, however, has also made several trips to Hannover, Denver, and Boston. It is suspected that he has taken an interest in the Draco Foundation and their activities.

It is a fact that Reed is intent on retrieving the Sextant of Worlds, no matter the cost. If it were not for the foundation's activities, he probably would not have known about it. Reed is a spy, but a modern one. There's a chance that he might have come across stories of the sextant's powers, but no guarantees. If he did, though, he would have learned that it could be a powerful weapon against Surehand, maybe a game-changer. Its rumored abilities are tied to the navigational metaphor of its form—as a telesma, it is supposedly an object useful in navigating and manipulating mana across planes of existence.

- Think of it this way: Everything has an origin point. Every bit of data has its node, every object has a source, every thought has its ideation, and every spell and spirit has its own home in the metaplanes. The working theory of the sextant is that it can find them, and even better, access them directly. If it is indeed a weapon, as Reed seems to believe, then the scenario becomes one where Surehand's magical defenses are neutralized on the metaplanes, without his knowledge, while Reed stabs him right in the heart.
- Ethernaut
- Only a dream can kill a dream. Or one able to enter the dreamspace.
- Man-of-Many-Names

## LUGH SUREHAND

The deposed High Prince was forced into exile after a series of crisis moments in late 2064, beginning with Crash 2.0 and ending with a unanimous decision by the Council of Princes not only to

remove him from power, but also to force him into exile. He left, and managed not to be seen for quite some time. He suddenly emerged in Atlanta in March 2067, and then again disappeared. The Bratach Gheal, the High Prince's personal bodyguards, remained in Portland and now serve Zincan. There was a great deal of speculation that they swore magical binding oaths to Surehand, but it seems it was sworn to the office of High Prince and not the man. Most of the Ghosts with Talent, however, were not bound in that way, and they followed Surehand into exile. They have not been seen again, and this deficiency is still being felt within their magical corps.

- They're finding ways to make up for it, though. The Peace Force has shown a great deal more tolerance of non-elven magicians in recent years.
- Hard Exit
- The Ghosts are a significant exception to that, even after their internal bloodletting.
- Bull

In that time, Surehand has popped up in Tír na nÓg, the UCAS, and in various cities across the globe. He's been ingratiating himself with the European nobles, feeding their egos and pet projects with plundered lucre and making himself an infrequent guest on the Grand Tour. He has frequently visited Dublin, meeting with the Senate and Council of Stewards as well as being granted an audience with the Seelie Court.

Surehand has no love for Charisma Associates or the rest of Horizon because of their deep relations with Hestaby and Larry Zincan. That has made him a client of corporations that generally try to tear each other's throats out: NeoNET, MCT, and Renraku. Seeking media rehabilitation and vengeance in the press, he has come to rely heavily on Mitsuhama Media's subsidiaries, DeMeKo and CBC. Of course, that also comes with access to SIS and their cadre of media "enforcers." He's also become a client of Renraku's Adams-Westlake Mediaworks, and he has them courting possible allies in Asia. It's not quite clear what his relationship is with NeoNET, but some of their trid talent on Erika's news/current affairs network is especially vicious in criticizing the Tír.

- Lugh Surehand seems like a scorched-earth kind of sore loser, and with his wealth and the connections it buys he can wreak some havoc. I'd guess that if he can't rule the Land of Promise, then it has to go. So of course NeoNET's contribution is Sam Roth, the trid star who waged a private war to destroy the Tír government before Crash 2.0.
- Bull

While in Europe, Surehand has crossed paths with his fellow ex-Prince, Aithne Oakforest, who has taken a particular interest in Pomorya and Saeder-Krupp's covert assault on the existing regime. If he wants the sextant, I'm sure it has everything to do with settling old scores. Zincan and Hestaby may be high on the list, but I would suspect Lofwyr remains number one with a bullet.

## OVERVIEW

Lugh Surehand was removed from power—deposed and forced into exile. His most loyal servants followed, only to be hunted and, for the most part, slaughtered. He was hunted, kept off-balance and unable to react. Time has passed, and he and one of his remaining Ghosts have been able to formulate a plan. Knowing that Ehran is in search of the artifacts, Surehand sought to recover them for his personal use, or to trade for a favor with the only kind of entities in the Sixth World with whom Surehand cares to deal. Given the nature of the artifacts and their ability to serve as an astral navigation system, they have become important to the Seelie Court of Tír na nÓg, with whom Surehand has formed a temporary alliance.

At the same time, Jonathon Reed has been taking his own counsel among various organizations with which he is deeply familiar thanks to his time as Operations Director of the Information Secretariat—organizations like the Black Lodge and the Illuminates of the New Dawn. With his intelligence background, Reed has been following the movements of Surehand and other former princes, including Ehran and Oakforest, along with the recent pursuit of the artifacts by the Draco and Atlantean Foundations. Reed has a special interest in the Draco Foundation, and his sources led him to the sextant and his Faustian pact with the Illuminates of the New Dawn, who have never been on good terms with the likes of Lugh Surehand when he ruled Tír Tairngire.

## PLOT POINT ONE

The runners are contacted through their fixer for a high-value run on very short notice. When they meet with the client, Ms. Johnson turns out to be Jessa, a former Information Secretariat spy. She meets with them at The Spirit Focus in Puyallup after it closes; she has made arrangements with the management to have the place to herself. Within the deserted jazz club she informs the runners that an object of great value, the Sextant of Worlds, has somehow been taken by Saeder-Krupp and is sitting in their Cara'Sir (Portland) arcology. She has also heard that the runners are already familiar with the object, and she is staking her claim to their services first. In fact, they were the last runners to have seen the sextant, so for all they know they are now robbing their previous client—a client who happens to have a snout and breathes fire.

The object is going to be transported from Tír Tairngire to Saeder-Krupp headquarters in Essen, and Ms. Johnson wants the runners to intercept that transfer and bring it to her in Washington, FDC. Jessa has contacts in the Border Guard and the Information Secretariat who can help the runners infiltrate Tír Tairngire with their gear. She can provide them a certain amount of protection to help them get into and out of the country with their gear and the sextant, but if the runners get into trouble with the two agencies (e.g., getting into physical combat), then they are on their own. She also has very little, if any, pull with the Peace Force. So while there is the opportunity for them to operate within the Tír armed with all of their important gear, if they get caught they are on their own. Jessa is able to provide detailed information on the arcology, including schematics, security systems, and threat assessment,

along with possible infiltration and escape routes leading into the surrounding city.

## PLOT POINT TWO

The runners are smuggled into Cara'Sir, where the arcology sits across the 405 from downtown in Willamette Heights. The runners must infiltrate the arcology and find the sealed and warded vault in the deepest sub-basements. Security is considerable, even with the intelligence Jessa provided, because the complex is not only the headquarters for Saeder-Krupp's presence in Tír Tairngire, it is also their headquarters for all of North America. Being in Tír Tairngire, and being a Saeder-Krupp facility, the arcology is also thoroughly saturated in magical security. As it happens, the intelligence Jessa has provided does not take into account the fact that the building is as malleable as S-K's organizational charts, and changes are made sometimes daily thanks to the modular building sections. The sub-basement is where it is supposed to be, but access tunnels, hallways, and HVAC systems (and associated security patrols) are not.

As the runners reach the sub-basement, they should become even more aware that something is not right. If they have been around the sextant before, they should notice that the strange effects normally present around the sextant are not felt or noticed. Eventually, the security level within the building goes off the charts, no matter how successful the runners have been in sneaking through the arcology. The system has been rigged to go off by another team that has already made off with the sextant. The runners have to deal with this fact that they are effectively trapped within the arcology, as S-K high-threat response forces pursue them within, and the Peace Force awaits beyond the walls. The endpoints of the escape routes Jessa provided remain intact, but the design differences make the middle points different, confusing the journey.

Once out of the arcology, the runners will be able to make it out of the country and back to Seattle provided that they have not come into too much of a conflict with the Peace Force. Jessa and her contacts don't care for Saeder-Krupp, and if their people die then so be it. They are not, however, as sanguine about casualties inflicted on their Peace Force colleagues, let alone Secretariat or Border Guard personnel.

## PLOT POINT THREE

Jessa informs the runners that her sources indicate that the thieves were working for the Tír na nÓg government. The sextant was delivered to the Ministry of Arts and Culture, which oversees all magical affairs within the country, including functions on behalf of the government and the Seelie Court. Specialists who study astral navigation and entities have taken the artifact for extensive research. This type of research is done under heavy warding and other protections in the instance that something unwelcome is brought back or makes its way into their laboratories.

Jessa makes arrangements to sneak the runners into Dublin, but she is unable to provide quite as much support as she did for the Tír Tairngire crossing. This means that she is not going to be able to help them bring any heavy weapons or other large





or heavily restricted pieces of gear into the country. Once in-country, they will be met by allies with the Unseelie Court, an anti-establishment group that is opposed to the magocratic ruling system of the Seelie Court and the neo-feudal system created by *Danaan* families, especially the *Danaan Mor* families who make up the Council of Stewards.

The Unseelie Court has greatly exploited the difficulties faced by the Senate and the Council as they liberalized parts of the government and economy only to have their rule challenged by the various insurgent groups such as the Unseelies, the IRA, and INLA, which all have freer access now. The fact that most of the small Tír armed forces is made of humans in an elven-controlled nation allows for a source of weapons and other technology to be funneled to the runners in aid of their mission. The fixer, Maire Gillen, is also able to provide them with intelligence on the ministry and its facility. They know about the sextant, and the Unseelie also want it—or at least they do not want the Tír government and the Seelie Court to possess it. The Unseelie want it for themselves to help them find the location of the Seelie Court, but that is beyond the scope of the runners' work.

This is another high-magic situation. The building is a classical design, but filled with magical defenses and a ubiquitous magical presence due to the ministry overseeing all magical affairs within Tír na nÓg. The runners should, however, be able to crack the security due to the fact that the country's magical defenses are being stretched thin by an insurgency and new threats that the government is still trying to control. This job is important enough to the Unseelies to provide a significant distraction to draw Tír Republican Corps personnel away from the ministry building and this sector of the government zone in order for the runners to infiltrate. They will also find support from Rory McGuinness, a TRC field operative who has secretly aligned himself with the Unseelie Court's cause. In fact, his grandfather is the director-general of the TRC and his father was a hero of the Corps and Order of Cu Chulainn, and he is able to help the runners evacuate to the extraction area out of the Tír.

## PLOT POINT FOUR

Once in possession of the sextant, the runners fly into Thomas Jefferson International Airport outside of Washington and make their way to the meeting with Jessa. This is when the people behind the original Saeder-Krupp theft make their move, as the runners from Cara'Sir are joined by Alec Tintagel and Felicia McGuinness, two incredibly powerful and dangerous operatives—one a former Ghost, the other active in Reach Fuileach (while also happening to be Rory's aunt). As soon as the runners have left the airport security zone, they will be pursued all the way up I-95 into the Federal District of Columbia at the Alexandria Sub-Sprawl, and across the river to the Illuminates of the New Dawn Grand Lodge in Foggy Bottom near the Watergate Rift Bunker.

This adventure should be run toward the end of any artifact campaign, and should come after **All-Seeing Eye** (p. 119). The presence of the artifacts in DeeCee is being felt, as three of the four are now within close proximity and the other two are no longer warded. Meanwhile, the Watergate Rift is growing increasingly unstable, and the effects seen in **All-Seeing Eye** are

growing in intensity and frequency. This wouldn't be an issue except that the sextant is trying to break free of its warding. The meet is at the Illuminates of the New Dawn Grand Lodge in Foggy Bottom—located within a kilometer of the Rift—where the sextant breaks its warding and becomes almost an astral beacon calling out to the other pieces. As part of the chase between the runners and the two Hunters of Men, the effects of the Rift and the artifacts create physical disturbances such as small seismic events, micro-storms, temporary increases or decreases in background count, and other effects.

Several major powers in the sprawl want control of the artifacts, and whoever knows about their existence is now certain to know where they are. If the runners have managed to hold off Tintagel and McGuinness, they also have the Draco Foundation, the Black Lodge, the Roman Catholic Church, the UCAS government (FBI and Magical Security Task Force, DIMR, Atlantean Foundation, Army Thaumaturgical Corps), and the various corporations studying magic in DeeCee (including NeoNET T99, MCT, Manadyne, and Lone Star) under the auspices of the Corporate Court Crisis Coordination Committee (C5), since they are well aware of the artifacts after the events of **Too Many Secrets** (p. 111); this, along with the Rift's instability, is why they are focused on the sextant. There is a chance here to play off any and every possible player one can imagine. If C5 or NeoNET makes their presence known, perhaps the runners can seek help from Samantha Roth (p. 118) if they made a deal with her at the end of **Too Many Secrets**. Roth may even be able to help deal with the Draco Foundation. If they sided with Corinna (see p. 116) instead, she can assist them with the UCAS government or Lone Star. The IOND has some pull with the Church (its founder, Rozilyn Hernandez, and other initiates are faculty in the Georgetown University Department of Occult Studies). It should be mentioned that as much as they might like to, neither Tintagel nor McGuinness would kill or seriously harm any UCAS personnel (FBI agents, army mages, etc.). Anyone else is fair game.

