

# SHADOWRUN<sup>®</sup>

# DARKEST HOUR<sup>™</sup>

## DAWN OF THE ARTIFACTS



milk  
juice mix  
bread  
detergent  
shampoo

**DON'T FORGET AMMO**  
IT'S TIME!

**CATALYST**  
game labs

A SHADOWRUN ADVENTURE



# ON THE HUNT

Sixth World scholars have long hypothesized the cyclical nature of magic. For years corporations, collectors and other factions have spent fortunes hunting down surviving relics of this mythical age. The shadows whisper of lost lore and a secret history to the world. A privileged few have come into possession of ancient items of great power and mysterious purpose, artifacts from before recorded history. Now it's your turn...

Eighteen months ago, the Phaistos Disk was stolen from the Herakleion Museum in Athens. Now, Mr. Johnson needs you to find it and bring it back. The hunt will take the runners through the shadows of Europe, and lead to interactions with smugglers, art dealers, and archaeologists. If they survive Interpol, Aztechnology, and an eccentrically violent shadowrunner team, they may just learn who is behind the hunt and why.

*Darkest Hour* is the third chapter of the *Dawn of the Artifacts* storyline. This continuing storyline explores the secret history of *Shadowrun*, and offers clues to the true mastermind behind the hunt for the artifacts

Under License from



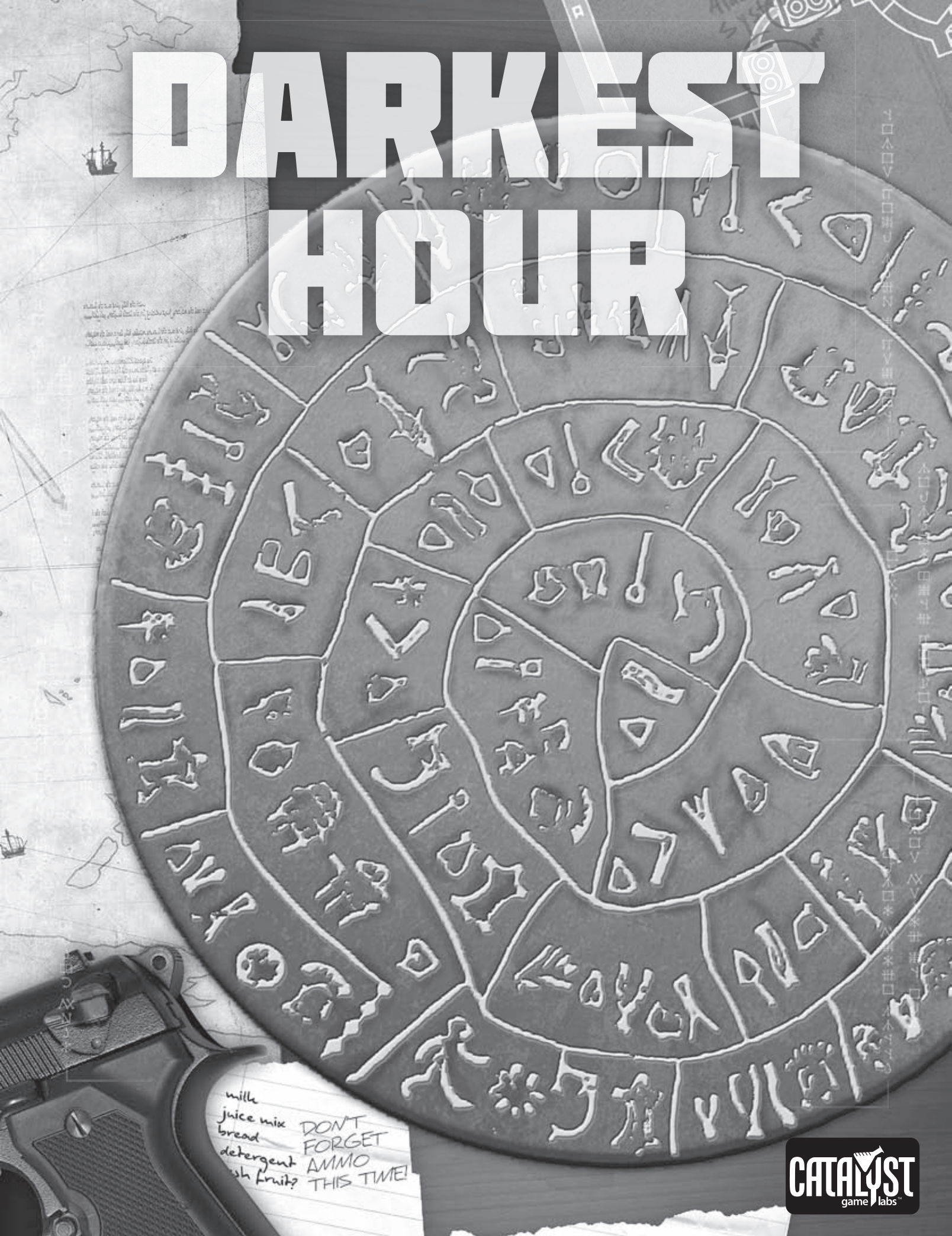
©2010 The Topps Company, Inc. All rights reserved.  
*DARKEST HOUR: Dawn of the Artifacts and Shadowrun*  
are registered trademarks and/or trademarks of The Topps  
Company, Inc. in the United States and/or other countries.  
Catalyst Game Labs and the Catalyst Game Labs logo are  
trademarks of InMediaRes Productions, LLC.

fact stolen from muse  
NINA





# DARKEST HOUR



milk  
juice mix  
bread  
detergent  
sh fruit?

DONT  
FORGET  
AMMO  
THIS TIME!



# ... TABLE OF CONTENTS ...

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>PREPARING THE ADVENTURE</b>	<b>4</b>
Adventure Structure	4
Main Sections	4
Adventure Scenes	4
Non-Player Characters	4
<b>ADVENTURE BACKGROUND</b>	<b>6</b>
The Phaistos Disc	6
<b>PLOT SYNOPSIS</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>ONCE MORE</b>	<b>8</b>
Scan This	8
Tell It To Them Straight	9
Behind The Scenes	9
<b>THE JOB</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>WELCOME TO HAMBURG</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>TO FIND A THIEF</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>GRABBING THE DISC</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>FINDING LOST TREASURE</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>CLOSING ACTION</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>PICKING UP THE PIECES</b>	<b>43</b>
Money	43
Karma	43
<b>LEGWORK</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>CAST OF SHADOWS</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>PLAYER HANDOUTS</b>	<b>48</b>

## **CREDITS** **DAWN OF THE ARTIFACTS: DARKEST HOUR**

**Author's Dedication:** Special thanks to the 54th Street Zoo and Becky Hall for your support throughout this.

**Writing:** Stephen McQuillan

**Editing:** Jason Hardy

**Development:** Jennifer Harding and Jason Hardy

**Art Direction:** Brent Evans

**Interior Layout:** Tiara Lynn Agresta

**Cover Design:** Matt Heerd

**Illustration:** Florian Stitz

**Maps:** Sean Macdonald

**Playtesters:** Ryan Cobb, Doug Vetillaro, Michael Polowy, Greg Danielson, Jordan Frame, Kase Kinney, Michael Wich, Michael Hoover, Siin Crawford, Rob Oliver, Kyra Gault, Christian Puschmann, Christoph Osterwald, Sina Schindler, Thomas Klemann, Timm Vowinkel, Bruce Ford, Brianna Peters, Eugen Fournes, Joanna Fournes, John Unchelenko, Lee Thoms, Stephen C. King, Steven A. Carroll, Joe Hatfield, Brian Joslin, Rod Ulberg, Rich "Bruno" Ingram, Kelli Gladney, Chris Hayes, Dan Dunchack, Thomas J. Howell

**Proofreaders:** Adam Bruno, Mark Dynna, Bruce Ford, Lauri Gardner, Mason Hart, Carl Schelin, Lars Wagner Hansen, Jeremy Weyand

Copyright © 2010 The Topps Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Shadowrun, Matrix and Dawn of the Artifact: Darkest Hour are registered trademarks and/or trademarks of The Topps Company, Inc., in the United States and/or other countries. No part of this work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, without the prior permission in writing of the Copyright Owner, nor be otherwise circulated in any form other than that in which it is published.

### **Find us online:**

[info@shadowrun4.com](mailto:info@shadowrun4.com)

(Shadowrun questions;  
please check the website FAQ first!)

<http://www.shadowrun4.com>

(official Shadowrun website)

<http://www.catalystgamelabs.com>

(Catalyst Game Labs website)

<http://www.catalystgamelabs.com/catalog>

(online Catalyst/Shadowrun store)





The door opened. There had been two sharp knocks, a brief pause, and then a sudden flood of light and noise and odor into Captain Herrera's office. There was a chopper heading west, thuds fading as it traveled toward the sun, and there was the smell that was everywhere. Herrera wasn't sure what the smell was, but she had heard men in her command refer to it as "blood and death," and that seemed apt enough.

The door closed, and some of the noise faded. The building was light, with thin walls, but it was made of high-strength polymers durable enough to stop small-arms fire and a fair amount of noise. It was also mobile—four men could pick it up by hand and move it as needed. Captain Herrera used it as both quarters and a command office.

The reason for the door's opening and closing, Lieutenant Ramirez, was now inside, standing at attention. He spoke without preamble.

"Captain, Lieutenant Ramirez reporting as requested. The perimeter has been secured. We have negotiated airspace control of the valley with the local forces and ensured that proper demarcation lines have been set."

The lieutenant then stood still and waited for a reply while Herrera stared at her virtual desktop and decided how long she should make him wait. She could work without worrying that Ramirez would see something he should not—over the last several months, she had taken to encrypting her AR feed so that the virtual desktop wasn't visible to her subordinates. She worked for several more minutes, moving AROs that only she could see.

Out of the corner of her eye, she saw Ramirez becoming increasingly twitchy, clearly wondering how long he should stay there. Finally, he snapped a sharp salute and turned to leave.

"Lieutenant, has the research team made any headway yet?" Captain Herrera's voice was low and rough ever since her larynx was damaged in the Amazonian conflict. It stopped the junior officer in his tracks.

"Not yet ma'am. Astral reconnaissance is slow because of the scarring and solid earth. GPR came back with some images of the temples. The construction appears similar to our teocallis but on a vastly more intricate scale. They've sent drones in, but signal degradation and collapsed tunnels have stifled progress."

Herrera nodded—it was the same news provided by the Watch Log. If the research team was hiding their findings, they were being thorough. If he knew about it, the lieutenant would likely have mentioned any scuttlebutt that might have posed a threat to their operation.

"Very well," Herrera said. "Inform the research team that Command is looking into the linguistic analysis of the markings. A team of actives was sent to identify and secure other sources of the language. There can be no mistakes on this project. Notify me immediately if the situation changes. Dismissed."

She watched the lieutenant leave before turning her attention back to her reports. Intel reported that the language had been seen before—the DIMR had a map with identical markings and a group of hermetics found similar glyphs in the Karlsruhe administrative zone. Due to the obvious Awakened roots of the language, pressure to decipher the meaning of its inscriptions was coming from the highest levels.

Levels that went well past Internal Security and Herrera's pay grade all the way to the heart of the Smoking Mirror and the founding influences. Age-old secrets were primed to be revealed.





## INTRODUCTION

*Darkest Hour: Dawn of the Artifacts 3* is the third in a series of adventures designed for *Shadowrun, Fourth Edition*. Like the first two adventures, it is not designed specifically for the novice player, but can easily be tweaked to suit a wide variety of player experience levels.

Players and gamemasters who played through previous adventures in the *Dawn of the Artifacts* line will have met several of the main characters involved in the adventure series, and their actions in the previous adventures will undoubtedly color their interactions with characters in this adventure. Likewise, their actions in this adventure will have ramifications on future adventures in the series.

Players should note that only gamemasters should read beyond this point. The following text reveals secrets and plots that, if read prior to the adventure, could impact their enjoyment of the adventure (and the surprises in store for them).

## PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

*Darkest Hour* can be run with only the *Shadowrun, Fourth Edition* rulebook. Many of the characters presented in this adventure draw from the additional core supplements, however, such as *Arsenal*, *Augmentation*, *Unwired*, and *Runner's Companion*. All rules in this adventure are assumed to follow the core rules presented in *Shadowrun, Fourth Edition*. A gamemaster can, of course, use any of the optional rules as best fits his or her game.

This adventure takes the runners on a grand tour, visiting several prime cities in Europe and traveling into a hotbed of violence and near-war. The first stop, Hamburg, is a featured location in *Runner Havens*. The second city, Europort, is a featured location in *Corporate Enclaves*. The final stop is Sarajevo, detailed in *Feral Cities*. Gamemasters and players will find a wealth of information, contacts, and additional plot hooks in those core location books. For players who have not read *Runner Havens*, *Corporate Enclaves*, or *Feral Cities*, player handouts included in this adventure provide a broad overview of the three cities. Gamemasters may wish to provide these to their players prior to the adventure, or alternatively, provide them as player characters research the city or interact with the various factions.

## ADVENTURE STRUCTURE

The runners meet up with Jane “Frosty” Foster yet again in “Once More.” Her employer has identified an artifact that he wants to add to his collection. The only catch is that it has already been stolen, so they need to find the thief and steal it back. Unlike their previous expeditions to Lagos (*Dusk*) and Chicago (*Midnight*), this job should keep the runners entirely in civilized regions and away from feral cities—or so they’re told. The downside is that the thief has covered his tracks well and will need to be dug out of the shadows. They will make a tour across the shadows of Europe and travel from smuggler havens to enclaves of capitalism.

Multiple paths are provided for the players to progress through each scene. Due to the knack players have of coming up with innovative solutions to problems, certain scenes may be skipped as the runners cut through the web of lies and intrigue. The adventure path can be as direct or circuitous as the players choose. Each scene contains some gamemaster hints for keeping players on track, or, alternatively, for expanding on the tangents they may take.

## MAIN SECTIONS

This book is divided into several sections designed to assist you in bringing the adventure presented herein to your table:

- **Preparing to Play:** A plot synopsis, necessary background information, and other useful details and data.
- **Adventure Scenes:** The adventure itself, broken down into individual scenes.
- **Legwork:** Summaries of information and data the player characters might find during their research.
- **Cast of Shadows:** Profiles of the primary NPCs with whom the player characters will interact during the adventure.
- **Player Handouts:** Information designed for players.

## ADVENTURE SCENES

The adventure itself plays out over a series of sequential scenes. Each scene contains some, or all, of the following subsections:

- **Scan This:** A brief summary of the events in the scene.
- **Tell It To Them Straight:** A text selection that can be read directly to the players or paraphrased when the player characters reach specific points in the scene.
- **Hooks:** Descriptions of ways that characters might be encouraged to play a scene.
- **Behind the Scenes:** The mechanics behind each scene, including NPC motivations and any secrets or special instructions.
- **Subplots:** Secondary adventures—or red herrings—that offer avenues for gamemasters to develop to make the adventure less linear for players.
- **Pushing the Envelope:** Suggestions for gamemasters on altering the scene to challenge more experienced players or more powerful player characters.
- **Debugging:** Suggestions for getting the adventure back on track if the shadowrunners’ actions derail it.
- **Places of Interest:** Locations featured in the scene, including descriptions and ratings for security systems and Matrix systems.
- **Grunts and Moving Targets:** NPCs in that particular scene. NPCs that are featured in multiple scenes are found in the *Cast of Shadows*.

## NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Non-player characters (NPCs) are essential to bringing any adventure to life; they include the allies, enemies, and contacts with whom the characters interact during the shadowrun. Important NPCs have relevant profiles, including stats, in the *Grunts and Moving Targets* section for each scene. Major NPCs who appear in multiple scenes are listed in the *Cast of Shadows* section at the end of this book. Some of the major NPCs are recurring characters from previous adventures in the *Dawn of the Artifacts* line; they have additional background provided that reveals more of their motivations. Gamemasters can and should tweak the NPCs to make them more or less challenging opponents (see *Prime Runners*, p. 284–285, *SR4A*). NPCs in groups benefit from Group Edge (p. 281, *SR4A*), while individual NPCs in this adventure possess their own Edge stat to use.







RHAISTOS  
DISC

SIZE  
OF OBJECT:  
APPROX  
15CM  
/ 5.9 INCH  
DIAMETER

MATERIAL:  
FIRED CLAY

- FOUND IN THE MESSIAH  
PALACE OF RHAISTOS  
- MANUFACTURED IN THE  
2ND MILLENIUM BC  
- SHOWS 241 DIFFERENT  
SYMBOLS

ENTRY NO. 248347129.003

## GAMEMASTERING THE ADVENTURE

*Darkest Hour* is an adventure designed for *Shadowrun, Fourth Edition*, and is the third in the *Dawn of the Artifacts* series of adventures that will immerse characters in some of the greatest mysteries of the Sixth World.

Here are a few suggestions that will make the adventure, and gamemastering it, run more smoothly.

### STEP ONE: READ THE ADVENTURE

Reading through the adventure prior to introducing your group to it ensures you know what's coming down the line and are familiar with the entire story. This helps when your players (inevitably) come up with something not presented in the adventure.

### STEP TWO: ASSESS THE ADVENTURE

Rarely does any gamemaster take a written adventure and run it without any changes. You may decide it needs to be more challenging for your players, or perhaps your players form a specialized team (such as all mages) who will undoubtedly approach certain tasks in unique ways. You may want to switch certain NPCs with characters your players are familiar with in their game, such as a common fixer or gang contact. Assessing the adventure lets you make notes on how you want to customize it to best fit your game and your gamemastering style.

### STEP THREE: KNOW THE CHARACTERS

You should have a copy of each character prior to running the adventure so you can assess their individual (and group) skills, contacts, and abilities. If a scene calls for them to fly a plane through the Rockies and none of them have a Pilot Aircraft skill, you may need to tweak the scene so they'll still have a chance at success. If a character is sidelined for parts of the story due to lack of abilities or

skills, the gamemaster should consider adding scenes that play to that character's strengths.

### STEP FOUR: TAKE NOTES

Written notes help you keep things organized. You may want to jot down a note to give a particular handout to players at a specific moment or highlight important details about an NPC or combat scene. Taking notes during the adventure helps you remember characters' actions along the way, which can be useful when awarding Karma and handling contacts at the conclusion. This is the third adventure in a series; if these characters played through *Dusk* and/or *Midnight*, you may want to refer to your notes from those games as well. Likewise, it is quite possible that the players' decisions in this adventure might come back to haunt them later.

### STEP FIVE: DON'T LET THE DICE RUN THE GAME

Dice rolls normally dictate the outcome of events in a roleplaying game. Sometimes, however, the dice fall in such a way that they interfere with the story. Remember, as gamemaster, you can always tweak the dice to enhance the story. As a rule of thumb, a gamemaster shouldn't fudge the dice rolls to *hurt* player characters, but occasionally might tweak the roll to help them out or to help the story progress (softening a roll to seriously injure a player rather than killing them is one example).

### STEP SIX: DON'T PANIC

You'll make mistakes. *Everyone* makes mistakes. You may forget a rule, misread a scene, or forget an important clue. Don't worry. The reason you're there is to have fun, and fun is far more important than a flawless performance. If you or the players make a mistake, do your best to straighten things out, then keep moving forward.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Artifacts are a big business in the Sixth World. Entire organizations the size of corporations exist to discover the secrets of metahumanity's lost history. Arcanoarcheology is a field of study that helps locate those lost artifacts, and the ones that exist are hot commodities desired by collectors, magical groups, even by megacorporate thaumaturgic research departments.

*Dusk* and *Midnight* introduced two artifacts, the Piri Reis Map and the Sextant of the Worlds. *Darkest Hour* focuses on a third ancient artifact, the Phaistos Disc. It is inherently linked to the other artifacts that Jane "Frosty" Foster and the runners have been collecting. The ultimate goal behind unearthing these artifacts and what they mean to the Sixth World has yet to be revealed.

## THE PHAISTOS DISC

*Greek authorities confirmed the recent theft of several artifacts, including the mysterious Phaistos Disc, from the archaeological museum in Heraklion, Crete, Greece. One official stated, "We will not rest until these priceless artifacts are returned to our country." Interpol is investigating, but there are no suspects at this time.*

—*Horizon Network News*

Modern historians trace the Phaistos Disc's origins to the early Minoan period, making it quite clearly an object of value to Crete's and by extension Greece's history. There are 241 markings stamped into the disc, using 45 unique characters. The iconography does not match any known language. The truth is that the disc





is much older than believed, and the markings belong to a civilization that died well before the earliest Minoans. The Phaistos Disc is one of four *Eochair kailiu*—a set of keys from the previous age of magic. It works in conjunction with the Piri Reis Map and the Sextant of Worlds, which were recovered in the previous *Dawn of the Artifacts* adventures.

When Ehran came into possession of the Piri Reis Map, he was able to use it (and to teach Frosty to use it) to locate the sextant. Unfortunately, the real disc is hidden in an astral hideaway, and so the Piri Reis Map cannot locate it (although Ehran is not aware of this—he only knows the map does not appear to be locating the disc, and he is baffled as to the reason).

The Phaistos Disc is a forty-five-centimeter flat stone disc that serves as a Rosetta Stone for the map and translates the encoded writing of a forgotten language into one that a handful of people still know. Without the disc to translate, the Piri Reis Map's usefulness is greatly diminished. The true disc was hidden away within an alchera to protect it from the ravages of time, and from eras where mana levels were too low to support it (see "Alchera," p. 115,

*Street Magic*). Unfortunately, because of the disc's resting place, the Piri Reis Map is unable to locate it.

To ensure that the real disc could eventually be recovered, small fragments of the original were embedded into clay replicas and spread throughout the world. One of these copies was discovered by archaeologists and stored safely in the Heraklion Archaeological Museum, where it remained for nearly two centuries as one of the collection's prize pieces—until its recent theft. The stolen disc measures fifteen centimeters across and weighs roughly two hundred grams. It has the same markings as the original Phaistos Disc.

In August 2070, a former Prince of Tir Tairngire, Ehran the Scribe, contracted a thief (through proxies, naturally) to steal several items from the Heraklion Museum, including the copy of the Phaistos Disc. The artifacts were then to be shipped via cargo container to him. The secrecy needed for this job required several layers of separation between Ehran and the thief, Malcolm Carella. Neither knew the identity of the other. Hermann Meyer, the leader of the Faustian enclave in Frankfurt, Allied German States, paid a special commission to Carella's team to have disc delivered to him instead of the cargo container. By the time the container arrived and Ehran knew of the betrayal, the disc had already changed hands. After the disc was stolen along with several other artifacts, Greek authorities scoured the country looking for a trail to the

#### DUSK: DAWN OF THE ARTIFACTS 1 SUMMARY

In *Dusk*, Jane "Frosty" Foster hires a team of runners to accompany her to Lagos as protection and investigative assistants, telling them she is a shadowrunner who normally works alone, but the feral city is no place for a single woman, no matter how skilled. They are going to Lagos to find Samriel Lockwood (p. 47), an Atlantean operative who has been sent to Lagos on the trail of the missing Sextant of Worlds, an artifact that was stolen from the Dunkelzahn Institute of Magical Research (DIMR). While in Lagos, the runners discover that the sextant isn't in the city, but they find another artifact their employer is interested in—the Piri Reis Map. It comes up at a black-market auction in Lagos, and the runners need to find a way into the auction or a way to steal the map beforehand. During their time together in Lagos, the runners learn more about Frosty, including the fact that she is a powerful magician herself when she saves the team from an ambush in the dangerous slums of the city.

After a harrowing week in the feral city—and with the help of some unknown, unseen guardian angels—the runners successfully acquire the map and return to Seattle, where Frosty and an unidentified elven man leave together with the map. The team returns from Lagos aboard a DIMR-chartered jet, giving astute runners a clue about the identity of their employer.

#### MIDNIGHT: DAWN OF THE ARTIFACTS 2 SUMMARY

When rumors of the stolen Sextant of Worlds surface, Jane must continue her previous assignment of recovering it. Evidence links the theft to Sonora, a powerful mage with connections to Aztechnology. Working with

a team of runners, Jane uses the Piri Reis Map to locate the sextant in Chicago. Unfortunately, the ritual to locate the sextant is both time-consuming and draining, leaving Frosty effectively mundane for twelve hours after performing the ritual. The team is followed by Samriel Lockwood, who is also still on the hunt for the sextant. Since Samriel cannot use the map himself, he is content to simply follow the runners until the final scene, when he and his team attempt to take both the map and the sextant for themselves.

The team travels across North America, chasing the sextant. Finally ending in Los Angeles, the runners must stop Sonora and members of the Smoking Mirror blood cult from taking the sextant into Aztlan. After fighting a heavily armed gang and a blood spirit, traversing the underwater tunnels of the Deep Lacuna, and engaging in a final, climactic battle in an underground smuggler's cavern, the runners are finally able to lay claim to the sextant.

#### RUNNING DARKEST HOUR AS A STANDALONE

If the players have not gone through *Dusk* or *Midnight*, it is still possible to enjoy *Darkest Hour*. Gamemasters will need to change some of the verbiage in the opening scene, but beyond that the adventure can stand on its own. Throughout the adventure, there will be characters who appear from Frosty's previous hunts for the artifacts. Sidebars provide the GM with necessary background information on the individuals and groups. Jane may also make small talk about the other jobs and explain how they impact the current assignment. Often this will be done during travel scenes or as brief text messages shot across AR if the group is facing a competing interest directly.





Urgent Message...

## BRIDGING THE ADVENTURES

*Darkest Hour* is set two weeks after the conclusion of *Midnight*. Most runners will be back home at this point and resettling into their lives. For teams who have been thus far successful and professional with Jane, she contacts them as a courtesy to see if they are interested in more work. This can be as fluid or hesitant as the terms of their last interactions dictate.

If the runners did not participate in *Midnight*, they are still able to complete *Darkest Hour* without many problems. Gamemasters should adjust specific references to the events from the previous adventure to accommodate individual circumstances. Beyond that, some runner teams may get confused at times when pieces of information are released. This is normal as runners don't always understand the intrigue and politics that are at play; it only gets worse in the secret-ridden world of arcanoarcheology. Jane will do her best to ensure that the confusion does not cause specific problems.

Some teams may have completely failed at the previous jobs or been so unprofessional as to allow their employer to come to great harm. In cases like this, if the players want to continue the story, they may want to use a different team of shadowrunners—this might be a good time to point out that especially in the shadows, positive working relationships can trump skill and proficiency when it comes to keeping contacts. If the runners were professional and suffered minor setbacks as discussed in the previous adventures, then they should not have a problem continuing in the storyline.

thief and partnered with international police agencies to ensure that the item was not sold on the black market.

Ehran very quietly waited, believing he had time to recover the disc. With the theft of the Sextant of Worlds from the Dunkelzahn Institute of Magical Research, he realized that someone else was beginning to collect the keys. His resources were able to trace the funds back to a hacker in Hamburg, Hardy Wagner. Wagner laundered the money and is the only lead that Ehran has to finding the thief. In this adventure, he uses Jane to set up a meeting with a group that's either trustworthy enough to complete the job with full discretion or expendable enough to be eliminated afterwards.

## PLOT SYNOPSIS

The runners are contacted by Jane "Frosty" Foster and told that her employer wants them to work with her on another job. Ehran the Scribe meets with them and hires the runners to track down an artifact that he believes is linked to the stolen Draco Foundation item that they recovered earlier this year (**Once More**). The Phaistos Disc acts as a Rosetta Stone to translate

the Piri Reis Map that they recovered. While the runners have seen the map used to find the sextant, it has a much greater purpose. Information gathered shows that the disc was last seen in Europe, and the runners are given contact information for Hardy Wagner, an info-broker in Hamburg who can get them started (**Welcome to Hamburg**). Life becomes interesting as they travel around the globe and find themselves in far-flung cities that resemble their own cultures on the surface. The runners must work with underworld elements including Western Vory and the Dutch Penose in Hamburg to find their info-broker. Friends on both sides of the dispute get involved, and the runners discover that the syndicates are playing for keeps. After surviving a political rally and an ambush in the flooded tunnels beneath the city, the team needs to get Wagner out of the city.

