

HUNTER

THE VIGIL



FREE RULES AND ADVENTURE

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HUNTER: THE VIGIL QUICKSTART

THE HUNT

Your Vigil Starts Here

Like most people, you've probably had the sense—at least once—that things are not right with the world and not everything is as it seems. You've felt that sinister truths hide behind a façade of normality, veiled partially by the rational, orderly “natural laws” we call science. And when night falls, when the shadows grow long and the wind whistles through the trees, you shudder and remember the truths of your ancestors, who were right to fear the dark. You've just entered the World of Darkness, a world very much like our own, save that the shadows hide very real monsters (though most people fool themselves into believing it isn't so).

In *Hunter: The Vigil*, the sixth Storytelling game set in the World of Darkness, you and your friends tell the story of those people who have come to recognize the truth, that monsters exist. These individuals cannot sit idly by. They study their foes. They destroy them or steal their power. They use them as pawns against one another. It's not an easy thing, the endless hunt, the ceaseless Vigil. It is a thing of brutality and obsession, a slope slippery with the blood of those who came and fell before, a slope that descends into nightmare. And yet they can do no differently, because the Vigil drives them. They sacrifice. They push forward. They hunt.

At the barest level, hunters exist in ignorant, rag-tag cells—friends, family or those driven together by maddening circumstances. They protect their stretch of forest, their city block, their network of women's shelters. They don't know the depth of what's out there; they have only the meager light of their own candles to light the way.

Candles give way to torches, to cells who band together in localized compacts. They pool resources. They provide moral support. They present a more unified front against the denizens of darkness.

And torches give way to raging bonfires as those compacts grow outward globally and backward through time. Ancient groups and modern conspiracies supply their hunters with potent weapons, some of which are so strange that those who use them can only wonder how long they can truly maintain their own humanity.

But even coming together to form an inferno or firestorm, hunters can't help but notice how deep and long those shadows are, and how numerous. Worse, fire is temporary: a candle burns down to its wick, a torch is snuffed in a cold wind, a bonfire has soon consumed all it can and grows dark. Hunters know they, too, are temporary where the shadows seem endless and eternal. They can only hope others will carry the Vigil in their stead.

The Game

Hunter is a Storytelling (or roleplaying) game. In it, a group of players cooperates to tell a story. Each player takes on the role of a single hunter, except for the Storyteller. This player essentially takes on every other role, describing the world to the other players, acting out the parts of other characters and determining what challenges the players' characters face. Players roll dice to determine whether their characters can overcome the challenges before them. In a typical exchange, the Storyteller describes the scene in which the players' characters find themselves. (“You rise from a night's rest in the small shack on the outskirts of town you use as a hideout. A scratching at the door tells you someone is trying to get in. What do you

do?”) The players in turn describe their characters' actions, usually in the first person. (“I sneak up to the door and look through the peep hole.”) The Storyteller then describes the results of the action, and he and the players go back and forth until the scene is resolved. Dice are rolled when players have their characters try things that aren't guaranteed success. Jumping out of a moving car without getting hurt would require a dice roll; leaving a stationary one wouldn't.

This booklet contains everything you and five of your friends will need to play your first game of **Hunter**, except for some pencils, paper for notes and several 10-sided dice. (These specialty dice are available in most hobby shops and are sometimes called “d10s.”) Those of you who are going to be players should read over the character backgrounds in the back of this booklet and choose the one you want to play. The Storyteller should read the rest of the booklet in preparation before playing.

The Rules

Hunter uses a set of rules called the Storytelling System. Many of the rules are introduced in the scenario proper or on the character sheets, but there are a few basics to go over first.

Rolling Dice: When rolling dice in the Storytelling System, you do not add the numbers together. Instead any single die that comes up 8 or better is considered a success. You usually need only one success to accomplish a task, but more is always better (causing more damage in combat, for example). Any die that comes up 0 (considered a 10) counts as a success and can be rolled again to potentially get another success. If you roll no successes at all, your character has failed that action.

Dice Pools: The number of dice you roll to attempt something is called your dice pool. It is usually made up of the total of one Attribute and one Skill on your character sheet, along with modifiers imposed by adverse conditions or any special equipment your character uses.

Modifiers: The Storyteller determines what modifiers apply to any dice pool. These either add to or subtract from the number of dice rolled in the dice pool. Modifiers usually come from tools used, Merits the character has or general circumstances. The Storyteller should grant or impose a bonus or penalty if the circumstances are especially favorable or deleterious, usually ranging from +5 to -5 (although modifiers tend to be closer to +2 to -2). For example, an attempt to climb a wall that is slick with rain and slime could suffer a -2 penalty, whereas doing so on one with a few handholds could gain a +1.

Chance Die: If modifiers reduce your dice pool to zero or fewer dice, you should roll a single die called a chance die. A 10 rolled on a chance die generates a single success, while any other result is a failure. Rolling a 1 on a chance die indicates a dramatic failure, and the Storyteller should describe especially troublesome results (a gun jamming, a blowout during a car chase, etc.).

Actions: Almost anything a character does is considered a simple action. You determine the dice pool, roll the dice, and see whether you succeed or fail. In combat you can perform one simple action per turn.