## PLOT POINT FIVE

By this point, the runners should have managed to hold off or negotiate their way to a stalemate. If they want, they can try to fight their way to Foggy Bottom. Assuming that Tintagel and McGuinness haven't captured them, the runners should be able to make it there. If they were especially stealthy or otherwise successful in evading their pursuers, the runners will be able to contact Jessa and pull up to the rear parking lot of the Grand Lodge. Something should already seem amiss though, since the Lodge's contracted security is through Desert Storm, a Shiawase subsidiary that has already been warned. Likewise, George Washington University's security contractor, Lone Star, patrols all of Foggy Bottom along with a higher-than-normal FedPol presence. None of the agencies seem to give the runners much regard as they arrive. If the runners have managed to negotiate an escort to the Grand Lodge, then it should be noted that no one seems to be coming after them.

Everything has stopped. The weather and the background of the sprawl are going wild, increasing in intensity as most residents of the city have fled in order to avoid the disturbances that seem to

be getting worse as the runners approach the Grand Lodge. That's when they see the Watergate Rift Bunker, which has been deserted. The building is visibly being stressed and has already suffered structural damage, and as they arrive one might even glimpse a familiar painted elf from an earlier incident lurking in the vicinity.

Either way, the runners enter the Grand Lodge and are immediately confronted by Lugh Surehand and Jonathon Reed, together. Jessa stands behind Reed as he politely asks the runners to walk down the street to the bunker right now. If the runners refuse, Surehand alone has the will and enough power to kill the group in an instant, and this should be strongly impressed upon the players. As soon as they hand the sextant over to Jessa, the mission is over. Even if they do, they are still encouraged to go with them. This leads to the fictional interlude, **Praxis** (see p. 136).

## PLOT POINT SIX

Following the events in **Praxis**, the runners are faced with a unique opportunity. As the Rift Bunker collapses around them and the collected power players are fighting for their lives and the lives of the people in the DeeCee Sprawl, the runners are generally unaffected by the amount of magic being wielded. They have the option of running, helping, or observing.

When the Rift collapses and the world goes white, the runners are the first ones to regain consciousness and composure because they weren't involved in what ended up being something like a massive amount of drain (that proves deadly to some) spread across the area. With the world descending upon them in the form of a massive military and security presence arriving on-scene, the runners can do whatever they want. In this chaos, they can see Tintagel carrying a limp Surehand away from the scene, and Jessa doing the same with Reed. If they so choose, the runners can try and help or settle old scores with some of the temporarily helpless power players in the rubble.

## LOCATIONS

### ILLUMINATES OF THE NEW DAWN GRAND LODGE

The Grand Lodge is in the Foggy Bottom neighborhood in Washington, D.C. It is located on H Street and New Hampshire Avenue within sight of the Watergate Rift Bunker. Much of the neighborhood was razed over the decades and restored in Neo-Georgian townhouses throughout the area west of 24th Street. The Grand Lodge is an exception, being five stories tall and occupying a large corner lot. It is a large red brick building surrounded by trees and covered in Awakened ivy to help deter astral surveillance. It is rumored that there is a massive ten-meter circle in a sub-basement of the building. The building's physical and Matrix security is provided by Desert Storm Security, with guards sitting in SUVs in front of the building on New Hampshire and in the rear parking lot.

DSS spiders control the building security, but most of the building's security is provided by its own magical defenses. Those are not contracted out, but are in fact performed by IOND initiates as part of their service to the Lodge. Most of the mages are trained in magical and astral combat, but there are also







professional combat magicians on staff overseeing and backing up the low-level initiates. A high-ranking initiate who maintains watchers and other spirit surveillance of the mages supervises all of these magicians. Given the nature of the IOND, the magicians on site are all hermetics or other “pure” magicians, with those following possession-based traditions and those following mentor spirits not being welcome within the group.

At any given time, there are eight Force 4 spirits of air patrolling the interior of the Lodge, while four to six watcher spirits keep an eye on the outer walls.

All exterior doors and windows are protected by Force 5 wards. Half of these are alarm wards, the other half are charge wards; the charge wards are scattered irregularly around the lodge, and their location changes to prevent anyone from memorizing where they are.

Any information stored in the Lodge is on a wired network; there are no wireless nodes, and there is no AR sculpting within the Lodge. The wired node can be accessed from jacks in most rooms of the Lodge. Its ratings are Firewall 6, Signal N/A, Response 5, System 6.

### **SAEDER-KRUPP TÍR TAIRNGIRE ARCOLOGY**

The arcology was built across the Willamette River from the Telestrian Habitat and has a fractal-design footprint that extends well over one hundred stories above the city of Cara'Sir. In contrast to the Telestrian Habitat across the river, Saeder-Krupp's arcology has no illusion of being a neo-Celtic/Green/Classical monstrosity. It is a postmodern Neo-Industrial beast that seems to be seamlessly integrated, but which in fact is actually quite modular and interchangeable. Because of that, it is not designed to be a singular pyramid or monolith like most arcologies. Instead, it is almost like a giant Tetris set. The arcology is set low across a large footprint that allows segments to be rearranged using integrated lifts and elevators that also serve as people movers. The general layout is in a series of overlapping, terraced circles that can be stacked in some gravity-defying positions thanks to the miracle of modern architecture (and magic).

Things are far more static beneath the surface, where the security layout is arranged for control and containment. The power system and resource farms are all underground, and Saeder-Krupp has learned a great deal about self-sustaining design from its many projects in the SOX as well as research “acquired” from competitors like Proteus AG. Sections are designed to be closed off, especially the sensitive labs and storage areas where the sextant would be held, and spiders are well integrated with physical and magical security personnel, who are military-trained.

The arcology should be treated like a city, with a wide variety of nodes and security personnel, though without the slums that most cities have. The entire arcology should be protected at the same level as corporate districts in most sprawls, though floors having executives have more protection than those holding regular corporate drones.

### **THOMAS JEFFERSON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

Thomas Jefferson International, aka “Tommy,” was constructed in 2040 just south of the Federal District boundaries of Alexandria. It sits just off I-95 north of Quantico Marine Base and was designed to handle suborbital and semiballistic traffic for the DeeCee Sprawl. The main terminal is designed in a neo-classical homage to Monticello, Thomas Jefferson's home. It is a massive, dark grey building with columns and a short dome above the atrium behind the main entrance where all traffic is directed. There is one controlled toll road from I-95 into Tommy where security begins. Knight Errant protects the airport along with the surrounding area since Knight Errant holds the policing contract for all of North Virginia. A memorandum of understanding with the Department of Homeland Security, which oversees the Federal Capitol Police Force, gives Knight Errant (along with Lone Star and Desert Storm) policing powers throughout the Federal District, which would allow them to pursue the runners into Alexandria and the rest of FDC.

Security is tight at the airport. Only ticket holders are allowed at the terminals, and they must pass through Rating 6 chemsniffers and Rating 6 MADs. Their SINs and tickets are checked by a Rating 6 security system.

### **TÍR NA NÓG MINISTRY OF ARTS AND CULTURE**

The ministry building lies in the center of downtown Dublin. Private automobile traffic is restricted in the area, which is heavily patrolled by the Garda, the national police, and the TRC. It appears much like a large castle adorned with ornate Celtic designs and trappings throughout the building that reinforce its role as the sentinel of national heritage and culture. Much of the building is administrative, as it includes the Education Ministry as a sub-agency, and also processes the cultural laws and other dictates of the government. It oversees the museums and other national landmarks, and contains a massive Matrix node filled with approved information on Tír na nÓg history, culture, and society. It also oversees magical education and the promotion of magical and religious practices that are permitted by the government. To this end, there are many magicians who work within the ministry administering the offices around the clock: stewards who administer the educational and culture services; bards who promote culture, sport, and society; druids who oversee the Magical Ministry; and warriors who protect the sacred integrity of the Arts and Culture of Tír na nÓg.

The Magical Ministry maintains several study circles and Force 5 magical lodges in the basement and sub-basement where they can further their studies of the land and magical objects and effects which can disturb the Path of the Wheel. These areas are heavily warded and protected by powerful magic, and security is provided by the Tír Republican Corps and dedicated civilian members of the Order of Cu Chulainn, the Order of the Way of the Warrior, who protect the druids and their work.



## WATERGATE RIFT BUNKER

The Rift Bunker is a massive ferrocrete structure that was built to encompass the Watergate Rift, which hovers over Virginia Avenue just west of the intersection of Virginia and New Hampshire Avenues in front of what were two of the Watergate Complex buildings. With the eight-meter rift sitting twenty meters above the street, the bunker stands forty-meters tall to accommodate the walls, ceilings, and floors, each of which is at least five meters of reinforced concrete. Even though the rift is not that large, being approximately fifty square meters in area, the bunker is a hulking cube that extends over what had been two of the Watergate buildings as well as a hotel that sat across the street from it. There is an external cordon around the area from 23<sup>rd</sup> Street to Rock Creek Parkway, and I-66, which runs alongside the Virginia Avenue. The cordon was covered by a massive tunnel shell up to K Street before being lowered and moved further northeast of its old route. E Street along the Potomac River has been tunneled over, and no one is permitted in this area besides authorized military personnel. The Army Thaumaturgical Corps maintains offices and spaces within the third Watergate building and also occupies the former Embassy of the Arabian Caliphate, which was evacuated following the emergence of Ghostwalker.

Within the bunker are a number of labs and research spaces where measurements and physical observations are made of the rift and the area around it. There are also areas of specific research and study as well as an on-site security presence made up of elite Army personnel, both magical and mundane. The rift itself is within a large, open space that is filled with measurement devices and staffed with magical researchers. Army mages and spirits patrol the entire bunker constantly, and it is warded many times over. The Rift Room is warded with magic that should not be within the army's grasp (the wards are cast at Force 10).

## PEOPLE

### JESSA

Trained as an Information Secretariat operative, Jessa proved her loyalty to Prince Reed many years ago with such devotion that he made her own of only three Paladins after a harrowing mission in San Francisco. She is a mundane elf who specializes in social infiltration and disruption similar to the work of the Dawkins Group. While she is mundane, she has several enhancements and is otherwise expertly skilled in reading and manipulating people.

Jessa is shorter than average for an elf, with light brown hair and light green/teal eyes. She is paramilitary-trained, but carries herself confidently without any signs of a martial background. Given her specialty, she tends to blend in and not draw attention to herself unless that is her intention.

**B** **A** **R** **S** **C** **I** **L** **W** **M** **Edg** **Ess** **Init** **IP**  
 3 3 4 2 6 3 3 4 6(9) 5 6 7(10) 1(4)

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10/10

**Armor (B/I):** 10/8

**Initiate Grade:** 3

**Qualities:** Focused Concentration [1], Magician, Martial Arts (Carromeleg), Maneuvers (Iaijutsu, Riposte, Set-Up, Finishing Move)

**Skills:** Arcana 3, Assensing 4, Astral Combat 3, Blades (Swords) 5 (+2), Conjuring skill group 3, Counterspelling (Combat Spells) 5 (+2), Etiquette (Elf) 3 (+2), Firearms skill group 3, Intimidation (Interrogation) 3 (+2), Leadership 3, Pilot Ground Craft 2, Ritual Sorcery 3, Spellcasting (Detection Spells) 5 (+2), Unarmed Combat (Carromeleg) 4 (+2), Stealth skill group 3

**Knowledge Skills:** Elven Society 4, Magic Theory 4, Tír Tairngire Politics 3,

**Languages:** Sperethiel N, English 5, Finnish 3, Salish 3

**Metamagic:** Centering, Quickening, Masking

**Spells (Those marked with asterisks are Quickened at 4 hits):** Analyze Truth, Armor\*, Chaotic World, Clairaudience, Clairvoyance, Combat Sense\*, Control Actions, Control Thoughts, Fireball, Heal, Improved Invisibility, Increase Reflexes\*, Magic Fingers, Manabolt, Mind Probe, Resist Pain, Stunball

**Gear:** Bracer (orichalchum and silver, Power Focus 3), chameleon suit, goggles [Rating 4, flare compensation, smartlink, thermographic vision, vision enhancement 2]

**Weapons:**

Broadsword [Blades, Reach 1, DV 4P, AP -1, Weapon Focus 3]

H&K 227-S [SMG, DV 5P; AP -4, SA/BF, RC 5, 28(c) w/ adv. safety, folding stock, gas-vent 3, personalized grip, smartgun, APDS ammo]

Savalette Guardian [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P; AP -1, SA/BF\*, RC 2, 12(c) w/ advanced safety, personalized grip, smartgun]

\* Burst fire requires a Complex Action

## FELICIA MCGUINNESS

(SEE RIVER CITY SHOOTOUT, P. 104)

## ILLUMINATES OF THE

NEW DAWN MAGICIANS (SEE P. 141)

## RORY MCGUINNESS

Rory is a relatively young elf (late twenties) who was quickly recruited into the TRC because of his family connections. His grandfather is the head of the Corps, his aunt is one of the Reach Fuileach, and his father was an intelligence operative who operated against Tír Tairngire and kept track of their activities. He currently serves on a signals intelligence field support team since he, like virtually everyone in his family, is an adept of the Way of the Warrior. He is especially skilled in stealth and infiltration, which is why he was given the mission in support of SIGINT support for missions where simple Matrix eavesdropping is not possible. He has become disenchanted with the *Danaan* families (of which his is one) and the secretive, racist machinations of the Seelie Court and his own Path. He is also quite bitter over the fact that it has turned his family into what he believes to be a group of bloody monsters. People allied with the Unseelie Court recruited him shortly after he began operating in Ulster. In this adventure, he is temporarily back in Dublin in order to avoid compromising the people with whom he works.