Following the lead provided by their informant, the team travels to Europort (**To Find a Thief**). The corporate enclave is grinding away at humanity as more drones replace workers to optimize production and efficiency. A joint task force of several smaller corporations has placed Malcolm Carella, the thief who stole the Phaistos Disc originally, into protective custody to keep him safe until he can testify about recent sabotage on behalf of Saeder-Krupp. The runners need to break into a secured facility, have their talk, and break out again without anyone knowing why they were there. If they delay, a corporate strike team from S-K Prime arrives to tie up their loose ends, which leaves the runners with several unanswered questions.

Armed with the information of who has the Phaistos Disc, the team travels to Frankfurt, the heart of the AGS (**Grabbing the Disc**). The Faustian leader who commissioned the theft is dead, sacrificed in a bloody and painful ritual. Local law enforcement consults with Aztechnology, and the Azzies assist the locals in finding the presumed blood mage responsible for the thief's death. As if Aztechnology's presence wasn't alarming enough, there is a heightened sense of security as visitors from across the globe converge on Frankfurt. The Faustus Society is hosting a gala for the Awakened elite, and the most influential academic minds in the world will be there. The runners must infiltrate the gala, break into the inner sanctum of the mansion, and recover the stolen disc.

Jane guides the runners through a ritual to astrally examine the disc, and they discover that the stolen disc is not the real artifact (see **Finding Lost Treasure**, p. 36). Using the copy as a link to track down the original, the team comes across an Aztechnology archaeological site in Bosnia where the real Phaistos Disc is buried. They must dodge military patrols and archaeologists while discovering a route into the heart of the dig site. With luck and tenacity, they will be able to find the disc and head home.

## ONCE MORE

### SCAN THIS

This scene begins when Jane contacts the runners in Seattle (or wherever they're based) about a new job. She is on her way out of town, leaving her employer to review the details with the runners. While this project won't require them to enter a third-world country or risk their necks in a feral city, they will need to work in





Europe. Because of Samriel's uncanny ability to follow Jane's tracks, Eهران wants the runners to arrange their own transportation to Hamburg, but they need to arrive within 72 hours. Jane is going to make enough bumps and jumps in her own travel that she will either lose her faithful tail or he will make it obvious that he's following her. The plan is for the runners to meet her there.

### TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

It's been two weeks since you returned from L.A. The shadows have been quiet, like the world is taking a deep breath. The last time this happened Seattle was very nearly swept into a mob war by tempo dealers. Hopefully this calm is a little less ominous.

Your mind keeps turning to your work, ruining what could have been a perfect Thursday night. Your commlink chimes as a video call scrolls across your vision in AR. Frosty is calling—the same chica that dragged you to Lagos and across the North Am.

#### If the runners answer, read the following:

"Hey, listen, I'm on my way out of town and my employer is looking for a team. Your people have been good to me so far, how about one more go?"

In the background, you can hear the indistinct sounds of an overhead announcement and see columns of decorated plasticrete. It sounds like she's in the SeaTac maglev terminal.

#### If the runners accept, read the following:

"Great, I'll have him meet you in a few hours at Infinity. Say, eleven o'clock? Tell the barkeeper you're there to meet Aaron Johnson."

#### At Infinity, read the following:

Arriving at Infinity, you can see a line stretching around the building. AR touch-ups project across the people in line as patrons socialize and strive to impress each other. There is a shorter VIP line, where luxury sedans and sports cars pull up and unload their occupants.

Inside, there is an Augmented Spectacle as DJ Bijan spins digital noise with AROs responding to every beat and pulse. The barkeep, a thin ork with long blonde hair, winks at you when you mention Aaron Johnson. She takes drink orders and sends you upstairs with a small green arrow floating in the corner of your vision. Upstairs, you arrive at a door painted dark blue. On the other side of it is an elven gentleman who looks like a human in his mid-thirties—making him older than most elves. He rises as you enter, and you get a good look at a charcoal suit that screams money, along with sapphires seated in cufflinks binding a bone-white shirt at his wrists. He nods to you and waves one arm toward the sofa, telling you to have a seat.

#### After drinks have arrived and everyone is situated, read the following:

Mr. Johnson passes his hand over the corner of the table and a red LED flickers on. There is a hiss at the edge of your hearing and your connection to the local Matrix flickers.

"I'm taking a few more precautions than normal due to Janey's faithful follower. Now—I would like you to track down some

stolen property. Let me put your mind at ease and say that it is a not radioactive wasteland, a city run by warlords, or a dragon's private playground. In fact, it was last seen in the cradle of civilization. The pay will be comparable to the previous projects you have worked on for me. Arrangements have even been made to provide you a chance to pick up gear on the other end if you require it. Are you interested?"

#### If the runners accept the job, read the following:

"Are you familiar with the Phaistos Disc? It was stolen from the Heraklion Archaeological Museum in Crete last summer along with several other valuable pieces of art. I would like you to recover it before the disc falls into the wrong hands. Thus far, it hasn't been put on the black market or sold at any private auctions of which I am aware. That means the thief either delivered it to a private collector or is holding on to it until the authorities stop looking."

### BEHIND THE SCENES

This scene, like many in this adventure, comprises several miniature scenes that can be broken up to give the runners a chance to pursue legwork, run data searches, or simply take a nap. When Jane calls the runners, it is about 7 PM on Thursday night. Hackers who run a Data Search + Browse (2) on the train station for Arrival and Departure schedules see that the Southern Coastal train just arrived in SeaTac before Jane called. The train runs from San Diego to Seattle with nearly fifty stops in between, including Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Eureka. Determining where Frosty got on the train is very difficult due to the lax security at train stations, and the job would require hacking through various customs agencies to determine which countries she recently passed through.

When the runners meet with Eهران, most will recognize him as an ex-Prince of Tir Tairngire and a noted international figure. If the players do not immediately make the connection, a Tir Knowledge + Intuition (2), Media + Intuition (2), Sixth World Culture + Intuition (2), or Current Events + Logic (2) Test identifies him. Runners who successfully handed over the Piri Reis Map to Jane at the end of *Dusk* can make a Memory (3) Test. If successful, they recognize the voice and profile of the aged elf who was in the back of the limo with Jane.

#### EHRAN THE SCRIBE

An Immortal Elf who first appeared in 2030 as a close advisor to Lugh Surehand, Eهران was a member of Tir Tairngire's Council of Princes until he stepped down in 2062. Eهران has kept careful watch on those of his descendants that might be an immortal as he is; he discovered that his daughter Jane "Frosty" Foster was one when she was a little girl. However, he has hidden his relationship to Jane—especially from Jane herself—for his own reasons. Eهران has published several works on metahumanity and the Awakening.

Urgent Message...





## TRAVEL ON THE FLY

Throughout this adventure, the runners may utilize public transportation either because they choose to or because it's the only way to get where they're going quickly. Below is a list of generic methods and security features at common transportation hubs; GMs are encouraged to modify the ratings based on the circumstances and exact location. For example, corporate enclaves may have higher-rated systems or include additional security measures, while small towns may only have a handful of systems operating at any given time. If this is the first time that a group has dealt with travel and security, it is recommended that they read through the *Flying Under the Radar* handout that Jane provides to the team or the *Travel and Smuggling* section of *Runner's Companion*.

In any of the law-abiding locations, if the runners are discovered with Forbidden gear, the gear is confiscated and the runners face criminal charges as appropriate.

## AIRPORT

With a combination of active and passive systems, commercial airports are among the most highly secured travel areas, surpassed only by sub-orbital launches. Private airfields have higher or lower system ratings based on the clientele that passes through them. Airports layer magical, technical, and physical security atop one another to minimize threats to the airport or any travelers. MAD and cyberware scanners for travelers are the first line of defense, with every piece of luggage going through the same analysis in addition to chemsniffers. If a mage or spirit cannot be present at a checkpoint, personnel are issued GloWands (p. 65, *Arsenal*) to identify astral threats or active magic. All Matrix systems are encrypted and compartmentalized to limit liability in case a single system becomes compromised. All accounts are cross-verified on multiple systems, meaning that hackers who want to log in without an authorized account need to hack into multiple systems simultaneously to generate the appropriate Access ID. Airport systems have IC and active spiders present at all hours to prevent tampering. Beyond these systems, all airports are Active-only zones with constant SIN verification. Most vendors do not accept certified credsticks and alert security to individuals attempting to use them.

Fields frequented by smugglers generally have their own security consisting of mercenaries and the smugglers themselves. They must also pay heavy bribes to local law enforcement to keep prying eyes away and provide warnings about when raids are going to happen. The cost of these bribes is passed directly on to people wanting to bank on the lack of questions asked.

## SUB-ORBITAL

By far the most secure of public travel methods, sub-orbital launches utilize the same layered approach to security as airports, though all ratings are generally 2 points higher. In addition, no one with a criminal SIN is allowed access to sub-orbital flights. All passengers must pass through a warded hallway on their way to board the sub-orbital, nominally to remind passengers to disable or deactivate all active foci, as a sub-orbital's trajectory takes it into the mana void of space. All restricted cyberware has an inhibitor placed on it to deactivate it for the duration of the flight. This includes cyberware for which the runner has the appropriate licenses.





### SUPER HIGHWAYS

Like train stations, super highways function through passive security. All vehicles must be subscribed to the Grid Guide system, even when piloted manually, for emergency response systems to take control and prevent collisions. Every fifty kilometers, the system pings every vehicle to verify that it is still subscribed to the system. Vehicles passing through these checkpoints without being subscribed or those that drop their subscription (either due to respoofing an Access ID or disabling the Grid Guide functionality) are cited, and law enforcement is notified of the violation.

Optional systems: SIN verification of commlinks, millimeter wave detection, and radar systems at exits and weigh stations.

### TRAIN STATIONS

Most train stations function through passive security, including MAD scanners at entrances into the terminal, SIN verification to purchase tickets, and cameras and facial recognition to monitor Most Wanted lists. The majority of the systems will be at Rating 3, with the Most Wanted lists being an international collection of fugitives. (A combined Notoriety + Public Awareness greater than 10 puts a runner on the Most Wanted list.) In an attempt to crack down on criminal activities, many train stations have stopped accepting certified cred. AROs and posters remind passengers that they can stop terrorism by reporting certified users to local authorities.

There are occasionally armed security forces on board a train, but for the most part trains are controlled remotely by a rigger who locks down access through maglocks, etc. ARemote access to the trains is maintained by physical connection through the tracks; the trains are not wireless-enabled. Every train is slaved to the main control system and will only accept commands that are relayed through the tracks' electronic control channel.

Optional systems: Gait Analysis, chemsniffers, trained critters for bomb/narcotic detection, biodrones (e.g., sniffer swarms).

### TRAVEL ON THE FLY

Mode	Cargo	Time	Price per person
Suborbital	PC + 1 trolley	4-6 hours	4,000¥
Flight (First Class)	PC + 2 suitcases	8-10 hours	1,200¥
Flight (Business)	PC + 1 suitcase	9-2 hours	800¥
Smuggler (Air)	PC + 2 duffle bags	24-32 hours	3,000-7,000¥
Smuggler (Land)*	PC + 2 duffle bags	60-90 hours	2,000-6,000¥
Ground Vehicle	Per Vehicle	Per Vehicle	
Owned Plane	Per Vehicle	Per Vehicle	

\*This is for primarily land-based smuggling with a brief flight to cross the Atlantic.

**Note:** All times are based on travel from Seattle to Hamburg, a trip of roughly 8,000 kilometers. Times include checking-in, boarding, etc.





## THE JOB

Payment is 10,000¥ to each runner for their assistance, plus pay for transportation and lodging. The runners can negotiate the rate with a Negotiation (4) Test. For each hit above the threshold—up to a maximum of ten—Ehnan increases the payment by 1,000¥ (up to an additional 10,000¥ each) or provides an additional 1,200¥ worth of gear per runner (up to 12,000¥ total per runner). As with previous assignments, a finder's fee of 50,000¥ is offered to the team. The runners can negotiate the rate with a Negotiation (4) Test. For each hit above the threshold—up to a maximum of ten—Ehnan increases the payment by 2,500¥ (up to an additional 25,000¥ for the team). This rate is slightly lower than Chicago, but the job doesn't require traveling in a feral city.

Ehnan tells them that Jane will meet them in Hamburg in 72 hours. Once there, they need to track down Hardy Wagner, an informant who has information about the thief. Due to the active investigation by Interpol, Ehnan is refusing to speak about it over the Matrix and is requiring a face-to-face meeting. Ehnan gives them the commcode for Wagner and a holo that looks like a SIN photo.

If the runners ask why they aren't traveling with Jane, Ehnan says that in the last few jobs, Samriel has mysteriously shown up at the right moment to track down Jane. He wants to figure out how Samriel is following her, and he hopes that her travel plans will cause the crusader to either lose the trail or be noticed. It is obvious that Jane is under surveillance; now she is trying to figure out how Samriel is keeping it up.

Ehnan tells the runners that Jane has a few contacts in Europe who are willing to help them as needed. One of them will expedite the purchase of any gear they need, especially weapons or armor, in case the runners are unable to bring those items with them.

## TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Transportation to Hamburg needs to be arranged by the runners to have them arrive within 72 hours of accepting the job. Hotel accommodations have been made for the team at Hotel Stella Maris in the Altona District of Hamburg. Also, Ehnan has placed 5,000¥ per runner into an escrow account for the runners to use for their travel budget. Options include a maglev to the East Coast and hopping a chartered flight, sub-orbital direct, or any number of alternatives. If the runners are completely clueless about global travel accommodations, Jane gives them a primer by 2XL on smuggling (*Flying Under the Radar*, p. 48).

Since getting to Hamburg can be an adventure all on its own, gamemasters are encouraged to allow teams time to plan the trip. A table of estimated costs and timelines is provided along with standard security systems the runners may face depending on their method of travel. A sample trip from Seattle could take the runners overland to Denver, a chartered plane to Toronto, and a commercial flight from Toronto to London before catching a boat from London to Hamburg. Allow contacts to help plan the trip and do warm hand-offs to other contacts.

For teams that don't want to have to worry about how they are getting there, a Fixer or Smuggler contact can arrange transportation for the runners, allowing them each two duffel bags to carry, at a cost of the full fee of 5,000¥/runner.

### TRAVEL INVENTORY

Gamemasters may ask each player to create a list of what items their player character takes when they leave their home city. Keeping track of these items as they are used increases record-keeping duties but also increases the feeling that every bullet counts, forcing characters to conserve resources and employ creative problem-solving.

### LIMITING FACTORS

Astute runners who have worked with Jane may have noticed that she can be immensely powerful when the time comes, but circumstances have kept her from flexing her full talent. She is currently wearing an amulet which functions as a personal -12 mana void. For purposes of determining whether something is within the area, treat the void as one meter wide by two meters tall. This means that the runners will be unaffected by the void unless they cast a spell directly on Jane or give her a hug.

The amulet's mana void will conceal any Awakened items placed in the field by masking their signature under the void.

A Negotiations + Charisma (3) Test can lower the cost, with each net hit reducing the price by 100¥ to a minimum of 4,000¥ (up to 10 net hits). Obviously vehicles and medium-size drones or larger will not fit in the duffel bags. Runners wishing to transport these types of items need to pay 250¥ per point of Body on medium drones; this rate doubles for large drones. Drones shipped this way arrive in five days. For earlier delivery, increase the cost by ten percent for each day taken off the delivery time. Shipping vehicles costs 250¥ per point of Body and they take two weeks to arrive. Internationally connected fixers can put teams in contact with smuggling groups and syndicates willing to rent a vehicle. The exact cost of borrowing a vehicle is left to gamemaster discretion, but damage to the vehicle should have consequences.

### PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

There will be plenty of time later on for the GM to push the players and threaten the characters. If the GM really wants to push the envelope here, an Enemy or Contact could be added to the area. Enemies do anything shy of open violence to harass and stop the characters from attending the meeting. A Contact could be well meaning but have a bad sense of timing—either they need a favor that delays the character from leaving town, or they just want some face time at an inopportune moment.



## CONSUMABLE GOODS

During *Midnight*, Samriel Lockwood (p. 47) followed Frosty to Seattle without her knowledge. He managed to spike Jane's and the runners' meals with nanoinfectors loaded with taggants. If the runners were tagged in the previous adventure, the nanites are still in their system. Runners who did not participate in the events of *Midnight* are not infected, and only Jane has the nanites in her system.

The nanoinfectors (p. 117, *Augmentation*) are a rating 6 microscopic soft nanoware system. They've been loaded with hardened Stealth RFID tags (p. 319, *SR4*) and designed to activate once in contact with the chemicals in a meta-human digestion system. They adhere to the walls of the intestines, securing the stealth tags. They degrade at one

point per week, and when they are gone, the stealth tags are flushed from the runners' digestive system. They have no ill effects on the health of the runners, nor do they affect the Essence or aura of the runners. (Gamemaster note: As a reminder, *Darkest Hour* is set two weeks after the events of *Midnight*, so the nanoinfectors will have degraded to Rating 4. Adjust the rating further if more time has passed for your campaign.)

Samriel pings the tags periodically during this adventure. He also has a team of young troubleshooters from the Foundation following Jane, utilizing the nanoinfectors to track her. The ten troubleshooters are in contact with each other and leapfrog around as they follow her, making it difficult to identify any one person following her.

GMs may also want to make the travel arrangements a more pivotal part of the story. Ehran can provide a longer window to arrive and open options of smuggling via ground transportation and/or ship. This can extend the length of the adventure well beyond the basic scope provided.

## DEBUGGING

The biggest problem here would be the runners not trusting Ehran. While Jane has been open and forthright with them in the past, Frosty (on Ehran's orders) has also led them to some of the most inhospitable locales around the globe. Teams can negotiate for more money per the rules above, but there are limitations to what Ehran will offer. If the runners don't want to take the job, he won't force them. He is talking to them first because "Janey" spoke positively of them. He has several other, more well-known associates to offer the job to. This would be a boost to their reputation—or it could be a loss of face if they walk away after negotiating for pay.

## PLACES OF INTEREST

### Club Infinity

One of the newest clubs in Seattle, Infinity is already on the elite's list of preferred nightspots. Unlike many of the other clubs in Seattle, Infinity doesn't bank on themes but instead focuses on being the best experience around. Holo-projections of sim-starlets dance through the crowd as the hottest musicians play through the night. The private meeting rooms are set on the ROYGBIV scale with ascending security precautions taken. The Indigo Room in which Ehran meets the runners in is equipped with a Rating 4 White Noise Generator and has Rating 8 Wi-Fi-negating paint. For more information, see *Infinity*, p. 53, *Seattle 2072*.

## WELCOME TO HAMBURG

### SCAN THIS

Once they have their information from Ehran, the runners need to get information out of a data-broker in Hamburg who happens to be a member of the local Penose. Talking in the streets and doing legwork allows them to discover an uptick in violence between the Dutch Penose (who have been muscling into the city) and the local Vory over the last few weeks. This makes the job more complicated than a simple data-buy. An assassination attempt on a Western Vory member and the resultant complications as the Vory retaliate against the Penose led to some of the Penose keeping their heads low (especially the less muscular ones). The runners' contact is unwilling to meet with anyone who isn't vetted first by a friend, and the price the data-broker exacts for his info is the runners' assistance in keeping him alive long enough to get him safely out of town.

### TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

Hamburg is a bustling city, though the energy level is very different from Seattle. Moving through the narrow streets, your mind is filled with noise as languages you don't understand flood the area, including the local lingo known as Habensprook ("Port Speak"), an eclectic mixture of North German dialect, Dutch, and Russian. Your linguasofts do their best to keep up but only translate the closest feeds to you, resulting in an echoing wash of chaotic sound.

AROs float around you, punching past filters designed for Seattle's traffic. You take a moment to reconfigure your settings as you walk to the Hotel Stella Maris. Despite many New Worlders' belief that everything in Europe was castles and old buildings, the Altona district looks fairly new. Occasional plaques show a building that survived World War II, but they are rare. At the hotel, the rooms are spacious but simple—a nice balance of comfort and discretion.



**When Jane calls, read the following:**

“Take some time, walk the streets, and talk to people. I’m going to need a day to put down some feelers of my own. I’ve got a couple ways of tracking our mark down, but you may find something else. Meet me at the hotel this afternoon. We’ll go talk to a friend about picking you up any missing gear. If you make a list, I’ll see what she can have on hand when we get there.”

Jane pauses a moment, weighing her words. “And remember, the borders are a lot closer here than the UCAS. Make sure that you can move whatever you are carrying through customs. There aren’t as many unwatched highways on this side of the pond; the autobahn is crawling with sensors.”

**At Red Anya’s, read the following:**

Driving up to the warehouse in the rented minivan Jane provided, you see that the neighborhood is a series of one-way streets and warehouses designed for shipping-container storage. You drive past a tall chain-link fence and into the warehouse. Inside, several men stand around wearing tracksuits and leather jackets, with heavy gold chains around their necks. They carry a mixture of weapons, mostly sleek submachine guns and chromed pistols.

“Anyachka!” Jane calls out as she climbs out of the minivan and walks toward a handsome woman with her hair pulled back into a tight braid. There is a muffled conversation between them

**NEW EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY (NEEC)**

A joint community of corporations and nation-states, the NEEC filled the void left by the collapse of the old European Union (EU) in 2028. Similar to the EU, the NEEC has a unified Electronic Registration System on par with the UCAS SIN system. The NEEC also has cross-jurisdiction bodies, including EuroForce and EuroPol, that handle military defense and policing duties respectively. EuroPol handles international-level crime including anti-terrorism and Matrix crimes, leaving local law enforcement to regional authorities.

Due to Hamburg’s status as a free city and the opposition of corporate influence in national matters, the Senate of Hamburg has expressed its disapproval of the NEEC on occasions in the Federal Council of the Allied German States. While the senate has never politically opposed NEEC delegates directly, Vesna Lyzhichko, speaker of the senate and nominal mayor of Hamburg, is rumored to be connected to the Anti-Eurocrats.

Urgent Message...

before Jane hugs her. Anya seems taken aback by the hug, but slowly pats Jane on the back.

Turning to your team, Anya addresses you with a thick Russian accent. “So, Jane tells me you are in need of some equipment, and that you need it quickly. Luckily we won’t be taking time to fill out forms, and that is what generally takes the longest. *Davaj*, let’s see what we can get for you.”

**At the rally, read the following:**

Traveling to the square, you can tell the energy of the city has changed, as if someone abruptly juiced up the voltage. Young people crowd the train system and seem to be converging on the same location as you. You pull into Dag-Hammarskjöld-Platz near the modern Congress Center Hamburg (CCH) and see that the AR is flooded with anti-NEEC propaganda and hooded protestors screaming political rallying cries. Hansec anti-riot detachments consisting of security drones packed with non-lethal weaponry and riot-shielded police have already placed themselves between the rally and the center. Picket signs scroll messages across them, changing rapidly as hackers reprogram the signs, and control of the messages sways between different groups.

With the program activated, the pressing mass of people and AR noise becomes heavy black smoke. You can still see vague outlines of people through the overlay and hear the cacophonous shouts. Deep into the plaza, at the heart of the rally, a shining pillar of bright white light streaks upward. The smuggler certainly didn’t play by halves.

**When entering the tunnels, read the following:**

You pass through a former WW II army hospital that was reconstructed into an apartment building before the Tide. Several flights of stairs down, you realize the old ground floor is now beneath street level. Reaching the original basement of the

DAWN OF THE ARTIFACTS: DARKEST HOUR

INCOMING FEED.....



building, Jan gestures for you to follow him. He picks his way across the floor to a broken section of the wall. Following, you find yourself before an old bomb shelter hidden behind the wall, the massive door sealed in front of you.

After a moment, the door opens and you see—and smell—a broad shouldered troll with pus from an infection seeping out around his dermal deposits. His eyes are covered with milky-white cataracts and he nods to the smuggler. Welcome to the rat's nest.

#### When the bounty hunters attack, read the following:

The tunnels echo disconcertingly, with shouts and gunfire coming from all directions. It is hard to tell where the noise is coming from as intersecting tunnels carry sound in front of and behind you. A shout comes directly towards you, cutting through the echo as several men step out of a side tunnel carrying shotguns.

*“Geef ons Wagner, of zullen we je vermoorden iedereen.”* (Dutch for: Give us Wagner, or we'll kill you all). Jan stops and lifts his arms into the air. Out of the side of his mouth, he hisses “Bounty hunters, they want Wagner.”

#### BEHIND THE SCENES

With the recent rise in violence between the Lobatchevski Vory and Dutch Penose, the shadows are tense. Interpol and HanSec have begun to crack down on known associates of both sides, raising the paranoia and suspicion to a palpable level. A successful Data Search + Browse (4, 1 min) Extended

Test or a perusal of the local newsfeeds reveals that the source of the tension and violence is the attempted assassination of Sovetnik Kirollai Neskaya. Neskaya, the right hand of Tsar Victor Lobatchevski, survived the attempt without injury and has proven uncooperative with law enforcement during the investigation. In the last week, the Vory have struck back at several soft targets—Penose hackers and support personnel to break the infrastructure—leading to flare-ups in St. Pauli and other hotspots the Penose have infested.

HanSec is only giving the underworld troubles a token effort. Most of their energy for the next week is being focused on a political rally taking place in Hamburg due to a New European Economic Community (NEEC) geopolitical summit that Hamburg (and its senate) was forced to host. The Anti-Eurocrats (an anti-NEEC rad group promoting nationalism and protection of national sovereignty) have scheduled a huge Hamburg-wide rally to protest NEEC legislation and push for secession from the NEEC-friendly AGS. Runners from Seattle may find some of the arguments are similar to the secession movement there, but Hamburg is highly politicized and divided. Rad groups whose agendas match with the Anti-Eurocrats (mainly left wing anti-corporate and green agendas, but also ultra-right nationalist groups) are throwing their support behind the movement even though it isn't their primary motivation. The summit is taking place at the Congress Center of Hamburg at the junction of Planten and Blomen Park, near the Alster.

Jane arrives a few hours after the 72-hour mark. She looks haggard and weary, but a few hours of sleep and a hot shower will fix most of that. If anyone asks, there was no sign of Samriel during her travel. Once the team is ready to leave for Anya's warehouse, Jane has the car pulled around to the front of the hotel. She is renting a VW Sleipnir (p. 21) to use while driving around the city. The minivan has space for six in the back and can comfortably fit a troll in the front passenger's seat. Jane is the only one who is authorized to drive the vehicle based on her rental contract, though the contract can be updated to add new drivers if any of the runners want to link a SIN (real or fake) to the record.

#### MEETING WITH RED ANYA (OPTIONAL)

If the runners have negotiated well or have completed the previous adventures successfully, Jane puts them in touch with Red Anya (or Anyachka, as Jane calls her in person). Anya can help the runners replace any gear they may not have been able to bring with them—provided they pay in cash. The markups for quick service are built into her prices, and she can provide standardized weapons and body armor with an Availability of less than 12 within twelve hours and an Availability of 12–14 within 24 hours. Every point above Availability 10 increases the price by 100 percent for the speed required. Any customization (weapon modification, armor upgrades, size allowances for sapient non-metahumans, etc.) is unavailable. Anya is here to sell weapons and armor and doesn't have time for custom orders. If the runners don't mind waiting a few weeks, she can get it done, but that is outside the scope of this adventure (however, if the runners impress Anya with their professionalism and they receive Jane's recommendation, she will make a good future contact).

Urgent Message...

#### CUSTOMIZED AUGMENTED REALITY ENVIRONMENTS (CARE)

CAREs are common programs designed to translate digital noise along a custom theme. They are regularly used in malls and metropolises to resculpt the surrounding AR by users who dislike the traditional layout. Smugglers and criminal syndicates have taken to using them to guide the uninitiated to black markets. Additional information about Augmented Reality Environments is available on p. 108, *Unwired*.

#### WHY UNARMED?

Jan Brecht tells the runners to come unarmed so that he can keep the advantage—he has a gun. Brecht believes this to be all the advantage he needs, since the percentage of Awakened individuals (and his personal knowledge of how magic works) is low enough that he doesn't suspect magic to be a viable threat. Brecht carries a GloWand (p. 65, *Arsenal*) that lights up and beeps if he is subjected to magic, or if powerful magic is used in the area.