Sometimes you'll be asked to take an extended action, which represents doing something over a period of time, like researching something in a library or searching a room. In this case, each roll of the dice represents a fixed amount of time (usually 10 minutes, but it varies for some more involved actions). You accumulate successes from roll to roll until you run out of time or get a certain number described in the text.

Some actions can also be contested, which means two people are working against each other, such as in an arm-wrestling match or when a character tries to sneak past a watchful guard. In a contested action, each player (or the player and the Storyteller) rolls the dice pool for his character, and the person with the most successes wins.

Finally, some actions are reflexive, which means they happen automatically and don't take up any time. You can perform them and still perform a simple action in that turn.

Turns and Scenes: A turn is a 3-second period used to track time passing in combat. A scene is a longer period of time, usually as long as it takes for everyone to do what they want in a particular place.

The Character Sheet

This booklet contains character sheets for the five characters players will use in “The Hunt.” These sheets contain all the game numbers that define a character's capabilities, divided into a variety of traits. Most traits are rated from one dot (•) to five (•••••), much like a star rating system for movies. Different traits represent different things.

Attributes represent inherent capabilities, such as Strength, Intelligence or Presence. Nearly every roll uses one of these as a basis for the dice pool.

Spirits and ghosts use three special Attributes: Power, Finesse and Resistance. Power represents a ghost's ability to affect its environment. Finesse represents a ghost's capability in interacting with or manipulating elements of its environment. Resistance represents a ghost's ability to withstand forces that could banish or destroy it.

Skills represent learned abilities, like Firearms or Medicine. A word or phrase in parentheses next to a Skill indicates a Specialty, an area of the overall Skill in which the character is particularly talented. If you are asked to roll a dice pool in which your character doesn't have the right Skill, you suffer a penalty of either -1 (for a missing Physical or Social Skill) or -3 (for a missing Mental Skill). If, on the other hand, you have a relevant specialty in the Skill in your dice pool, you get a +1 modifier.

Health determines how wounded your character is, and it has both dots and points. Your character's dots are filled in on your character sheet, and they represent the total number of Health points available to him when he is uninjured. His lost Health points are recorded in the corresponding boxes, denoting his current state of health. (See “Health and Damage” for how to mark off Health points and the effects of wound penalties.) Spirits and ghosts use Corpus points instead of Health points.

Willpower represents your character's reserves. You can spend only one point of Willpower on any roll, and you get three additional dice in your dice pool. Alternatively, you can spend a point to raise your Defense trait by two against a single attack. Further, hunters can *risk* Willpower (see "Risking Willpower," p. 7). Willpower is valuable, and it's regained by acting in accordance with your character's **Virtue** and **Vice** (see individual character descriptions). It is ranked from 1 to 10, unlike most of the other traits.

Merits are special edges a character has, such as Contacts or Resources or Stunning Looks. The effects of each are explained in the character's description.

Profession represents what the hunter is good at. It's not just a job; it's what the hunter *is*. The character's profession relates to her Professional Training Merit, and is listed on the character sheet.

Tactics are special maneuvers hunter cells develop in order to combat supernatural monsters. Most of the members of the cell need to participate in the Tactic for it to be effective. How to use Tactics is detailed in "Tactics" on pp.7-8, and the Tactics the cell has are detailed on the character sheets in the back of this booklet.

Defense and Initiative Modifiers are traits used in combat, and are explained below.

Speed is the number of yards a character can move in one combat turn and still perform an action. A character can run up to twice his Speed rating yards in a turn if he sacrifices his action. Speed will most likely come into play in a chase.

Morality is a measure of your characters' sense of compassion and basic respect for the rule of law. Your characters can lose Morality over the course of play. Morality is ranked from 1 to 10, with an average Morality of 7.

Combat

Violence is inevitable in the life of the hunter—some would say it's at the core of the Vigil. When a fight breaks out, it can be important to keep track of who is doing what, and how badly they are hurting each other.

First, the Storyteller tells the players their characters are entering combat. Until the combat ends, everyone acts turn-by-turn, with each character getting one chance to act each turn.

Next, have everyone roll Initiative, which is the result of the roll of a single die + the character's Initiative modifier as listed on the character sheet. This is a rare case in which you add the number that comes up on a die to the value of your trait, instead of rolling a dice pool and looking for a success.

Starting with the character with the highest Initiative result and continuing to the lowest, each character gets to take a single action (usually an attack). The player can choose to yield her character's action until later in the Initiative queue, or until the next turn if she wishes. The Storyteller resolves each character's action before asking the next player what her character does.

If a character attacks another character, the attacker rolls the appropriate dice pool:

- ☠ **Unarmed close combat:** Strength + Brawl, minus target's Defense and armor (if any)
- ☠ **Armed close combat:** Strength + Weaponry, minus target's Defense and armor (if any)
- ☠ **Touching an opponent:** Dexterity + Brawl, minus target's Defense
- ☠ **Ranged combat (guns and bows):** Dexterity + Firearms, minus target's armor (if any)
- ☠ **Ranged combat (thrown weapons):** Dexterity + Athletics, minus target's Defense and armor (if any)

Add bonus dice based upon what weapon is being used or what effect is being performed, then subtract penalties for circumstance conditions. The player rolls the remaining pool. Each success equates to a Health point of damage inflicted, the type of which is determined by the nature of the attack. The Storyteller describes the attack and wound in narrative terms.