**B** **A** **R** **S** **C** **I** **L** **W** **M** **Edg** **Ess** **Init** **IP**  
 4 8 6(7) 4 5 5 4 4 8 4 6 12 1(2)



**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10/10

**Armor (B/I):** 8/6

**Qualities:** Adept, Aptitude (Infiltration), Martial Art [2, Wildcat, +1 DV on Unarmed Combat attacks, +1 die on

**Called Shots to increase damage], Maneuvers [Finishing Move, Set-Up, Throw, Vicious Blow], Lost Loved One, Sensitive System**

**Skills:** Athletics skill group 5, Blades 4, Cracking skill group 2, Electronics skill group 4, Firearms skill group 3, Demolitions 2, Etiquette (Danaan) 3 (+2), Infiltration 7 (9), Locksmith 3, Perception 6, Pilot Ground Vehicle 2, Shadowing 5, Throwing Weapons 2, Unarmed Combat (Martial Arts) 5 (7) (+2),

**Knowledge Skills:** Tactics (Ambush) 2 (+2), Tradecraft (Reconnaissance) 2 (+2), Danaan Mythos 3, Path of the Wheel 3 (Warrior) 3 (+2), Tír na nÓg Politics 2 (Subversive Groups +2)

**Languages:** Irish Gaelic N, English 4

**Adept Powers:** Attribute Boost: Strength 3, Attribute Boost: Reaction 3, Cloak 3, Combat Sense 2, Improved Ability: Infiltration 2, Improved Ability: Unarmed Combat 2, Increased Reflexes 1, Memory Displacement, Penetrating Strike 2, Traceless Walk

**Initiate Grade:** 2

**Metamagics:** Adept Centering, Masking

**Gear:** Autopicker 6, camouflage TRC fatigues [w/ smart pouches], contacts [Rating 3, w/ flare compensation, image link, smartlink], earbuds [Rating 3, w/ audio enhancement 3], hardware kit, keycard copier 6, laser link, low-light micro flashlight, maglock passkey 6, maglock sequencer 6, mini-welder, signal repeater 6, TRC ID card, wire clippers

**Weapons:**

Ares Predator IV [Heavy Pistol, DV 6P; AP -2, SA, 15(c), w/ personalized grip, smartgun, 3 clips EX-explosive ammo]

H&K 227-S [SMG, DV 5P; AP -4, SA/BF, RC 5, 28(c) w/ adv. safety, folding stock, gas-vent 3, personalized grip, smartgun, 2 clips APDS ammo]

Cougar Fineblade Long Blade [Blades, Reach —, DV 7P, AP -1]

Extendable Baton [Clubs, Reach 1, DV 7P, AP —]

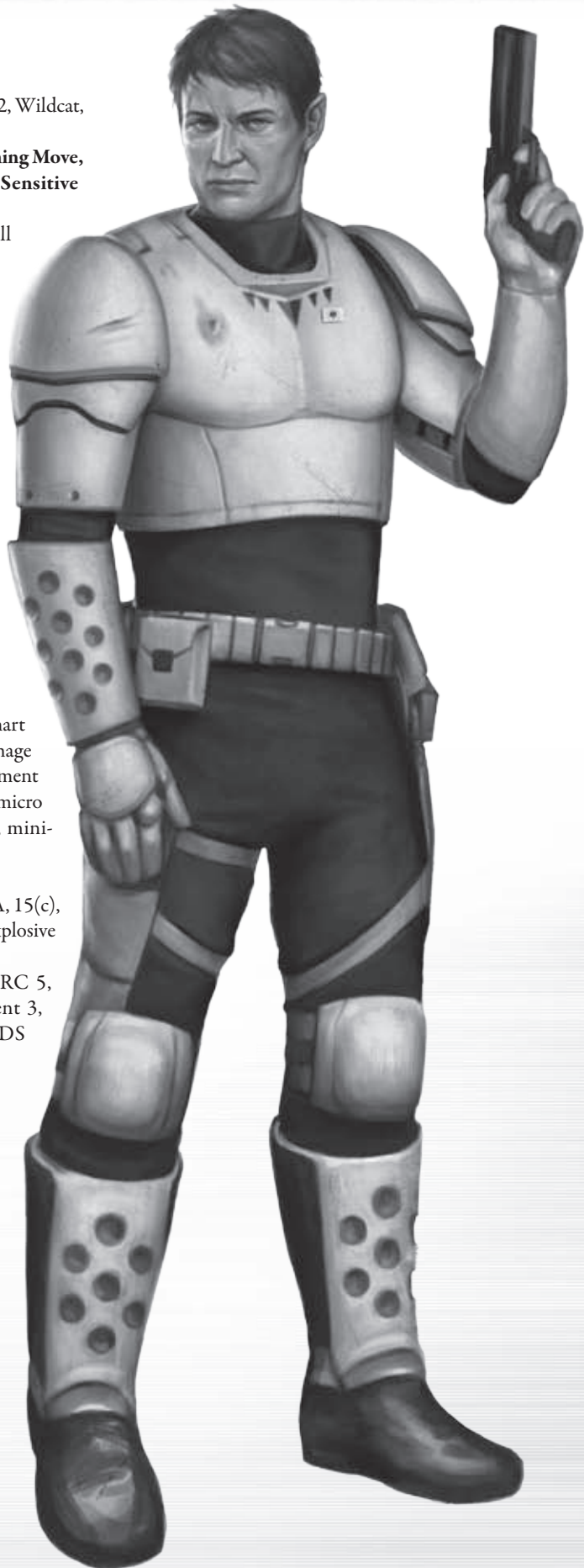
3 flash bang grenades [Grenade, DV 6S, AP -3, Blast 10m Radius]

3 thermal smoke grenades [Grenade, impairs visibility, Blast 10m radius]

Fists [Unarmed, Reach —, DV 2S, AP 0]

## ALEXANDER TINTAGEL

Alec is a former Tír Ghost captain who led twenty of his fellow Ghosts mages and adepts into exile as part of their Oath to Lugh Surehand. They were betrayed, however, and Alec is the only survivor. He left behind a family in Portland who survive on their own wiles while he serves Surehand as an oathbound paladin. Tintagel was a true believer of



the Tír way and rather arrogant in his confidence in elven and magical superiority until Surehand was exiled. Over the last decade he has maintained much of that confidence, acting as if Surehand's circumstances were nothing more than a temporary setback that will pass. He also has a complex relationship with Felicia McGuinness because he was fighting alongside Sean, her twin brother, in a Seattle conflict that Sean did not survive. Alec now carries Sean's sword almost everywhere as a focus.

**B** **A** **R** **S** **C** **I** **L** **W** **Edg** **Ess** **M** **Init** **IP**  
4 6(10) 5 3 5 5 5 6 4 6 11 10(13) 1(4)

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10 (12) /11

**Armor (B/I):** 14/12

**Skills:** Arcana 3, Assensing 6, Athletics skill group 3, Close Combat skill group 4, Cracking skill group 2, Electronics skill group 3, Etiquette (Elven) 3 (+2), Firearms skill group 4, First Aid 3 (Combat Wounds +2), Heavy Weapons 2, Intimidation 3 (Interrogation +2), Pilot Ground Craft 2, Stealth skill group 4, Throwing Weapons 3, Sorcery skill group 6, Conjuring skill group 4, **Knowledge Skills:** Arcanoarchaeology 3, Area Knowledge: Tarislar 3, Elven Culture (Tír Tairngire) 4 (+2), Magical Background 5, Military Procedures (Peace Force) 3 (+2), Mystic Secrets 4, Tactics 5, Tír Tairngire Politics 4. Languages: Sperethiel N, English 5

**Qualities:** Magician, Focused Concentration [2], Prejudiced (Non-Elves, Biased)

**Initiate Grade:** 5

**Metamagics:** Centering, Extended Masking, Masking, Quickening, Shielding

**Gear:** Sperethiel-inscribed Gauntlet [Power Focus 3], Light Military Armor [12/10, Holster, Mobility Upgrade 3, Ruthenium Polymer Coating, Skinlink], Ballistic Mask [+2/1, Image Link, Smartlink, Flare Compensation]

**Spells (those marked with asterisks are Quickened:** self, 4 hits): Alter Memory, Analyze Truth, Armor, Combat Sense\*, Control Actions, Detect Enemies, Detect Life, Enhance Aim, Eyes of the Pack, Heal, Improved Invisibility, Increase Agility\*, Increase Reflexes\*, Mindnet (Extended Range), Mind Probe, Offensive Mana Barrier, Physical Barrier, Resist Pain, Stealth, Stunball, Stunbolt

**Weapons:**

Ares Alpha [Assault Rifle, DV 6P, AP -1 or -5, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 42(c), w/ personalized grip, smartgun, APDS ammo (6 clips), regular ammo (10 clips); Grenade Launcher, DV Special, AP -, SS, 6(c), 6 HE grenades, 6 fragmentation grenades]

Savalette Guardian [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P; AP -1, SA/BF\*, RC 2, 12(c) w/ advanced safety, personalized grip, smartgun]

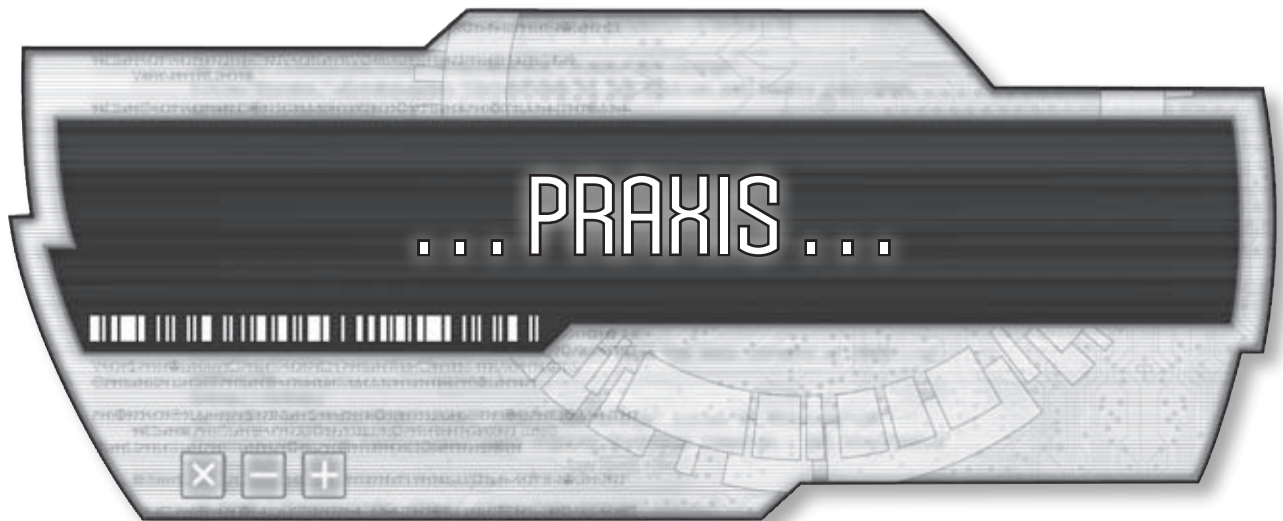
\* Burst fire requires a Complex Action

Broadsword [Blades, Reach 1, DV 4P, AP -1, Centering/Weapon Focus 4]

6 thermal smoke grenades [Grenade, DV —, AP —, Blast 10m Radius]







The painted elf stared at the rift, the ultimate physical reminder of his good friend Dunkelzahn. It was an impressive thing; eight meters across at the furthest edges of the ellipse. He stood alone in the massive chamber, surrounded by deserted sensors and monitors where the UCAS Army otherwise would have been keeping an eye on the rift and any possible emissions. Astrally, the chamber was also empty. It had become attuned to the magical energies used by the Army to study the rift, as well as from the presence of spirits and magicians whose job was to keep anything that might emerge from the rift from leaving the heavily warded chamber. Harlequin did not know why the chamber, not to mention the entire bunker complex in which he was standing, would be deserted this evening. Someone of considerable political power within this city must have pulled every string and cashed in every favor they had to pull this off; his suspicion rested on a certain white-haired nubian elf.

Though he was alone, that would not last for long. He felt the presence of another and witnessed the form of a massive orange great dragon circling around the damaged Washington Monument to approach the bunker from the east, directly above Virginia Avenue. Harlequin stood and watched as she slowed, hovering above the building before taking a human form and landing on the balcony that ringed the chamber level some twenty meters above the street below. She passed through the security doors without objection. The elf watched her silently until they stood face to face a few meters from the rift.

"No joke? No clever witticism? I'm insulted," she said. The shifting glow of the rift shimmered in her deep orange eyes as she stared at the rift with a mix of curiosity and fear. She could only imagine the hell that Ghostwalker experienced before he tore his way out of the rift, which spilled magics onto this plane that only a few of her kind could even begin to understand.

"I was summoned here, like you, against my better judgment."

"As if your judgment was worth anything," a male voice announced from the shadows. Ehran emerged from the inky blackness slowly, and with a pronounced limp. Frosty had informed her mentor of what had transpired on the ship as it sailed across the Pacific Ocean. She emerged shortly after he did, and took her place at Harlequin's right side.