DAWN OF THE ARTIFACTS: DARKEST HOUR . . . . .



If necessary, Jane reiterates to the runners that they may be taking public travel options and need to be able to get everything through customs without questions asked. This means they may need to pay more money either for fake licenses or for the appropriate skills and gear to hide everything. Anya recommends they speak to the Water Rats if they need smuggling gear (hidden compartments, shielded cases, etc.), and she can help broker a deal for them. Use standard Swag rules (p. 287, *SR4A*).

### Tracking Down Hardy Wagner

There are several ways to track down Wagner, though only three are listed here; GMs are encouraged to synthesize the information to accommodate different approaches. If the runners aren't sure where to begin, Jane offers the three paths listed here. With the runners' input, she selects one method that she'll do on her own, leaving the other two for the runners to take care of. As this is the runners' story, Jane's method should be successful only if the runners fail on their efforts, making the runners empowered rather than having them sit around and wait for the well-connected NPC to do her thing. All routes should eventually lead to the rally, though how the runners get there and their interaction with the NPCs to that point affect the flow of events.

### Calling Wagner

Calls to Wagner's commcode lead to a voice messaging service. The commlink is currently powered off to remove the ability to trace it, and Wagner is using disposable commlinks when he needs to contact any of his people. If the runners leave a message, Jan Brecht, a Water Rat and friend of Wagner, contacts them several hours later to arrange a meeting. Contact is done via the Matrix with a generic icon instead of video. He introduces himself by name and tells them that he is a friend of Wagner. If the runners want to meet with Wagner, they have to go through him first or wait until the whole problem with the Vory blows over. Brecht won't meet them unless it is on his terms. Brecht schedules to meet them the following afternoon, and he calls them an hour before the meet to tell them where it will happen.

Attempts to trace the call are being actively thwarted, with Brecht's Mk-V agent performing a Redirect Trace, and the call has been routed through two proxy servers. If the runners succeed in tracking him down, they find the call is being placed from the train station. The current population of the train station is about 1,500 people, with constant turnover every four to eight minutes as new trains come and go.

At the one-hour mark before the rally, Jan calls the team and tells them to meet him in the shadow of the Rathaus at a political rally. They are to come unarmed. If he suspects anyone of foul play, he will drop off the grid and not give them a second chance. Along with the address, Brecht sends them a Customized Augmented Reality Environment (CARE) that, when it is running, turns his AR presence into a beacon of light and masks all the AROs nearby as clouds of dark smoke. While using the CARE, runners are not able to read or see any AROs that are outside of their private network (treat as heavy smoke for Perception Test modifiers). Brecht requires everyone on the team to use the program.

Loading the CARE counts as a single Rating 4 program, and the CARE contains a Track program. This program allows the

CARE to identify the commcode that Brecht selected for the pillar of light, and it also allows him to track the position of the runners unless they actively redirect the trace. Hackers who examine the program identify this hidden feature with a successful Software + Analyze (3) Test. If any of the runners, such as technomancers, choose to not load the program into their commlink, Brecht gives them one chance to activate it before he drops off the grid. Brecht paid a tout near the hotel to find out how many runners are in Jane's group. If any of the runners made their own reservations and have not communicated with Brecht, he is not expecting them at the meetup, and he will not require them to have the program.

### DUTCH PENOSE

A Netherlands-based syndicate, the Dutch Penose has a pronounced presence in Europort and is just starting to carve a niche out of the Hamburg shadows. They supply low-grade pharmaceuticals and BTLs to dozens of gray businesses in Europort and Hamburg. The Penose are forming inroads with the Water Rats and various rad groups in Hamburg. While the Penose do not have the resources to win a straight fight with the Vory, they have been able to win some small victories through hit-and-run engagements.

### House Calls

If the runners locate Wagner's apartment via legwork, they find what used to be a small, one-bedroom apartment quarantined with police tape and "Kein Durchgang—Polizeiliche Ermittlungen" (No Trespassing—Police Investigation) AROs. From the street, they can see a window on the third floor has been blown out and signs of smoke damage rising up the building. Inside, it appears that several white phosphorous grenades were thrown into the apartment and the gas line burst. Everything is burnt to varying degrees, and the furniture is shattered. There are no active biological links left for ritual sorcery or tracking. Looking through the wreckage, it's obvious that Wagner left in a hurry and fully planned on coming back. Small knick-knacks that were probably valuable before the fire have been destroyed. Chemical detection systems can discover trace elements of accelerants amid the white phosphorous. It appears that someone splashed down the apartment with gasoline before torching it. Treat the knick-knacks from the apartment as oft-handled objects with an additional -4 penalty caused by the fire damage. (Note that the path an astral mage takes to get to the target will be very different than the one the runners have to take to walk there.)

Additionally, there are Vory members in the area watching the apartment, waiting for members of the Penose to show up. Negotiations (hostile or polite) can get the runners more information about the Penose and open a lead to the Water Rats and Brecht. Runners who work with the Vory politely or have other Vory contacts to vouch for them can negotiate to trade Wagner after getting the information for a lead to Brecht. The Vory know that Brecht is hiding members of the Penose, but they have avoided approaching him directly so as to not tip their hand. If the runners are hostile with their negotiations, the Vory retaliate. They don't come at the runners head-on, instead focusing on soft

points—like attempting to identify the most helpless member of the runners' group and then cornering that individual alone at the hotel. Jane calls them from the hotel because she is having a conversation with Vory soldiers who have unpleasant things to say about the runners. The runners need to defuse the situation without getting into a firefight in the hotel room.

Whether through negotiation or interrogation, the runners should learn that Brecht is going to be at the rally. They will need to find him in the crowd either by tracking his commlink or running overhead surveillance and using facial recognition software.

### It's Who You Know

By going through the Tower Bar, the runners can get in touch with the Penose and use the internal communication systems to find Wagner. This again can go as politely or violently as they choose, but eventually leads to Brecht, whom the Penose believe is going to betray Wagner to the Vory.

Teams that do not wish to work through Brecht can investigate other means of tracking down Wagner. Data Searches and talking with people at the Tower Bar can yield a photograph for use in creating a symbolic link, or belongings from the apartment can be used as a sympathetic link. Teams without access to the Sympathetic Link metamagic can attempt to backtrack Wagner's steps and use Scent Tracking (p. 206, *Running Wild*). Wagner is in contact with Brecht every twelve hours using a disposable commlink. By tapping Brecht's commlink, a Sprite can use its Traceroute power to determine Wagner's physical location; likewise Mind Probes and other Mental Manipulations can be used to force the information out of Brecht (although if attempted in Jane's presence, she immediately stops any "brain rapes" and the offending magician loses status in her view).

### The Rally

Meeting Jan Brecht in the middle of the rally is distracting, making Negotiations difficult. Apply a -3 dice pool modifier to all tests because of the distraction and Brecht's suspicion. Street Cred does not apply to this test, as Brecht does not know the runners' reputations. The team must succeed at an Etiquette + Charisma (10, 5 minutes) Test to convince Brecht that they are not members of Interpol or the Vory. This can be done as a Teamwork Test. If they are successful, he leads them to Hardy. The political rally can drift between a rowdy crowd to full mob violence as the team moves through it (per GM discretion, see **Pushing the Envelope** below). As a reminder, all Social Tests are limited by the Skill Rating of the language being spoken (p. 130, *SR4A*).

Both **House Calls** and **It's Who you Know** have the runners trying to find Brecht while he is at the rally meeting with other interested parties. Runners can choose to either Negotiate or Intimidate Brecht into helping them after they find him. This is an excellent time for the team's face to shine, or for some great in-character roleplaying. For those who wish to bypass the roleplaying aspects, a Negotiation/Intimidate + Charisma (10, 5 minutes) Extended Test sufficiently convinces Brecht to take them down to see Wagner. There are further roleplaying implications as they deal with the ghoulish troll at the door and other groups that may be traveling through the tunnels. Depending on the team's tactics, Brecht may also be actively trying to signal ahead to warn Wagner, but the tunnels limit signal range.

### SEEING WITHOUT YOUR EYES

Scanning Brecht for a Hidden PAN requires a successful Electronic Warfare + Scan (24, 1 Combat Turn) Test due to the massive number of other devices in the area. Brecht currently has two commlinks; Wagner's, which is in Passive Mode, and his own implanted comm in Hidden Mode.

Assessing Brecht reveals the following information

- 1 Subject is Healthy, Nervous, Mundane
- 2 Presence of implants in his head, along the central nervous system, and arms
- 3 Essence Higher or Lower (depending on PC), no astral presences

Essence 3

### Into the Rat's Nest

Once the runners have convinced Brecht of their sincerity or intimidated him, he leads them to Wagner. The Water Rat heads west for several blocks before heading into a large apartment building. From the apartment, he walks down to the basement and through a large crack in the concrete. The crack opens out into a (now hidden) bomb shelter from World War II. Standing in front of the massive vault door, the smuggler sends a long string of messages to someone on the other side of the thirty-centimeter-thick steel door. After a moment there is the sound of gears turning, and the door swings open into the tunnels. A cataract-eyed troll stands guard at the vault door, handing Brecht a pair of hip waders when he comes through.

The tunnels are combined basements of buildings and steam tunnels that eventually connect into abandoned sewer and subway tunnels. Several of the passages are flooded, ranging from ankle- to knee-deep water with only the slightest current. Sounds of water pumps can be heard at various locations as the smugglers have drained many of the tunnels in the "concrete reef." The tunnels are nearly pitch black except for any lights that the runners may have brought. Jan cracks several chemical lights and hangs them on his belt, shedding an eerie green light within one meter of him. For everything else, he navigates through ultrasound.

There are random AROs spread throughout the tunnels, and Brecht seems to be guided more by memory than the RFID tags. A dozen of the tags that the team walks past are static and noise. A Software + Decrypt (3) Test determines that the signal isn't encrypted but has become completely and utterly corrupted. All of the tags have the exact same scrambled message if compared through an Analyze program, suggesting that it wasn't random corruption. This is caused by technocritters using the Spraying (p. 218, *Running Wild*) power on AROs. There are no technocritters in this scene, but gamemasters can add them if they wish to have an additional encounter.

As the runners follow Brecht down through the tunnels, they are ambushed by members of a mercenary group who are hunting Water Rats and Penose hiding in the tunnels. They are willing to let

Urgent Message...

DRAWN OF THE ARTIFACTS: DARKEST HOUR . . . . .



the runners go or negotiate for Wagner after the runners get their information (they honestly will let them go; their business is with the Penose). If the runners agree, Brecht sends a message through AR to his friend to warn him. Otherwise, it can be a fight, though the runners need to protect Brecht to be able to get to Wagner safely. If the runners pull weapons that were hidden from Brecht earlier, there may need to be some fast talking to regain his trust.

The mercenaries use the available cover to their best advantage, not wanting to get involved in a knockdown fight. Their freeze-foam grenades can be used to lock down the runners in the hallway. If the lieutenant is badly wounded, or more than three of his men are badly wounded, he tosses freeze-foam grenades down the hallway toward the runners to block the tunnel while he and his people escape. The team then focuses fire on anyone who is left on their side of the foam and runs. Knowing this plan, all of the mercenary thugs do their best to stay out of melee range unless they are obviously winning.

### Finally there

When the runners reach Wagner, the Penose data-broker is anxious and jumpy. He is camped out in a fallout shelter with a portable generator and a handful of smugglers. Inside the shelter, sections have been made of tarps and sheets to quarter off small one meter by two meter sleeping areas with blankets tossed over the concrete floor. Most of the smugglers are armed with heavy pistols and the occasional machine pistol. They don't want any trouble and have given Wagner their hospitality on behalf of Brecht.

Wagner gives them the information if they are able to escort him out of town (if the runners did anything to Brecht or sold out Wagner to the Vory, the informant is already on the run). Navigating a different path out of the tunnels should make for a nervous several hours for the runners as more sounds of gunfire echo through the passages from other ambushes. Gamemasters can use Vory soldiers, more mercenary teams coming to collect a bounty, or paracritters that have made the passage their home to add problems for the runners. Once they are back on the surface, Jane contacts Anya to make arrangements to leave town. The runners can either take Wagner with them to Europort via train, which is faster but has the possibility of customs checks or other security measures, or pay to smuggle him out of the city. Jane is covering their travel expenses and takes care of the train ticket if he's joining them. If the runners want to be free of their burden, they can pay to have him smuggled out, but Jane won't cover it. The cost to pay for Wagner to be smuggled out of the city is 2,500¥.

If the runners do not have the ability to get through customs, Jane arranges through Anya for a smuggler boat to take them out as the tide shifts and Wagner gives them the information. Hardy Wagner will want to tag along, and Frosty has space. If the runners use this chance to give him to the Vory, or if they are seen

leaving with him, they will have complications waiting for them in Europort.

Once he has successfully left the city, or if the team swears to take him with them when they leave, Wagner tells them that the thief who stole the Phaistos Disc is Malcolm Carella of the Loose Cannons. The Cannons are a runner team based out of Europort that specializes in theft and espionage.

## PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

The political rally can easily turn into a full-scale riot with police forces using riot tactics and engaging with super squirts, tear gas, and stun batons. Obviously armed or armored runners are treated as resisting arrest and actively targeted by law enforcement and other demonstrators. Once the police begin their assault, the crowd panics. Runners need to make a Body + Gymnastics (2) Test to avoid being knocked to the ground (modifiers for balance help with this test). Any runner who is knocked down needs to resist 3S with Impact armor as the crowd tramples them. This damage repeats every Combat Turn if the runner doesn't retake their feet through the same Body + Gymnastics (2) Test. Larger characters may help their teammates by increasing the threshold of their own test by 1; for every +1 to their threshold, the character may give a +2 dice pool modifier to another character.

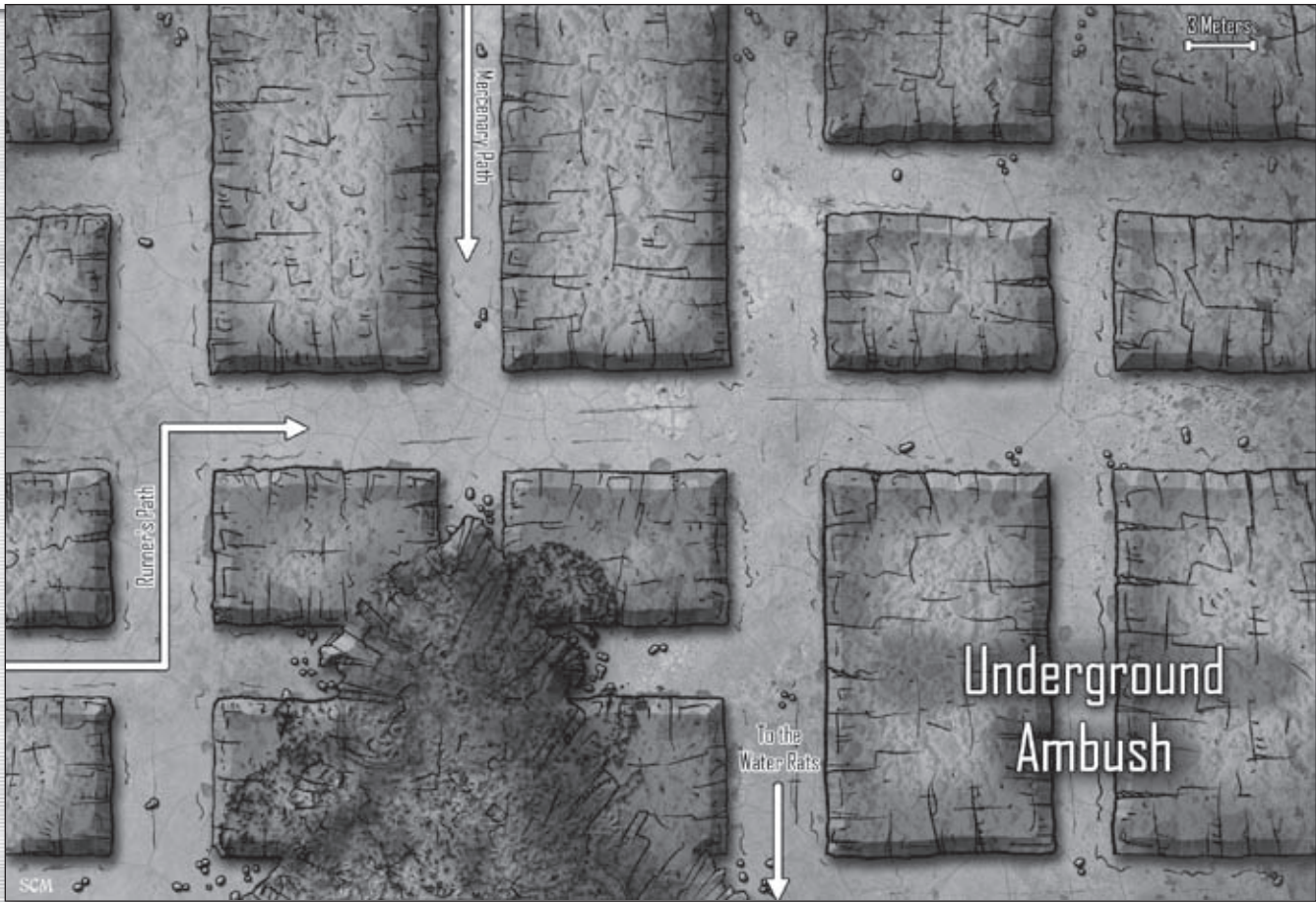
Gamemasters can also increase the number of mercenaries or have them lay booby traps in the hallway. AP grenades with a radio detonator are very difficult to spot if placed underwater in the bad lighting. A Perception+ Intuition (3) Test with a -4 dice pool modifier (in addition to specific vision penalties for light source) spots the grenade before it detonates.

## DEBUGGING

If the runners try to call Brecht's bluff and not play by his rules, he drops off the grid, and the easy route to finding Wagner is gone. Launching a trace on the last known location of the commlink leads the runners into the middle of the rally where shattered pieces of electronics litter the ground. It looks like he dismantled the commlink and dumped pieces as he walked, and the pieces were then crushed underfoot by protesters. Runner teams at this point will need to find another route to Wagner.

Some runners may attempt Ritual Sorcery as a means of bypassing part of the adventure. As they do not have a material link or know where the disc is, they must utilize a Symbolic Link. This requires the Sympathetic Linking metamagic technique, and creating the object is an Intuition + Artisan (16, 1 day) Test (see "Symbolic Links," p. 29, *Street Magic*) If they tell Frosty of their plan, she tells them to go about finding the disc the traditional way. There are other assets working on the magic side of the search.





INCOMING FEED.....

## LOCATIONS OF NOTE

### Anya's Warehouse

The warehouse is a wide, low building roughly two kilometers from the docks. It has a large bay door at either end, broad and tall enough for a tractor-trailer with a shipping container to fit. There is a smaller door on the north end of the building, a few meters from the bay door. Inside, shipping containers line the walls. The path directly from one bay door to the next is clear to allow a truck to pull in, offload, and pull out without turning around.

A narrow catwalk surrounds the edge of the warehouse on the second floor and crisscrosses the warehouse to provide overhead access to containers. A large crane moves along the bottom of the catwalk to move the shipping containers off trucks. At the north end of the second floor sits Anya's office. It is sparsely decorated, and in all items function trumps form.

### Hotel Stella Maris

With comfortable rooms and easy accommodations, the hotel is decorated in a classic nautical theme. Each hotel room has a bed, writing desk, and closet. Runners who leave their bags in the room find that the housekeeping staff unpacks the clothing into the closet and dresser. Any weapons or body armor are left in the bags. Downstairs, there is a library of false bookfronts that each function as the actual book in AR. Reading the books in the

library is free, but there is a charge to copy the files for permanent storage (ranging from 10–50¥ per book).

The hotel is located near the harbor, and the wind carries a pungent odor.

### Tower Bar

The Tower Bar is a locals' bar in the shadows. Situated in the red-light district of St Pauli, the Tower is on the top two floors of a seven-story building. When the hotel below it went out of business, the bar manager bought the rest of the building and now leases out floors to various groups. While he does his best to keep the locals from clashing with each other, the occasional brawl occurs between splinter groups in the region.

Runners are met with suspicion at first as the regulars heap their habitual paranoia on the newcomers. Like most people in local watering holes, the locals do not like unknown factors making trouble. If the team is able to prove that they aren't undercover Interpol agents or Vory operatives, the bar can serve as a font of information. Etiquette and Legwork Tests can be done in the bar for any shadow- or syndicate-related activities in Hamburg. If any of the runners ask about Wagner, reactions initially range from ignorant to curious. The current climate of the shadows is tense, and groups are trying to stay unaligned. Several different Rad Groups are represented in the bar; most of them support secession and talk at length about the need for a Free City, unbound by the corrupt NEEC and AGS lapdogs.





## GRUNTS AND MOVING TARGETS

### Jan Brecht, Ork Smuggler

Jan Brecht is a Water Rat, a specialized smuggler based out of Hamburg who uses the underground and often-flooded tunnels to smuggle goods in and out of the city. Brash and sometimes overbearing, he is actually a coward when it comes to a fair fight. The smuggler is used to his physical size being enough to intimidate most people, helping him avoid confrontation. When skirmishes break out, Brecht prefers to take cover, wrapped inside several layers of reinforced steel and using vehicles and drones to take out threats.

**B A R S C I L W Edg Ess Init IP**  
 8 5 5(6) 5 3 4 4 3 2 3 9(10) 1(2)

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

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 8/6

**Skills:** Dodge 2, Etiquette (Smugglers) 2 (+2), Electronic Warfare 3, Hacking 2, Gunnery 4, Mechanic Skill group 4, Navigation 4, Perception 3, Pilot Watercraft (Jet Skis) 6 (+2), Pilot Ground Craft 5, Pistols 2, Swimming 5, Unarmed Combat 1

**Knowledge Skills:** Auto Mechanic 4, Harbor Patrol Tactics 4, Nautical Mechanic 5, Smuggling Routes 4

**Languages:** German (N), Dutch 3, Polish 2, Russian 3

**Augmentations:** Control Rig, Commlink (Device Rating 6), Datajack, Sim Module, Wired Reflexes 1

**Programs:** Analyze 6, Command 5, ECCM 5, Encrypt 4, Scan 5, Spoof 5, Stealth 5

**Autosofts:** Clearsight 3, Defense 3, Electronic Warfare 3, Maneuver (Ground Craft) 3, Maneuver (Watercraft) 4

**Gear:** Commlink (Rating 4), survival kit, medkit (Rating 4), armor jacket, 2 fake sins (ags, neec), GPS unit, Mk-V agent (Rating 5), ultrasound goggles, glowwand

#### Weapons:

Colt Manhunter [Heavy Pistol, 5P, AP -1, SA, RC -, 15 (c), w/ laser sight]

Knife [Blade, DV 4P, AP -]

### Hardy Wagner, Penose Data Broker

Smart enough to know when to fight and when to hide, Hardy is hiding behind friends. The data broker is wiry and nervous about placing his life in the hands of others. He has slight tick that causes the left side of his mouth to twitch upwards into a smile.

**B A R S C I L W Edg Ess Init IP**  
 4 3 5 3 2 5 4 3 3 3.8 10 1

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

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 8/6

**Skills:** Athletics Skill group 1, Cybercombat 5, Dodge 4, Electronics Skill group 4, Electronic Warfare 4, Hacking 5, Perception 3, Pistols 1

**Knowledge Skills:** Corporate Economics 4, Data Havens 4, Matrix Security 3, Money Laundering 5, System Design 3  
**Languages:** Dutch N, German N, Russian 2, French 2  
**Qualities:** Bilingual, Codeslinger (Hacking on the Fly), Combat Paralysis

**Augmentations:** Attention Co-Processor, Cybereyes Rating 2 (w/Flare Compensation, Low-Light, Vision Enhancement 2, Smartlink), Datajack, Encephalon (Rating 2)

**Gear:** 3 disposable commlinks (Rating 2), 1 disposable commlink (Rating 5) (in use), armor jacket

**Programs:** Analyze 5, Armor 5, Attack 5, Biofeedback Filter 5, Blackhammer 3, Browse 5, Command 3, Decrypt 4, Edit 5, Scan 5, Spoof 3, Stealth 5, Track 3

**Weapons:**

Ruger Super Warhawk [Heavy Pistol, DV 6P, AP -2, SS, RC -, 6 (cy), w/ smartgun]

**Mercenary Lieutenant—Professional Rating 4**

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
6	5 (6)	4 (6)	4 (5)	3	5	3	4	1.8	9 (11)	1 (3)

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 14/8

**Skills:** Close Combat Skills group 4, Etiquette (Syndicate) 3 (+2), Dodge 3, Longarms (Shotguns) 5 (+2), Infiltration 3, Perception 3, Pilot Groundcraft 4, Pilot Watercraft 1, Survival (Urban) 1 (+2), Thrown Weapons 2

**Qualities:** High Pain Tolerance 3

**Augmentations:** Cybereyes (Rating 1 w/Smartlink, Vision Enhancement 1); Wired Reflexes 2, Muscle Replacement 1

**Gear:** Armor jacket, form-fitting body armor full suit, commlink (Rating 4)

**Weapons:**

Knife [Blade, DV 4P, AP -]  
 Stun Baton [Club, DV 6S(e), AP -half, Reach 1]  
 Franchi SPAS-22 [Shotgun, DV 8P; AP -2, SA/BF, RC(1), 10(m) w/ smartgun, ex-ex rounds]  
 Freeze-Foam Grenade (3) [Rating 6]

**Mercenary Thugs—Professional Rating 4 (5)**

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
4	5 (6)	4 (5)	4 (5)	3	4	3	4	2.8	8 (9)	1 (2)

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 8/6

**Skills:** Close Combat Skill group 3, Etiquette (Syndicate) 1 (+2), Dodge 3, Longarms (Shotguns) 3 (+2), Infiltration 3, Perception 3, Pilot Groundcraft 2, Pilot Watercraft 1, Survival (Urban) 1 (+2)

**Qualities:** High Pain Tolerance 3

**Augmentations:** Cybereyes (Rating 1 w/Smartlink, Vision Enhancement 1); Wired Reflexes 1, Muscle Replacement 1

**Gear:** Armor jacket, commlink (Rating 4)

**Weapons:**

Knife [Blade, DV 4P, AP -]  
 Stun Baton [Club, DV 6S(e), AP -half, Reach 1]  
 Franchi SPAS-22 [Shotgun, DV 7P; AP -1, SA/BF, RC (1), 10(m) w/ smartgun]

**VW Sleipnir (Minivan)**

Modified with Amenities (High), Passenger Protection 2, Anti-Theft System 2.

Hand	Accel	Speed	Pilot	Body	Armor	Sensor	Firewall	Analyze
0	10/30	120	2	14	6	2	4	4

**TO FIND A THIEF**

**SCAN THIS**

The data broker's information takes the runners to Europort to catch a thief: Malcom Carella. While the initial plan is to grab him and get the disc back, this is complicated by the fact that he's already been caught. Runners need to get inside a secure facility run by a joint task force of corporations to talk with Malcolm Carella. He has already delivered the artifact to his buyer, but he will tell the runners who the buyer was in exchange for getting him out. There are plenty of obstacles facing the runners; an array of corporations want to keep Carella locked up until he can testify to corporate espionage and theft on behalf of S-K against the task force, while S-K Prime is working at eliminating Carella before he becomes a problem.

**TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT**

**If the runners travel by train, read the following:**

The train ride from Hamburg to Europort takes nearly four hours, with a layover in Hannover. Wagner jumps at every noise and is in high-adrenaline mode. Your team is all grouped together in a private cabin to give you some semblance of security. Jane is turned with her feet on the bench next to her curled up in the corner with her head in a pillow. The idea of sleep sounds good, but the frantic energy of the informant has awakened you up each time you tried. You hear quiet whispers come from Jane every little while, half-formed words in several languages.