Once everyone has acted, a new turn starts and the player with the highest Initiative gets to act again. Players *do not* make new Initiative rolls every turn.

Complications

Avoiding Damage in Close Combat: Your character's Defense trait represents his instinctive ability to duck and weave and make an enemy's close-combat attacks more difficult, and so serves as a penalty to incoming attacks. If your character hasn't yet acted this turn and is willing to forgo that action, he can dodge, which doubles his Defense for the rest of the turn. If your character is attacked multiple times in the same turn, however, it becomes harder for him to avoid being hurt. For every attack targeted at him past the first, reduce the character's Defense by 1 (to a minimum of 0). If your character is dodging, the doubled Defense reduces by 1 for each additional attack.

Avoiding Damage in Ranged Combat: Unless a ranged attacker is only a few feet away or is throwing a weapon, Defense doesn't apply. To avoid damage in a firefight you can either hide behind something solid or fall prone to the ground. Falling prone constitutes a character's action for the turn but levies a -2 penalty on ranged attacks. Anyone within a few feet gets a +2 bonus to hit a prone character, though.

Concealment and Cover: If your character is partially concealed behind an object, she is harder to hit with ranged attacks. The penalty goes from -1 (crouching behind an office chair) to -3 (poking up out of a foxhole). If you are completely concealed, the attacker suffers no dice pool penalty but has to score enough successes to shoot through the intervening object (called the *cover*). Piercing an object reduces the number of successes rolled by a number based upon the *durability* of the cover: from 1 (for wood or thick glass) to 3 (for steel). If this penalty reduces the number of successes to 0, the attack fails to penetrate the cover and you take no damage.

Range: Every ranged weapon has three ranges listed in yards, in the format "short range/medium range/long range." An attacker suffers no penalty when her target is within the



short range. If the target is at medium range, she suffers a -2 penalty. At long range, this penalty goes to -4.

Health and Damage

Damage Types: There are three types of damage, each more serious than the last: bashing, lethal and aggravated. *Bashing damage* generally results from blunt or stunning attacks. *Lethal damage* often comes from cuts, gunshots and other more serious attacks. *Aggravated damage* is the result of especially vile supernatural attacks or extremely damaging effects (like fire).

Marking Damage: When a character suffers damage, the player marks off that number of Health points, starting with the box under the leftmost dot of his Health trait and proceeding left to right. The symbol used depends upon the type of damage.

Bashing damage is marked with a slash (/) in the first available empty box. So imagining that Gabreski (one of the characters in this scenario, who has eight Health dots) had just taken one point of bashing damage, his Health boxes would look like this:



Lethal damage is marked with an X, and it pushes any existing bashing damage right on the track (so that it always appears to the left of bashing damage). If Gabreski next took a point of lethal damage, his track would be:



Aggravated damage is marked with a large asterisk (*) by adding a vertical bar to an X. It also pushes any existing lethal and bashing damage right on the track (so that it always appears to the left of lethal or bashing damage). If Gabreski next suffered a point of aggravated damage, his track would be:



No More Health: Marking off a character's last Health box usually means the character has become incapacitated. If that rightmost wound is bashing, she falls unconscious. If that rightmost wound is lethal or aggravated, the character quickly bleeds to death. Note that this would mean the character has no bashing damage at all, since it will always be the rightmost. Supernatural creatures may react differently to damage—nothing is certain with monsters.

Additional Damage: An unconscious or severely battered hunter can still be damaged by further attacks. Without further Health boxes to mark off, you represent this damage by upgrading existing wounds. Any new bashing wound upgrades an existing bashing wound to lethal (make the leftmost / into an X), while new lethal damage can upgrade older wounds to aggravated (make the leftmost X into an asterisk). Additional aggravated damage also converts a point of bashing or lethal damage to aggravated (make the leftmost / or X into an asterisk).

Healing: Hunters recover from damage thanks to rest and medical attention. Left to heal naturally, characters recover one point of bashing damage every 15 minutes, one point of lethal damage every 2 days, and one point of aggravated damage every week. Lost Health is recovered from right to left on the character sheet.

Taking the Vigil

The characters in this scenario are already familiar with hunting monsters and the shadowy world of the Vigil, but since the players can't be expected to know the various aspects of the hunt, we have compiled the details into this comprehensive list.

Tiers

Hunters must keep their Vigil a closely-guarded secret, because humanity as a whole is ignorant of the horrors lurking in its midst. Yet while the Vigil is a lonely and isolating existence, very few hunters can take on the night alone and hope to survive. Individual hunters band together to form *cells*, pooling their skills and resources to take on solitary monsters that threaten their communities. Sometimes these hunters become aware of other cells in their area and they form broader ties that grow into larger *compacts*, creating a network that spans entire cities or regions. In rare cases, hunter compacts grow so large that their resources and influence span entire countries. These *conspiracies*, while powerful and ruthlessly efficient, must contend with the same inter-conspiracy politics, bureaucratic inertia and conflicting interests common to any large organization.

Tier One: Hunter Cells

A cell is the smallest and most common element of hunter society; at its core, it's a group of like-minded people dedicated to stopping the monsters that threaten their homes and loved ones. These groups are usually composed of only a handful of individuals, often with minimal resources and limited knowledge of the supernatural, and their area of influence is extremely local. Any given city features dozens, if not scores, of hunter cells.