Beyond the walls of the Watergate Rift Bunker, people were moving about with purpose of action. Whatever political favors had been called and moves made, the military personnel of the UCAS, along with troops from megacorporations, foreign armies, and mercenaries that were garrisoned across the river at the UN Mission within the DC National Airport, had become increasingly alarmed at the presence of the magic that otherwise should have concealed the presence of Hestaby and the others. Too many people started asking questions, and their trained response after the years of chaos and violence that had plagued this metroplex was to respond with overwhelming force. This time, though, their forces would not be nearly enough.

The next two arrivals were eerily silent, even for this morose assembly. Lugh Surehand and Jonathon Reed entered the rift chamber accompanied by their paladins, mercenaries, and shadowrunners. Surehand carried the Sextant of Worlds, which emitted a powerful aura on the astral plane that even the mundanes in the room could probably sense. The runners possessed the Phaistos Disc and Shantaya's Compass. With the three artifacts together, the rift began to twist and distort. The glow fluctuated in color and intensity as the air around them crackled with energy. The artifacts, against all their normal inclinations, wanted to be together. The rift wanted them.

"These mortals should not be here," a woman's voice said, breaking the silence. It came from a tall Persian woman who approached the rift without any further acknowledgement of

the others as she stood within reach of the planar fissure. She held out her hand toward the rift, almost touching it. Blue electricity arced toward the woman, and she hesitated before pulling her arm back.

A chill ran down Harlequin's spine for the first time in centuries. He recognized Aden in his gender-bending human form. From afar Harlequin admired the wyrm's subtle jabs at the metahumanity's assorted biases and assumptions. Standing in the presence of the unexpected visitor, though, caused him to realize that Ghostwalker had deceived them all.

"Nor should you," Surehand growled. "Lofwyr and the humans are massing armies beyond these walls. If they knew you were here, they would destroy this city from above just to end you."

"Lofwyr knows better," Hestaby said, interrupting them as Surehand and Aden squared off. Aden carried a box in "her" other hand, and Surehand smiled at the sight of it. He noticed Reed staring at the box as well, and turned to face his former protégé with a knowing yet sadistic smile.

"Please, everyone, maintain some level of decorum." The voice belonged to Aina Dupree, his dear friend. Her voice carried authority in this room whether anyone wanted to admit it. She was responsible for this conclave being possible after all. Aina walked into the chamber alongside a very somber looking human. Harlequin eyed the man with some curiosity, and tried to figure out his old friend's game. As they walked into the middle of the group, he finally remembered where he had seen this serious human. They once fought alongside each other at the gates of Vienna. Harlequin shook his head and then began to laugh out loud. And yet many here considered him to be the fool.

"Well, where is he?" Surehand asked aloud. He had unfinished business with most of the people in the chamber, and he was not exhibiting the patience with his equals that he had shown as High Prince.

As if to answer his question, the rift began to expand and energy crackled and burst forth from within it, striking the walls with enough intensity to burn and blast chunks of ferrocrete into the air. The entire building shook, and all assembled within converged together in front of the rift as it destroyed the roof and floor surrounding it. The roof completely crumbled, then was vaporized into dust by the combined protective magics of those present. With the roof gone, they could all see what was coming: The massive white great dragon descending down toward the rift as the building was surrounded by an armada of military craft. None dared take action—history was filled with conflagrations being lit by much smaller sparks.

Ghostwalker stopped just above the group, his massive wings flapping slowly as everyone looked up at him. Everything that happened, every move made, and every possible outcome had shaped this one moment. The dragon wanted the artifacts that he considered to be his alone, and that goal was now within his reach. Harlequin had to admire the white wyrm for that if

nothing else. He played a bunch of schemers like only he or his clutchmate could.

The rift finally began to stabilize. Surehand offered up the sextant, and it rose to the dragon's right claw. He then turned and looked at the runners. They were out of their league, and out of their element. They looked at each other with a measure of grudging acceptance, and offered up the two artifacts in their possession. Ghostwalker extended his right claw to receive them, and offered everyone a glimpse of the Piri Reis map pressed against his torso. Finally, Aden looked down at the box, and the back up at Ghostwalker. He released his grip on the box, which was immediately taken by the hovering lizard.

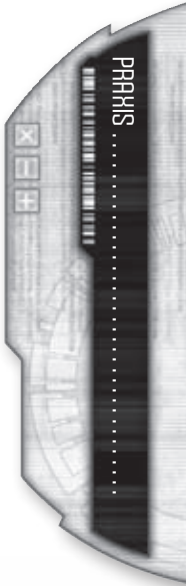
With all of his tools in hand, the giant white dragon began to perform an ancient magical ritual. The rift began to expand outward and above him, creating a tunnel-like entrance. He was preparing to enter hell, and Harlequin began to wonder if he was going to drag them all in with him. It was also possible that Ghostwalker might simply unleash hell on this patch of Earth. He glimpsed over at Hestaby, and then at Aina. He saw fear in their eyes. They had to do something, but he could not even speak.

The energy of the rift began to unravel from the portal-like shape it had maintained for almost two decades, and it unraveled into tendrils of energy that wrapped around Ghostwalker as he came in closer. He began to turn incorporeal and was passing through them and their magics as he entered the rift. What seemed like an excruciatingly slow process suddenly shifted, and Ghostwalker simply vanished into the rift. Or what was left of the rift. It shrank and faded behind him until it was a small point of light.

Harlequin breathed. He found himself able to move and blink just in time to feel a blast of pure mana sweep over him. Damn the pale wyrm, he thought. Ghostwalker slammed the metaphorical door behind him so that none could follow. He didn't care to inform the assembled beings that closing the rift would expel a large amount of energy back onto this plane roughly equivalent to the nuclear weapon *Dunkelzahn* used to open it in the first place. Equilibrium needed to be maintained. Harlequin didn't have time to think. He wrapped himself in defensive magic. Everyone tried to save themselves. Raw mana tore at itself in slow motion as he felt a thread of mana reach into his soul. He could not sense anything, but he knew who was responsible. Aina was performing some sort of ritual only she would understand. The elves, the dragons, and even the Crusader all became as one with her in the heart of their gestalt.

She used their combined magic and tricks to warp reality around them. A surge of mana could not be simply be dispersed, or absorbed, or channeled into something else. Harlequin simply could not comprehend what she was doing as his entire being was consumed in a white light, and felt that his fate was being rewritten before the white light was replaced by the dark emptiness of ... death?

*No. Life.*





# ... CHARACTER TROVE ...

Below are characters who are used at different parts of *Artifacts Unbound*. Note that when gender is not listed for a character, the gamemaster can determine gender at her discretion. Some of the characters listed here may be inserted as grunts in certain circumstances, but their stats could be the basis for NPCs or even PCs. To retain flexibility, these particular characters have been given Edge statistics and have both their physical and stun condition monitor boxes listed. When using them as grunts, remember to use only the higher of the two condition monitor numbers and to count all damage in a single track.

## ALEPH SOCIETY MEMBER (Professional Rating 3)

*Ork*

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	M	Ess	Init	IP
6	4(6)	3(5)	3(9)	2	3	4(5)	5	2	4	2	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 11

**Armor:** 10/8

**Skills:** Athletics skill group 2, Banishing 3, Blades (Cyber-Implant Blades) 4 (+2), Dodge (Ranged) 2 (+2), Counterspelling (Combat Spells) 2 (+2), Pistols (Heavy Pistols) 3 (4) (+2), Perception 3 (6), Spellcasting 4, Stealth skill group 2 (3), Summoning 3

**Knowledge Skills:** Archaeology 2, Astral Research 5, Gang Turf 2, Magic Background 5, Parazology 3, Street Drugs 4

**Languages:** English N

**Qualities:** Addiction (Moderate, Psyche), Astral Beacon, Bad Luck, Magician.

**Spells:** Armor, Combat Sense, Detect Magic, Heal, Improved Invisibility, Increase Reflexes, Influence, Manabolt, Stunball.

**Augmentations:** Cerebral booster 1, cyberarm [right, obvious, customized, Body 6, Agility 6, Strength 6 w/ bulk modification (Rating 1), armor (Rating 2), strength enhancement (Rating 3), cybergun (Heavy Pistol) and spurs], reaction enhancers 2, smartlink (retinal modification), synthacardium 3, reflex recorder (Pistols)

**Gear:** Armor jacket [w/ nonconductivity (Rating 4)], commlink (Device Rating 4), Esprit "Petite Brume" grenade, glasses [Rating 3, w/ flare compensation, image link, vision enhancement (Rating

3)], GloWand, 1 dose of jazz, mage sight goggles, medkit (Rating 5), 10 doses psyche, rebreather (Rating 5), 2 stimulant patches (Rating 6), sustaining focus (Force 2).

**Weapons:**

Spur [Reach —, DV 7P, AP —]

Heavy cyber pistol [Heavy Pistol, DV 7P(f), AP +5, SA, RC 0, 10 (m) w/ int. smartgun and flechette ammo]

## ANTIQUITIES AND ODDITIES DEALER (Professional Rating 2)

*Dwarf*

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	M	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
3	2	3	3	4	3	4	4	5	2	6	6	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10/10

**Armor (B/I):** 6/4

**Skills:** Arcana 2, Assensing 4, Conjuring skill group 2, Dodge 2, Enchanting (Artificing) 3 (+2), Etiquette (Street) 2 (+2), Negotiations (Bargaining) 4 (+2), Perception (Visual) 2 (+2), Pistols 1, Sorcery skill group 3

**Qualities:** Addiction (Mild, Wudu'aku), Black Market Pipeline (Magic), Day Job (10 hrs), Resistance to Pathogens, Thermographic Vision, Trustworthy (Negotiations), Sensitive Neurostructure

**Knowledge Skills:** Archeology 3, Middle Eastern Mythology 3, Magic Theory 2, Parabotany 3, Parageology 3, Parazology 3

**Languages:** English N, Arabic 2, Farsi 2

**Spells:** Analyze Magic, Catalog, Detect Magic, Manabolt

**Gear:** Assaying kit, commlink [Device Rating 3, w/ biometric lock (Rating 2), w/ Analyze 2, Browse 3, Edit 2], enchanting shop, glasses [w/ Image link, microscopic vision], lined coat, magic lodge materials (Rating 5), pouch (w/ a few units of raw and refined mineral and vegetable reagents), talislegger kit

**Weapons:**

Ruger Super Warhawk [Heavy Pistol, DV 6P, AP -2, SS, RC —, 6 (cy)]

## CHILDREN OF THE DRAGON MEMBER (Professional Rating 3)

Human

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	M	Ess	Init	IP
3	3	3	2	3	4	5	5	6	6	7	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

**Armor (B/I):** 8/6

**Skills:** Astral Combat 4, Athletics skill group 3, Blades 3, Conjuring skill group 4, Counterspelling 5, Etiquette 4, Infiltration 3, Influence skill group 4, Outdoors skill group 4, Perception 4 (5), Pistols 3, Spellcasting 6

**Qualities:** Magician (Hermetic), Perceptive (5BP)

**Spells:** Analyze Device, Analyze Magic, Catalog, Clairvoyance, Detect Artifacts (Artifacts meaning any manmade object over 500 years old), Detect Magic, Improved Invisibility, Mind Probe, Oxygenate, Stunbolt, Translate

**Bound Spirits:** Spirit of air (Force 5, 3 services)

**Gear:** Camouflage suit, climbing gear, commlink [Device Rating 3], contact lenses [Rating 3, w/ low-light vision, thermographic vision, image link], GPS, grapple gun [with 100m myomeric Rope], mage sight goggles, maglock passkey [Rating 4], 10 magnesium torches, medkit [Rating 6], micro-transceiver [Rating 6], power focus [Rating 2], spellcasting focus [Rating 4], 100 stealth tags, survival kit, tag eraser

**Weapons:**

Colt Manhunter [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, 16(c), w/ laser sight]

Sword [Weapon Focus Rating 2, Reach 1, DV 4P]

## CORPORATE HEADHUNTER (Professional Rating 4)

Human

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
4	4	3	3	5 (7)	5	5 (7)	4	4.2	8	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10

**Armor (B/I):** 6/5

**Skills:** Business 5, Cracking skill group 2 (4), Dodge 3, Electronics skill group 4 (6), Influence skill group 5, Intimidation 1, Pilot Ground Craft (Wheeled) 1 (+2), Perception 5 (8), Pistols 3, Stealth skill group 2 (3)

**Knowledge Skills:** Corporate Politics 5, Security Companies 5, Underworld Politics 5

**Languages:** English N, Japanese 5

**Qualities:** Low Pain Tolerance, Incompetent (Demolitions, Gunnery, Gymnastics, Heavy Weapons), SINner

**Augmentations:** Attention coprocessor 3, cerebral booster 2, datajack, nanohive [Rating 2, w/ Neocortical neural amplifiers (Rating 2)], tailored pheromones 2

**Gear:** Contact lenses [Rating 3, w/ empathy software, image link, smartlink], DocWagon contract (Platinum, 2 Years), modified Fairlight Caliban commlink w/ Novatech Navi [Response 4, Signal 5, Firewall 6, System 4 w/ skinlink, subvocal microphone and trodes], Mortimer of London Greatcoat, respirator (Rating 5).