The upside is that you have plenty of time to talk and hash out your plan for how to get the information out of Carella about where he is hiding the disc. Thirty minutes before the train is due to pull into the station, attendants begin walking down the aisles, knocking on cabin doors for SIN checks. They are thorough, posting attendants at bathrooms and not allowing anyone to pass by them without their SIN being verified. An announcement comes over the speaker system.

"Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to Europort. Please set all PANs to Active and broadcast SIN information at all times that you are in the train terminal. Violators will be cited and fined. All non-corporate personnel must pass through customs and be ready to declare any commercial or dangerous goods."

**If the runners travel by sea, read the following:**

After forty minutes of bouncing along on the back of a jet ski, your team boards a powerboat and sets out for Europort. You spent the night crashing over waves and across wakes, a bone-numbing experience that leaves you sore and exhausted. As you enter the harbor, you see mile after mile of automated loading/unloading facilities. Everywhere you look, loaders and heavy drones move containers and equipment. Corporate security forces stand at attention, and logos are spread across every surface that can hold one. The captain maneuvers his boat past the commercial docks into a small marina.





At the entrance to the marina, you see three men in pea coats talking with guards and smoking. One of them waves a hand behind his back, gesturing for you to move past quickly. Past the collection of figures at the gate, you see two orks moving a crate of vodka out of a pickup truck and setting it conspicuously near the guard shack. Welcome to Europort.

**If the runners contact the Loose Cannons, read the following:**

Ten minutes after leaving a message in the drop box, your commlink vibrates and a young woman's face scrolls across your vision. In the space behind her you can see what looks to be a troll's elbow, sharp dermal deposits thrusting out of the skin.

"What do you want? And before you ask, no, I didn't listen to your message. The fact that you left one means you want something, and I'd rather hear it direct." As she talks, the woman turns slightly and shoves bodily against something outside of the monitor range, but the troll's arm slips away. Her hair slips aside and you can see the sharply pointed ear of an elf, with enough piercings to make it look like she replaced her ear with sterling silver.

**If the runners schedule a meeting, read the following:**

"Yeah, we'll be down here for another hour or two. Come by the Blue Rhapsody, tell Golas you are 'here to see the kids.' Don't mention us by name, don't say anything else. Just say 'we're here to see the kids,' got it? It's an easy phrase, so don't fuck it up." As the woman tells you the pass phrase, she makes little quote signs in the air. It's obvious that she's done this before, and at least once, someone has not followed the instructions.

**Upon arriving at the Blue Rhapsody, read the following:**

Golas leads you back through the kitchen to a private meeting room. There is a muffled noise coming from inside the room, which quickly turns into full shouting as soon as the door is opened. The shouts break off in mid-tirade as the team turns to look at you. You recognize the woman from your commcall and guess that the troll across the table was the one whose arm was in the picture before.

"You made it. May as well sit down and tell us what was so bloody important. If you want to talk to Malcolm, you'll need to convince us that it's okay."

One thing strikes you as strange when you look around the room: there are several glasses, bottles of soda, and pitchers of water. For a meeting in the back room of a bar, the containers all seem oddly free of alcohol.

## BEHIND THE SCENES

Traveling to Europort is a very different experience based on which method the runners chose. Security at the train station is standard fare as described above (p. 10, *Travel on the Fly*). There is a wireless signal the entire time for runners to access so they can start their legwork. Teams that were smuggled out do not pass through security but must be able to carry all of their gear in a single large duffel bag across their back. Gear that won't fit can be sold for ten percent of its street value or left with Anya to hold (it will be up to the runners to come back and get it). There are no wireless signals available on the boat as the smugglers do not want to risk the coast guard finding them.

Players with ground transportation may also choose to drive themselves to Europort. The drive takes about six hours plus any time added for incidents along the way. Travel this way can include encounters with auto-duelists, a beautiful view of the toxic countryside, and border checkpoints. Teams that include travel specialists or have smuggler contacts may choose to fly, taking into consideration the security procedures (Frosty would prefer to avoid commercial air travel, in case Samriel is still searching for her).

Depending on how much legwork the team started while on the train or driving (no legwork is possible on the boat), they should start by trying to find signs of Carella. Jane tells the team that she is going to go check them into the Bastion Hotel on the edge of the city and update her employer on where they are. They will know where to find her, but Jane wants to give the team a free leash, suspecting that they do better when she isn't staring over their shoulders. Saeder-Krupp has a large investment in running Europort, and Jane has agreed to stay off the grid while in Lofwyr's backyard.

### EUROPORT ADMINISTRATIVE RULING COUNCIL (EARC)

An administrative body composed of the twelve largest local corporations, the EARC supports and maintains the financial well-being of the city. Through wolf-pack social tactics, the group polices their member corps internally. While S-K is the powerhouse of the EARC, Regulus provides most of the arbitration between infighters. Regulus serves as the neutral entity between warring factions and has been crucial in maintaining the balance of power.

Urgent Message...

When the team starts to look for Malcolm Carella, they find his name in the newsfeeds. A Data Search + Browse (16, 1 hour) Extended Test discovers that he was taken into "protective custody" by a group of corporations (ESUS, DeBeers, and WWS) who are running an inquiry on behalf of the Europort Administration Ruling Council into recent corporate espionage believed to have been perpetuated by S-K. Carella is being kept inside a Regulus detention center to keep him safe. Regulus is a member of the EARC but is taking a neutral position in the matter. This obviously puts a damper on the team's ability to question him on the location of the Phaistos Disc.

Carella is the long-standing leader of a runner team known as the Loose Cannons. They are based out of Europort and do jobs all across Europe. Talking with the rest of Carella's team can be marginally helpful. The team is currently planning how to get him out, with their youngest member (Widget) running roughshod over the others as the new de facto leader. Emilio, the heavy weapons specialist, is suggesting that they should let Carella twist, while the others want to go in guns blazing and respond with overwhelming force. The Loose Cannons have a basic but incomplete





DAWN OF THE ARTIFACTS: DARKEST HOUR . . . . .

INCOMING FEED.....



layout of the facility since Carella's contacts have dried up and won't talk to them for fear of him selling them out. The team can give the runners the facility floor plan and assist in drawing some of the guards away, but looking at the info, they are unable to complete the job alone.

If the runners have met with the Loose Cannons and are on positive terms, asking about the Phaistos Disc garners a small bit of information. They all recognize a picture of the disc as one of the artifacts stolen from the Heraklion Museum. Widget knows that the goods were all shipped to a location in San Francisco via a slow-moving cargo ship. However, Carella removed the disc just before the container was sealed. He paid each of them an extra 5,000 nuyen and said that the disc was being sent to a different buyer.

#### Option A for Action

The team may choose to break into the facility. JJane would prefer them ghosting in without leaving evidence, talking to Carella, and breaking back out. She will stay at the hotel and wait for them. She's a good shot, but one more pistol isn't going to be the deciding factor in this fight. If the runners work with the Loose Cannons, the other team can provide a distraction while the runners break in. An Opposed Leadership Test can be used to convince Carella's team to change specific aspects of their plan.

Widget believes that successfully hacking into the system can give the team access to a full layout and security map of the facility. Some of this information is loaded into the administrative node rather than the security node—the security node keeps track of coordinates that overlay the map in the administrative section. Hackers in the administrative node can search for prisoner logs. The prisoner logs show booking histories as well as prisoner transfers and bunking. Currently Carella is in cell S-9 (Solitary 9), but there was a change made to his file to transfer him to general population in 48 hours. This change was made by a Saeder-Krupp hacker to make Carella an easier target. One of the Regulus guards has been paid to kill Carella during an "attempted escape" that will be faked twelve hours after the transfer. S-K has planned this to appear as if Carella arranged for a prison breakout. Runners should also realize that once Carella is mixed with the general population of the holding facility, getting him alone to talk to will be much more difficult.

#### Option B for Bureaucracy

Contrary to what the Loose Cannons believe, there is an option for getting in and talking to Carella that doesn't require blowing the building to kingdom come. The EARC, and Europort in general, is full of bureaucracy, a by-product of corporate living. The bureaucracy supports paperwork, and it is possible to work through connections with any of the corporations



Urgent Message...

### THE (NOT-SO-GREAT) PLAN, ACCORDING TO THE LOOSE CANNONS:

Monitor signals in and out of the building, using a Sniffer program, then Spoof a prisoner transfer order. After the order has been inserted into the system, fly into the building. Land on helipad, take down guards using overwhelming firepower. Leave Emilio in helicopter with Widget to detonate charges on the street as oncoming vehicles respond. He also keeps an eye on Widget while she is in the Matrix.

Widget brings her registered Paladin to protect her while she threads up a Blackout to crush active Matrix users, and she commands a Rating 5 Crack Sprite to crash all the icons.

Problems: The Loose Cannons can lay the charges and tackle the external security, but there aren't enough of them to manage the interior security forces as well. An attempted rescue would result in their entire team being overrun and captured. Also, if they go hot, any attempts to actually breach the building will be met by Regulus Elite Forces.

besides Saeder-Krupp to get in to see Carella. While the EARC is a corporate enclave and immune from extradition laws, they don't want to actively hinder an ongoing criminal investigation. Runners can con their way through the layers of red tape for an interview with the thief. A successful Con + Charisma (10, 1 day) Extended Test convinces the bureaucratic system that a runner should be allowed in to complete an interview. Runners with appropriate licenses, such as a journalist, or a contact within the corporation can receive a positive dice pool modifier on the test based on the rating of the fake license or the loyalty of the contact.

Getting in for the interview also involves a full background check with biometric data. Doing this requires placing their SIN on record and having it verified, an Opposed Test between the rating of the fake SIN and a Rating 6 SIN verification system. A small DNA sample is taken as well by pricking the thumb of the runner (this is a standard verification system for secure locations). The runner who completes this background check is then allowed in, checked for weapons, and allowed to have a recorded conversation with the prisoner.

A similar process can be done with Carella's lawyer to engage the lawyer in the conversation. If this happens, the conversation is not recorded due to lawyer/client privilege. The NEEC has maintained this privilege due to the benefits that it offers their corporate citizens; other discussions that are considered privileged in other jurisdictions, such as a doctor or priest, are not given the same consideration here.

#### Option C for Corporate Communications

Teams that reach out to corporate contacts and fixers for assistance in navigating the Europort corporate waters are directed

to Jakob Schultz. Schultz can be found at Trippoli Desserts and is connected throughout the EARC from his role as an ESUS internal negotiator assigned to the EARC. Due to the role ESUS played in capturing Carella, they are allowed unlimited access to the prisoner. If the runners are willing to do a favor for Schultz or pay for the favor, he arranges for Carella to be transported to an ESUS enclave. Any conversations the runners have with Carella at the enclave are recorded.

The favor Schultz requests is based on the talents of the team, ranging from corporate espionage to wetwork. The details of the project are left up to the gamemaster to design. Suggestions include breaking into a local "coffeehouse" and changing ingredients to a more lethal mix, or infiltrating one of the corporate cliques to recover intel from an asset that fell in too deep.

#### Talking with Carella

What the Loose Cannons don't know is that Carella does not want to escape. When they reach him, he tells the runners that if he escapes, there will be an S-K Prime team waiting to erase him. He's not stupid or suicidal, and staying in protective custody will work until this is all over. As long as he stays in solitary, he will be fine.

Carella admits that he stole the disc for Hermann Meyer—the other items were all delivered to private collections or placed inside containers to go to a dealer in San Francisco. The disc was supposed to go there too, but he was paid extra and rerouted it to Meyer instead. The items were shipped on a cargo freighter that took twelve weeks to arrive.

If the runners mention Frosty, Carella asks if they mean Jane Foster, then asks whether or not her boyfriend is in town. He says he did some work for "the elf" back in '63. Runners will be able to sense an obvious animosity towards Jane and more specifically her boyfriend. If the runners probe into it, they can find out that Carella was hired to break into a French manor house and steal a sword. The job was a bust, and afterwards his mage spent three months hallucinating and screaming. She eventually committed suicide to stop the nightmares. In Carella's opinion whatever the runners are being paid isn't enough. "That fucker," he says, referring to Jane's mysterious boyfriend, "is a user—he doesn't care if people get hurt as long as the goal is met."

#### From Bad to Worse

Georgiy Abolev and his bodyguards are in town after rumors that Frosty is in their backyard. If the runners have done any data searches related to artifacts like the Phaistos Disc while in Europort, the Apep Consortium knows about the item. Otherwise, the meeting is more informal as the Russian and his two bodyguards try to talk with the runners about their job. Subtle threats are exchanged, and the runners gain a tail that they will have to lose unless they want the Apep following them.

#### PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

There are plenty of ways to push the envelope here. Increasing the number and skill of the guards is the easiest way, but alternatives include throwing in an S-K Prime team that is

DAWN OF THE ARTIFACTS: DARKEST HOUR



## APEP CONSORTIUM

The latest major entrant into the arcanoarchaeology field, the Apep Consortium is a collection of interests that finances large-scale dig sites. Most of the investors are not interested in history and little is known about the actual agenda of this group. It is clear that they pilfer more than preserve history.

The Apep Consortium was involved in the events of *Dusk* and the auction of the Piri Reis Map. Their representative Georgiy Abolev wants to get his hands on the map and any other artifacts that the runners are helping Frosty find. He is willing to pay them highly for the items and uses any means necessary to accomplish his task.

infiltrating the facility at the same time to kill Carella while he is in custody. This would not change the hacking that another team from S-K has already done. The team uses the cover and distraction that the Loose Cannons are providing and surges past them to get inside.

For a more difficult social encounter, Georgiy and his bodyguards could be badgering Jane while the team is halfway through to Carella. Jane can't use her magic and is caught at a disadvantage as the four Russians push past hospitality. The Apep Consortium representative has brought with him a trained paracritter, a small cat with the Influence power, to subtly coerce Jane into talking. Have the runners receive a text message from Jane while she is obviously distracted that reads "Need help, come soon." This will force the runners to decide whether they want to finish the job that they started or go back to help Jane knowing that failure now means that it is even harder to get to Carella.

## DEBUGGING

If Carella dies (either due to the team's actions or inaction), the Loose Cannons have nothing more to do with the runners—with the exception of Emilio. The troll tells them that Carella had a safe deposit box at the Frankfurt Bank Association (FBA). The runners can arrange a bank job if necessary to get the information. Exact details on the bank job are left to the gamemaster's discretion to build around the runner's abilities. Runners who leave evidence behind in a bank robbery need to think quickly as they go to Frankfurt, the home of the FBA and the city that is half-owned by the bank.

## LOCATIONS OF NOTE

### Bastion Hotel-Rotterdam

The hotel is rundown by the standards of the rest of the city, settled on the outskirts of the enclave and outside any extra-territorial zone. It is six stories tall, with bright green and yellow stucco in an eye-catching checkered pattern that begins to hurt the brain if it is stared at for too long. The windows are coated semi-transparently with the same colors, brightening the overcast sky and lending color to the gray light. At the concierge desk is a tall dwarf with Algerian features in her late twenties. She has sharp eyes and a sculpted beauty that shows she has been under the knife a few times. Jane registers the team for a set of three connected suites, placing herself in the left-most suite. Each suite has a communal area and separated sleeping rooms. There are doorways between the communal areas connecting the rooms together. The sleeping areas each have two beds plus the couch in the communal area unfolds to provide a third.

### Rhapsody Blues

A tavern in the old sense, the Rhapsody Blues is conservatively decorated with booths lining the right side of the building, and an outdoor patio. On the left side, tables with comfortable chairs and benches are spread sporadically around. The tables are moved regularly to accommodate different-sized crowds and the servers adjust easily. A full bar operates in the middle of the room with people coming up to place orders and wait-staff running back and forth between the bar and tables. At the end of the building is a small stage and dance floor that is roughly twenty-five meters square. During the evenings, the dance floor is often standing-room only with people shoved tight near each other drinking and talking rather than dancing.

There is a private meeting room off of the kitchen in the back that regulars can rent by the hour for meetings. A successful Negotiation Test is required before Golas rents it to new customers. The room has a conference room table large enough to seat ten people and a white noise generator (Rating 4). It is painted in a drab gray color with Wi-Fi-blocking paint (Rating 4).

### Trippoli Desserts

Originally a Dutch "coffeehouse," the Trippoli changed when the new owners decided to add more desserts to the menu and specialize in custom creations. Most of the treats are laced with legalized narcotics and must be consumed on the premises. The design is ultra-modern indoors with glass and chrome everywhere. There is a small covered patio for café patrons to watch passersby while they eat.



## REGULUS HOLDING FACILITY

### Physical Security

There are eight Ares Sentinel R Series drones, upgraded with Pilot 5, Targeting (Longarms) 5, and Targeting (Automatics) 5 programs. They are armed with Ares HVAR modified with a hundred-round drum feed and a safe targeting system. The drones are loaded with gel rounds. The rails for the drones are mounted along the perimeter fence and the drones are capable of firing into or out of the compound. The drones are slaved to Node 3.

The compound has solitary confinement cells for nine and general population cells (two prisoners per cell) for eighty. All the prisoners are chipped with a hardened stealth tag implanted along the artery beneath their jawbone and a radioactive isotope in their left upper arm. The radiation is filtered out after six weeks. Long-term prisoners have the isotope updated as needed.

A Matrix Search (Threshold 24) turns up aerial photos and supposed floor plans (rough maps from former inmates). There are no public maps. All contractors were in-house and materials were charged to the Global Security Infrastructure budget.

The compound is physically removed from the city with flat, open terrain surrounding it for one kilometer in all directions. Sneaking up on the facility is very difficult. In the field surrounding the facility, there are pressure plates set to go off for anything above twenty kilograms. Rating 6 sensor emplacements

are mounted along the fence pointing outward, with low-light and thermographic cameras, radar, and motion-detection capabilities. The sensors are aimed low for ground coverage, and the building relies on the radar system for anything that is more than fifty meters above the ground.

### Matrix

**Sculpting:** The site's Matrix system is sculpted to look like a standard police station and processing center.

**Hardware:** A custom system, with Persona limit 20 and Processor limit 60.

**Authentication:** Node 1 and 3: Passkey (Nanotech Passkey for Node 3)

**Node 2 & 4:** Linked Passcode

### Privileges:

**Node 3:** Security and Admin only

**Node 1, 2, and 4:** Standard

### Attributes:

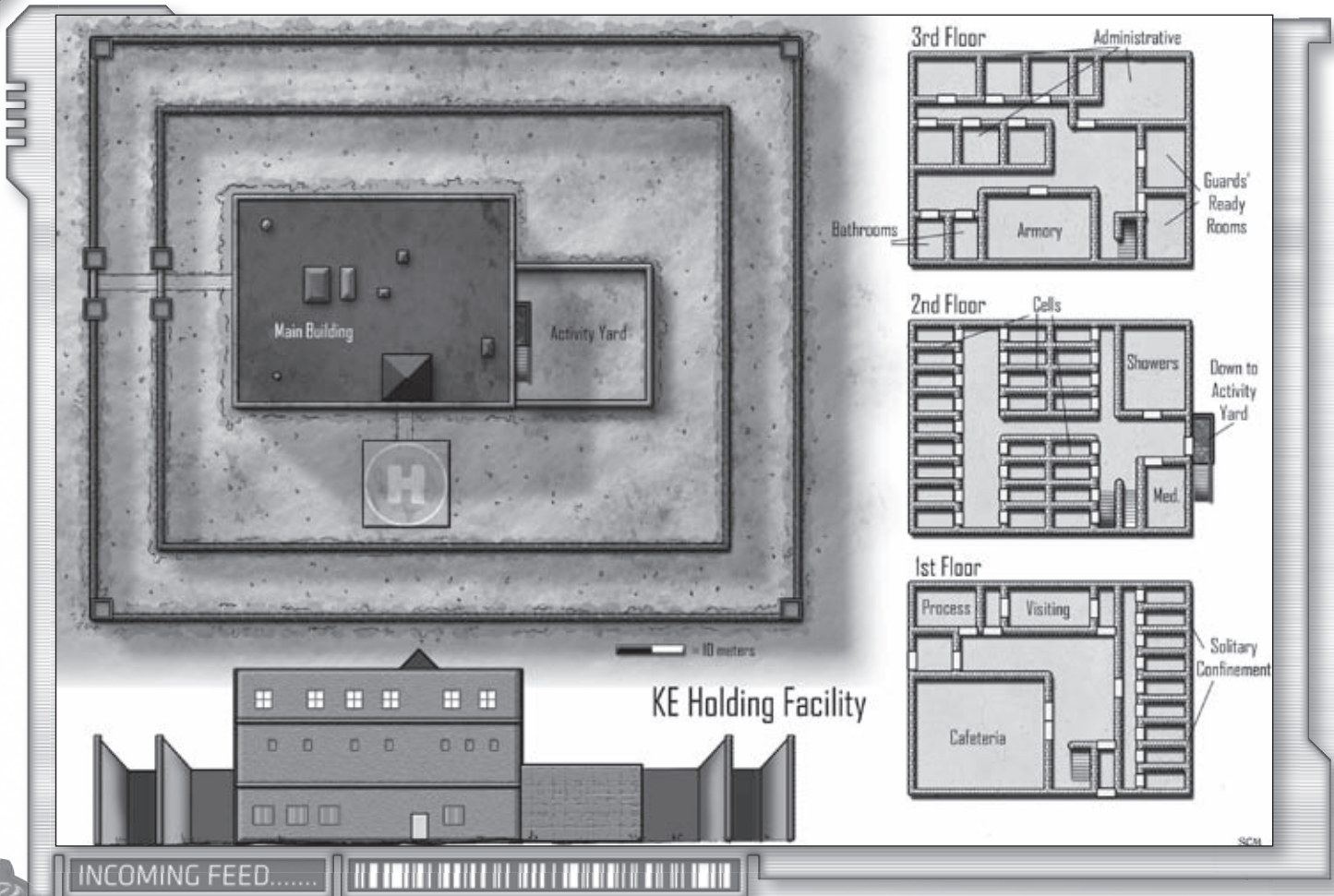
**Node 1:** Firewall 6, Response 5, Signal 3, System 5

**Node 2-4:** Firewall 6, Response 4, Signal 1, System 5

**Spiders:** Matrix Support Specialist on duty at all times, splitting time between each node.

Professional spider on duty in Security Node (monitoring security systems, cameras, and drones) at all times. (p. 69, *Unwired*)

DAWN OF THE ARTIFACTS: DARKEST HOUR



INCOMING FEED.....



## IC:

**Node 1:** Three Musketeers Suite (Rating 5)

### Resident Programs:

**Node 1:** Analyze 5

**Node 2-4:** Analyze 4

**Node 4:** Encrypt 5 (files)

**ARC:** Alert Spider

**Topology:** Node 1 is a chokepoint node, with connections to the matrix via a satellite link. Node 2 is for the on-site personnel, for entertainment and communication. Node 3 is the security node. Node 4 is the administrative node.

### Magical Security

The entire area has accrued a minor background count due to the emotions of the prisoners. The on-site mage has used geomancy to transform the -2 Background count into a Rating 2 Domain for Dragonslayer. Because he was not allowed to change the layout of the building, he must complete the ritual every month.

There is also an active astral patrol made up of a Force 7 Spirit of Man and five Watcher Spirits. The patrol is tasked with alerting the mage if any intruders approach within fifty meters of the complex.

### Human Resources

The facility is guarded by forty regulars, an on-site combat mage, and ten elite guards. The regulars provide coverage as both the prison guards and facility security, drawing support from the elite guards as required for riot suppression or in dealing with terrorist (read: shadowrunner) attacks. The mage provides wards around key areas of the building and an ongoing astral patrol.

One benefit offered to the guards at this duty assignment is that there are no surprise inspections. All visits by high-ranking officials are planned ten days or more in advance. If runners attempt to con their way into the facility using this technique, they are buzzed into the entry foyer, an airlock structure for security purposes, and gassed with CS/Tear Gas (p. 255, *SR4A*). They are left in the room for the two minutes it takes the gas to be rendered inert. Note: Gamemasters can choose to either have the toxin resisted once per Combat Turn, or increase the power by 1 per Combat Turn exposed and roll only two Resistance Tests (one every 10 Combat Turns).

## GRUNTS AND MOVING TARGETS

### Winter

Winter is the Bastion Hotel night shift concierge and madame. She can get the runners any entertainment that they may need while in the hotel as well as any illicit substances. The only restriction is that all substance use must be used in guest rooms and not in a public part of the hotel. Winter has long blonde hair with dark roots suggesting that the color came from a bottle.

### Summer

Summer serves as the Bastion Hotel day shift concierge and tour guide. In contrast to her sister's choice of bringing entertainment into the hotel, Summer specializes in matters outside the hotel. Any request for a museum, restaurant, or boutique immediately results in a handful of suggestions from her. Summer keeps her dark hair cut short with bangs just long enough to frame her face.

Both sisters speak French fluently with a very light north-African accent. They also speak German, English, and Dutch professionally.

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

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

**Skills:** Etiquette 5, Negotiation 4, Perception 3

**Knowledge Skills:** Adjust by sister.

### Golas

A Fomorian troll speaking with a thick accent, Golas is the owner of the Rhapsody Blues and bartends every night. He lives in an apartment above the bar. Natively from Edinburgh, Golas lived in Seattle for many years before coming back to Europe. He settled in Europort about two years ago and found a niche serving drinks and not asking questions. The troll is a fifth generation barkeep who doesn't have any grand plans about doing anything besides serving drinks.

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

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 11

**Skills:** Blades 4, Etiquette 5, Negotiation 4, Perception 3

**Knowledge Skills:** Alcohol 3, Bartending 3, Mixology 6

### Jakob Schultz

A retired DeBeers negotiator who works out of the Trippoli Desserts café, Jakob Schultz specializes in the Europort shadow community and prides himself on knowing as much as possible. The ork keeps a team of heavy hitters nearby at all times, though generally at least one of them is under the influence of the drug of the week.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	Init
3	3	3	2	6	5	3	5	4	6	8

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

**Skills:** Computer 2, Con 4, Data Search 3, Etiquette 5, Negotiation 4, Perception 6, Pistols 2

**Knowledge Skills:** Corporate Politics 5, Local Rumor Mill 6, Prime Runners 4

**Quality:** Exceptional Attribute (Charisma)





## THE LOOSE CANNONS—CARELLA'S CREW

### Widget—Elf Technomancer Rigger

Young, early twenties, pale with day-glow red hair and purple highlights. Very fit and occasionally pedantic, Widget is used to giving people simple instructions and having them fail at the task. She whispers to shadows and sprites that only she can see, giving her a slightly touched air when she does her techno stuff.

**B A R S C I L W Edg Ess Res Init IP**  
3 3 3 2 4 4 3 4 4 6 6 7 (10) 1 (3)

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

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 7/5

**Skills:** Compiling 3, Cracking Skill group 4, Electronics Skill group 3, Etiquette 1, Gunnery 2, Registering 2, Perception 3, Pilot Groundcraft 3, Pilot Aircraft 4, Pistols (Machine Pistols) 2 (+2)

**Knowledge Skills:** Border Patrol Tactics 3, Smuggler Routes 3, Matrix Combat 4, Sprites 2

**Qualities:** Codeslinger (Hack on the Fly)

**Living Persona:** System 3, Response 5, Firewall 4, Signal 3

**Complex Forms:** Analyze 4, Armor 3, Attack 3, Bio-Feedback Filter 4, Blackout 5, Blackhammer 5, Command 5, Exploit 5, Scan 4, Stealth 5

**Registered Sprites:** Paladin (Rating 4, 3 services), Tank (Rating 4, 4 services)

**Gear:** Form fit body armor full-body suit, ppp helmet, vitals protector, commlink (Response 1, Signal 2, Firewall 1, System 1)

#### Weapons:

Steyr TMP [Machine Pistol, 4P, AP -, SA/BF/FA, RC -, 30 (c), w/ Gas-Vent 3, Heavy Barrel, Personalized Grip, Silencer]

### Hiver—Elf Ranged Support/First Aid

Second oldest on the team after Nerefeiz, Hiver is in his late thirties. Scandinavian features, pale skin, blonde hair, blue eyes, Hiver speaks with a French accent that comes and goes as it suits him. He is paternal and looks at Widget, Emilio, and Yuyi as kids to be protected. He knows they are competent but still watches over them.