Tier Two: Hunter Compacts

Hunter cells that survive long enough will eventually stumble across the existence of others like them, each going about the Vigil the best way they know how. As more cells pool their knowledge and resources to pursue a common goal, their network of communication becomes more elaborate and better organized. This is how many hunter compacts take shape, starting out as a collection of isolated groups that come together to pursue the Vigil on a much larger scale.

The Ashwood Abbey: A decadent Hellfire Club dedicated to experiencing everything that life (or unlife) has to offer.

The Long Night: Christian hunters who fight the agents of evil in an attempt to stave off the end of the world.

The Loyalists of Thule: Hungry for knowledge, this occult group seeks things man was not meant to know in places he was not meant to tread.

Network 0: Network 0 uses radio, television and Internet to not only hunt monsters but also to publicize their existence.

Null Mysteriis: Skeptics who battle the supernatural in an attempt to prove it does not exist.

The Union: Rag-tag blue-collar monster hunters, members of the Union work without government sanction to protect humanity against its most dangerous enemies.

Tier Three: Hunter Conspiracies

Some hunter groups manage to grow until they become influential, well-financed conspiracies that are capable of challenging the world's monsters on an even footing. Through shrewd leadership and relentless dedication to the Vigil, these conspiracies have built a resource base that allows them to operate more or less self-sufficiently; more importantly, they have accumulated a storehouse of occult knowledge and operational tactics their smaller peers can only dream about.

Aegis Kai Doru: Greek for "Shield and Spear," the Aegis Kai Doru search the world for history's legendary artifacts with which to bolster their numbers in their timeless battle against the forces of darkness.

Ascending Ones: The Ascending Ones trace their history and symbology back to both ancient Egypt and Muhammed the Prophet. Like the sacred sun, they see themselves as a cleansing agent that can burn away the monstrous impurities of the world.

The Cheiron Group: A confederacy of international corporations, The Cheiron Group possesses great wealth and technology.

The Lucifuge: Is it a paradox for those who consider themselves the children of a fallen angel to hunt monsters? The Lucifuge doesn't think so, hoping to earn its redemption by slaying the truly evil forces in the world.

Malleus Maleficarum: In the Middle Ages, the Malleus Maleficarum wielded the power of the Church against vampires. Today, the Catholic conspiracy pursues supernatural monsters of all sorts with religious zeal.

Task Force: VALKYRIE: This covert government anti-monster brigade includes members from every branch of the military, foreign and domestic. They hunt by order only, slaying monsters where and when their higher-ups dictate.

Risking Willpower

Instead of spending a Willpower point to get three additional dice for a roll, a player can *risk* Willpower on a roll once per scene. Risks don't stack; that is, if a player didn't risk Willpower last scene, he can't do it twice during the current scene. The roll must directly relate to the Vigil. Rolls to uncover information about a *known* monster, to break into a monster's home, to interrogate the monster's minion, to sneak up on a sleeping creature, to resist a monster's powers and, of course, combat rolls against monsters, can all benefit.

When a player wishes to risk Willpower, he states this *before* rolling the dice. If the roll succeeds, the character regains the point of spent Willpower and an additional point on top of that (for a total of two Willpower points gained), though this can never go beyond the character's pool limit. The character feels a flush of exhilaration and a sense of invincibility. If the roll fails, however, the world comes crashing down around the hunter. The roll is considered a *dramatic failure*, no matter how many dice were rolled.

Risked rolls can benefit or suffer from environmental or equipment modifiers, just as other rolls can.

Tactics

Successful cells of hunters develop *Tactics*, specialized maneuvers to damage, hinder and even learn from supernatural

creatures. Tactics require practice and discipline to execute correctly, and they don't bestow supernatural alacrity or strength on the hunters who use them. The Tactics possessed by the hunter characters are listed with the character sheets in the back of this booklet. There are a few unique rules for implementing a Tactic:

- ☠ One character is the primary actor for the Tactic. The player of that character makes the last roll in the Tactic, the one that ultimately determines whether the Tactic succeeds or fails.
- ☠ All other characters are secondary actors. They make their rolls before the primary actor.
- ☠ Any successes on a secondary actor's roll add to the primary actor's dice pool. A failure adds nothing, and may have additional effects (see individual Tactic descriptions). A dramatic failure imposes a -4 penalty on the primary actor's roll, in addition to any of the effects of a failure.
- ☠ A player can choose to risk Willpower as either a secondary or primary actor, with all the benefit and risk that entails. A player can also spend Willpower normally.

If the primary actor succeeds in his roll, the Tactic is successful, and the benefits listed under "Success" take effect. If the primary actor fails, however, refer to the "Failure" section of the Tactic.

Morality

Hunters hunt. It's what they do. For some, this is extremely literal—guns drawn, bullets blazing, the hunter tracks her prey and puts an end to its profane existence. For others, the pursuit is more figurative, capturing and studying the supernatural, or gathering

resources and information to help protect the people, places and things important to the hunter. Either way, the hunter is frequently confronted with having to decide what is right and wrong.

Morality tracks this delicate balance as the hunter struggles with his conscience. A hunter with high Morality is concerned about the rules of society, and is better able to relate to people in it. By contrast, a hunter with low Morality finds her sanity spiraling out of control. She becomes more like a monster herself, capable of virtually any depraved act.