**Programs:** Armor 3, Analyze 4, Biofeedback Filter 3, Browse 4,

Command 2, Edit 4, Empathy 4, Exploit 4, Stealth 4.

**Weapons:**

Fichetti Security 600 [Light pistol, DV 6S(e), AP -half, SA, RC (1), 30(c), w/ ext. smartgun and 3 clips Stick 'n Shock ammo]

## CORPORATE SECURITY UNIT (Professional Rating 4)

Human

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
4 (6)	4 (6)	4 (6)	4 (6)	2	4	3	4	1.52	8 (10)	1 (3)

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

**Armor:** 13/13

**Skills:** Athletics skill group 3 (5), Clubs (Batons) 4 (+2), Computer 2, Etiquette (Corporate) 3 (+2), Firearms skill group 4, Hardware 2, Infiltration 2, Intimidation 5, Perception 3 (5), Shadowing 2, Throwing Weapons (Lobbed) 2 (+2), Unarmed Combat (Block) 3 (+2)

**Augmentations:** (all alphaware) Cybereyes [Rating 3 w/ eye recording unit, flare compensation, image link, smartlink, thermographic vision, and vision enhancement 2], dermal plating 1, ceramic bone lacing, muscle augmentation 2, muscle toner 2, synthacardium 2, wired reflexes 2

**Gear:** Commlink (Rating 4), full body armor (w/ helmet, chemical protection 5, non-conductivity 5), stim patch (Rating 5)

**Weapons:**

Stun Baton [Club, Reach 1, DV 6S(e), AP -half]

HK-227-X [SMG, DV 5P, AP -4, SA/BF/FA, RC 2 (3), 28(c), w/ retractable stock, smartgun system, internal sound suppressor, gas-vent 2, and 3 clips APDS ammo]

2 flash-bang grenades [Grenade, DV 6S, AP -3, Blast 10m Radius]

## DUELIST ADEPT (Professional Rating 4)

Elf

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	M	Ess	Init	IP
4	6 (7)	5 (7)	5	3	3	2	4	7	6	8	1 (3)

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

**Armor:** 10/11

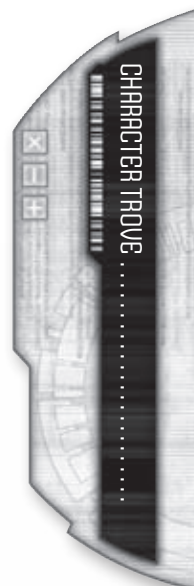
**Skills:** Athletics skill group 4, Blades (Swords) 4 (6) (+2), Dodge (Ranged) 3 (+5), Dodge (Melee) 3 (+3), Firearms skill group 3, Infiltration 3 (5), Intimidation (Physical) 2 (3) (+2), Outdoors skill group 1, Perception 3 (5), Pilot Ground Craft (Bike) 1 (+2), Shadowing 2, Unarmed Combat (Martial Arts) 3 (+2)

**Qualities:** Adept, Gremlins (Rating 2), Martial Arts (Arnis De Mano, +1 die on Called Shots to disarm, +1 DV on Blades attacks), Poor Self Control (Combat Monster), Spirit Bane (Beasts), The Warrior's Way.

**Initiate Grade:** 1

**Metamagics:** Adept centering.

**Adept Powers:** Combat Sense 3 (1.125), Enhanced Perception 2 (.5), Improved Ability (Blades) 2 (.75), Improved Ability (Infiltration) 2 (.5), Improved Ability (Intimidation) 1 (.25),





Improved Attribute (Agility) 1 (.75), Improved Reflexes 2 (1.875), Improved Sense (Flare Compensation) (.25), Mystic Armor 2 (1).

**Maneuvers:** Disarm, Riposte.

**Gear:** Commlink (Device Rating 4), chain shirt, FFBA (full-body suit), respirator (Rating 5), stim patch (Rating 5).

**Weapons:**

Sword [Blade, Reach 1, DV 6P, AP —, w/ personalized grip]  
Ruger Thunderbolt [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, BF, RC 3, 12(c), w/ laser sight, personalized grip, and quick-draw holster]

**Notes:** The Way of the Warrior quality discounted the following Powers: Combat Sense, Improved Ability (Blades) and Improved Reflexes. Adept gets a +3 dice pool modifier for Surprise Tests for Reaction. Combat Sense also provides +3 dice pool modifier for dodging melee and ranged attacks.

## FROSTY

*Female Elf*

Jane “Frosty” Foster is an accomplished magician in her mid-forties, though she looks to be twenty years younger. She has long, curly, platinum blonde hair. Her eyes are a clear blue, and she has a stunning smile. At first glance, she may appear human, since she has rounded ears and lacks the typical almond-shaped eyes of elves, but she is taller and thinner than most human women. She has a very slight limp, which is only pronounced when she is deeply fatigued.

Frosty has a casual attitude and a very pragmatic outlook on life. She is very loyal and basically honest, despite her career as a shadow-runner. She has a well-developed sense of humor and enjoys a good joke. She doesn't like surprises, however, and tends to lash out at unpleasant surprises with a hot temper—and significant amounts of mana.

Jane grew up in an orphanage, unaware of her parentage, although always slightly wistful and curious. Eventually, she went to the University of Missouri, then began working for a small corporation in Columbia, Missouri. When she was in her twenties, her magical abilities Awakened and she apprenticed to Harlequin, a powerful and eccentric magician. Her mentor encouraged her to run the shadows and put her abilities to practice, to develop skills, contacts, and resources of her own.

After twenty years in the shadows, she's obtained some very well-placed contacts, in both low circles and high. She's met Fastjack in person and is a member of his VPN, JackPoint. In addition, she's connected through her mentor to some very powerful individuals. On occasion, she has even met dragons—indeed, she was bequeathed a ring from Dunkelzahn in his will, a power focus that she never removes. These contacts have allowed her occasional access to some of the most secretive circles at large in the Sixth World (and she even occasionally shares her opinions and theories with her associates on JackPoint).

Being taught by one of the most powerful metahuman magicians on the planet has some advantages. Jane knows several spells and metamagical techniques that aren't common knowledge (or even believed possible) in the magical community of 2072. Jane uses an arcane language and symbols during her rituals that are not recognizable to any magicians who observe her. Her magical talents are also unique—or at least not known beyond a handful of other people, such as her mentor.



B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	M	Edg	Ess
4	5	4	3	8	4	6	8	15	4	6



**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10/12

**Armor (B/I):** 8/6

**Skills:** Arcana 4, Astral Combat 4, Athletics skill group 3, Close Combat (Swords) 2 (+2), Conjuring skill group 6, Dodge 3, Pistols 4, First Aid 2, Influence skill group 5, Electronics skill group 2, Perception 4, Pilot Aircraft 3, Pilot Ground Craft 4, Sorcery skill group 6, Survival 2

**Knowledge Skills:** Magic History 4, Magic Organizations 4, Magic Theory 4, Street Rumors 3, Tír Tairngire Culture 3, Travel Gear 3

**Languages:** English N, French 3, German 3, Japanese 4, Mandarin 3, Spanish 3, Sperethiel 6

**Qualities:** Magician (Path of the Wheel), Focused Concentration 2

**Initiate Level:** 11

**Metamagics:** Geomancy, masking, extended masking, shielding, Wheel 1, Sacrifice, Sacrifice 2, Flexible Signature

**Wheel 1:** Understanding. Jane adds her Initiate Grade to Social tests requiring empathy.

**Sacrifice 2:** This technique allows the use of sacrifice on oneself or a willing victim without creating a background count.

**Spells:** Armor, Chaotic World, Control Emotions, Death Touch, Detect Enemy, Detect Lies, Fashion, Fireball, Heal, Healthy Glow, Influence, Manabolt, Oxygenate, Stunbolt

**Gear:** Armor jacket, commlink [Device Rating 4, w/custom OS that displays only in Old Sperethiel], contact lenses [Rating 2, w/smartlink, vision enhancement 2], dragon ring (Force 6 power focus), 3 fake SINS (Rating 6), ivory earring (Force 5 sustaining focus), medkit (Rating 6)

**Weapons:**

Ares Predator IV [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -5, SA, RC —, 15 (c), w/ smartlink, 5 clips APDS ammo]

Monofilament sword [Blade, Reach 1, DV 5P, AP -1, Force 3 weapon focus]

## GANG BANGERS

**(Professional Rating 1)**

*Human*

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
3	4	3	3	2	3	2	2	5.8	6	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10

**Armor (B/I):** 6/4

**Skills:** Close Combat skill group 3, Etiquette (Street) 3 (+2), Intimidation 2, Pistols 2

**Quality:** Toughness

**Augmentations:** Hand razors

**Gear:** Armor vest, commlink (Device Rating 2), 1 dose of jazz

**Weapons:**

Knife [Blade, Reach —, DV 3P, AP —]

Ruger Super Warhawk [Heavy Pistol, DV 6P, AP -2, SS, RC —, 6 (cy)]

## GANG LEADER

**(Professional Rating 2)**

*Human*

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
3	4	4	4	3	3	2	3	4.7	7	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10

**Armor (B/I):** 8/6

**Skills:** Close Combat skill group 3, Dodge 2, Etiquette (Street) 3 (+2), Intimidation 4, Pistols (Semi-automatics) 3 (+2), Thrown Weapons 2

**Quality:** Toughness

**Augmentations:** Dermal plating 2, retractable spur

**Gear:** Armor vest, commlink (Device Rating 2), 1 dose of jazz

**Weapons:**

Knife [Blade, Reach —, DV 3P, AP —]

Colt Manhunter [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, RC —, 16 (c)]

3 flash-bang grenades [Grenade, DV 6S, AP -3, Blast 10m Radius]

## GUERRILLA

**(Professional Rating 2)**

*Human*

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
3	4	4	3	3	3	2	4	6	7	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

**Armor (B/I):** 6/4

**Skills:** Athletics skill group 3, Close Combat skill group 3, Dodge 3, Escape Artist 2, Infiltration 3, Longarms (Sniper Rifles) 4 (+2), Perception (Visual) 3 (+2), Pistols 3, Shadowing 2, Survival 3, Tracking 3

**Qualities:** Guts, Home Ground (current location)

**Gear:** Armor vest, commlink (Device Rating 2), glasses [Rating 2, w/ smartlink, thermographic vision], 2 doses cram

**Weapons:**

Ares Desert Strike [Sniper Rifle, DV 8P, AP -3, SA, RC (1), 14 (c), w/ imaging scope]

Club [Club, Reach 1, DV 3P, AP —]

Fichetti Security 600 [Light Pistol, DV 4P, AP —, SA, RC (1), 30 (c), w/ laser sight]

## ILLUMINATES OF THE NEW DAWN MAGICIAN

**(Professional Rating 3)**

*Human*

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	M	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
4	2	3	3	4	3	4	5	6	3	6	6	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10/11

**Armor (B/I):** 8/6

**Skills:** Arcana 3, Assensing 3, Conjuring skill group (2), Dodge 2, Etiquette (Street) 2 (+2), Perception (visual) 3 (+2), Pistols (Semi-Automatics) 2 (+2), Shadowing (Tailing) 2 (+2), Sorcery skill group 3

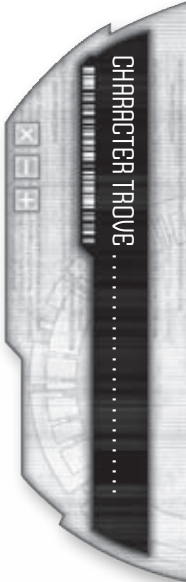
**Knowledge Skills:** European History 2, Magic Theory 3, Parabotany 3, Parageology 3, Parazoology 3

**Languages:** English N, Russian 4, German 4

**Qualities:** Magician, SINner

**Spells:** Analyze Magic, Analyze Truth, Improved Invisibility, Manabolt, Manaball

**Gear:** Armored jacket [w/ chemical resistance 2, fire resistance 2,





non-conductivity 2], commlink [Device Rating 3, w/ biometric lock (Rating 3), skinlink], earbuds [Rating 3, w/ audio enhancement 2, spatial recognizer], 2 fake SINS (Rating 4), glasses [Rating 4, w/ image link, low-light, flare compensation, smartlink], High Lifestyle (6 months), magic lodge materials (Force 6), Programs [Analyze 3, Browse 3, Command 1, Edit 3], subvocal microphone

**Weapons:**

Ares Predator IV [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, RC 1,15(c)]

**JENNA NI'FAIRRA**

*Female Elf*

Jenna Ni'Fairra is an elf, a former T'ir Prince, and an enigma with no concrete background information available. While Jenna is not the most famous of T'ir Princes, she is well known for her racist attitudes and her immense magical abilities. Jenna will not talk with non-elves, and she looks down upon any elf who associates with other races. She is also very intense and rabid about getting back the Book of Leaves.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	M	Edg	Ess
5	6	5	4	8	6	6	8	16	6	6

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10/12

**Armor (B/I):** 8/1

**Skills:** Arcana 5, Archery 3, Astral Combat 5, Athletics skill group 3, Close Combat (Knives) 4 (+2), Conjuring skill group 6, Dodge 3, First Aid 5, Influence skill group 6, Instruction 4, Perception (Visual) 6 (+2), Pilot Aircraft 4, Pilot Ground Craft 4, Pistols 3, Sorcery skill group 6, Survival 3

**Knowledge Skills:** Architecture 4, Magic History 6, Magic Theory 6, T'ir Tairngire Culture 6, T'ir Tairngire Politics 6