**B A R S C I L W Edg Ess Init IP**  
5 5 (7) 6 (8) 5 (7) 5 4 2 4 4 1.6 8 (10) 1 (3)

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

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 8/6

**Skills:** Athletics Skill group 4, Automatics 2, Blades 3, Computer 3, Data Search 2, Dodge 3, Etiquette (Medical) 4 (+2), First Aid (Combat Wounds) 6 (+2), Infiltration 2, Longarms (Sniper Rifles) 6 (+2), Perception 5, Unarmed Combat 3

**Knowledge Skills:** Cybertechnology 4, Runner Haunts 5, Sniper Locations 3

**Qualities:** Will to Live 3

**Augmentations:** Cybereyes (Rating 3 w/ Flare Compensation, Low-Light, Smartlink, Thermographic), Muscle Replacement 2 (Alpha), Wired Reflexes 2 (Alpha)

**Gear:** Camouflage suit (Urban), Hermes Ikon (Response 4, Signal 3) with Novatech Navi OS (System 4, Firewall 3), medkit (Rating 6)

**Programs:** Browse 4, Edit 4

#### Weapons:

Ares Desert Strike [Sniper Rifle, 8P, AP -3, SA, RC 1, 14 (c), w/ melee hardening, APDS ammo]

### Emilio—Troll Heavy Weapons

Late twenties and sure of himself, Emilio is augmented to the gills with obvious reflective eye protectors stitched into his flesh. He is very muscular and built like a brick house. When he's not working, he regularly wears rockabilly-style dark jeans and white t-shirt stretched tight over his torso.

**B A R S C I L W Edg Ess Init IP**  
9 4 (6) 4 (6) 9 (11) 3 4 2 4 5 0.8 8 (10) 1 (3)

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

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 16/14

**Skills:** Athletics Skills group 3, Automatics 5, Blades 4, Computer 3, Data Search 4, Demolitions 4, Dodge 3, Etiquette (Street) 4 (+2), Heavy Weapons 6, Infiltration 2, Perception 3, Pilot Ground Craft (Bike) 1 (+2), Pistols 4, Unarmed Combat 5

**Knowledge Skills:** Fences 4, Firearm Design 3, Gear Value 6, Safe Houses 4, Europort Shadowrunners 4,

**Qualities:** Toughness

**Languages:** Spanish N, German 4, Dutch 2, French 2

**Augmentations:** Cybereyes (Rating 3 w/ Flare Compensation, Low-Light, Smartlink, Thermographic), Dermal Plating 2 (Alpha), Muscle Replacement 2 (Alpha), Wired Reflexes 2 (Alpha)

**Gear:** Hermes Ikon (Response 4, Signal 3) with Novatech Navi OS (System 4, Firewall 3), radio detonator (6), SWAT armor w/ helmet

**Programs:** Analyze 4, Browse 4, Edit 4, Empathy 4

#### Weapons:

Ares Vigorous Assault Cannon [Assault Cannon, 10P, -5AP, SS, RC -, 12(c)]

RPK HMG [HMG, 7P, -3AP, FA, RC (6), 40(c)]

Satchel Charges (5) [1 kg IED, 14P (-1 per 2 meters), -1AP]

### Nerefeiz—Human Face (Former Knight Errant)

In his early forties, Nerefeiz is a booze-loving retired cop who gives up the sauce when he's working but easily falls back on the bottle. Years of working vice and homicide taught him how to talk to people and get them to open up about difficult things in their lives, but he never learned to do it himself. He hides from his past and his true thoughts in a bottle of whiskey. Modern genetics have given him a kidney that won't die and purged his body of the traditional smell of long-term alcoholics.

**B A R S C I L W Edg Ess Init IP**  
3 2 2 4 5 4 3 5 3 5.15 6 1

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

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 8/3

**Skills:** Artisan 2, Computer 4, Con 4, Data Search 3, Dodge 2, Etiquette 5 (Corp +2), Instruction 3, Intimidation (Mental) 4 (+2), Leadership (Persuasion) 5 (+2), Negotiation (Diplomacy) 6 (+2), Outdoors Group 2, Perception 3, Pistols 3, Unarmed Combat 2



**Knowledge Skills:** Corp Rumors (Ares) 4 (+2), Megacorp Interests (Ares) 5 (+2), Security Procedures (Knight Errant) 4 (+2), Psychology 5, NEEC Politics (Corporate Lobbies) 5 (+2)

**Qualities:** First Impression

**Languages:** German N, Dutch 4, English 2, French 2

**Augmentations:** Sleep Regulator, Tailored Pheromones (Rating 3), Clean Metabolism

**Gear:** Actioneer business clothes, form fitting body armor (shirt), customized Transys Avalon (Response 6, Signal 6) with customized Novatech Navi OS (Firewall 5, System 6), glasses with image link, ear buds, ar gloves, sim module

**Programs:** Analyze 6, Browse 6, Edit 6, Empathy 6

**Weapons:**

Ares Predator IV [Heavy Pistol, 6P, -1AP, SA, RC -, 15 (c), w/ personalized grip, ex-ex ammo]

### Yuyi—Ork Covert Ops B/E

Very lightly built for an ork, Yuyi almost always wears traditional Noh masks or re-breathers. The team knows that something scarred her face and lungs so that pollution is much deadlier to her weakened pulmonary system. She favors quick decisive action but follows a strict code of personal honor.

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

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

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 6/4

**Skills:** Assensing 3, Astral Combat 3, Athletics Group 5, Blades 3, Dodge 5, Electronics Group 5, Pistols 4, First Aid 2, Perception 4, Stealth Group 4, Unarmed Combat 4

**Qualities:** Adept, Allergy (Pollution, Severe)

**Initiate Grade:** 3

**Metamagics:** Adept Centering, Divination, Psychometry

**Adept Powers:** Empathic Healing, Improved Senses (Flare Compensation, Direction Sense, Thermographic, Vision Magnification), Combat Sense 3, Enhanced Perception 3, Improved Reflexes 2, Improved Ability (Infiltration) 3, Traceless Walk

**Gear:** Form-fitting body armor (full suit), Securetech PPP forearm guards, Securetech PPP shin guards, Fairlight Caliban (Response 4, Signal 5) running Novatech Navi OS (System 4, Firewall 3), AR gloves, subvocal mic, contact lenses with image link and smartlink, ear buds

**Programs:** Analyze 4, Browse 4, Edit 4, Empathy 4

**Weapons:**

Ares Predator IV [Heavy Pistol, 5P, AP -1, SA, RC -, 15 (c), w/ ceramic/plasteel components 3, improved range finder, personalized grip, silencer, skinlink, APDS ammo]

### Regulus Security Unit (Professional Rating 4)—20

An experienced security unit, these men and women have been assigned to the Rotterdam security facility and pull double duty as guards for the inmates and security for the building. They have been trained to work together and will quickly form firing teams to take cover and provide suppressive fire while members of their team advance.

**B A R S C I L W Ess Init IP**  
4 (5) 5 4 (5) 4 3 4 3 4 3.48 8 (9) 1 (2)

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

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

**Skills:** Athletics Skill group 3, Close Combat Skill group 4, Dodge 4, Etiquette (Military) 1 (+2), Firearms Skill group 5, Outdoors Skill group 3, Perception 3

**Languages:** German (N), English 3

**Qualities:** Home Ground

**Augmentation:** Lone Star SWAT cyberware suite [Flare Compensation, Thermographic Vision, Smartlink; Plastic Bone Lacing; Wired Reflexes 1]

**Gear:** Light military armor w/ helmet

**Weapons:**

Stun Baton [Club, Reach 1, DV 6S(e), AP -1/2].

Modified Ares Alpha [Assault rifle, DV 6P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 42(c), w/ smartgun, gas-vent 3] (Note: The underbarrel grenade launcher has been removed and replaced with a gas vent 3)

### Regulus Combat Mage

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

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

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

**Skills:** Assensing 3, Astral Combat 3, Athletics Group 1, Close Combat Group 3, Conjuring Group 4, Etiquette (Corporate) 3 (+2), First Aid 4, Firearms Group 3, Infiltration 2, Leadership 4, Perception 4, Pilot Ground Craft 2, Sorcery Group 6

**Qualities:** Home Ground, Magician, Mentor Spirit (Dragonslayer)

**Initiate Grade:** 3

**Metamagics:** Centering, Geomancy, Shielding

**Spells:** Armor, Blast, Eyes of the Pack, Fireball, Heal, Improved Invisibility, Increase Reflexes, Manabolt, Stealth, Stunball, Stunbolt

**Gear:** Light Military Armor w/helmet and chemical seal, sustaining foci Rating 4 (Health)

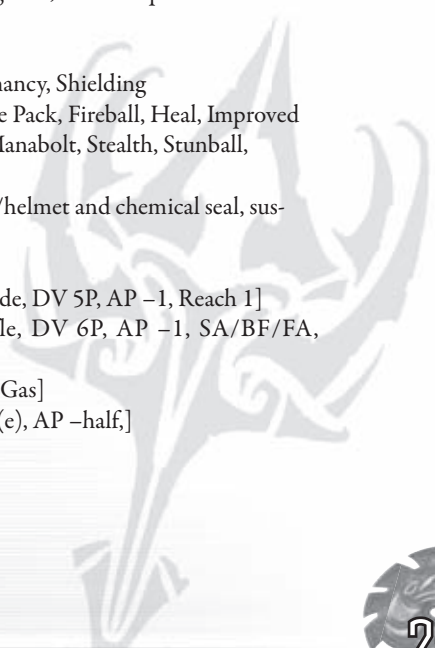
**Weapons:**

Monofilament Sword [Blade, DV 5P, AP -1, Reach 1]

Ares Alpha [Assault Rifle, DV 6P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC2, 42(c)]

2 Gas Grenades [CS/Tear Gas]

Stun Baton [Club, DV 6S(e), AP -half,]







INCOMING FEED.....

### Regulus Elite Guards (10)

This is the team that gets activated when a prison riot or attempted assault of the complex happens. They have living quarters on site and are on shift for three days at a time. Weapon selection is based on threat assessment, though they always have the knife and sidearm.

**B** **A** **R** **S** **C** **I** **L** **W** **Ess** **Init** **IP**  
 4(7) 5(7) 6(8) 4(6) 3 6 4 5 1.93 12(14) 1(3)

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

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

**Skills:** Athletics Skill group 4 (6), Close Combat Skill group 6, Etiquette (Military) 3 (+2), Firearms Skill group 6, Heavy Weapons 4, Perception 5, Pilot Ground Craft 4, Pilot Aircraft 4, Pilot Watercraft 4, Survival 3, Stealth Skill Group 5

**Qualities:** Home Ground, Toughness

**Augmentations:** (all betaware) Assault Cybersuite [Cybereyes (Rating 3, w/flare compensation, thermographic, smartlink), Dermal Plating (Rating 2), Titanium Bone Lacing, Wired Reflexes (Rating 2)], Muscle Augmentation and Toner (Rating 2), Synthacardium (Rating 2)

**Gear:** Light military armor (w/ mobility upgrade 1, gyromount) and military helmet, built in commlink (device rating 6), TacSoft Rating 4

### Weapons:

Vibro knife [Blade, DV 4P, AP -2]

Ares Predator IV [Heavy pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, 15(c), w/ smartgun]

Franchi SPAS-22 [Shotgun, DV 7P; AP -1, SA/BF, RC 4, 10(m) w/ adv. safety, folding stock, smartgun]

Ingram White Knight [LMG, DV 6P, AP -5, BF/FA, RC 5(6), 50(c) w/ smartgun, folding stock, APDS ammo]

## GRABBING THE DISC

### SCAN THIS

Armed with the information from Carella on where the disc was sent, the runners travel to Frankfurt. The team has to track down Hermann Meyer, the Faustian who bought the disc from Carella. Meyer is dead—apparently ritually murdered with an obsidian blade—and now the disc is with the Faustians. Hans Winokur, now the head of the Frankfurt Faustians, is hosting a party for several of the Awakened powerhouses and educational groups of the Sixth World. The team needs to get the disc during the gala without tipping off any of the other groups in the city as to the nature of the disc or its connection to the other artifacts. At the gala, Jane and the more social runners find Samriel talking to partygoers. After recovering the disc, they learn that it's a fake but can be used to find the real one.

## TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

From Europort there are trains that leave five minutes past the hour, every hour, to Frankfurt. The tourist sheets fill you in on the highlights; AG Chemie and the FBA own almost the entire city. The corporate vibe is subdued by the fact that neither corp has full extraterritoriality, and the AGS is fully in control—or as in control as a group of bought-and-paid-for politicians can be.

On the train, your employer once again curls herself into a ball and sleeps fitfully in the corner. Either she always talks in her sleep, or she's having some really ugly nightmares. Given the way this job has been going, and your luck when working for Jane, you are half tempted to start your search in the morgue. As the thought passes through your head, Jane cries out again and sits up sharply.

She smiles weakly at you and then rises to go wash her face. As the train pulls into Frankfurt, local newsfeeds begin to populate the tracker in your cabin. The lead article is about the burial of a prominent Faustus Society member found eviscerated on his front lawn last week.

### If the runners read the article

In Frankfurt, Hermann Meyer was found murdered on his front lawn. The wounds were made with a razor-sharp obsidian knife. News reports state that he was disemboweled and his heart removed. His entrails were spread while he was still alive, and the cause of death was massive blood loss. Astral forensics found a residual background count that faded with the signature. A high-Force Detection spell was cast in the area within a few moments of his death. Due to the apparent relationship to Aztec traditions, investigators are working with Aztechnology on the investigation. The megacorporation has cooperated fully and is working to “bring this criminal to justice.”

The Faustians have taken this blow to their organization staunchly and have vowed to continue the research and values that Meyer professed. Several members of the circle, including Faustian President Hans Winokur, will be present at the interment this afternoon.

## BEHIND THE SCENES

Hermann Meyer was murdered by an unknown assailant who used Aztec sacrificial techniques and a metamagic procedure associated most commonly with practitioners in Aztlan. Aztechnology volunteered their expertise, and specialists are working closely with investigators to find out who was behind the killing. The specialists are certain that no one from Aztechnology who has been trained in the Sacrifice metamagic technique was in the country at the time of the killing and that no Aztechnology personnel would be involved in such an atrocity. They are therefore searching for other individuals who would be properly trained and want to damage Aztechnology's reputation and corporate relationships.

The assassination was perpetrated by a shadowrunner based in Bogota. He was hired to question Hermann Meyer about the Phaistos Disc, report his findings, and then kill Meyer in a manner that would cast the blame on the Azzies. Meyer was unwilling even at the brink of death to give up his collection and died for the cause. The shadowrunner was equipped with an obsidian knife

with a spell anchored to it to help him find the Disc, but the wards around the house blocked the spell from penetrating and finding the item. Once the spell failed, the runner knew that the police would be arriving shortly, so he fled the scene. He informed Ms. Johnson that the mission had been completed, though the spell had failed to impart any specific information to him.

Since they know that none of their people were in the area, the Azzies have offered to assist with the investigation. Their hope is that while helping, their agents will stumble across a clue for their Internal Affairs department to handle or, if it's an outsider, to turn over to Interpol. Agents Ramirez and O'Donnell are both upstanding and successful members of Aztechnology Security with instructions to render all possible aid to Interpol.

While the investigation continues, both Aztechnology agents and members of local law enforcement come and go from the Manor House. They are conducting follow-up interviews with members of the house staff and canvassing the area to look for people who may have seen something. Ramirez has also requested that a surveillance team be placed nearby to watch the house for individuals who may pose a threat to the Faustians. Any of the runners who perform physical recon of the building need to be careful to avoid raising the suspicion of the surveillance team. The Aztech team's instructions are to watch for individuals or groups that may be planning an assault on the house. They know that the gala would provide cover for an attempted break-in because security forces will be distracted by the guests and intruders will be harder to identify. A successful Security Procedures + Intuition (2) Test tells the runners that many of the security systems will be disabled during the gala in order to not hamper the guests.

### DR. FAUSTUS SOCIETY

The Dr. Faustus Society began as a circle of the first hermetic mages to study at the Ruprecht-Karls-Universität in Heidelberg. Over the decades, the study circle grew into a huge organization that is now one of the world's largest magic groups. Unlike the Illuminates of the New Dawn (p. 72, *Street Magic*), the Faustians are deeply entrenched in the arcane academia of Europe's magic universities. The group only accepts hermetics, and it has the reputation of being an “old boys' network,” with few women in the organization.

There are also rumors of a loose inner circle (called “True Faustians”) in the magical groups that follow in the footsteps of Faust, dealing with extraplanar beings. These True Faustians are Twisted magicians following the Faustian path (p. 138, *Street Magic*) and using the foundation's resources to fuel their personal agenda.

Urgent Message...





## Following the Money

Meyer's residence was part of an incorporated trust for his circle. All of his personal belongings were left to the group, including several illicit items that are not on public record. Further investigation into Hans Winokur or Hermann Meyer leads to sound bites about the gala that the Faustians have been planning. Primarily an invitation to the world's most powerful and influential magical groups, the gala also includes several members of the educational community. The event will hopefully provide a boost in influence for the Faustians. Members from the Atlantean Foundation, Dunkelzahn Institute for Magical Research, and Apep Consortium have been invited, as well as lead researchers at universities around the world. It is believed that the Druidic Movement, both Tirs, and Azania will send representatives.

Hans Winokur is coordinating the last-minute arrangements, with a circus of servants, caterers, and waitstaff. He is unwilling to meet with anyone other than the gala coordinators until after the party. Legwork (either Data Searches or Etiquette) reveals that the gala is in two nights. During the gala, several artifacts from the Faustian collection will be on display. Several pieces will also be on loan from nearby museums and available for viewing.

The catering company has run thorough background checks on all of their cooks and banquet servers and is not accepting further applicants. The wait-staff for appetizers, however, has not gone through the same security as they recently lost a number of employees when the Frankfurt Bank Association planned a party for the same night and offered a higher rate. Prospective cocktail servers are expected to speak a minimum of two languages proficiently (Rating 3 or higher) and have a Charisma 4+. The company is not discriminating purely on appearance (although a certain amount of attractiveness helps), but rather is looking for a pleasant personality. Anyone with Uncouth or other negative Social qualities will not be accepted.

The guest list for the gala was decided upon months ago, and no further invitations are being sent out. Jane calls in a favor from Kat o' Nine Tales (just Kat to the runners) to get invitations to the gala. Frosty is selective about who she is willing to have come to the party with her. She doesn't want to cause a scene and only offers to bring runners who know how to mingle and would not stand out in a bad way. Runners with obvious cyberware, who have been rude or obnoxious to her, or who simply cannot avoid being the limelight won't be invited. Each runner attending with Jane needs to wear chic clothing—armored lines are frowned on, though they will be accepted if they are from a designer house.

If the team wants to crash the party, Frosty reminds them that the disc is likely not going to be on display but will be hidden somewhere in the mansion. The Faustus Society is not stupid enough to brazenly display a stolen artifact. Frosty says she is going to serve as a distraction and bait, while the runners do the hard work of finding the Phaistos Disc.

## The Party

Samriel is at the gala along with a hundred or so members of the upper echelons of power and privilege. Discussions range from foreign policy in the NEEC and thaumaturgy to fashion shows in Milan last week. Most of the conversations use French, German, and English, with a light peppering of other languages. Samriel speaks

in fluent Sperethiel with elves from Tír na Nóg about recent events. Gamemasters can feel free to drop any subjects in here that they would like to or they can reference the provided topic list for ideas.

Questioning most of the members of the Faustus Society turns up either blank stares or hopes that the thief of the disc will be found. Only Hans Winokur knows that the Phaistos Disc was in Meyer's collection. It was brought to Hamburg to be stored in the Society's sanctum until a decision could be made about what to do with his belongings. A few of the Faustians know that Meyer was the circle-leader of a subset within the Society. They do not admit this freely, though the information may be gathered from a successful Mind Probe (keeping in mind that many of the attendees are magically active and will notice active spells) or an Interrogation + Charisma (6) Test.

Jane can manage the room, and she keeps the more socially inclined runners with her as the rest of the team sneaks in to steal the disc. With the majority of security focused on and around the guests, there is not as much security on other parts of the house. Runners must bypass the Manor House's security forces to get into the sub-basement where the disc is stored. The disc is on a pressure plate (non-wireless), and any change in the weight triggers a hardwired alarm (defeating the plate requires an Electronics Kit and a Hardware + Logic [5, 1 minute] Extended Test). Full information about the disc is available through the Matrix—including weight—if they want to make a dummy to swap for the disc. Runners attempting to make the swap must succeed at a Palming + Reaction (4) Test.

## TOPICS TO DISCUSS

- Recent changes in the Veil
- Sudden spike in arcanoarchaeological findings
- Discussions on the Unified Theory of Magic and its impact on academics
- Upcoming release of Spinrad's Komunitas cyberware suite for personal networking headware
- The Milan fashion show last week—Vashon raised hemlines four centimeters
- Thoughts on Denver's 2072 Winter Olympic outcomes (Aztlan was banned from the games)

Urgent Message...

During the gala, the Spider has loaded an agent running an Analyze program into the security node. Its job is to monitor the security feeds to detect editing (make an Opposed Test between the agent's Rating + Analyze and the hacker's Hacking + Edit), so the runners will have to be careful to avoid tripping the alarms. Most of the guards have been moved inside the house and only four guards are currently patrolling the exterior. The five patrollers are moving freely without guards to escort them and are monitoring for trouble.

Samriel's Mystic Crusader team is in the area to assist in creating a diversion or eliminating security forces that prove to be too much for the runners to handle. They attempt to remain hidden as

**GUESTS OF HONOR**

Kevin McNamara

François Goy

Jean-Marc Bouttin

Balaji Martyn

Andrew Meyers

Billie Nguyen

Father Rupert Caine

Aina Dupree

Georgiy Abolev

Casey Williams

Illuminates of the New Dawn

Seer's Guild

Université Québec

Charles University

Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Thaumaturgy

Texas AM&amp;M

Vigilia Evangelica

Dunkelzahn Institute of Magical Research

Apep Consortium

Atalantean Foundation

much as possible, and the runners may simply see muzzle flashes from the distance or a shadow shift as a guard runs past. The Crusaders stay out of the runners' way and do not take any hostile actions, though they defend themselves if the runners detect and attack them.

Given the high number of powerful and influential people present, Hans Winokur has extended a request to Interpol and utilized some of his influence to have a team nearby. Any obvious attack or security breach places the Interpol Threat Response team on alert. If it is clear that an organized team of criminals has put the lives of the guests at danger, the ITR team responds.

**Where to, Boss?**

Once the runners meet back with Jane and have the disc, Frosty examines the disc astrally and determines it's not the real disc. However, she can perform a ritual to use the disc to track the real one (Frosty thought she might be needing her abilities at this gathering, so she is not wearing her mana void amulet). Frosty asks one of the runner magicians (if possible) to be the Astral Spotter. She guides the ritual, and it is up to the runner to follow the trail of magic back to the source. As rituals go, it seems fairly simple; Jane reaches into her pocket and pours a small circle of sand around the disc while chanting. Runners in the area who speak Sperethiel notice that it is an ancient version of the language, though they can only pick up every seventh word or so.

In astral space, power builds up around the disc as the very center pulses with life. Jane reaches out to place the astrally projecting mage's hand on the disc before flicking her fingers through the sand to break the circle. Power drives the projection up and out of the building, climbing high towards the edges of the manasphere. Pinpoints of light spread across Europe, Asia, and Africa, places of possible connections to the disc, but the power drives toward the brightest of them. As the vision plummets back toward the earth, the mage sees a valley with four pyramids. The surrounding countryside is ravaged by war and violence, scarring the space and bleeding emotion into the mage's mind.

Once the mage comes back into their body, they should tell the group what they saw. If the runners are unfamiliar with the area, a Data Search + Browse (16, 1 minute) Extended Test turns up articles about four pyramids being excavated in war-torn Bosnia, by Sarajevo: the Pyramid of the Sun complex.

On finding out where the Phaistos Disc is, Jane smiles wryly. "It looks like we couldn't avoid it. It's time to head back to the blurred edge of civilization. Pack anything you think you can get past customs on your way out of here."

**PUSHING THE ENVELOPE**

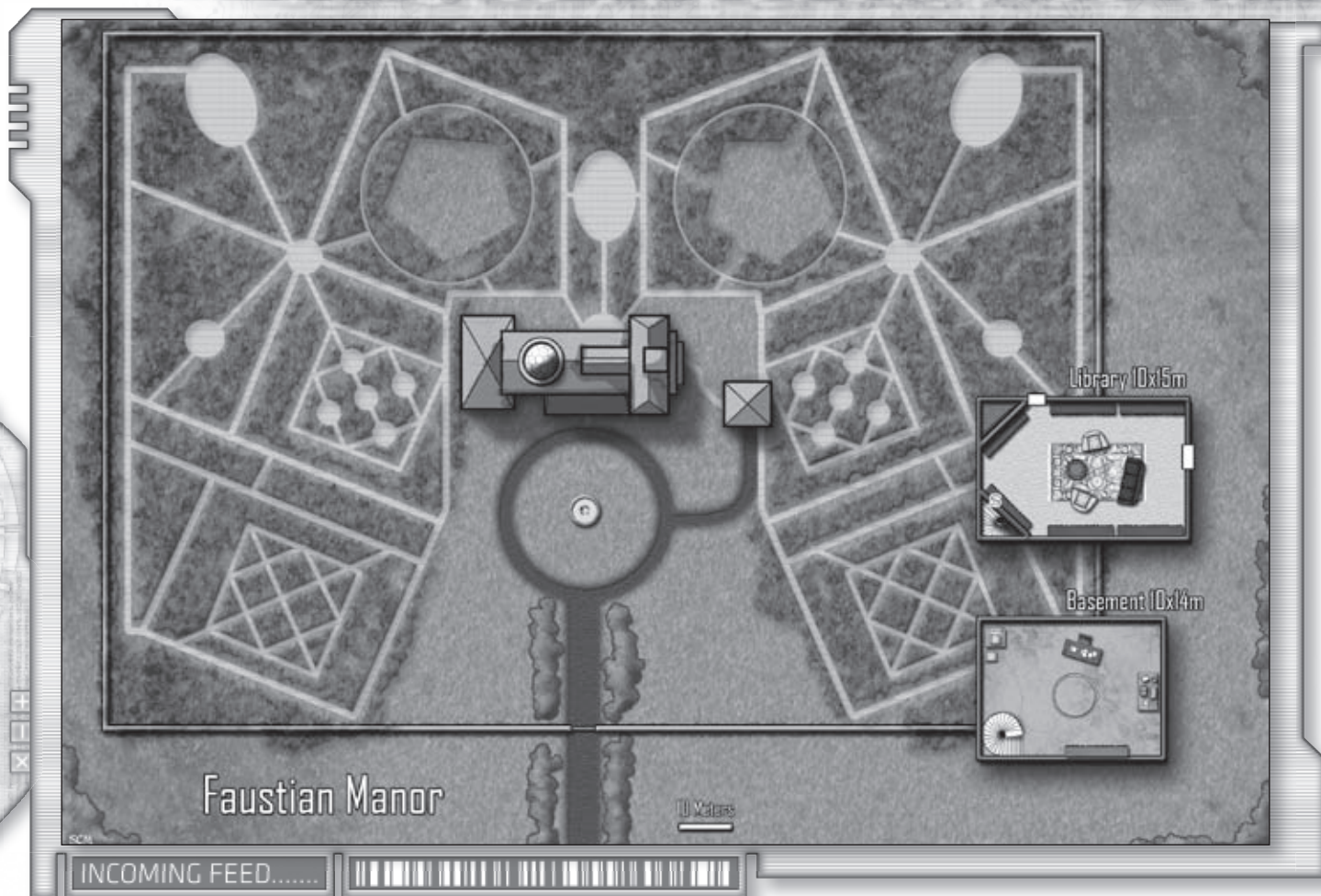
While the gala is happening, members of the Apep Consortium attempt to steal the disc and break into the Faustian sanctum. Alternately, they can be waiting outside, where they see the runners go in. Then, when the runners come out of the manor, they ambush them to steal the disc. In addition to causing a ruckus at the gala, anyone caught with the disc can attract the attention of Interpol and an Interpol Threat Response (ITR) team will come and attempt to arrest the team.