When the character commits such an act, the player rolls a number of dice based upon the severity of the sin; Willpower can't be spent on this roll. The worse the sin, the fewer dice are rolled: petty theft is four dice, manslaughter or massive property damage is three dice, murder is two dice. If the roll fails, the character loses a point of Morality. Characters with reduced Morality find a way to cope with their loss of perspective, and allow themselves to drift further out of touch. It will now take a worse sin to cause another roll to degenerate. At a rating of 7 (where most of the characters start) petty theft or shoplifting can cause a loss of Morality. At Morality 6, only grand theft or burglary can spark such a roll. At Morality 5, it takes intentional mass property damage, such as arson. At Morality 4, it takes an impassioned crime such as manslaughter.

Characters who do lose Morality also risk becoming unhinged mentally. If a player fails a degeneration roll, he should immediately roll his character's *reduced* Morality as a dice pool. If he fails that roll, the character gains a derangement. This can be any form of minor but pervasive mental disorder, such as depression or a phobia. The player should roleplay this new character quirk, but it has no mechanical effect.



The Hunt

This story takes the characters deep into the World of Darkness, and reveals some of the terrible secrets that exist just outside human understanding. It is meant as an introduction to the strange lives of hunter characters and as a launching point from which Storytellers can begin chronicles of their own devising. Though the characters start out in Philadelphia, their ultimate fate is in your hands. This standalone scenario is meant for the Storyteller's eyes only. If you are planning to take on the role of one of the characters in "The Hunt," please stop reading now. Storytelling games are much more enjoyable if you experience the plot twists and surprises along with your characters, so don't spoil the fun for yourself.

Preparing for Play

First, read through the rules at the beginning of this document, just to get an idea of how the mechanics of the game work. Then, have a look at the character sheets at the end of the booklet, and note the characters' different capabilities and advantages. We don't expect you or the players to memorize everything right out of the gate, but if you give the characters a quick once-over in conjunction with the rules, the numbers will make more sense in game play.

Let the players read over their characters' backgrounds, role-playing hints and traits, and answer any questions they might have. Help them understand how the rules work with regard to the dots and numbers on the character sheets. Also, read through "The Hunt" once before attempting to act as Storyteller. We've tried to make it as easy as possible on you, but you should have an idea of what's coming up. Plus, players will always make decisions that you—and we—didn't see coming. That's great! That's part of roleplaying. It does, however, require you to think on your feet.

If you know how the plot progresses, you can take what the players do and allow those decisions to steer the game toward a satisfying conclusion, rather than having to say, "No, you can't do that because it would take us too far off track."

ABOUT THE FORMAT

The format we use for scenes in this quickstart is our Storyteller Adventure System (or SAS for short). To keep this quickstart lean and focused, we haven't included many of the core premises and Storyteller suggestions that are at the heart of the SAS. If you want to learn more about how our stories work in this system, be sure to read the free SAS Guide, found at the SAS website:

www.white-wolf.com/sas

Treatment

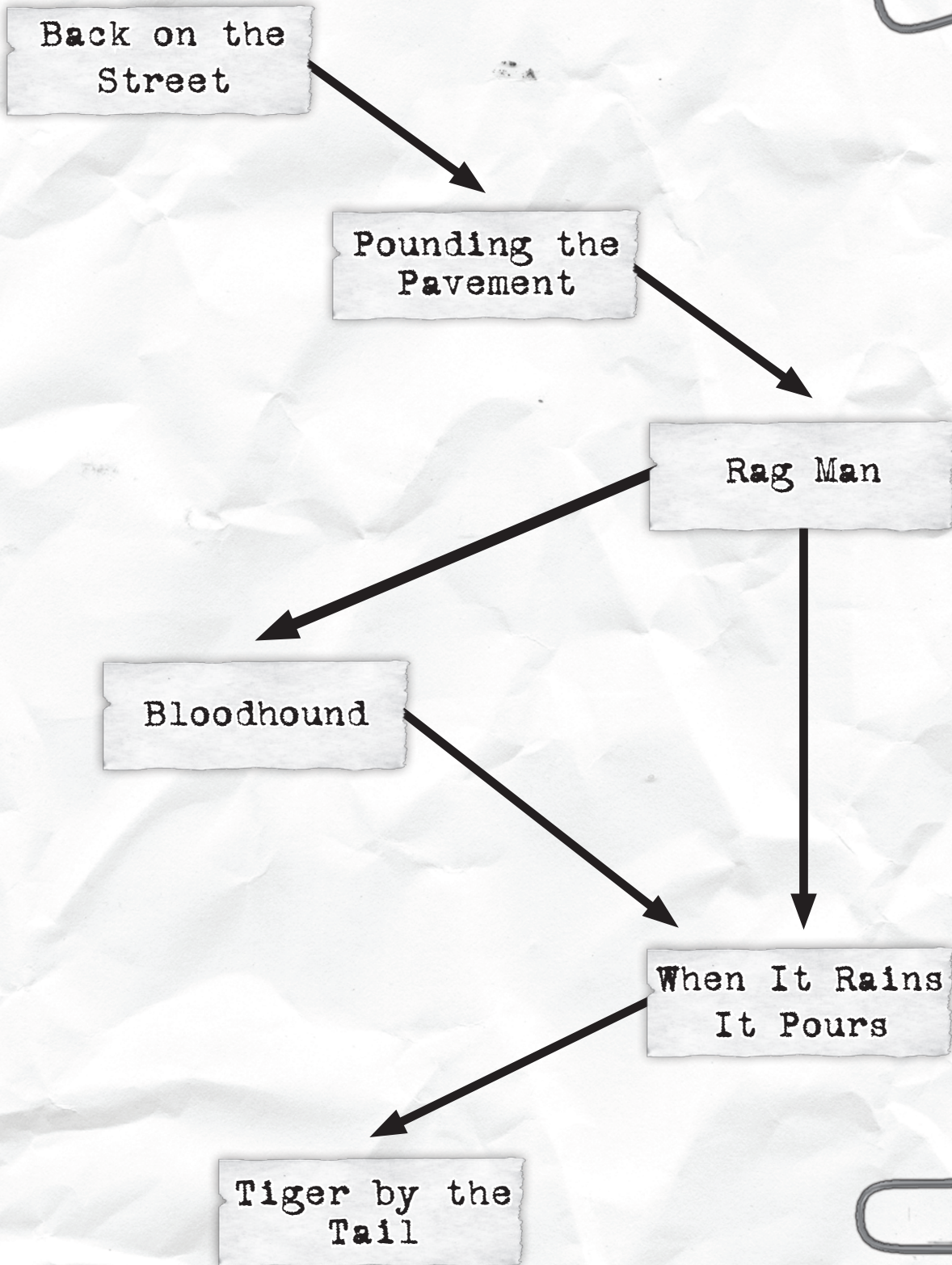
"The Hunt" revolves around an investigation into several ritualistic murders. Jeremiah Quaker, a wealthy socialite with the power to utterly bend people to his will, is obsessed with finding a lost piece of Philadelphia's occult history and sees no problem with murdering strangers to achieve his goal. The cell is asked to look into the first of these killings, but the false evidence left at the scene points them to another of the city's supernatural denizens.