**Languages:** Sperethiel N, English 5, French 5

**Qualities:** Bad Luck, Magician (Path of the Wheel), Focused Concentration 2

**Initiate Grade:** 12

**Metamagics:** Absorb, anchoring, geomancy, masking, extended masking, flexible signature, psychometry, quickening, reflecting, shielding, sacrifice, sympathetic linking

**Spells:** Analyze Truth, Antidote, Armor, Chaotic World, Control Actions, Control Emotions, Death Touch, Detect Enemy, Detect Lies, Fashion, Fireball, Heal, Healthy Glow, Improved Invisibility, Influence, Mana Barrier, Manabolt, Mindlink, One Less Dwarf, Oxygenate, Shattershield, Slaughter Orks, Slaughter Trolls, Stunbolt, Toxic Wave

**Gear:** Commlink [Device Rating 5], contact lenses [Rating 2, w/ smartlink, vision enhancement 3], diamond ring (Force 6 sustaining focus), FFBA shirt, Moonsilver Line evening gown w/ scarf, silver tiara (Force 6 power focus)

**Bound spirits:** Spirit of air (Force 4, 2 services), spirit of earth (Force 6, 2 services), 2 spirits of man (Force 3, 3 services apiece)

**Weapons:**

Cougar Fineblade Knife short blade [Blade, Reach —, DV 3P, AP -1]

Defiance Protector [Taser, DV 6S(e), -half, SA, RC —, 3 (m)]

**JOSEPH ELLIS**

*Male Dwarf*

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	M	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
4	4	4	3	6	6	6	6	13 (7/6)	4	6	10	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 11/11

**Armor:** 10/7

**Skills:** Arcana 4, Assensing 4, Astral Combat 4, Blades 4, Conjuring skill group 6, Counterspelling 5 (7), Dodge 4, Influence skill group 6 (9), Intimidation (Mental) 4 (+2), Perception 4 (8), Pilot Ground Craft (Wheeled) 1 (+2), Pistols (Semi-Automatics) 2 (+2), Ritual Spellcasting (Manipulation) 5 (7) (+2), Spellcasting (Manipulation) 4 (6) (+2), Stealth skill group 3

**Qualities:** Focus Addiction (Mild), Geasa (Gesture, Incantation, Ritual), Mentor Spirit (Adversary), Mystic Adept.

**Initiate Grade:** 7

**Metamagics:** Centering, extended masking, masking, quickening, reflecting, shielding, sympathetic linking

**Adept Powers:** Astral Perception, Commanding Voice, Kinesics (2), Improved Ability (Con) (3), Mystic Armor (1), Natural Immunity (4), Spell Resistance (2), Voice Control.

**Spells:** Agony, Alter Memory, Control Actions, Death Touch, Deflection, Detect Enemies, Heal, Ignite, Improved Invisibility, Increase Reflexes, Increase Charisma, Influence, Mind Probe, Mob Mood, Physical Mask, Stunball.

**Bound Spirits:** Spirit of Man (Force 7, 6 Services).

**Gear:** Briefcase with false bottom, commlink [Device Rating 8 w/ skinlink and subdermal microphone] contact lenses [Rating 3, w/ vision enhancement 3, image link, smartlink], Mortimer of London greatcoat [w/ delta-amyloid coating and nonconductivity (Rating 6)], onyx cufflinks (2 Force 5 sustaining foci), 10 doses of psyche, 10 doses of shade, UCAS Flag tie pin (Force 5 shielding focus)

**Weapons:**

Sword-cane [Blade, Reach 1, DV 4P, AP —, w/ personalized grip]

Walther Secura Kompakt [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -5, SA, RC 1, 9 (c), w/ personalized grip, int. smartgun, and APDS ammo]

Walther Palm Pistol [Holdout, DV 4S, AP +2, SS/BF, RC 0, 2 (b), w/ int. smartgun, capsule ammo w/ shade (see p. 178, Arsenal)]

**Note(s):** Ellis relies on the Awakened drug Shade to overcome his normal inability, as a Mystic Adept, to astrally project; considering the extreme side effects, he uses it only very sparingly. He has also weaponized it with capsule rounds in his holdout. His sword-cane has Concealment modifiers of +0 to for the whole cane, and -6 to detect its true nature. Ellis rarely if ever uses magic in public, as he is not registered as Awakened and has purposefully concealed that fact. In the unlikely event he were forced into a desperate situation where he would use magic in public, he would still use only his subtlest spells; most of his spellcasting, however, is done through a ritual circle.



## KNIGHTS OF THE DRAGON MEMBER

(Professional Rating 4)

Elf

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
3	6(9)	5(9)	3(6)	6	5	4(6)	3	3.025	10(14)	1(3)

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10/10

**Armor (B/I):** 8/6

**Skills:** Athletics skill group 3 (5), Automatics (Machine Pistols) 3 (+2), Close Combat skill group 4, Con 3, Electronics skill group 2, Disguise 3, Infiltration (Urban) 4 (+2), Perception 2, Pistols (Semi-Automatics) 4 (+2), Shadowing 3, Throwing Weapons 2  
**Knowledge Skills:** Conspiracy Theories 3, Dragon Rumors 2, Magic Theory 3

**Languages:** English N, French 3, German 3 Sperthiel 4

**Qualities:** Double Jointed, Toughness

**Augmentations:** (all delaware) Bone density augmentation 3, cerebral booster 2, cyberears [Rating 2, w/ audio enhancement 2, balance augments, spatial recognizer], cybereyes [Rating 3, w/ flare compensation, low-light vision, smartlink, thermographic vision, and vision magnification], enhanced articulation, metabolic arrester, muscle augmentation 3, muscle toner 3, reaction enhancers 2, synthcardium 2, wired reflexes 2

**Gear:** Chameleon suit, commlink (Device Rating 3), gecko tape gloves, grapple gun w/ climbing gear, jammer (area, Rating 4), maglock passkey (Rating 5), white noise generator (Rating 5)

**Weapons:**

- Monofilament sword [Blade, Reach 1, DV 5P (6P), AP -1]
- Morrissey Alta [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, RC —, 12 (c), w/ laser sight]
- 4 thermal smoke grenades, DV —, AP —, Blast 10m Radius]

## LONE STAR POLICE SQUAD MEMBER

(Professional Rating 3)

Human

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
4	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	6	8	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10

**Armor (B/I):** 8/6

**Skills:** Clubs 3, Law Enforcement (Professional Knowledge) 3, Perception 2, Pistols 3, Unarmed Combat 3

**Gear:** Armor jacket, commlink (Device Rating 3), 2 doses of jazz

**Weapons:**

- Colt America L36 [Light Pistol, DV 4P, AP —, SA, RC —, 11 (c)]
- Defiance EX Shocker [Taser, DV 8S(e), AP -half, SS, RC —, 4 (m)]
- Stun baton [Club, Reach 1, DV 6S(e), AP -half]

## MILITARY POLICE

(Professional Rating 3)

Human

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
3	3	4	3	3	3(4)	2	4	4.6	7(8)	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

**Armor (B/I):** 8/6

**Skills:** Athletics skill group 3, Automatics 3, Close Combat skill group 3, Dodge 3, Intimidation 2, Longarms 3, Perception 2, Pistols 3, Survival 2

**Augmentations:** Dermal plating 2, qualia transgenic

**Gear:** Armor vest, commlink (Device Rating 3), plasteel restraints

**Weapons:**

- Fichetti Security 600 [Light Pistol, DV 4P, AP —, SA, RC (1), 30 (c), w/ laser sight]
- Heckler & Koch G12A3z [Assault Rifle, DV 6P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 32 (c), w/ gas-vent 2, laser sight]
- Stun baton [Club, Reach 1, DV 6S(e), AP -half]

## MILITARY POLICE LIEUTENANT

(Professional Rating 4)

Human

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
3	3	4(5)	3	4	3(4)	2	4	2.6	7(9)	1(2)

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

**Armor (B/I):** 8/6

**Skills:** Athletics skill group 3, Automatics (Assault Rifles) 4 (+2), Close Combat skill group 3, Dodge 3, Intimidation 4, Leadership 3, Longarms 3, Perception 3, Pistols 3, Survival 1

**Qualities:** Toughness

**Augmentations:** Dermal plating 2, qualia transgenic, wired reflexes 1

**Gear:** Armor vest, commlink (Device Rating 3), plasteel restraints

**Weapons:**

- Fichetti Security 600 [Light Pistol, DV 4P, AP —, SA, RC (1), 30 (c), w/ laser sight]
- Heckler & Koch G12A3z [Assault Rifle, DV 6P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 32 (c), w/ gas-vent 2, laser sight]
- Stun baton [Club, Reach 1, DV 6S(e), AP -half]

## MR. JOHNSON (BASIC)

(Professional Rating 3)

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
2	3	3	2	5	5	4	4	6	8	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10

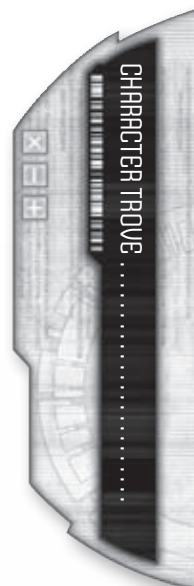
**Armor (B/I):** 5/3

**Skills:** Computer 4, Con 4, Data Search 3, Etiquette (Corporate) 4 (+2), Intimidation 2, Negotiation 5, Perception 3, Pistols (Tasers) 3 (+2)

**Knowledge Skills:** Corporate Finances 3, Corporate Rumors 6, Psychology 5, SOTA Technology 3

**Languages:** English N, German 4, Japanese 3, Mandarin 3

**Gear:** Actioneer business clothes, commlink (Device Rating 3)





**Weapons:**

Yamaha Pulsar [Taser, DV 6S(e), AP -half, SA, RC —, 4 (m)]

**MR. JOHNSON (HIGH-RANKING)**  
(Professional Rating 5)

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
4	4	4	3	6 (8)	5	5 (7)	5	5.075	9	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 11**Armor (B/I):** 9/2**Skills:** Blades 3, Computer (Analyze) 4 (+2), Con (Fast Talk) 5 (+2), Data Search (Street Rumors) 4 (+2), Etiquette (Corporate) 4 (+2), Hacking 3, (Intimidation 4, Negotiation (Bargaining) 6 (+2), Perception 4, Pistols (Semi-Automatics) 4 (+2), Tracking 3  
**Knowledge Skills:** Corporate Finances 3, Corporate Rumors 6, Local Shadowrunners 4, Psychology 5, SOTA Technology 3**Languages:** English N, German 4, Japanese 4, Mandarin 3, Spanish 3, Spherethiel 4**Augmentations:** Cerebral booster 2, hand blade, tailored pheromones 2**Gear:** Commlink (Device Rating 4), FFBA (shirt), jammer (area, Rating 6), Zoé Executive Suite Line (long jacket, shirt, trousers)**Weapons:**

Hand Blade [Blade, Reach —, DV 3P, AP —]

HK Urban Fighter [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, RC —, 10 (c), w/ ceramic silencer]

**MR. JOHNSON (SUBTLE)**  
(Professional Rating 4)

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
2	4	3	2	5 (6)	5	4	4	5.8	8	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10**Armor (B/I):** 5/3**Skills:** Computer 4, Con 5, Data Search 3, Etiquette (Corporate) 5 (+2), Infiltration 3, Intimidation 2, Negotiation 5, Perception 3, Pistols (Tasers) 3 (+2), Shadowing 3, Tracking 3**Knowledge Skills:** Corporate Finances 3, Corporate Rumors 6, Psychology (Criminal) 5 (+2), SOTA Technology 3**Languages:** English N, German 4, Japanese 3, Mandarin 3**Augmentations:** Tailored pheromones 1**Gear:** Actioneer business clothes, commlink (Device Rating 3)**Weapons:**

Yamaha Pulsar [Taser, DV 6S(e), AP -half, SA, RC —, 4 (m)]

**ORGANIZED CRIMINAL**  
(Professional Rating 2)*Human*

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
3	5	4	3	3	4	3	4	5.7	8	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10**Armor (B/I):** 6/4**Skills:** Blades (Knife) 3 (+2), Dodge 3, Firearms skill group 4,

Intimidation 3, Perception 2, Unarmed Combat 3

**Quality:** Toughness**Augmentations:** Cybereyes [Rating 2, w/ low-light vision, smartlink, thermographic vision]**Gear:** Commlink (Device Rating 3), lined coat**Weapons:**

Knife [Blade, Reach —, DV 3P, AP —]

Ceska Black Scorpion [Machine Pistol, DV 4P, SA/BF, RC (1), 35 (c)]

**RED SAMURAI DETACHMENT**  
(Professional Rating 5)*Human*

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
5	5 (7)	5 (7)	4 (6)	3	3	3	4	2.05	8 (10)	1 (3)

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 11**Armor (B/I):** 15/15**Skills:** Athletics skill group 3 (6), Close Combat skill group 4, Etiquette (Corporate) 3 (+2), Firearms skill group 5, Infiltration 3, Perception 3**Augmentations:** Cybereyes [Rating 3, w/ flare compensation, low-light vision, smartlink], muscle augmentation 2, muscle toner 2, synthcardium 3, wired reflexes 2**Gear:** Katana, commlink (Device Rating 4), Red Samurai Armor and Kabuto Helmet**Weapons:**