**DEBUGGING**

Careless runners may find themselves in an Aztechnology interrogation room with Agents Ramirez and O'Donnell wanting to know what they were doing. Jane tries to counsel the other runners to be patient and not attack the local law enforcement. Any mention of the Phaistos Disc results in Interpol flagging the case and being brought in. Aztechnology finishes their interrogation and hands the runners over to Interpol once they have confirmed that they had nothing to do with the assassination of Hermann Meyer.

Jane quickly distances herself from any runners who get caught in a running gunfight with Interpol and waits until everything has cooled off before contacting the runners to see who survived. If the runners escaped and have the Phaistos Disc, she meets with them. If they do not have the disc, she tells them not to contact her until they get it.





## LOCATIONS OF NOTE

### The Manor House

An early 18th Century manor, the Manor House is built in the baroque style of colonnades and the bold play of volume and void. The Manor is seated on a broad estate that has slowly been chewed at by various corporate interests. After the Faustians purchased the land, the slow erosion of the property stopped, leaving them with about forty acres of manicured gardens, fountains, and Grecian statues. It is one of the luxury estates that the Circle maintains, and members can claim sanctuary there at any time.

Sensor emplacements (Rating 4) are spread throughout the greenery, and Rating 5 pressure plates are spread alongside paths. Every door and window is equipped with a Rating 5 maglock; the doors use a passkey, and the windows can only be opened from the inside. These systems will be active at all times leading up to the party. During the party, the pressure plates and sensor emplacements are disabled to allow guests to walk the grounds without triggering an alert. The maglocks on doors near the ballroom are also disabled during the gala.

The private collection of the Faustian circle is in the basement of the mansion, in a new section that is not connected to the wine cellar. It is accessed through the library where several exotic pieces of the collection are kept, through a hidden passage behind the wall. The wall presses against the servants' quarters so no one has noticed that a meter-wide gap exists. There are several passages like

this one spread throughout the house to allow servants access to the house without traveling through the main areas where guests would see them. As the pattern of servants being bred for the position and hereditary service faded in the early 20th century, over one hundred years has passed since the passages saw common use. Knowledge of the passages is now limited to an elite few within the Faustian circle so that knowledge of them won't escape. A successful Classical Architecture + Logic (3) Test lets a runner know of the possibility of the passages' existence.

To access the passage, a hidden panel in the bookcase must be opened (Perception + Intuition [4] Test to locate it and the operating mechanism). Behind the panel is a Rating 5 Voice-Print Recognizer (passphrase: "Knowledge is the only true power") and a Rating 5 Alchemical passkey reader (see *Passkeys*, p. 64, *Unwired*). Each device is loaded with a Rating 5 agent running Analyze 5 to detect a spoofed signal (if the agent has any net hits based on the threshold of the Spoof test, it locks down the device it is attached to). Both systems must be triggered simultaneously (within one initiative pass) or the system locks out for 24 hours, requiring an administrative override to reset. The five highest-ranking Faustians have access to the area and carry the appropriate key cards on their persons. Only Hans Winokur can override the lockout with his key card and voiceprint. Each of the systems has anti-tampering systems in place at the same rating as the base system. These security systems are not connected to the primary security node and are hardwired to the computer terminal in the sub-basement.



This sub-basement is where the Faustians maintain their ritual space and have a Force 10 Magic Lodge that appears as a large circle with precious metals poured into the earth to form a permanent circle. The walls around the circle are covered in bookshelves and workspaces with a separate computer terminal that is non-wireless.

### Matrix

There are two nodes run in parallel. The public house node is in passive mode and allows for access to the Matrix through the house node. The security node is run in hidden mode and has a passkey verification system.

**Sculpting:** The sculpting is clean and utilitarian with marble and wood finishes.

**Hardware:** One MCT Sentinel II (Persona Limit 10, Processor Limit 60) and one NeoNET Office Genie (Persona Limit 5, Processor Limit 20)

### Authentication:

**Node 1:** Passcode

**Node 2:** Passkey

**Privileges:** Standard

### Attributes:

**Node 1:** Firewall 5, Response 4, Signal 4, System 5

**Node 2:** Firewall 5 Response 3, Signal 2, System 5

**Spiders:** 1 Security Consultant on duty at all times

**IC: Node 1:** 1 MCT Bloodhound 5 (patrolling), 1 Three Musketeers Suite 5 (loaded)

**Node 2:** 1 BabySwarm 5

### Resident Programs:

**Node 1:** Analyze 5

**Node 2:** Analyze 4

**ARC:** Launch IC (Three Musketeers Suite)

**Topology:** Node 1 is accessible from the Matrix via wireless and acts as a gateway for Node 2. Node 1 is the public access node for house staff and personal usage, Node 2 is the security node that serves to coordinate the security feeds from the guards and patrollers. Rating 6 Data Bombs (customized with Optimize 1, Pavlov) are loaded into the security access log, as well as each camera feed. Accessing or editing the log or one of the feeds causes the bomb to detonate.

### Magical Security

The house is surrounded with Force 6 wards, though the wards have been dismantled around the ballroom and foyer where guests are passing through. An astral patrol made of a Force 8 Spirit of Beasts and 5 Watcher Spirits travels through the area. Since a large number of guests are passing through during the gala, simply coming into the area does not alert the patrol. Casting a Combat or Illusion spell, or having an active astral presence, triggers the astral patrol. The spirits alert the onsite mage to the problem. If the individual is located in the ballroom, the alert is ignored. If they are elsewhere on the grounds, the mage projects to see the problem and alert security forces.

### Physical Security

Before the gala, there are investigators still coming and going from the front lawn of the Manor House, and private security has been increased around the manor itself. At any given time, there are ten security guards walking the grounds in pairs with

a patroller (p. 30, *Running Wild*). If attacked, the patroller can shed the leash and charge intruders. Additionally, the grounds are home to several biodrone rabbits that feed sensor data into the network (use stats for Rat-Eyes, p. 31, *Running Wild*).

The manor is surrounded by a two-meter tall brick wall with large, ornate wrought-iron gates at the front. The driveway leads up a 100-meter path to a turnaround in front of the house. A path leads off to the side building for the garage (a renovated carriage-house). Trees are spread around the grounds with thermographic and low-light cameras.

## GRUNTS AND MOVING TARGETS

### Hans Winokur

The pro-tem leader of the Hamburg circle, Hans Winokur is the host of the gala. He is working with the Faustians to elect a new leader. Until the leader can be selected, he is carrying though on all the plans and putting Meyer's affairs in order.

**B A R S C I L W Edg Ess M Init IP**  
2 3 2 3 5 4 6 6 4 6 8 6 1

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 9

**Active Skills:** Arcana 4, Computer 2, Conjuring 5, Data Search 2, Etiquette (Awakened) 4 (+2), Leadership 4, Negotiation 3, Perception 4, Sorcery Skill group 5

**Knowledge Skills:** Business 3, Corporate Policies 3, Corporate Rumors 2, Megacorp Law 4 (Awakened +2), Spell Design 4

### Interpol Threat Response (Professional Rating 5)

All members of the unit are highly qualified and capable veterans of security and paramilitary forces. They are fielded with military-grade equipment and professional tactics to counter any threats Interpol deems in need of an overwhelming show of force.

**B A R S C I L W Ess Init IP**  
5 (7) 6 5 (7) 4 3 6 4 5 1.85 11 (13) 1 (3)

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 11

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 14/13 (20/17)

**Skills:** Athletics Skill group 4 (6), Demolitions 3, Firearms Skill group 5, Perception 4, Stealth Skill group 4, Throwing Weapons 4, Unarmed Combat 5

**Augmentations:** Lone Star Watchman 2 Cybersuite (alpha)

[Cybereyes (Rating 4 w/ Flare Compensation, Thermographic Vision, Smartlink); Aluminum Bone Lacing; Wired Reflexes (Rating 2)], Synthacardium (Rating 2)

**Gear:** Standard issue: SWAT Armor and helmet [w/non-conductivity 5, integral bio-monitor, autoinjector loading Stim (Rating 5)], flash-bang grenades (2), thermal smoke grenades (2), commlink (Device Rating 2), ballistic shields (every other man)

### Weapons:

H&K 227-X [SMG, DV 5P; AP -4, SA/BF/FA, RC 5, 28(c) w/ adv. safety, folding stock, gas-vent 3, personalized grip, smartgun, APDS ammo]

Franchi SPAS-22 [Shotgun, DV 7P; AP -1, SA/BF, RC (1), 10(m) w/ adv. safety, folding stock, smartgun]

Savalette Guardian [Heavy pistol, DV 5P; AP -1, SA/BF\*, RC 1, 12(c) w/ adv. safety, personalized grip, smartgun]

\* Burst fire requires a Complex Action.





### Interpol Threat Response Sniper

ITR units possess some of the best tactical sharpshooters in the business. Each ITR team features at least one such sniper equipped with state-of-the-art weapons and implants.

**B A R S C I L W Ess Init IP**  
4(6) 6 5(7) 4 5 6 4 5 2.66 11(13) 1(3)

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 14/13

**Skills:** Athletics Skill group 4 (6), Firearms Skill group 4 (Sniper 6), Perception 5, Stealth Skill Group 4, Unarmed Combat 5

**Augmentations:** Lone Star Watchman 2 Cybersuite (alpha) [Cybereyes (Rating 4 w/ flare compensation, thermographic vision, smartlink); Aluminum Bone Lacing; Wired Reflexes (Rating 2)], Synthacardium (Rating 2)

**Gear:** See Interpol Threat Response Unit for standard issue gear above. Ballistic shield with fire port.

#### Weapons:

Stun baton [Clubs, DV 6(e), AP -half]

H&K 227-X [SMG, DV 5P; AP -4, SA/BF/FA, RC 5, 28(c) w/ adv. safety, folding stock, gas-vent 3, personalized grip, smartgun, APDS ammo]

Franchi SPAS-22 [Shotgun, DV 7P; AP -1, SA/BF, RC (1), 10(m) w/ adv. safety, folding stock, smartgun]

Savalette Guardian [Heavy pistol, DV 5P; AP -1, SA/BF\*, RC 2, 12(c) w/ adv. safety, personalized grip, smartgun]

\* Burst fire requires a Complex Action.

Ranger Arms SM-4 [Sniper Rifle, DV 8P; AP -7, SA, RC 2, 12(c) w/ adv. safety, bipod, folding stock, personalized grip, smartgun, APDS ammo]

### Interpol Threat Response Commander

The highly decorated career officer is an experienced field commander and excellent tactician. He is cool and collected even under fire and leads by example.

**B A R S C I L W Ess Init IP**  
4(6) 6(9) 5(7) 4(7) 5 6 4 5 1.38 11(13) 1(3)

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

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 14/13

**Skills:** Athletics Skill group 4 (6), Clubs 3, Demolitions 3, Firearms Skill Group 5, Perception 5, Stealth Skill Group 6, Throwing Weapons 4, Unarmed Combat 4

**Augmentations:** LS Watchman 2 Cybersuite (alpha) [Cybereyes (Rating 4 w/ flare compensation, thermographic, smartlink); Aluminum Bone Lacing; Wired Reflexes (Rating 2)], Cyberears (Rating 2 w/ damper, spatial recognizer), Customized Obvious Cyberarm [Agi and Str Enhancements (3) w/ shockhand, spur, grapple gun, and integral commlink], Synthacardium (Rating 2)

**Gear:** SWAT armor and helmet [w/non-conductivity 5, integral bio-monitor, autoinjector loading stim (Rating 5)], flash-bang grenades (2), thermal smoke grenades (2), commlink, petite brume grenades (1), tacnet

#### Weapons:

Stun baton [Clubs, DV 6(e), AP -half]

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]

Franchi SPAS-22 [Shotgun, DV 7P; AP -1, SA/BF, RC (1), 10(m) w/ adv. safety, folding stock, smartgun]

Savalette Guardian [Heavy pistol, DV 5P; AP -1, SA/BF\*, RC 2, 12(c) w/ adv. safety, personalized grip, smartgun]

\* Burst fire requires a Complex Action.

### ITR Combat Mage

Given the dangers that lurk in the back streets of the Awakened world, a combat mage is an integral part of every ITR unit, cross-trained in combined urban warfare tactics and ready to provide them with counterspelling and mana barriers while they engage the targets.

**B A R S C I L W M Ess Init IP**  
4(6) 6 5(6) 4 5 5 4 6 4 4.85 11(12) 1(2)

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 14/13

**Skills:** Athletics Skill group 3, Automatics 3, Conjuring Skill group 3, Perception 4, Sorcery Skill Group 4, Stealth Skill group 3, Throwing Weapons 2, Unarmed Combat 3

**Qualities:** Magician (Hermetic)

**Initiate Grade:** 2

**Metamagics:** Shielding, Absorption

**Spells:** Armor, Levitate, Lightning bolt, Mana Barrier, Powerbolt, Physical Barrier, Stunball, Stunbolt

**Bound Spirits:** 1 Fire spirit (Force 5, 2 services), 1 Earth spirit (Force 5, 3 services), 2 Air spirit (Force 5, 3 services)

**Augmentations:** (all betaware) Aluminum Bone Lacing, Cybereyes (Rating 3 w/ thermographic, flash compensation, smartlink), Synaptic Booster (Rating 1)

**Gear:** SWAT armor and helmet [w/non-conductivity 5, integral bio-monitor, autoinjector loading stim (Rating 5)], flash-bang grenades (2), thermal smoke grenades (2), commlink, petite brume grenades (1), combat spell focus (Rating 2), manipulation spell focus (Rating 2)

#### Weapons:

Stun baton [Clubs, DV 6(e), AP -half]

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]

Franchi SPAS-22 [Shotgun, DV 7P; AP -1, SA/BF, RC (1), 10(m) w/ adv. safety, folding stock, smartgun]

Savalette Guardian [Heavy pistol, DV 5P; AP -1, SA/BF\*, RC 2, 12(c) w/ adv. safety, personalized grip, smartgun]

\* Burst fire requires a Complex Action.



## FINDING LOST TREASURE

### SCAN THIS

Having completed the ritual, the team heads to their final destination: the “Bosanska Piramida Sunca” (Bosnian Pyramid of the Sun). There is still a military presence in the area, and the runners need to dodge soldiers and Aztechnology archaeologists while digging through the ruins to find the disc. Rumors about the Sun/Moon/Dragon/Earth temples being able to “break a cloud of negative energy, allowing the Earth to receive cosmic energy from the centre of the galaxy” are undermined by “expert sources” who are trying to hide the truth about the site.

### TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

You land in a small airstrip outside of Sarajevo and are immediately struck by a vision straight out of the Euro Wars. Along the horizon you see military helicopters flying to the north, and closer, large cargo jets unloading gear onto trucks. You quickly notice Aztechnology logos on the trucks. Boarding the shuttle to take your team from the airport to the city proper, you pass mile after mile of ruins and gravemarkers. The area has been a constant war zone for eighty-odd years, with peace being shoved down the throats of the locals.

Guards patrol the streets in heavy armor with assault rifles slung over their shoulders. Armbands for officers from the

European Crisis Group list which merc company they work for. In other places, the blue helmets and body armor clearly call out UN forces striving to keep the peace. The hotel has boards covering a dozen windows on the ground floor, and pockmarks from nearby explosions scar the plascrete walls.

### If the runners head out to the pyramids, read the following:

The road leaving town is blockaded by military personnel stopping vehicles from entering the city without being searched. You wait twenty minutes as a line of cars comes into the city before they allow your lane to depart through the checkpoint. As you drive past, you can see the line to get back into Sarajevo is nearly a mile long.

It is a thirty-kilometer drive down broken roads to the pyramids. Along the way you pass burnt fields, destroyed trucks, and ruins. After ten kilometers, the only vehicles you see are cargo trucks with Aztechnology logos, most driving back towards the city. After another ten kilometers you can see the mountain on the horizon. At first glance it looks like a large smooth hill, but as you get closer you see that it is too smooth to be natural. Squinting into the sunlight, you see what appears to be a vast pyramid, larger than any you’ve ever heard of, buried under thousands of years of dirt. Early signs of excavation give you a hint of what may come.

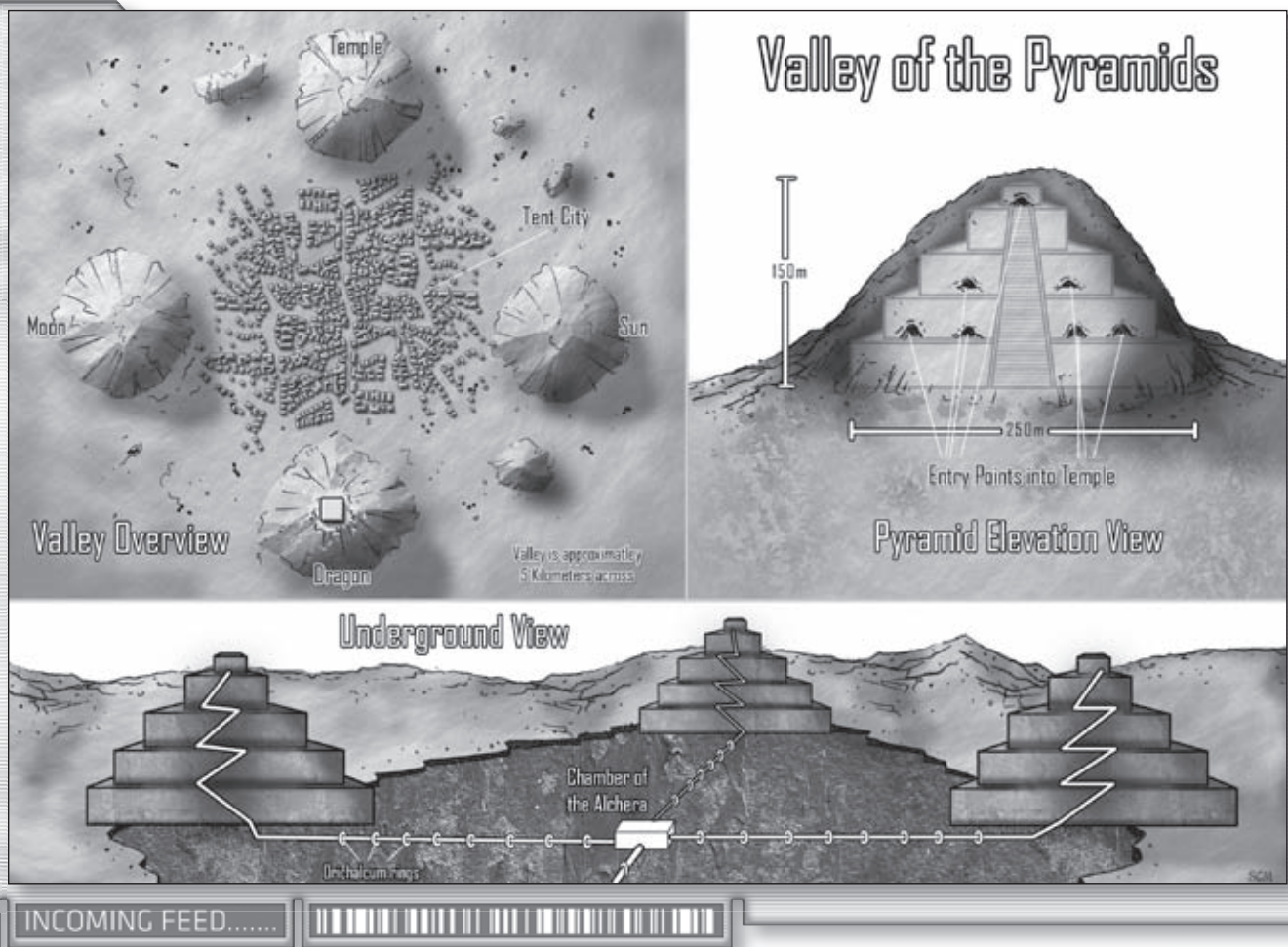
DRAWN OF THE ARTIFACTS: DARKEST HOUR .....



INCOMING FEED.....

|||||





INCOMING FEED.....

**A kilometer from the site, read the following:**

Driving over the last stretch, you see the road drop down ahead of you, opening into a wide, shallow valley. The pyramid you saw before is on the far end of the valley where it raises back up to the same elevation as you. Within the valley at cardinal points you see three other hills, all perfectly smooth and pyramidally shaped. What you didn't expect was the swarming encampment in the valley between the pyramids.

A tent city has sprung up, with hundreds of people moving around the area. Cargo trucks, the same ones you saw before, are being unloaded. Large crates of foodstuffs and industrial equipment are being moved. The air between the pyramids shimmers with heat—at least, it looks like it's heat.

**BEHIND THE SCENES**

Besides those in the city itself, there are no hotels or accommodations within 150 kilometers of Sarajevo. The team needs to either stay in Sarajevo or camp (if they have gear) in the wilderness. Sarajevo is currently a city of warring factions, with the peace maintained through occupation. UN and Corporate Court forces (Blue Helmets and mercs, primarily) patrol the area and fight back against the nationalist factions and militias. The runners look like outsiders, and they are not molested as long as they don't start trouble. The average background count of the city is 2, with minor variances from area to area.

Jane leads them to a hotel in a non-Muslim quarter. It is nameless, bearing only the word "hotel" on the outside in Serbian. The official language of the area is Serbo-Croat, though most people speak a bizarre pidgin language drawing on Balkan dialects, Arabic, and Slavic. The policing forces all run Serbo-Croatian and Arabic linguasofts, and Arabic is spoken heavily in the Muslim quarter. Nuyen is accepted at the larger businesses, and both larger businesses and small vendors take Bosnian marks.

There is no public Matrix access in the city. Scanning for wireless signals detects micro-networks for various corporate enterprises. Runners must stay within signal range of each other to maintain communication, as their commlinks cannot subscribe to the overarching mesh network that is generally available in civilization. While they may have experience in other feral cities due to their exposure in Lagos and Chicago, Sarajevo is different. Here the heavy military presence doesn't abide foreigners with large weapons, as there have been too many incidents with guns and explosives falling into the wrong hands.

Runners are discouraged from wearing heavy armor or carrying large weapons openly. The largest weapons being worn visibly by natives walking the streets are heavy pistols. Anyone carrying heavier weapons is harassed and possibly ambushed by one of the local factions. Killing any of the ambushers catalyzes the city and embroils the runners into the local conflicts.

Due to the presence of Aztechnology and the recent run-in

with both the Apep Consortium and Samriel, Jane is going to stay in Sarajevo. She believes (rightfully so) that her presence will serve as a distraction to anyone who's following them—and while she's being followed, the runners will be free to go about the countryside.

### Investigating the Site

When the team arrives at the site, they find signs of military forces from the Dinaric Collective beginning to pull out of the region and move the frontlines thirty-five kilometers to the north. Aztechnology archaeologists have already begun to dig through the ruins in search of clues to decipher the mysterious similarities between the pyramids here and the pyramids in Latin America. Their tent city is nearly complete, and the security perimeter has been established.

A shimmering curtain runs around the edge of the valley, visible as a distortion effect similar to heat waves. The area within the valley is an astral shallow (p. 116, *Street Magic*), and astral presences are completely visible. A century of war has ravaged the landscape and torn up astral space to resemble a battlefield as well. There is a background count of 4 within the valley. The background count drops to 2 outside of the valley and throughout Sarajevo.

Talking to locals about the temples reveals that the local population believes the area to be haunted. Rumors about ghosts of fallen soldiers and ancient warriors abound. Various mercenary groups have used the valley as a base of operations. The astral shallow makes security and identifying astral threats easier. According to the locals, no company has ever stayed in the valley for more than a month. The pyramids themselves are believed to be ancient. There have been attempts to dig at the site in the past, but the hotbed of violence has always put an end to the excavation.

The runners can scout out the area, finding four temples. The Azzies are focusing most of their efforts on the northern pyramid, which they call the Dragon temple. Preliminary excavation is being done on the other three. Core samples have been taken, and the archaeologists are bombarding the hills with ground-penetrating radar to create a three-dimensional image. The pyramids have all been imaged. There are signs of tunnels that branch off from each of the temples to a space directly beneath the camp, but the sensors are unable to get a clear image of where the tunnels connect.

There are roughly three hundred scientists and support personnel working the dig site, along with sixty guards. The guards are well trained and outfitted with personal transports designed for the off-road conditions of the area. An electronic perimeter has been set up around the valley with sensors monitoring a kilometer in every direction. There is only a single road into the valley, so runners who want to sneak in will have to approach on foot, across country.

#### Local Node:

**Sculpting:** The sculpting is an Aztec pyramid with IC and Personas as temple guards and supplicants.

**Hardware:** One MCT Sentinel II (Persona Limit 10, Processor Limit 60)

**Authentication:** Passkey

**Privileges:** Standard

**Attributes:** Firewall 5, Response 4, Signal 3, System 5

**Spiders:** 1 Security Consultant on duty at all times

**IC:** 1 MCT Bloodhound 5 (patrolling), 1 Three Musketeers Suite 5 (loaded), 1 BabySwarm 5 (loaded)

**Resident Programs:** Analyze 5

**ARC:** Launch IC

**Topology:** The node is accessible via wireless connection; all connected security devices are slaved.

The archaeologists are running a hidden mesh network between their commlinks to store personal journals and scientific findings. Runners who scan for wireless signals can find the network, though it has a Signal rating of 1. Information on the system is unencrypted and shows carbon dating that confirms the temples were built around 10,000 B.C. There are comments connecting that date with events from that same period, including the destruction of Atlantis in 9,564 B.C. and the earliest use of pottery in Japan. The scientists are excited because the tests place the pyramids' creation roughly 7,000 years before the earliest known pyramids worldwide.

There are pictures and holographic recordings from within the temple, showing strange glyphs in a language that none of the scientists have been able to recognize. The runners recognize the glyphs as matching some of the markings on the disc, the map, and the sextant. Several of the archaeologists have been working on translating the glyphs, to no avail, but they've come up with some interesting theories based on some of the larger pictographs. Larger murals within the deeper levels of the Dragon Temple show the dead returning to life and other miracles common to the myths of early civilizations.

### Traveling the Ways

Due to the astral shallow, astral reconnaissance is very difficult. The runners need to be able to bypass the sensors on the perimeter and approach the temples without being noticed by any of the guards. According to the ritual performed by Jane and any runner magicians, the real Phaistos Disc is located in the space at the center of the four temples, about forty meters beneath the surface. Unless the runners want to enter a direct confrontation with the entire camp and then dig straight down, they need to enter through one of the temples and breach the underground passages connecting the pyramids together.

The Dragon Temple has had the most progress made on clearing the passages, but it is swarming with archaeologists and interns. There are the three other temples that have had core samples drilled through them. The Moon Temple's core sampling hit a methane pocket, resulting in a large explosion. This opened a two-meter-wide hole in one chamber but caved in the only exit from the room. So far, the dig team has not excavated that section, though the sensors show that it is only blocked by a meter or so of debris.

Traveling past the debris or drilling through the blocks in the Moon Temple takes the runners into an area that should be pitch black but is very gently illuminated through the astral shallow. Moving this way is very disorienting for characters who have never astrally perceived, and the standard -2 dice for Perception tests of physical objects applies. After dropping below the explored levels, the runners need to squeeze through sections of stone that have collapsed in the tunnels. Here they find skeletal remains of





very short humans (roughly 1–1.5m tall) that were trapped when the stones collapsed. Though their upper bodies have crumbled with time, the position of their legs and lower back shows that they were all seated cross-legged on the floor when they died (or at least were posed that way before decomposition). The runners then catch glimpses of movement out of the corners of their eyes; half-formed spirits seem to move around in the space, laboring with tools to shape the stone.