Rag Man is a homeless man who is able to assume the shape of a dog, and he is set up by Jeremiah to take the rap for the murders. Rag Man flees from the characters when first encountering them, but quickly attempts to ally himself with them once captured. After some simple interrogation, he reveals that while he kills dogs to fuel his shape changing, he is utterly repulsed at the thought of killing people. Even though he offers to help them find the real culprit, the cell is left with little forward momentum.

After several days of chasing down false leads, two more murders are reported, matching the profile of the first. The victims this time are a couple found dead in their low-rent apartment, and again there's little evidence left at the scene. However, the cell catches a break when it's discovered that the neighboring shop's security camera covers the front door of the apartment building. As they're looking into this, a battered and bruised Rag Man shows up at the precinct house looking for them. He claims he was attacked in the night by the man he saw before, the same man seen on the security tape. As proof of his story, he offers up the man's finger, which he managed to chew off in the fight. The prints come back with the name of a man accused of rape several years ago: Jeremiah Quaker, a wealthy socialite.

Finally, the characters confront Jeremiah and find him in the middle of an inexplicable ritual. He seems to be consuming the missing eyes of the murder victims, and after barely acknowledging the cell member's presence, he sets the spirits of his victims on them, all while attempting to control Gabreski with his powers. During the fight, the cell members can see the object of Jeremiah's power beginning to take shape inside a ruin inscription on the floor, but once they kill him all evidence of his actions winks out of existence, leaving them to explain the ruined house to both the police and Task Force: VALKYRIE.

The Hunt Flowchart



Theme – Man's Inhumanity to Man

The more things change, the more they stay the same. The murders, and their fallout, are all very mundane—gruesome, certainly, but still something that happens with distressing regularity. The only things that set Jeremiah's actions apart from any other serial murderer are his supernatural motives. Monstrous and inhumanly powerful as he is, Jeremiah is still committing these crimes for the same reason any regular person would, and that should frighten the characters.

Mood – Frantic

The classic detective story utilizes slow, deliberate pacing punctuated with bursts of violent action. In many ways, "The Hunt" still uses that formula, but it also draws from newer sources of inspiration, particularly television cop dramas. The characters are dropped into situations they know nothing about, and left to figure things out as they go. The only certainty they have is the knowledge that the longer they take to track down the murderer, the more likely he is to kill again. The story should feel as if it has a finite length, as if the characters need to act quickly if they want to avert catastrophe. You should strive to impress upon the players that every scene is moving the plot that much closer to a final conclusion—whether or not it's one they want.

Background

The Characters

The characters presented in this scenario are all new to the Vigil, having encountered the supernatural for the first time less than a week before the events of the first scene. The three detectives (along with their now-deceased partner, Darnell Waters) all belong to the Special Cases Unit, a small police unit created by the Mayor's Office with the stated goal of stemming the rapid growth of Philadelphia's gangs. The unit worked hard to clean up the streets, but threats and procedural shortcuts soon turned into bribes and protection schemes, and they strayed from the straight and narrow. The detectives became involved with Raimundo and the *Siete Muertos*' drug trafficking, but their carelessness eventually drew the attention of the Internal Affairs Bureau, leading to both an investigation and Agent Carver's interest in the team.

While the SCU (along with Raimundo and a couple of his soldiers) followed Carver's tip about strange activity in a downtown warehouse, they were attacked by flesh-eating monsters called ghouls. Waters was taken by the ghouls as they made their escape into the sewers beneath the warehouse, and the cell vowed to track down the monsters and save him. Gabreski started by reaching out to Karl, an old media contact of his, and with his help they located the ghouls' lairs.