FN HAR Assault Rifle [Assault Rifle, DV 6P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 35 (c)]

Katana [Blade, Reach 1, DV 5P (6P), AP -1]

SCK Model 100 [SMG, DV 5P, AP —, SA/BF, RC (1), 30 (c), w/ internal smartlink and folding stock]

**SECURITY TECHNOMANCER**  
(Professional Rating 4)

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	R	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
3	4	5	2	4	5	5	4	6	3	6	10	1

**Matrix Initiative/IP:** 13/5**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun/Matrix):** 10/10/11**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 8/6**Skills:** Cracking skill group 4, Dodge 3, Electronics skill group 5, Intimidation 2, Perception 4, Pistols (Semi-Automatics) 3 (+2), Tasking skill group 5**Qualities:** More than Metahuman, Technomancer**Submersion Grade:** 3**Echoes:** Advanced Overclocking, Immersion, Overclocking**Gear:** Armor jacket**Living Persona:** Firewall 4, Response 5, Signal 3, System 5**Programs/Complex Forms:** Analyze 5, Armor 6, Attack 4, Biofeedback Filter 4, Blackout 4, Browse 3, Command 4, Decrypt 4, ECCM 3, Exploit 5, Scan 5, Track 5**Weapons:**

Colt Manhunter [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, RC —, 16(c), w/ smartgun]



## SKILLED TECHNOMANCER (Professional Rating 4)

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	R	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
3	3	4	2	3	5	5	4	5	2	6	9	1

**Matrix Initiative/IP:** 12/4

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun/Matrix):** 10/10/11

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 6/4

**Skills:** Cracking skill group 4, Dodge 2, Electronics skill group 4, Negotiation 2, Perception 3, Pistols (Semi-Automatics) 1 (+2), Tasking skill group 5

**Qualities:** Combat Paralysis, Natural Hardening, Technomancer, Weak Immune System

**Submersion Grade:** 2

**Echoes:** E-sensing, Overclocking

**Living Persona:** Firewall 5, Response 5, Signal 3, System 5

**Programs/Complex Forms:** Analyze 3, Armor 4, Attack 4, Biofeedback Filter 3, Browse 5, Decrypt 3, Edit 3, Exploit 5, Scan 4, Stealth 5, Track 4

**Gear:** BMW 5050 Monobike, concealable holster, lined coat

**Weapons:**

HK Mk31 [heavy pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, 15(c), w/ laser sight, sound suppressor]

## SNEAK (Professional Rating 4)

*Human*

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
3	5	5(7)	3	5	5	4	3	4.35	10(12)	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 10/10

**Armor (B/I):** 8/6

**Skills:** Athletics skill group 3, Automatics (Machine Pistols) 3 (+2), Close Combat skill group 3, Con 3, Electronics skill group 2, Disguise 4, Etiquette 3, Infiltration (Urban) 4 (+2), Perception 2, Shadowing 3, Throwing Weapons 2, Tracking 3

**Knowledge Skills:** Corporate Politics 3, Finances 2, Fine Cuisine 3, Modern Literature 2, Safe Houses 2, Security Systems 3

**Languages:** English N, French 3, German 3 Spanish 4, Sperthiel 2

**Qualities:** Blandness, Double Jointed, Murky Link

**Augmentations:** Cyberears [Rating 2, w/ audio enhancement 2, balance augments, spatial recognizer], cybereyes [Rating 3, w/ flare compensation, low-light vision, smartlink, thermographic vision, and vision magnification], reaction enhancers 2, spur, vocal range enhancer

**Gear:** Armor jacket, autopicker (Rating 4), chameleon suit, commlink (Device Rating 3), gas mask, gecko tape gloves, grapple gun w/ climbing gear, jammer (area, Rating 5), keycard copier (Rating 4), maglock passkey (Rating 5), medkit (Rating 6), 2 small containers of nanopaste disguise, 200 m of stealth rope, white noise generator (Rating 5), wire clippers

**Weapons:**

Ares Crusader [Machine Pistol, DV 4P, AP -4, SA/BF, RC 2, 40 (c), w/ gas-vent 2, 4 clips of APDS ammo, sound suppressor]

Spur [Reach —, DV 5P, AP —]

4 thermal smoke grenades, DV —, AP —, Blast 10m Radius]

Vibro Knife [Blade, Reach —, DV 4P, AP -2]

## SYLVESTRINE (Professional Rating 4)

*Human*

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	M	Ess	Init	IP
3	3	3	2	6	5	3	5	6	6	8	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

**Armor (B/I):** 6/4

**Skills:** Arcana 5, Artisan 3, Assensing 6, Astral Combat 4, Conjuring skill group 4, Dodge 3, Etiquette (Catholic Church) 5 (+2), First Aid 4, Instruction 4, Leadership 5, Negotiation 5, Perception 5, Pistols 3, Sorcery skill group 5

**Qualities:** Magician (Christian Theurgist)

**Initiate Grade:** 1

**Metamagics:** Centering (Prayer)

**Spells:** Alleviate Addiction, Analyze Magic, Analyze Trust, Antidote, Chaotic World, Cure Disease, Detect Enemies, Detect Life, Diagnose, Heal, Mana Barrier, Nutrition, Physical Barrier, Stunball

**Bound Spirits:** 2 Guidance spirits (Force 4, 4 services)

**Gear:** Armored vest, commlink [Device Rating 3], Gilded Cross of Lorraine [Power Focus, Force 1], magical lodge materials [Force 6], medkit [Rating 6], rosary [Spellcasting focus, Health, Rating 3]

**Weapons:**

Colt Manhunter [Heavy Pistol, DV 6s(e), AP -half, SA, w/ Stick-n-Shock rounds and laser sight]

## TEMPLAR COMBAT MAGE (Professional Rating 4)

*Troll*

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	M	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
7	4	3	7	2	3	4	5	5	2	6	6	1(4)

**Condition Monitor Boxes (Physical/Stun):** 12/11

**Armor:** 10/10

**Skills:** Assensing 2, Astral Combat 3, Blades (Swords) 6 (+2), Conjuring skill group 5, Etiquette 2, Latin 3, Heavy Weapons 4, Perception 2, Sorcery skill group 5

**Knowledge Skills:** Magic Background 3, Magical Phenomenon 3, Mercenary Hangouts 2, Secret Societies 4, Urban Brawl Odds 2

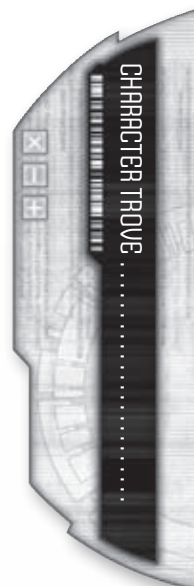
**Language:** English N, German 4

**Qualities:** Allergy (Seawater, Mild), Magician, Sensitive System  
**Spells:** Armor, Increase Reflexes, Levitate, Manaball, Manabolt, Physical Barrier

**Gear:** Armor jacket, brass cufflinks (Force 2 power focus), commlink (Device Rating 4 w/ skinlink and subvocal microphone), 2 cruciform bracers (Force 3 sustaining foci), goggles [Rating 3, w/ flare compensation, image link, smartlink], SecureTech PPP System (forearm guards, leg and arm casings, shin guards, and vitals protector), 2 stim patches (Rating 5)

**Weapons:**

Claymore [Reach 2 (3), DV 8P, AP -1, w/ personalized grip]





Ruhrmetall SF20 [HMG, DV 7P, AP -3, FA, RC 4 (5), 40(c), w/ int. gas-vent 3, hip pad, personalized grip, and ext. smartgun]

## TÍR MAGE (Professional Rating 6)

*Elf*

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	M	Ess	Init	IP
3	4(5)	4(6)	2	6	4	3	5	7	5.04	8(10)	1(3)

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

**Armor (B/I):** 6/4 (Chameleon Suit)

**Skills:** Assensing 5, Astral Combat 4, Athletics skill group 3, Conjuring skill group 5, Dodge 2, Etiquette (Tír Tairngire) 4 (+2), Firearms skill group 3, Influence skill group 4, Perception 5, Sorcery skill group 5, Stealth skill group 4, Unarmed Combat 3

**Qualities:** Magician (The Path of the Wheel)

**Initiate Grade:** 2

**Metamagics:** Shielding, Reflecting

**Spells:** Acid Stream, Analyze Truth, Armor, Chaotic World, Detect Enemies (Extended), Heal, Improved Invisibility, Manaball, Manabolt, Physical Barrier, Physical Mask, Stunball, Stunbolt, Trid Phantasm

**Bound Spirits:** Guidance spirit (Force 5, 4 services), spirit of fire (Force 6, 3 services)

**Augmentations:** (all alphaware) muscle toner (Rating 1), synaptic booster (Rating 2)

**Gear:** Biomonitor, chameleon suit, commlink [Device Rating 5], contacts [Rating 3, w/ flare compensation, smartlink, thermographic vision], counterspelling focus [Rating 4], micro-transceiver, sustaining focus [Rating 5]

**Weapons:**

HK Urban Fighter [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, 10 (c), with Smartlink]

HK Urban Combat [SMG, DV 5P, SA/BF/FA, 36(c), with Smartlink]

4 thermal smoke grenades [Grenade, obscures vision, Blast 10m Radius]

## VETERAN COMBAT ADEPT (Professional Rating 4)

*Human*

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	M	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
5	5	6(8)	5	3	4	4	4	6	4	6	10(12)	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 11/10

**Armor (B/I):** 6/4

**Skills:** Athletics skill group 2, Blades 4, Dodge (Melee) 4 (+2), Dodge (Ranged) 4 (+2), Etiquette (Street) 3 (+2), Firearms skill group 6, Perception (Visual) 4 (+2), Pilot Ground Craft (Car) 2 (+2), Unarmed Combat (Subdual Combat) 4 (+2)

**Knowledge Skills:** Close Combat Tactics 3, Firearms Design 4, Firearms History 2, Horizon Action Trids 3, Local Security Procedures 4, Local Street Gangs 3

**Languages:** English N, Mandarin 3, Spanish 3

**Qualities:** Adept, Ambidextrous

**Adept Powers:** Attribute Boost (Agility) 1 (.25), Combat Sense 2 (1), Critical Strike 1 (.25), Improved Ability (Blades) 1 (.5), Improved Ability (Pistols) 2 (.1), Improved Reflexes 2 (2.5), Killing Hands (.5)

**Gear:** AR gloves, commlink (Device Rating 3, programs: Analyze 3, Browse 4, Command 2, Edit 2), contact lenses [Rating 2, w/ image link and smartlink], fake SIN (Rating 4), lined coat medkit (Rating 6)

**Weapons:**

2 x Colt Manhunters [Heavy Pistols, DV 6P, AP -2, SA, RC —, 16 (c), w/ internal smartlink, quickdraw holders, 12 clips EX-explosive ammo]

Sword [Blade, Reach 1, DV 6P, AP —]

Unarmed [Reach —, DV 4P, AP —]

Vibro Knife [Blade, Reach —, DV 5P, AP -2]

**Notes:** Combat Sense 2 provides a +2 dice pool modifier for Surprise Tests. Also provides a +2 for dodging Melee and Ranged Attacks.

## VETERAN COMBAT MAGE (Professional Rating 4)

*Human*

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	M	Ess	Init	IP
3	4	4	3	5	3	2	5	6	6	7	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 11

**Armor (B/I):** 8/6

**Skills:** Astral Combat 4, Automatics 4, Blades 3, Conjuring skill group 3, Counterspelling 5, Etiquette (Street) 2 (+2), Perception 2, Pistols 3, Spellcasting 5

**Qualities:** Magician (Black Magic), Mentor Spirit (Lion, +2 Combat spells, +2 Banishing tests, Willpower + Charisma (3) Test to back down from a fight)

**Spells:** Armor, Fireball, Increase Initiative, Mana Barrier, Manaball, Manabolt, Physical Barrier, Stunbolt

**Bound Spirits:** Spirit of earth (Force 4, 3 services), 2 spirits of fire (Force 5, 2 services), spirit of man (Force 4, 4 services)

**Gear:** Armored jacket, commlink [Device Rating 3], mage sight Goggles, magic lodge materials [Force 6], spellcasting focus [Combat, Force 2]

**Weapons:**

Katana [Reach 1, DV 5P, AP -1]

Morrissey Alta [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, 12(c), w/ laser sight]

HK MP-5 TX [SMG, DV 5P, SA/BF/FA, RC 2 (3), 20(c), w/ gas-vent 2, laser sight]



## VETERAN FACE (Professional Rating 4)

*Dwarf*

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
3	3	3	3	6	5	4	5	4	5.7	8	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10/11

**Armor (B/I):** 6/4

**Skills:** Artisan (Dance) 1 (+2), Con 5, Dodge 2, Electronics skill group 3, Etiquette 5, Pilot Ground Craft (Car) 2 (+2), Intimidation 3, Negotiations 5, Perception 4, Pistols 3

**Knowledge Skills:** Combat Bike Schedule 3, Dance Clubs 2, Fine Cuisine 3, Fine Restaurants 3, Gambling Card Games 2, Urban Brawl Schedule 3