The tunnels have collapsed at several points, and as the runners move through the area, signs of ancient traps can be found, broken and decayed. Large pits that were designed to trap grave robbers and raiders have opened and now pose hazards for the runners. Periodic Survival and Climbing tests may be required by the gamemaster for runners to avoid causing further collapses. There are also methane pockets from sealed chambers with decomposing matter that can either have an explosive interaction with open flames or be a gas attack on the runners.

As the runners pass far enough down to be below the surface of the valley, the runes and glyphs along the walls will glow within the astral. Streaks of orichalcum run through the stones. Every three meters along the hallway, a four-centimeter-wide strip of pure orichalcum runs in a ring around the tunnel. Awakened characters feel a tingling along their skin as they pass each ring. Spells cast in the hallways grind into the rings rather than doing what they were supposed to. At this point any GPS systems the runners have begun to fail as network connections are blocked.

Continuing down the corridors, the runners see a chamber in the distance that is brightly lit. This chamber is a displacement alchera and is not an astral shallow. Runners who astrally project into the room with their body on the other side of the threshold become disoriented. Non-initiates are lost and unable to find the connection back to their bodies without assistance (a fellow team member who is an initiate or a gamemaster-introduced free spirit may help). Initiates recognize that they are in a deep metaplane, but they crossed over without seeing the Dweller on the Threshold. The magician needs to attempt to find her body as if it had been moved (Astral Tracking, p. 193, *SR4A*).

The chamber has birds chirping and appears to be filled with actual sunlight. If they approach the area, the runners see a young elven couple facing each other over a stone table. A successful Perception + Intuition (3) Test reveals that the two have an otherworldly nature and that they are not metahuman. Between the couple on the stone table is the Phaistos Disc. When they see the runners, the couple tells them not to come any closer. If the runners cross over the threshold and step into the room, they feel a pulling sensation in their gut, like something dragging their bellybutton back through their spine. Looking over themselves, they see they are fine, but as each runner steps into the room, spurs of bone jut out of the elves' bodies and tear bloodily through clothing. A Medicine + Logic (3) Test shows that the two elves are suffering from osteocuspis, an affliction seen infrequently among SURGE victims.

The elves are the final guardians of the Phaistos Disc and have been ordered to not give the disc to anyone but their summoner. If the runners attempt to take the disc, the spirits tell them that they cannot take it; only through sacrifice may the runners prove themselves worthy. Proceeding further causes them to attack the runners.

Should the runners manage to defeat the Guardians, their job isn't over. They must escape back up the way they came and not

attract the attention of the Azzies on their way out. If the runners assaulted any of the researchers or soldiers on their way in, there is an ambush waiting for them as they come out. The Aztech team avoids using explosives near the entrance of the temple so as not to damage it. Beyond that, the runners need to evade pursuit by the Azzies or capture by MET 2000.

## PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

Depending on the runners' previous interactions with the Apep Consortium, Georgiy Abolev could be in Sarajevo and waiting to steal the disc when the runners come out of the camp. His people are arrayed along the road and have secured the services of local off-duty mercenaries (use the stats for the Mercenary Forces provided). He is also in the area in case runners from before accepted his offer and are willing to sell him the disc. Abolev deals with them honestly and pays what was promised, though the funds are placed in an escrow account until he is able to get away safely.

## DEBUGGING

This section of the adventure is fairly straightforward. If the runners fail to retrieve the Phaistos Disc, the story can still finish as discussed in **Closing Action**. Teams that do not attempt any modicum of stealth and go for the genocide approach should encounter the full force of the Aztechnology security team. The corp knows that they do not have adequate resources to call for backup and have made the necessary arrangements with MET 2000 to provide additional fire support as required.

## GRUNTS AND MOVING TARGETS

### MERCENARY FORCES

These mercs provide security for the city of Sarajevo and work in conjunction with the Blue Helmets from the UN.

### MET 2000 Mercs

All members of the security force are experienced mercenaries; they are tactically aware, maximize cover, use suppressive fire, and provide covering fire for one another.

**B A R S C I L W M Ess Init IP**  
4(6) 6(8) 5(7) 4(6) 5 5 4 6 4 3.4 11(13) 1(3)

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 11

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

**Skills:** Athletics Skill group 3, Blades (Knife) 3 (+2), Dodge 4, Etiquette (Military) 3 (+2), Firearms Skill group 5, Infiltration 3, Perception 3, Unarmed Combat 4

**Qualities:** Toughness

**Augmentations:** Cybereyes (Rating 3, w/ smartlink, low-light, flare comp), Muscle Augmentation and Toner (Rating 1), Wired Reflexes (Rating 1)

**Gear:** Light military armor (w/ mobility upgrade 2, biomonitor, autoinjector w/ Stim 4, and gyromount) and military helmet, medkit (Rating 6)

**Weapons:**

Vibro knife [Blade, Reach 0, DV 4P, AP -2].

Ares HVAR [Assault rifle, DV 6P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC 3(4), 50(c) w/ gas-vent 3, smartgun, ex-ex ammo]



## MET 2000 Merc Combat Mages

The combat mages counterspell and cast offensive mana barriers around the unit's position. They also will spirit support as needed and defend the mercenaries in their unit.

**B A R S C I L W M Ess Init IP**  
4 4 5 3 4 5 5 4 7 6.0 10 1

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

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

**Skills:** Athletics Skill group 2, Automatics 3, Blades 3, Conjuring Skill group 4, Dodge 4, Etiquette (Military) 3 (+2), Infiltration 3, Perception 3, Sorcery Skill group 5, Unarmed Combat 2

**Qualities:** Magician (Hermetic)

**Initiate Grade:** 1

**Metamagics:** Shielding

**Spells:** Combat Sense, Detect Enemies (Extended), Levitate, Lightning Bolt, Mana Barrier, Napalm, Nutrition, Oxygenate, Physical Barrier, Powerbolt, Shatter, Stabilize, Stunball

**Gear:** Light military armor (w/ mobility upgrade 2, biomonitor, autoinjector w/ Stim 4) and military helmet, medkit (Rating 6)

**Weapons:**

Vibro knife [Blade, Reach 0, DV 4P, AP -2]  
Ares HVAR [Assault rifle, DV 5P, AP 0, SA/BF/FA, RC 3 (4), 50(c) w/ gas-vent 3, smartgun, folding stock]

## PYRAMID FORCES

These are the forces protecting the pyramids.

### Captain Marta Herrera

A highly trained and experienced special forces operative, Captain Herrera is loyal to Aztechnology. She is the one who came up with the idea to get the disc from Meyer. Marta is in command of the forces at the Bosnian pyramids and will not accept failure a second time.

**B A R S C I L W M Edg Ess Init IP**  
6 4(6) 5(7) [9] 6(8) 2 4 3 5[7] 7 4 4.58 9(11) 1(3)

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 11

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 14/12 *or* 8/6

**Skills:** Athletics Skill group 4, Automatics 6 (9), Blades 5 (8), Demolitions 3, Disguise 3, Infiltration 5, Intimidation (Physical) 4 (+2), Negotiation 2, Pistols 3, Shadowing 4, Survival 3, Throwing Weapons 3

**Qualities:** Adept, Mentor Spirit (Eagle), Martial Arts (ROSS: +1 on called shots to disarm, Take Aim as Free Action, Ready Weapon as Free Action, attacker in melee modifier reduced by -1), Scorched,

**Initiate Grade:** 4

**Metamagics:** Adept Centering, Infusion, Masking, Somatic Control

**Adept Powers:** Counterstrike 2, Improved Ability: Blades 3, Improved Ability Automatics 3, Missile Parry 2, Pain Resistance 3, Traceless Walk

**Augmentations:** (all delaware) Adrenaline Pump (Rating 2), Synaptic Boosters (Rating 2), Radar Sensor (Rating 3), Reflex Recorder (Stealth Skill Group)

**Gear:** Light military armor [w/ mobility upgrade (Rating 2), thermal damping, ruthenium polymer coating, auto-injector Stim (5)] and military helmet [w/ image link, low-light, range finder, smartlink] *or* armor jacket w/ FFBA shirt [w/ non conductivity (4), fire resistance (4)], nanopaste disguise, smart pouch system [w/ ammo pouch, ration pouch, smart canteen, combat load vest 6 clips]

**Maneuvers:** Multi-Strike, Off-Hand Training, Set-Up, Two Weapon Style

**Weapons:**

Macault [Reach 1, DV 6P, AP 0 w/ personalized grip]  
Nitama Optimum II [Assault rifle, DV 6P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC 1, 30(c), w/ auto-adjusting underbarrel weight, gas-vent 3, personalized grip, smartgun, and APDS ammo]  
Underbarrel Shotgun [Shotgun, DV 7P, AP -1, SA, RC 1, 5(m), slug ammo]  
2 Frag Grenades [Grenade, DV 12P(f), AP+5, Blast -1/m]  
2 High Explosive Grenades [Grenade, DV 10P, AP -2, Blast -2/m]  
2 Flash Bang Grenades [Grenade, DV 6S, AP -3, Blast 10m radius]

### Black Ops Lieutenant, Raw Cuacuahtin

The Cuacuahtin warriors (or "Eagles") are put in command of normal soldiers, bolstering their troops with their religious zeal and magical ability. It's said that one unit of soldiers lead by a Cuacuahtin can hold off a force ten times its size simply through their faith in their captain.

**B A R S C I L W Ess M Init IP**  
5 5 5 5 5 6 4 5 6.0 6 11 1

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 11

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

**Skills:** Athletics Skill group 4, Close Combat Skill group 4, Etiquette (Military) 3 (+2), Firearms Skill group 5, First Aid 3, Heavy Weapons 5 (8), Leadership 5 (7), Perception 4, Stealth Skill group 5

**Qualities:** Martial Arts: Firefight (1 less penalty for firing in melee), Toughness

**Initiate Grade:** 2

**Metamagics:** Adept Centering, Item Attunement (Ingram White Knight LMG)

**Adept Powers:** Cloak 3, Commanding Voice, Improved Ability (Heavy Weapons) 3, Improved Ability (Leadership) 2, Improved Reflexes 2, Motion Sense

**Gear:** Light military armor (w/ mobility upgrade 1, gyromount) and military helmet, medkit (Rating 5)

**Maneuvers:** Evasion, Full Offense, Iaijutsu, Watchful Guard

**Weapons:**

Vibro knife [Blade, DV 5P, AP -2]  
Ares Predator IV [Heavy pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, RC -, 15(c), w/ smartgun]  
Ingram White Knight [LMG, DV 6P, AP -1, BF/FA, RC 5(6), 50(c) w/ smartgun, APDS ammo]





### Aztech Security Forces (50)

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
4	5 (6)	4 (5)	4 (5)	3	4	3	4	2.8	8 (9)	1 (2)

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 8/6

**Skills:** Automatics 3, Close Combat Skill group 3, Etiquette (Corporate) 1 (+2), Dodge 3, Infiltration 3, Perception 3, Pilot Groundcraft 2, Survival (Urban) 1 (+2)

**Qualities:** High Pain Tolerance 3

**Augmentations:** Cybereyes (Rating 1 w/Smartlink, Vision Enhancement 1); Wired Reflexes 1, Muscle Replacement 1

**Gear:** Armor jacket, commlink (Device Rating 4)

**Weapons:**

- Knife [Blade, DV 4P, AP -]
- Stun Baton [Club, DV 6S(c), AP -half,]
- Ares Alpha [Assault Rifle, DV 6P; AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 42(c) w/ smartgun]

### Cuanato, Free Spirit of Beasts

Cuanato entered into a pact of service with Captain Herrera to serve Aztechnology for a year and a day. The free spirit in exchange draws energy from willing sacrifices offered in its name. He materializes when called and leads a coterie of living jaguars that have been augmented.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
8	7	8	8	6	6	6	6	6	14	2

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 12

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

**Skills:** Assensing 6, Astral Combat 6, Dodge 6, Perception 6, Unarmed Combat 6

**Force:** 6

**Powers:** Animal Control, Astral Form, Enhanced Senses (hearing, low-light, smell), Fear, Materialization, Movement, Natural Weapon, Sapience, Search and Venom

**Weapons:**

- Bite attack [Unarmed, DV 6P, AP -, injects venom (Speed: 1, Combat Turn, Power: 6, Effect: Physical Damage)].
- Claws [Unarmed, DV 6P, AP -]

### Náhuatl (Chimeric biodrone) (5)

Developed by Aztechnology to be used alongside the Jaguars, the Náhuatl is a chimeric jaguar. Trained from a young age using sirmsense and magical abilities, the large cats are accustomed to soldiers. Each Náhuatl is equipped for mission parameters with gear harnesses and combat drugs.

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
9 (11)	8	4 (6)	8	3	3	2	3	4	3.85	7 (9)	1

**Movement:** 10/60

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 6/6

**Skills:** Infiltration 3, Perception 2, Tracking 3, Unarmed Combat 4

**Powers:** Attribute Enhancement (Agi, Bod, Str), Chimeric Ability (Armor), Natural Weapon (Claws/Bite: DV 8P, AP 0), Pheromone Coding, Thicker Hide

**Bioware:** Bone Density 2, Damage Compensators 3

**Cyberware:** Auto-Injector (K-10), Blood Circuit Control, Reaction Enhancers 2

### Guardians of the Disc (2) (Free Spirit Guardians)

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	Ess	Init	IP
11	7	10	12	8	8	8	8	8	14	2

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 14

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 16/16\*

**Force:** 8

**Skills:** Assensing 8, Astral Combat 8, Blades 8, Clubs 8, Counterspelling 8, Dodge 8, Exotic Ranged Weapon 8, Perception 8, Unarmed Combat 8.

**Powers:** Astral Form, Elemental Attack, Fear, Guard, Magical Guard, Materialization, Movement, Psychokinesis, Regeneration, Sapience, Weakness: Sacrifice.

**Weapons:**

- Unarmed strike [melee, DV 6S]

The Guardians have a weakness to personal sacrifice. For every box of damage a runner willingly inflicts upon herself, both of the guardians also take a box of damage. This damage is cumulative for all the runners. This damage cannot be regenerated.

\* Immunity to Normal Weapons



## CLOSING ACTION

### SCAN THIS

The job is done, it's time to bug out and go home before the big uglies come calling. If the runners successfully retrieved the disc and kept it out of the hands of other interested groups, all that is left is to hop on a jet and go home. Jane asks them to escort her back to Sarajevo where, again, a private unmarked jet is waiting. She isn't returning to Seattle immediately, so a second jet will take the runners home. When they arrive at the airfield, an older man is waiting by the jet to speak with her. When they get there, an older man is waiting by the jet to speak with her. Samriel is standing by the second jet to speak with the runners.

If the runners failed and either the Apep Consortium or the Azzies escaped with the disc, then skip Samriel's exchange with the runners.

### TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

Forty kilometers and an eternity later, you arrive back in Sarajevo. Jane asks you to stay at the hotel for the few hours needed for your transportation to be sorted out. She's holding the Phaistos Disc, tracing the symbols with her finger, as though she's puzzling it out.

"I don't know what it says—it's not a language I've been taught—but this one looks a bit like an early Spherethiel symbol for 'gate,' I think. Of course, this one looks just like a little fish, so maybe I'm just imagining it."

She's happy enough to chat with you, but soon enough, the wait is over and your team descends the stairs to the black SUV and drives over to the airport. On the runway, two small sleek jets sit parked facing each other at slight angles. An elf is waiting beside the plane for her—tall, thin, and wearing ... clown makeup? Jane just shakes her head as she climbs out of the SUV.

"He thinks it makes a statement," she says, rolling her eyes as she climbs out of the SUV. At the plane, the clown-faced elf gives Jane a gentle kiss on the forehead—and then as she steps past him onto the plane, he slaps her on the ass.

DAWN OF THE ARTIFACTS: DARKEST HOUR





INCOMING FEED.....

Looking over to your jet, you have a guest as well. Samriel, his gray eyes watching the exchange between Jane and the man, turns toward you. Without the finery from the gala or his seemingly ever-present armor, he looks like a normal man. He steps towards you and stops a meter or so back. “You’ve done a good job. I don’t know what drives you to her side, but you have earned her respect and thus mine. Travel safely.” Without another word, he turns and walks to the silver SUV where his team is waiting.

You board the aircraft and fly home, no questions asked.

### BEHIND THE SCENES

You win some and you lose some; Jane understands the score. As long as the team behaved well and never betrayed her, she pays them what they were promised. If the Apep Consortium has the disc, she mentions that it’s awfully cold in Moscow at this time of year but that’s where she’s going. If the Azzies have it, Jane mutters under her breath “it’s gonna be one hell of a rough week.” She makes it clear that she isn’t going now, but if the runners want in, she’ll call them when the time is right.

If the team is successful, she thanks them for helping her with this latest project. She gives one of them a silver coin inscribed in a delicate script. “Jane Foster—One favor.” If they ever get caught in a really deep bind, they know how to get in touch with her. She may not be able to get there herself, but someone will help them out. It’s a one-time favor for groups that have successfully helped her out over the last few missions.

## PICKING UP THE PIECES

### MONEY

10,000¥ per runner for locating the Disc, negotiated up to an additional 10,000¥ each or up to 12,000¥ total per runner in gear.

Finder’s Fee of 50,000¥, negotiated up to an additional 25,000¥ for the team for recovering the Phaistos Disc and handing it over to Jane Foster.

5,000¥ per runner placed in escrow for travel to Hamburg.

### KARMA

At the end of any Shadowrun adventure, Karma is awarded to each shadowrunner for their part in it. Just surviving deserves some Karma, and accomplishing specific goals earns more. Most player characters won’t earn every point of Karma available, which is normal.

For awarding individual Karma, it is a good idea to keep notes on each player character’s performance during the adventure. Exceptional roleplaying, humor, or heroics deserve to be rewarded, so keep notes on those actions (or others) to ensure you have an accurate tally by the end of the adventure. On the same lines, don’t be afraid to subtract Karma from characters who do particularly foolhardy or out-of-character actions. Karma represents the universe’s reward for hard work and a job well done, and it can be lost just as easily as earned.



In *Darkest Hour*, bonus Karma is also awarded for each contact the player characters earn during the adventure. If the runners have already earned Frosty as a contact through the previous adventures, ending this adventure on a positive note (regardless of if they succeed or not) increases her Loyalty rating by one point.

Of course, you don't need to share this with your players. Allow them to play the adventure as presented, without informing them of what actions result in a Karma award or deduction. This will help keep them from second-guessing themselves (and you) as they go through the adventure.

Generally, Karma is awarded at the end of the adventure. Occasionally, some gamemasters like to award a point of Karma during the game to reward a particularly impressive feat, exceptional roleplaying, or even a particularly brilliant in-character joke.

### TEAM KARMA

Situation	Award
Find Hardy Wagner and get the information	1
Track down Malcolm Carella	1
Recover the stolen Phaistos Disc	1
Discover the Pyramid of the Sun's inner sanctum	1
Recover the true disc and hand it over to Frosty	6

### Bonus Karma—1 per each contact gained

Jan Brecht	1
Hardy Wagner	1
Malcolm Carella	1
Hans Winokur	1
The Loose Cannons (Group)	1

### INDIVIDUAL KARMA

Situation	Award
Surviving	3
Good roleplaying	1-3
Guts/Bravery	1
Humor	1
Pushing the storyline along	1

## LEGWORK

When a PC gets in touch with a contact, make a Connection + Connection Test for the contact. The results of this test determines how many ranks of information the contact knows about the question (apply die modifiers to this test based upon relevance of the contact to the subject matter). A runner then makes a Charisma + Etiquette + Loyalty Test. The contact reveals that many levels of information about that topic for free (up to the number of hits scored by the contact for that topic). If the contact knows more, additional information requires a payment to the contact either in nuyen, favors owed, or information to trade.

If the shadowrunners have worked all of their contacts and are still missing important information, they may request that a contact ask around. If they do so, have the contact make a Connection + Connection (20 minutes) Extended Test. Additional information may be available, and prices are up to the gamemaster's discretion.

A Data Search may also be utilized to gather information from the following charts. Runners may make a Logic + Data Search Extended Test, and gamemasters are encouraged to utilize the optional rule that limits dice pools for Extended Tests by a -1 dice pool modifier (cumulative) for each roll after the first (p. 64, *SR4A*).

### INFINITY

Contact	Search	Information
0	0	That's a really big number, mate.
1	2	Yeah, it's some nova-hot club in Downtown.
2	4	They just opened a few years ago. Went from zero to hero in no time.
3	8	I know the doorman and can get you on the VIP list. If you need to go upstairs, talk to the barkeep.
4+	16+	No one is quite sure who owns the place, but whoever it is pays the bills on time.

### PHAISTOS DISC

Contact	Search	Information
0	0	Discs are last century, man. Do I look like an antiques dealer?
1	2	Some kind of clay tablet—it was stolen from a museum a few months back.
2	4	No one has ever been able to translate the glyphs. Maybe it's like Or'zet, I don't understand them either.
3	8	I heard a rumor that when the Comet passed by, museum guests saw the glyphs flicker and change.
4+	16+	The disc was found in an archaeological dig but the techniques used to make it weren't developed for another two hundred years.

Urgent Message...

DAWN OF THE ARTIFACTS: DARKEST HOUR



## HARDY WAGNER

Contact	Search	Information
0	0	Hardly worth talking about, don't you think?
1	2	A two-timing snitch to anyone paying.
2	4	He's a data-broker for the Dutch Penose but sells to anyone who pays.
3	8	A bona fide coward with a yellow streak three clicks wide, but he's smart. He's done a vanishing act a dozen times through friends in the Water Rats.
4+	16+	He lives in a quaint condo up on Tornquiststraße. I can give you the exact address for 100¥.

## FROSTY

If the runners search using Jane's professional handle, they find more information.

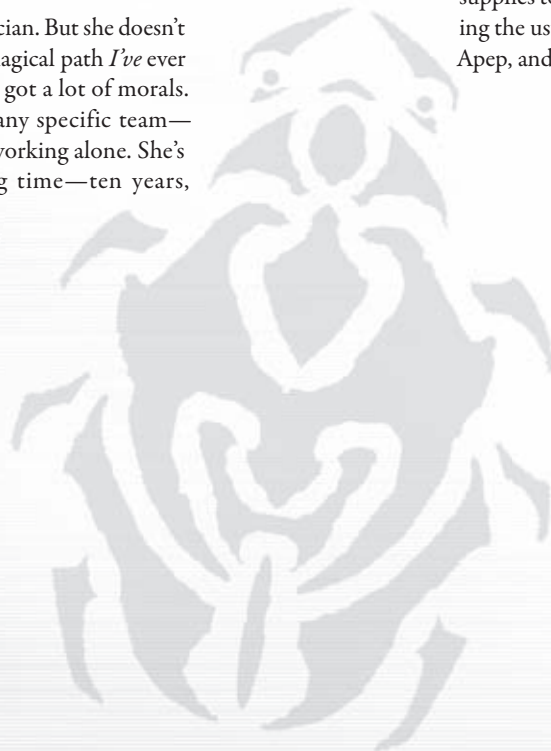
Contact	Search	Information
0	0	"Frosty? Isn't that a dessert?"
1	2	"Frosty? Isn't that the handle of some chica in the biz?"
2	4	"Yes, I've heard of Frosty. She's a talented mage, supposedly. Has a good rep ... although I don't know any jobs she's done."
3	8	"I've heard she's professional through and through. Picky about the jobs she takes and doesn't seem to take that many. I don't know anyone who's met her in person, though."
4+	16+	"Frosty's an elf, a magician. But she doesn't seem to follow any magical path I've ever seen. I've heard she's got a lot of morals. Doesn't work with any specific team—she seems to prefer working alone. She's been around a long time—ten years, maybe more."

## MALCOLM CARELLA

Contact	Search	Information
0	0	"Never heard of the slitch."
1	2	"He's in the biz—some kind of thief."
2	4	"Carella heads a team called the Loose Cannons—I can put you in touch for an easy 100¥" (Contact provides drop box number)
3	8	"Solid rep—he's a thief by trade, which makes him good at espionage."
4+	16+	"He does a lot of corporate work—strictly European theatre. Last I heard his team was working in Europort."

## BOSANSKA PIRAMIDA SUNCA

Contact	Search	Information
0	0	"I only speak English and bad English."
1	2	"Those are the pyramids outside of Sarajevo right?"
2	4	"Some kind of archaeological dig site—ancient pyramids from before the Romans rolled through killing people."
3	8	"The area is weird—magic doesn't work there the normal way it should. The pyramids are rumored to channel energy from the center of the universe to break a cloud of negative energy. I'm not sure how that works exactly ..."
4+	16+	"The Big A just sent in a whole convoy of supplies to set up a dig site. They are keeping the usual archaeologists—Atlanteans, Apep, and DIMR—out of the loop."





## CAST OF SHADOWS

### JANE “FROSTY” FOSTER

Jane “Frosty” Foster is an accomplished magician in her mid-forties. Physically, she appears to be in her early twenties due to her elven heritage. She has long, curly white hair. Her eyes are a clear blue, and she’s attractive, with a stunning smile. At first glance, she appears human, although she’s much taller than average for a human woman. She also has a very slight limp. Frosty has a casual attitude and a very pragmatic outlook on life. She is very loyal and basically honest, despite her career as a shadowrunner. 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 a powerful magician. That’s when she began to sporadically run the shadows.

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, like her mentor and her father.

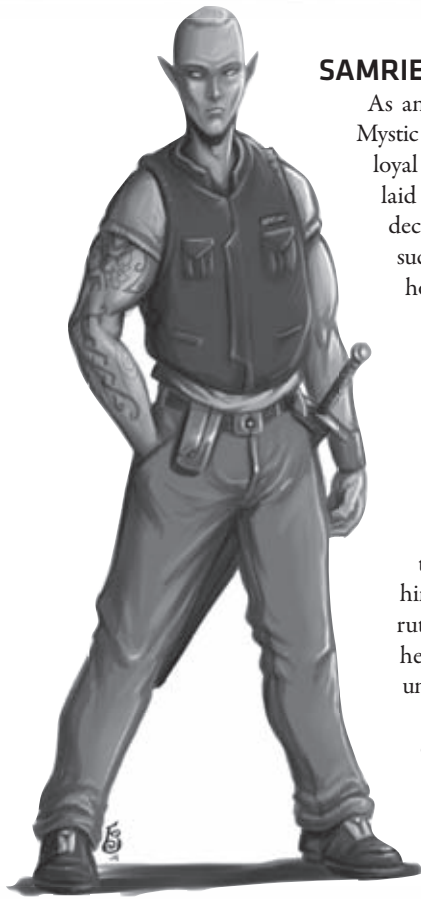
**Stats:** Frosty is a high-level initiate magician (at least grade 8) with some unique spell and magical abilities. Her magic follows a different paradigm than other magicians in the Sixth World, though it looks vaguely hermetic. Jane eschews cyberware. No stats are provided as Jane should be as powerful as the gamemaster needs her to be and balanced with the group. She is experienced at driving a bike and should have a firearms dice pool comparable to that of the player characters. Deprived of her magical talents, she prefers using heavy pistols in a fight, but she is also an accomplished swordswoman.



### EHRAN THE SCRIBE

In this adventure, Eهران doesn’t have much to do with the actual action. By a quirk of birth or magic, he is immune to the ravages of age, toxins, and disease. He is one of the most accomplished metahuman magicians on the planet. As a rule of thumb, assume that if magic can do something, Eهران can do it. If the player characters do make a determined effort to kill him, give it a good show as if they succeeded and remove his obvious presence from the final scene. He will still be alive and there may be consequences for their actions later.

Eهران the Scribe is a male elf with shoulder-length blond hair, usually swept back. His eyes are always blue, though the exact shade depends on the light (and possibly other factors). Fairly tall and thin, Eهران looks older than most elves, with a few more wrinkles around his mouth and hands. As his epithet suggests, Eهران likes to write, often copiously and by hand, and he is likely to be seen with ink-stained fingers as from an old-fashioned pen. For this occasion, Eهران wears a thin platinum torc in the shape of a two-headed dragon around his neck; it is obvious to anyone who sees it that the style is identical to Frosty’s ring. Eهران the Scribe is Frosty’s biological father, a fact she is unaware of as yet.