The cell wiped out nearly all the ghouls, but was not in time to save Darnell from a grisly fate. Galvanized by their exposure to the secret world around them, the characters accepted Carver's offer of conditional membership in Task Force: VALKYRIE. Now, not even a week after their fight with the ghouls, the IAB

investigation has been shelved and they are tasked with looking into a gruesome (and clearly occult) murder.

Jeremiah Quaker

Jeremiah Quaker took over leadership of the Parliament of Philosophers nearly five years ago, but the society's lack of any real occult knowledge left him with little to do except spend his money and enjoy the thrill of total domination of the people around him. Several months ago, however, that all changed.

Jeremiah spends some of his copious leisure time researching the occult history of the early United States, and Philadelphia in general. Recently, his studies led him to the story of a strange artifact supposedly used by the founding fathers to bolster their political hold over the colonies and eventually lead them to revolt. The artifact, said to look like a piece of limestone with an unknown fossil protruding from its surface, was originally discovered by Thomas Jefferson during the surveying of a plantation in 1762. It was hurled into the Schuylkill by George Washington in 1799. Shortly afterward, Washington died and the Capitol moved to Washington, D.C.

Jeremiah seeks to locate the stone, and believes the only way to do so is through an occult ritual of dowsing. In order to successfully complete the ritual, he requires the eyes of both a long-time resident of the city and those of someone newly moved there. He feels no remorse for these acts, believing them necessary to bring about his utopian vision, but he fears being stopped by the police before his work is complete. In order to avoid any suspicion, he observes the ritual killings practiced by Rag Man and attempts to duplicate them, hoping the skinning and runes will distract detectives from any incidental evidence he accidentally leaves behind.

The Investigation

As the characters progress through their investigation of the murders, there are several secondary elements of both the story and the game that bear remembering. The presence of these elements is easy to adjust, leaving you to decide how much you wish to emphasize each in your story.

Police Captain William Johnston

Cpt. Johnston hates Gabreski and his crew, and does everything he can to make their lives miserable, but the shelving of the IAB investigation into them has tied his hands for the moment. Though he is not a major player in this scenario, if you wish to play up the friction between the cell and the rest of the department, you can put him to good use.

Gabreski's clear lack of accountability leads Johnston to persistently harass and make demands of the team in an effort to keep them as honest as possible. He checks in constantly, demands impeccable paperwork and generally makes things tough for everyone in the cell. His constant presence at the precinct can be a great motivator for the cell to keep the majority of its investigation in the field.

Agent Carver

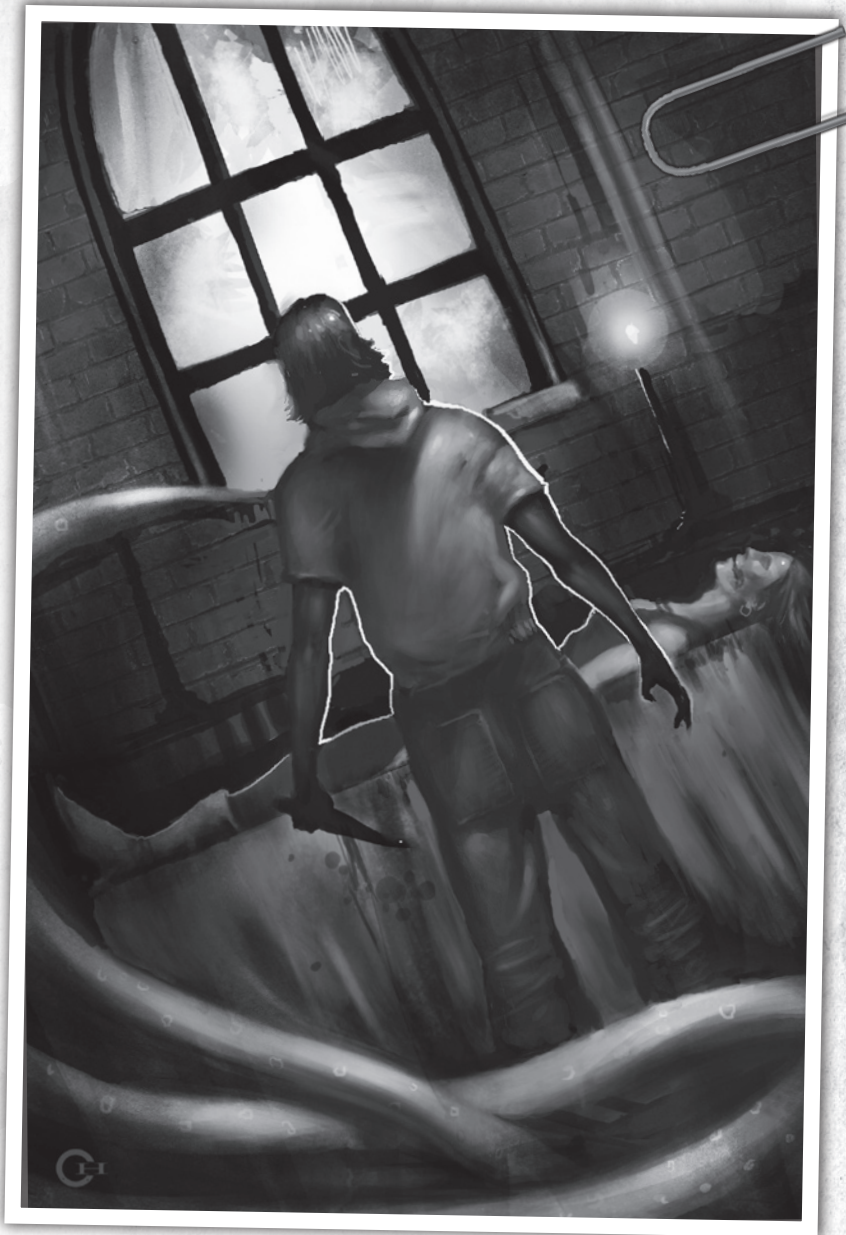
Agent Carver is a member of Task Force: VALKYRIE. TFV's Philadelphia presence is small, but Carver wants to change that—hence his recruiting the characters.