**Languages:** English N, Arabic 3, Cantonese 3, German 3, Japanese 3, Spanish 3

**Qualities:** Exceptional Attribute (charisma), First Impression, Combat Paralysis, Gremlins (Rating 2)

**Augmentations:** Datajack, implanted commlink (Device Rating 4)

**Gear:** Basic DocWagon contract (1 year), 4 certified credstics (blank), 2 fake SINS (Rating 4), high lifestyle (4 Months), jammer [Area, Rating 4], lined coat, Mercury Comet, monocle [Rating 2, w/ image link, smartlink]

**Weapons:**

Fichetti Security 600 [Light Pistol, DV 4P, AP —, SA, RC (1), 30(c)]

## VETERAN STREET SAMURAI (Professional Rating 4)

*Ork*

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
7	4(7)	4(9)	6(8)	3	3	2	3	3	1.5	7(10)	1(4)

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 12/10

**Armor (B/I):** 6/4

**Skills:** Athletics skill group 4, Automatics 5, Blades 5, Heavy Weapons 4, Infiltration 4, Negotiation 2, Perception (Visual) 3 (+2), Pilot Ground Craft (Auto) 2 (+2), Pistols (Semi-Automatics) 5 (+2), Unarmed Combat 5

**Knowledge Skills:** Firearm Design 3, Safe Houses 4, Weapon Manufacturers 3, Zen Meditation 3

**Languages:** English N, Japanese 2, Spanish 3

**Qualities:** Guts, High Pain Tolerance, Incompetent (Hacking)

**Augmentations:** Cyberarm [left obvious customized full, w/ Armor 2, Enhanced Agility 3, Enhanced Strength 2, small smuggling compartment], cyberarm [right obvious customized full, w/ Armor 2, Enhanced Agility 3, Enhanced Strength 2, spur, shock hand], wired reflexes (deltaware) 3

**Gear:** Basic DocWagon contract (1 year), 4 certified credstics (blank), 2 fake SINS (Rating 4), high lifestyle (4 Months), jammer [Area, Rating 4], lined coat, Mercury Comet, monocle [Rating 2, w/ image link, smartlink]

**Weapons:**

Fichetti Security 600 [Light Pistol, DV 4P, AP —, SA, RC (1), 30(c)]

## VETERAN STREET SHAMAN (Professional Rating 4)

*Troll*

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	M	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
5	3	3	5	5	4	4	4	5	4	6	7	1

**Astral Init/IP:** 8/3

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 11/10

**Armor (B/I):** 6/4

**Skills:** Assensing 3, Banishing 4, Binding 4, Dodge 2, Infiltration 3, Palming 2, Perception 3, Sorcery skill group 4, Summoning 5, Survival (Urban) 1 (+2)

**Knowledge Skills:** Action Trids 2, Critter Habitats 2, Ecology 3, Local Area Knowledge 4, Magical Theory 4, Public Transportation Routes 3, Safe Houses 3, Spirits 5

**Languages:** English N, Spanish 3

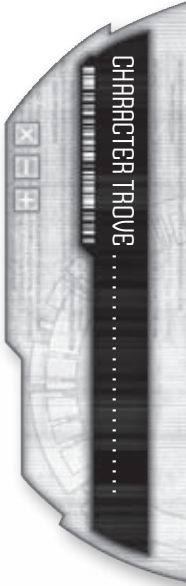
**Qualities:** Magician, Mentor Spirit (Rat), Focused Concentration (10 BP), Gremlins

**Spells:** Calm Pack, Confusion, Eyes of the Pack, Heal, Improved Invisibility, Manabolt, Mask, Mob Mood, Spirit Barrier, Stunball

**Gear:** Armor jacket, commlink (Device Rating 3; programs Analyze 2, Browse 1, Command 1, Edit 1), gas mask, goggles [Rating 2, w/ image link, vision enhancement 1], magical lodge materials (Force 5), medkit (Rating 4)

**Weapons:**

Cougar Fineblade (long blade) [Blade, Reach —, DV 5P, AP -1]





## PLAYER HANDOUTS

A Visitor's Guide To Lagos (annotated ShadowSea Summary)

Today is *Sunday, February 7th*

Today's Weather in Lagos: 34 deg C (daytime high) with heavy sustained winds

Lagos is a feral city on the coast of West Africa. The city itself is home to 10–20 million people, most of whom live in conditions that make the Redmond Barrens look luxurious. Immensely powerful and rich warlords rule the city from the secure enclave of Lagos Island. Corporate investment in the city is high, since it is the primary outlet for the oil pumped in the Niger delta and serves as a no-holds-barred playground for everything from cheap consumer goods to black-market bioweapons. Almost any goods with value can be bought or sold in Lagos, be it weapons, metahumans, or technology. With no police force (or city-wide infrastructure), the rich and powerful write their own rules—and the corporations enjoy having no rules at all.

The city is built around large, shallow lagoons of brackish, polluted water. About a quarter of the sprawl area is actually water, and much of the rest of the city is built on a swamp. During the rainy season, streets become waterways and entire neighborhoods are flooded. Homes built over the swamps and lagoons balance precariously on stilts, while wooden or plastic slats connect homes. In the drier areas of the city, homes are often built of cinderblocks, and multi-story apartment complexes are common in the dense slums. Everywhere, people collect the acidic rainwater on rooftops and in barrels, and many families have rooftop “gardens” of edible fungi and hardy plants. The water from the lagoon, rivers, and streams is too polluted with toxic chemicals and metahuman waste to be drinkable (in fact, just falling into the water can cause a metahuman to become seriously ill). Less than one percent of the population has access to clean water (or plumbing), and so sterilized bags of water are common at markets and roadside vendors. Shamans with the sterilize spell are such valuable commodities that gangs and neighborhoods have been known to go to war to acquire one.

Food is another danger; fish from the lagoons can be toxic, and vegetables and fruit are often washed in polluted water. Food-borne illness is rampant, especially amongst visitors. There are few soy or soy-based products, however, and the spicy cooking features fresh fish, Cassava, rice, and yams. Devil rats (or their less dangerous cousins) are also a staple.

## THE HAWALA NETWORK

A hawala network is an informal system of monetary transfers that relies upon a strict honor system and is common throughout most of Africa and parts of Asia. A person can make a deposit (certified electronic funds, hard currency, precious metals or gems, or occasionally other highly valuable commodities) with a hawala in their area. For a percentage, generally 10–20 percent, the hawala gives the client a voucher. Then, generally, the hawala contacts another hawala in another city, transferring the funds to that hawala. Anyone with the correct voucher (a physical token, occasionally a written, electronic, even a verbal phrase or key) can then access the funds, which will be provided in the requested form (generally certified cred or hard currency). The system depends completely on the honor and honesty of the hawalas and the trust that their clients place upon them. As such, the men are often held in high esteem within their societies and often act as trustworthy and reputable fixers.

Hawala tokens in Lagos are often small items, such as tiny shells, fragments of bone, or small rocks with intricate carvings indicating the originating Hawala and value. Forging a Hawala token is a serious cultural taboo, and most Lagosians believe doing so will call down a curse on the thief. Eerie stories of carved leopards springing to life to slaughter a thief, or a plague killing his entire family, or spirits driving him mad are whispered throughout the sprawl.

Hawala tokens always have two sides, with symbols on both. The top shows the value, the bottom the hawala's personal symbol. In Lagos, the network of Lagosian hawalas has agreed upon the common symbols and values.

Image	Value
Monkey	5 Naira
Fish	10 Naira
Hippo	50 Naira
Parrot	100 Naira
Lion	1,000 Naira

In December and February, the strong Harmattan wind blows from the Sahara, bringing a warm, dry period and coating everything in the city with a fine, red dust. There is little to no rain during this time, and drinkable water becomes scarce.

Magic runs through the city, with tribal *dibias* and *olorishas* (shamans) holding their societies together or profiting by their powers. Much of the city has a background count, from centuries of metahuman suffering, misery, and overwhelming pollution. Some areas are domains that favor toxic magic, like the dense, polluted slums of Shomolu, while others favor nature magic, such as the wild, untamed grasslands of Ifako-Ijaye. Dangerous Awakened creatures are drawn to the tainted astral space. Local *dibias* learn to compensate for the difficulty in drawing mana, but visitors can be caught unaware.

Wireless coverage in the city is provided primarily through a Mesh Network. There are a few areas with reliable wireless coverage (such as Festac Town or Lagos Island). However, since the majority of the population has commlinks (although many are scavenged from corporate recycling programs), a viable mesh network exists. The network is subject to the flows of metahuman traffic, however, and at anytime, coverage could go from strong to non-existent within a few minutes.

While many people have commlinks, almost no one has a bank account (or ID). Instead, most of the daily financial transactions are done through barter or physical currency. The *naira* is the common currency for Lagos, and 20 naira are worth approximately 1 nuyen. Rampant forgery makes the paper naira almost worthless, while coins (in amounts up to 500 naira) are slightly better as long as a person verifies the coin is made from real metal. Better yet are **hawala** tokens, which are accepted everywhere in the sprawl and are often given a higher value in daily transactions. Hawala tokens generally come in amounts up to 1,000 naira. Most sprawl residents will also accept bartered items in exchange for goods or services.

There are estimates that there are over one hundred different languages spoken in Lagos. Many residents speak a Lagos-specific type of city speak, which

### COMMON PRICES FOR GEAR AND SERVICES IN LAGOS

- Heard you were heading to Lagos. Because I care, I've attached a price sheet, courtesy of that dog Duarte. He says to tell you that these prices are what a native might get, or someone really hot at negotiating.

- Kat o'Nine Tales

AK-97 (only "slightly" used): 1,000 Naira

Ares Predator IV: 3,500 Naira

Regular Ammo (10): 200 Naira

Hotel (Porto Novo): 1,000 Naira

Hotel (Lagos Island): 1,000+ Nuyen

(Naira not accepted)

Cab Ride (1 hr): 100 Naira

Okada Ride (1 hr): 20 Naira

Breakfast/Lunch (Roadside Vendor): 5-10 Naira

Dinner (Buka): 20 Naira

Dinner (Nice Restaurant): 200+ Naira

Typical Area Boy Bribe (foreigner rates): 100 Naira

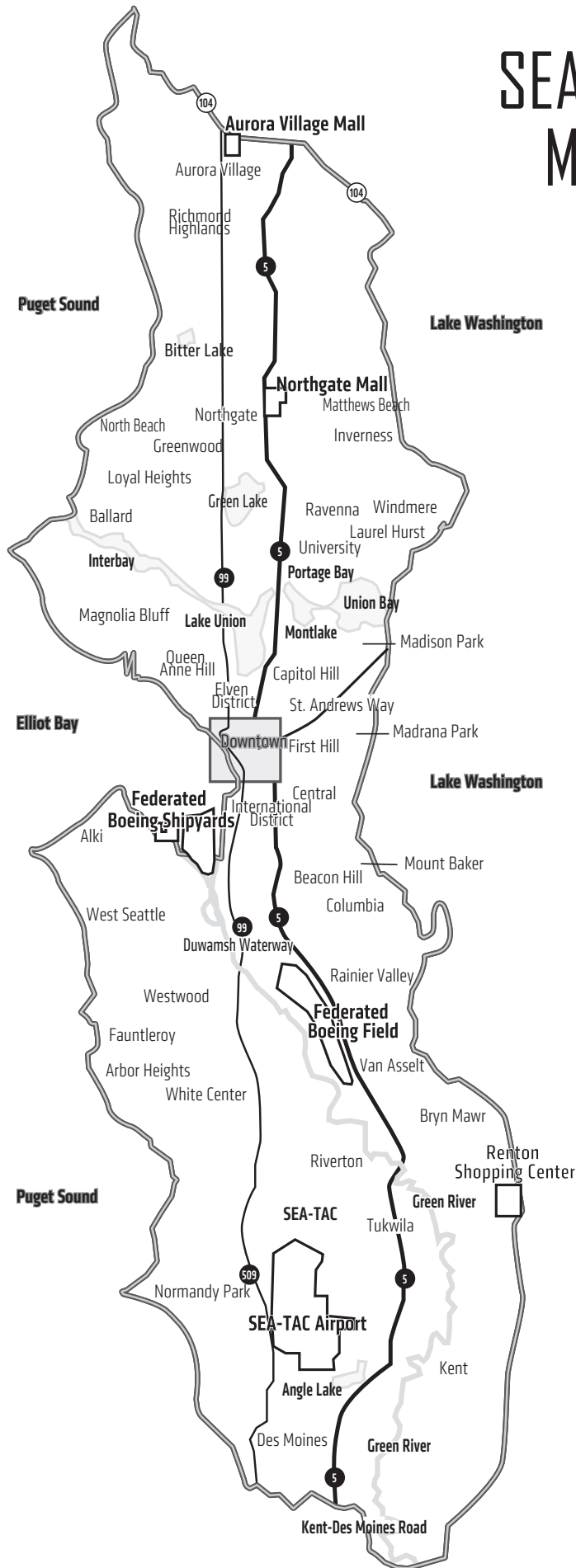
combines several tribal languages with English and French. Other major languages are Yoruba and Igbo. While Horizon's Life-line linguasoft service has Yoruba linguasofts available, there are no linguasofts on the market for the unique Lagosian city speak, Igbo, or any of the other tribal languages. However, between Yoruba, English, and French, most *oyibos* (foreigners) can make themselves understood, as long as they remember not to speak Yoruba to an Igbo unless they're spoiling for a fight.



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# SEATTLE MAP







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