## SAMRIEL

As an Inner Circle member of the Mystic Crusaders, Samriel is fanatically loyal to following the chivalric code laid out in an ancient mystic codex deciphered by the Inner Circle. As such, he is dedicated to his code of honor, martial prowess, and the goal of unveiling the hidden mysteries of the past age of magic. Samriel generally works alone on secretive missions that are undisclosed to any outside the Inner Circle (and occasionally even withheld from them). He is a fanatic, but he adheres strictly to his code of honor, making him a valuable ally—though he is ruthless when dealing with those he judges to be dishonorable or untrustworthy.

Samriel blends bio and cyberware with his magic to push himself beyond mortal limits. Because of his heavy Essence loss, he is considered slightly off by many of the others in his order, but no one questions his ability to accomplish his missions

or his unwavering loyalty. Samriel sees his body as a tool to be used on behalf of the Mystic Crusaders and accepts the loss of some of his metahumanity as a worthwhile cost.

Samriel is a Caucasian elf with solid silver cybereyes, a heavily muscled physique, and close-cut gray hair. He is above-average height for an elf, and heavier than average due to his bioware augmentations. Although he is in his mid-thirties, his elven heritage gives him a much younger appearance. Samriel has a strict, no-nonsense approach to life.

Although it may appear that he is pursuing the interests of the Atlantean Foundation, in truth, his purpose—and that of the Inner Circle of the Mystic Crusaders—diverges from that of the organization at large. His current assignment is to successfully gather together the artifacts that Jane Foster is looking for. After his previous failures in Lagos and Los Angeles, Samriel has decided to assist Frosty in gathering them (unbeknownst to her) and then find an opportune moment to take them all—or to take the prize the artifacts lead to.

Samriel translates from Sperethiel as “discomfort”, implying necessary discomfort as in medical treatment.

**B A R S C I L W M Edg Ess Init IP**  
5 7(10) 7(10) 5(8) 5 6 4(7) 5 7 3 3.13 13(16) 4

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

**Armor (Ballistic/Impact):** 9 (13)/5 (9)

**Skills:** Athletics Skill group 5 (6), Close Combat Skill group 6 (7), Demolitions 2, Dodge 6 (7), Electronics Skill group 2, Firearms Skill group 5 (6), First Aid 3, Influence Group 3, Leadership 3, Locksmith 4, Navigation 3, Pilot Ground Craft 5 (6), Stealth Skill group 5

**Qualities:** Adept, Exceptional Attribute (Reaction)

**Adept Abilities:** Commanding Voice, Eidetic Sense Memory, Enhanced Perception 5, Killing Hands, Magic Sense, Mystic Armor 4, Spell Resistance 4

**Initiate Grade:** 4

**Metamagic:** Adept Centering, Cognition, Extended Masking, Masking

**Augmentations:** (all Delta grade) Cerebral Booster (Rating 3), Damage Compensators Rating 6, Enhanced Articulation, Muscle Augmentation and Toner (Rating 3), Orthoskin (Rating 3), Platelet Factories, Cybereyes (silver) [w/ Flare Comp, Low-light, Smartlink, and Vision Enhancement 2], Synaptic Booster (Rating 3), Synthacardium (Rating 3)

**Gear:** Form-fitting body armor

**Weapons:**

Monofilament sword [Blade, DV 7P]

Savalette Guardian [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA/BF\*, RC 1, 12(c)]

\*Burst Fire requires a complex action.

Colt M22A3 [Assault Rifle, DV 6P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC 1, 40(c) w/ personalized grip, folding stock, gas-vent 3]

### Samriel's Mystic Crusaders (3)

An all-elfen team, these three have traveled with Samriel throughout the hunt. While they are here to help the runners at getting the artifacts into Frosty's hands, the team wants to stay as hidden as possible. They strike from stealth and use the ruthenium polymer coating on their armor to vanish quickly. The team is highly skilled and loyal to Samriel above all. Though all of them have mastered Carromeleg, they have thus far refused the honorific that goes with the name. It is their belief that a further challenge awaits them that they must overcome before accepting the title.

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

**Condition Monitor Boxes:** 10

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

**Skills:** Athletics Skill group 5, Close Combat Skill group 5, Cracking Skill group 4, Etiquette 3, Dodge 4, Electronics skill group 5, Firearms Skill group 5, Perception 5, Stealth Skill group 6, Survival (Urban) 3 (+2)

**Qualities:** Martial Arts 4 (Carromeleg)

**Advantages:** +2 dice on Surprise Tests when initiating an attack, +1 die on Receiving a Charge, +1 die on Interception Tests

**Adept Abilities:** Astral Perception, Counterstrike, Improved Ability (All Athletics Group skills) 1, Combat Sense 3, Improved Reflexes 2, Killing Hands

**Metamagics:** Centering, Extended Masking, Masking

**Gear:** Light military armor (w/ mobility upgrade 2, strength upgrade 3, thermal dampening, ruthenium polymer coating) and military helmet, medkit (Rating 4)

**Weapons:**

Knife [Blade, DV 5P, AP -]

Sword [Blade, DV 7P, AP -]

HK Urban Combat [Submachine Gun, DV 5P; AP -, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 36(c) w/ smartgun]





## PLAYER HANDOUTS

### FLYING UNDER THE RADAR

- To: Frosty
- RE: Flying under the Radar

- Here are some basics for your greenhorns. If they don't know this, I'd recommend they find a good smuggler—failing is a good way to wind up in lockdown.
- 2XL

So, you decided to take a job away from home. Let's go over some of the tried-and-true methods to get past the border patrol or airport security.

The simplest way is to leave your gear behind. Fixers and smugglers often know people around the world, and if you can grab the gear at the other end it a) makes getting through security much easier and b) makes it harder to trace the job back to you. Sometimes though, the gear you need is unavailable or can't be left behind, like your cyber. If you plan on doing any work outside your hometown, make friends with a good forger.

Forgery is part and parcel of smuggling. Skilled forgers can insert data across a series of databases, bypassing the Web of Trust authentication systems used by most airports. For a fake ID to get past more secure systems and checkpoints, you will need biometric data from retinal scans to DNA sequencing added onto the ID. Make sure that your new SIN matches the country you are working in. Playing in the AGS with a Japanese SIN gets you deported faster than you can say "Thank you, officer."

In addition to the fake SIN, pairing up with a street doc can explain your cyberware within a complicated medical history. Bone lacing isn't there to make you tougher, it's combating chronic osteocuspis. Likewise, your reaction enhancers are to help with a degenerative nerve condition. Most security systems won't be able to detect bioware or gene therapy so you can leave them out of your medical checklist.

If you have the gift of gab, a little social engineering can get you out of a jam. Most security guards are underpaid, and they are always on the lookout for some extra cred. Bribery generally consists of putting cred or contraband in the hands of an official. The trick is to find the soft point in your mark's morality and push. While greasing palms is fast and simple, the problem comes with leaving a trail of people

who know you. A good disguise can keep you from needing to constantly look over your shoulder.

For times when you can't let anyone know you came in, conning is appropriate. A con job is never something you do on the spot. Planning, a few props, and friends can always help. The trick of the con is to use a busy station or checkpoint. Rush hour is your friend here; guards are going to be used to waving vehicles through. Keep giving the guard as much information as you can. By overwhelming security with verbosity, you can keep security distracted so they don't see your true purpose.

Without the socially inclined or the creative minded, your options to get past a manned security checkpoint are smugglers. Coyotes are specialized smugglers who get people across borders. The techniques they use range from hidden compartments in unassuming vehicles to secret passages. Often coyotes will only cross a specific border, knowing various routes based on the number of people who are crossing and what they are bringing with them.

Remember that you and your teammates can be caches for anything you need to smuggle. Portable goods, like optical chips, can be hidden in any orifice. Likewise, data stored onto a security tag and embedded in your thigh is as secure as you are. The tag stays hidden and no one is ever the wiser. Specialized containers ranging from super-conductive polymer suppositories with lubricant to chemical-resistant latex pouches designed to be swallowed and regurgitated later can be found at most black markets. The same things with different packaging can be found in your local Stuffer Shack or adult emporium.

Let's not forget the more direct uses of magic. Spirits to hide your vehicle and make you go a little faster are worth all the money you have to pay to keep them around. Mages can also handwave guards into believing that your paperwork is fine or help see around the corner. If you don't have one on your team, their services can be pricy but always worth it.

Most importantly, if you know what you're doing do it. If not, find a professional, pay them a premium for not asking questions, and get it done.

Urgent Message...

DAWN OF THE ARTIFACTS: DARKEST HOUR



## PLAYER HANDOUTS

Urgent Message...

### HAMBURG

- To: Frosty
- RE: Surviving in Hamburg
  
- Here's the abridged version.
- Umsturz

The Hanseatic Free City of Hamburg has been a rat's nest of smugglers, pirates, and other *zwielichtiges Gesindel* (shady characters like you, mesh-head) since the Hanseatic times of old, and it still hosts the largest scene of criminals and wannabes in Northern Europe. A chunk of the city was flooded in 2011 and stayed that way, leaving us as the "Venice of the North."

If you need to lose a tail or drop the pursuing HanSec (the local constabulary), you can head to some of the lower-lying streets. There are plascrete jetties for long-term use and the occasional plank tossed between boats and pontoons to create a quick bridge. Make sure you don't fall in, though; the black water will leave you sick and wishing you were dead. Get to know some of the smugglers in the area and they will keep you safe for a price.

The uptown districts like the Nordstadt enclave (a whole district's worth of corp-zombie offices and apartment towers), Eimsbüttel (media biz and bean counters), and Wandsbek (metroplex administration) are the home ground of wageslaves of all kinds, while the dilapidated buildings of the southern districts like Harburg and Bergedorf house all the lower echelons of society.

Hamburg's central districts are where you will find the thickest shadows. Mingling up and downtown, the Neue Mitte (most of which is nerved by waterways) and Altona are the districts where the class divide blurs under shining holo-projections, colorful arrows, and flashing neo-lights.

No surprise then that Neue Mitte is an AR spam zone. You can't walk through the Reeperbahn in open mode without being swarmed by kinky RFID body tags that hookers and hustlers employ to advertise their goods. However, runners and fixers have been known to use the tag system as info drop boxes, hiding and encoding data under virtual graffiti.

Avoid these last two zones until you know what you are doing in the city and have a plan on getting in and out:

The Z-zone Wildost (Wild East) contains a former Baltic-Polish refugee camp sprawling over a concrete reef of submerged building blocks. Illegal immigrants, the SINless, and anti-tech or green communes like the Klabauterbund eke out their miserable existence in this stinking silt morass, making do with floating container blocks, house-hovercrafts, and yurt barracks. The locals just call it *die Sickergrube* (the Seeping Pit) because any scum picked up uptown inevitably ends up in these waters.

Wilhelmsburg (known locally as Big Willi) is the strangest district. Built as an Alcatraz-like prison island/labor camp, it is surrounded by a drone perimeter and guarded only on the island's rim by HanSec. The prison itself is autonomous (and extraterritorial), except for food parcels that are dropped into the area daily and distributed along the prevailing food chain. As part of their punishment, the prisoners work 24/7 in automated production lines for the benefit of the city—and if they don't, food delivery is suspended.

If you need to get some gear, talk to one of the local Schmidts (you call them Johnsons). Black markets (some of them underwater) float around the Neue Mitte on a regular basis. My favorite is the old Fischmarkt, a pontoon market that opens early every day. You can pick up about almost anything there except fish, including illegal goods like weapons and restricted tech, all traded under the counter. The Lobatchevski Vory still ride high on the tide in Hamburg, subcontracting their illegal operations to Scand Vikings gangs, Dutch Penose thugs, and hover-gangs like the Wasserratten (Water Rats). They've kept some competition at bay by sharing the market with indy smugglers, kapers, pirates, and the Luden (Hamburg's independent panders), but the constant influx of Baltic Red Vory enforcers into the underworld has led to serious flare-ups in the canals.

Hamburg is a breeding ground for political agitators of all sorts, as the senate has always used its ties to activist groups and rads as a front to restrain the corps from excessive meddling in the sprawl's affairs. With the nationalist, left-wing, Green, anti-corporate, and anarchist politicos backing their senators in the ongoing conflict with the AGS' government, Hamburg has become a thriving hive of subversive political elements in the last few years. Rad groups also schedule rallies, and more direct action, to push their agendas. Starting trouble at a rally will draw the attention of the crowd as much as HanSec—bad publicity can deal a blow to the rads so they police their own.

DRAWN OF THE ARTIFACTS: DARKEST HOUR . . . . .



## PLAYER HANDOUTS

### EUROPORT

- RE: EUROPORT
- Frosty, welcome to town. I'm out at the moment, but this should get you by.
- Fianchetto

The city is controlled part and parcel by the EARC—Europort Administrative Ruling Council. The Council divided it into thirteen districts where all manner of corporate production and negotiation happens. Their investment has force-evolved the artificial enterprise zone that is Europort into an automated industrial moloch. Over half the sprawl is taken up by the Portoplex, a vast superport incorporating a plethora of docks, plants, and refineries, as well as multi-level container parks, warehousing and logistics centers—all interlinked and reconfigurable. Even the docks are adaptive, combining floating docks with adjustable pylons and mobile locks to configure themselves to different sizes of vessels, from local barges to cargo whales and behemoth freighters from all corners of the globe. If you believe Netcat, there's a xenosapient AI in the primary node making all of it function.

While robotics are cheaper and more capable, metahumans are employed in minor supervisory capacities, though a number of cranejacks and spiders were recruited from other ports after the technomancer and AI scares of recent months. Human network admins, sysops, and techtypes are also in high demand as security is higher than ever. The security is redundant, and items are tracked on a dozen different systems due to the Gordian Knot that is their network. Upside is that if something doesn't get entered, it's lost forever, but pulling off a hack to sneak something out of the system would take a crew.

Maintenance contracts for the artificial dikes that protect the city from the toxic North Sea, power, public works, sanitation, security, and public transportation—like the aboveground maglev train system that interconnects shopping, apartment, and corporate districts with the Oude Centraal and the Portoplex—are outsourced to local corps and supported by tax funds raised from the city's registered residents (more than eighty percent of whom have corporate affiliation). To keep all communication channels as short as possible, the administrative bodies are clustered around central De Kop van Zuid ("the Head of the South"), Europort's de facto cerebellum where all corporations' representations, including Regulus' HQ, are located.

Surprisingly, the Eurocorps cooperate extremely well, with Regulus functioning as an arbiter in disputes. However, rumors abound that some of the Eurocorps (those with longstanding grudges like Mærsk, Spinrad Industries, or Z-IC) have forged an alliance with Regulus to keep Saeder-Krupp in check. De Maas Waker Politie, Europort's private police organization (now owned by Regulus), is on the EARC's payroll. An independent inter-corporate taskforce is usually dispatched for special missions.

Europort's remaining ten districts, all laid out by corporate architects, are divvied up by function; work and leisure are kept strictly separate, and most are simply dormitory areas that orbit the bustling Portoplex. Contrary to what you might expect, the worst places are the desolate residential areas for metahuman workers and their families around Vlaardingen and Schiedam. No matter how the corps spruce them up with AR and colorful paints, they always feel lifeless and desolate. The soot, grime, and vague chemical smells that permeate the sprawl don't help.

Vice and leisure also have a place in Europort, particularly in a red-light halo around the Oude Centraal known as the Reefer district where stevedores and suits rub shoulders and blow off steam. Originally home to a number of up-and-up recreation and leisure businesses, the area has seen better days. In many areas of the Reefer, legitimate casinos, nightclubs, and Dutch "coffeeshops" have given way to gambling dens, fight clubs, brothels, table dance clubs, or virtuaporn cafés. Corporate "cliques" are a curious feature of Europort's bars and clubs, recognizable by their own distinctive corporate styles and behaviors. Cliques develop within different ranks of the corporate hierarchy, united by common interests (rebellion against the corporate establishment, if nothing else). Since there are few if any lower-echelon SINless in Europort, these zoku-like cliques occupy the gangs' social niche in the urban microcosm. Many are adept at small-time felonies like robbing apartments, blackmailing for corp scrip, prostituting classmates, organizing fight club events, or hacking corporate vaults from the inside.

If you are looking to stay out of sight, stay on the southeastern edge of the sprawl—just outside the enclave, there's a thriving community of stragglers and hangers-on. They feed off the scraps of the city and prey upon travelers entering Europort from the Autobahn.

Urgent Message...

DAWN OF THE ARTIFACTS: DARKEST HOUR



### DARK MAGE BURIED; KILLER'S TRAIL STILL COLD

The life of Hermann Meyer, former leader of Frankfurt's Dr. Faustus Society, will play out its final chapter today as he is interred in Hauptfriedhof Frankfurt. While his friends and family will be seeking closure, the investigation into his murder remains very much open, with police officials privately expressing their frustration at the lack of compelling leads.

"Everything we have seen tells us this was an intricately planned crime, and that plan extended right through the cover up. We really don't have any solid leads to pursue," said one official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Meyer's body was found on the front lawn of his vast manor five days ago. The official cause of death is listed as massive blood loss, a technical phrase that hardly describes the horror visited upon Meyer. When his body was found, his chest and abdomen were nothing more than gaping wounds, and his entrails were found spread around his body. Some organs, including his heart, have yet to be found.

Though hard evidence seems difficult to come by, one element of the case that has drawn considerable attention is the role that magic played in Meyer's death. As Frankfurt's leading Faustian mage, Meyer was no stranger to the dark side of magic, and there has been speculation that the same dark forces he tapped into in life may have been involved in his death. Mages working with the police report that a strong spell was cast in the area just before Meyer died, and many observers have commented that the grisly crime had the trappings of ritual magic.

These trappings have made many think of techniques employed across the ocean in Aztlan. In an effort to nip any negative speculation in the bud, Aztechnology has been quick to offer its support in finding the culprits.

"Aztechnology naturally abhors what happened to Mr. Meyer," said spokesman Bernhard Goldschmidt. "We

are fully confident that there is absolutely no connection between our corporation, our methods, and this crime, and we are very interested in seeing the guilty party or parties brought to justice."

While the investigation continues, Meyer's peers in the Dr. Faustus Society are committed to carrying on in their late leader's name. In statements of tribute to Meyer, Faustians have cited his rigorous intellect and his tireless commitment to digging into and uncovering arcane secrets.

"The best tribute we can offer Hermann Meyer is to continue his work, which we will do. We will miss his presence, but his name will continue to be an inspiration," said Hans Winokur, who has succeeded Meyer as the local leader of the Faustians. Winokur and other members of Meyer's organizations are expected to be present at the internment of his remains.

The funeral is also likely to include unwelcome guests, such as protestors who believe that using police resources to investigate Meyer's death is a waste, since he only reaped what he sowed. Councilman Eberhard Keller, who is believed to be connected to the ultraconservative group National Action, has been especially vociferous in his criticism of the official handling of the case.

"Meyer messed with bad things, so bad things happened to him. The amount of time and money the police are spending on this is ridiculous. When someone jumps off a building, they write it up as a suicide and leave it at that. Well, Meyer spent most of his life messing around with sources that were likely to kill him, and they finally killed him. So let's leave the case alone. I think there are plenty of other problems, like the gangs running around, that they could be worrying about instead of looking into this," Keller said recently in a public statement on the case.

Meyer's friends and family did not offer a response to Keller's statements.



## PLAYER HANDOUTS

### SARAJEVO

- RE: Sarajevo
- I'd say don't come, but you won't listen. Here's what you paid for.
- Goat Foot

Control is an illusion in the Balkans—an illusion that has spawned genocide and violence for as far back as anyone can remember. A crossroad of cultures, the territory bottles the tensions between different groups, rooted in ethnicity, language, faith, and land, and shakes them together into a potent, often bloody brew. Thirsty for vengeance and fueled by the Balkan penchant for savagery, Serbs, Bulgarians, Albanians, Croats, Bosnians, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Romanians, and Slovenes all drank deeply.

In the middle of it all, the Sarajevo Enclave—which includes the former capital and neighboring cities of Ilidža (including Mt. Igman) and Vogošća—is the closest we have for a safe haven. While Bosnia-Herzegovina fragmented into a mosaic of contested autonomous enclaves like the Dinaric Collective (an enclave of Croatian-backed paramilitaries in the Dinaric Mountains), the Republika SRPSKA (or Sebrencian Serb Republic, which borders Montenegro and is run by Serbian warlord Goran Jakšić), or the Allied Islamic Territories (formed when the Muslim Bosnian Republic fell apart following the Serbian campaigns of the mid-'50s), Sarajevo survived due to its strategic and symbolic importance as a socio-political and cultural hub. Don't bother keeping up-to-date on the numerous Balkan microstates, their leaders, and allegiances. The constant border, religious, or ethnic strife means these self-proclaimed nations change every other month.

Though Serbo-Croatian is the official language of the sprawl, most people speak their native Balkan dialect or the Balkan pidgin spoken in Sarajevo that owes much to both Slavic and Arabic. Islamic influence extends to more than just language, though. Islam touches many aspects of life in Sarajevo, and the city boasts several Muslim schools and more than a hundred mosques.

A significant portion of the ethnically diverse population is made up of the thousands of refugees that escaped to Sarajevo from rural areas in fear of persecution, rape, or murder by partisans and militias, the majority being Eastern Orthodox Serbs, Roman Catholic Croats, and Bosnian Muslims. Violent flare-ups between members of these major faiths and Slavic neo-pagans have become

commonplace. The Alliance for Allah and more radical factions within each of the cultural groups regularly spread propaganda—further marginalizing and fracturing the city.

Ever since the local police forces and military disbanded decades ago (the endless stretch of grave markers leading to Mt. Igman tells that story), criminal investigations and peacekeeping tasks are performed jointly by Blue Helmets from the Balkan UN Protection Force (a peacekeeping mission started in the early 1990s) and a European Crisis Group (Euroforce/MET 2000 troops supported and re-commissioned by the NEEC).

The Peacekeeping task forces are stationed in Butmir, where they assist in protecting Sarajevo Airport, maintained by Saeder-Krupp and serving as one of the few remaining aerial gateways in the Balkans. Recently Aztechnology has begun talks with MET 2000 to parcel off a valley nearby for their own use. The leverage of the AAAs paying to keep Euroforce and MET 2000 troops in the area paid off well. The peacekeepers focus on containment rather than control. Limiting the violence to a small area is easier than the impossible dream of stopping it.

Peace is hard won in the city. Nationalist factions, militias, partisans, hired mercenaries, and cutthroats are always causing havoc, with collateral damage being more rule than exception. Cheap or used armored vests are common fashion accessories among Sarajevo's natives. Those who can afford additional protection hire bodyguards (often outsiders to avoid conflicts of interest) or travel in armored vehicles. Although public transportation systems like the spinal tram network around the central district and buses that shuttle to the suburbs survived, they have been a target of attacks and hostage-takings in the past.

If you're going to travel well armed, make sure that someone looks local, otherwise you may be approached to serve as guards. Pick the wrong side in that conflict and the Blue Helmets will scrape your spleen off a Sarajevo Rose that used to be you.

Sarajevo's laughable excuse for a grid navigated the Crash 2.0 and its aftermath with nary a glitch, and to this day the 'plex still doesn't possess a public wireless network (with no plans on the horizon either), though smaller corporate and private networks do exist. Free access to today's infosociety is still well out of the reach of the Balkan people—a pity, since education and cultural exchange might be exactly what the doctor ordered to break the cycle of violence.

Urgent Message...

DAWN OF THE ARTIFACTS: DARKEST HOUR





Everyone pictures Marseilles like the trids show it—sunny and glamorous, with nubile young bodies running on the beach. Samriel had never seen pictures of Marseilles in the spring when the city was cooler and the wind carried in storm clouds from the Mediterranean. He sat in front of a café overlooking the beach, sipping coffee and looking out across the sea at a chateau that was perched on a small island. With his enhanced vision, he could make out the forms of large dogs running and playing on the grounds. Strategies slowly formed in his head for how he would approach the island and what extraction protocols he should follow afterwards.

All of those thoughts shifted to the back of his mind as Samriel's commlink chirped—it was time for the after-action report.

"She has the disc." No greetings or small talk; the caller most likely wouldn't notice.

"Excellent. Any complications I should know about?" Samriel knew it was a rhetorical question—if there had been a problem, he would have told her about it earlier. But it seemed she had a role to play and a script to follow, so she was going to stick to it. Samriel knew that those who survive in this game longest are those who know when you need to stick to the rules.

"No. I'm not sure what her team thinks yet—they are erratic and hard to read. She is beginning to warm to me."

"Humor, from you?" the caller said, with no added warmth in her voice. "I am pleased to see that something still lives within your heart beyond purpose and devotion."

At the café, a single ray of sunlight broke through the clouds. A few tourists, visiting in the off-season while it was cheaper, ran across the street from their shopping to take pictures. Samriel just took another sip of his coffee.

"A turn of phrase" he said into his commlink. "I watched the pass-off in Sarajevo. The Prince was there. There was a connection in Monaco, she returned to d'If and he continued to Portland. The pieces are vulnerable. My team could take them and then gather the fourth."

"No. Let her play out this hand. The girl believes that she is doing a job, and she doesn't know who the other players are. I have the joker, but first I will let her take out a few of the others. Take the long view, my knight; we need her to put everything she has in to the game, if we want to be able to take it all away."

"I know my orders. I will return to Atlanta within forty-eight hours. My people need some rest and I would like to research a few things."

"Travel safely. The others will prepare everything you need."

With that, the connection was terminated. Samriel finished his coffee and transferred nuyen to pay the café. He shrugged into his coat and stepped away from the heated patio. He would do his duty, which meant this would not be his last trip to Marseilles or the chateau.



THULE PROTECTORATE

Scottish  
Irradiated  
Zone

UNITED  
KINGDOM

Scotsprawl \*

New

Belfast •

Meresys \*

Galway •

Dublin •

Birmi \*

TÍR NA NÓG

Cardiff-Caerdydd •

Lyonesse •

SOX (SAAR-LORRAINE LUXEMBOURG)

BRIT

EUSKAL  
HERRIA

Gasteiz •

SPAIN

Ma

PORTUGAL

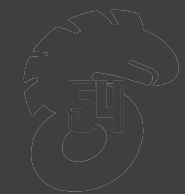
Lisbon •

Casablanca • Rabat

MOROCCO

Canary Islands

Atlantic  
n







SCANDINAVIAN UNION

SWEDEN

FINLAND

NORWAY

Oslo

Stockholm

Helsinki

Tallinn

ESTONIA

Rīga

LATVIA

LITHUANIA

Vilnius

St Petersburg

Moscow

RUS

DENMARK

Copenhagen

Gothenburg

Scottish Fringe  
Toxic Zone

UNITED

NETHERLANDS

Hamburg

Hannover

Berlin

A.G.S.

KÖNIGSBERG

POLAND

Warsaw

BELARUS

Minsk

CZECH REP.

Prague

Brno

SLOVAKIA

UKRAINE

Kiev

Monument to the  
Sea King's Daughter

Volgograd

London

Brussels EC

Paris

Rhine-Ruhr  
Sprawl

Frankfurt

Karlsruhe

Stuttgart

FRANCE

Auvergne

SWITZERLAND

New Morocco

Marseille

Nice

FREE  
CORSICA

ITALIAN  
CONFEDERATION

Tunis

Mount Etna

Valletta

MALTA

Tripoli

TUNISIA

Ouargla

ALGERIA

Reggane

Chain of the Ark Awbari Darkest Hour

Dianet

AUSTRIA

HUNGARY

DISPUTED  
BOSNIAN  
TERRITORY

Sarajevo

SERBIA

ROMANIA

Bucharest

UKRAINIAN  
PROTECTORATE

BRASOV-COVASNA ENCLAVE

BULGARIA

Constantinople

Ankara

TURKEY

Black Sea

EAST  
ANATOLIA

T'bilisi

Yereva

KURDISTAN

Irbil

SYRIA

IRAQ

Baghdad

Nicosia

CYPRUS

Alexandria

Giza

Cairo

EGYPT

Luxor

PALESTINE

ISRAEL

Tel-Aviv

Gaza

Medina

Riyadh





**TO BE  
CONCLUDED...**