Like Cpt. Johnston, Carver wants to stay in touch with the cell as it proceeds through its investigation; however, unlike Johnston, he is unwilling to get overly involved. He wants to make sure his new recruits are capable of handling themselves in the field, so he will offer up only the information he has once he's sure the characters have earned it. His definition of "earned" is up to you, and can be triggered by the characters telling him about Rag Man (of whom he wasn't aware before), asking for all the intel he has or even nearly solving the case on their own.

Regardless of when you choose to reveal Carver's intel, his primary use in the story is to provide a contrast to Johnston. Should you desire to play up the tension between the captain and the characters, Carver is a great tool for increasing that tension by acting as a second boss hovering over their shoulders.

Professional Training

Many of the characters in this scenario possess the Professional Training Merit, allowing them to roll a simple dice pool to simulate putting their professional connections to work. While the mechanics for this Merit are located in the appropriate characters' sections, its impact on the story as a whole bears mentioning here. The Merit is an important resource, one the characters are expected to utilize at several points in the story in order to move the plot forward; however, you should be cautious not to allow it to wholly replace good roleplaying. A large portion of any good police story involves talking to people and puzzling through conflicting testimonies in order to reach the truth and the guilty party, but too little or too much of this kind of gameplay can render an otherwise interesting mystery boring and lifeless. Try to judge your players' interest in the investigative side of the story, drawing out an interrogation when they're intrigued and summing up two days of phone calls in a single dice roll when they're eager to move on.



Scenes

BACK ON THE STREET

Mental  Physical — Social 

Overview

The cell is coming from its first encounter with the supernatural, and has only just been spared an Internal Affairs investigation into its actions. It's now on its way to a murder scene, one it was pointed to by Gabreski's Task Force: VALKYRIE contact, Agent Carver. The victim is a homeless man from the city's Northside, and inquiries into his identity, as well as why he's so far from his usual turf, will lead the cell one step closer to the horror toward which Carver has directed it.

Description

"I've got one more task for you." That's what Carver told you—one more case to take care of, then you were as good as in. As you double-check the address and turn down a narrow street, you find yourself thinking back to the events of the last few weeks. Things were bad enough, what with the IAB investigation, but that tip from Agent Carver was the straw that broke the camel's back and brought your world crashing down around you.

You stop the team's van in front of the address, pulling up next to one of the patrol cars already on the scene. All of you had seen some weird shit in your time on the streets, but to suddenly and violently learn the truth about what hides in the darkness was almost enough to drive you nuts. Almost.

One of the uniforms starts filling you in on what few details they know, but your train of thought has led you right back to the same image you've seen every night for nearly a week: Darnell's lifeless body draped atop a mountain of corpses.

"Detective? Did you hear me? I said we can't really let these two down the alley. They're not cleared." You snap to and realize he's talking about Karl and Raimundo.

It's important to set the scene for the players: the characters are fresh from their first encounter with the supernatural, one that took the life of a close friend and partner. They were also under investigation by the Internal Affairs Bureau due to suspicions they were protecting Raimundo's drug trade. They've been spared the investigation by an agent of Task Force: VALKYRIE and invited to join, provided they wrap up this last case.

The area around the crime scene is heavily commercial, and can be as busy as you like. The police have taped off both ends of a short alley, and a uniform stands watch over an open service entrance to one of the buildings. Just inside the door is the body of what appears to be a homeless man. His eyes and the skin on his face have been removed, and the body is surrounded by occult markings that appear to be drawn in blood, presumably his.

The uniform ordered to brief the detectives refuses to let either Karl or Raimundo onto the scene, but some fast talking from any of the three cops will persuade him to drop the issue; otherwise, the two civilians have to wait in the van while the other three check the place out.

Storyteller Goals

This scene is designed to help evoke the proper mood and understanding of the characters' motives. It has very little action, but it is written much like the opening of a TV police drama, alternating between revealing the past and moving the story forward.

Having just arrived on the scene, the action is still largely out of the characters' hands. The uniformed officers have already begun cataloging the basic evidence, and the medical examiner has completed his initial examination of the body. They will have to rely upon their investigative skills to move forward, but many of the answers they need are close at hand.

Once the characters have gone over the crime scene a few times and the players are comfortable with the mechanics of tracking down leads, don't be afraid to quickly move to the next scene.

Character Goals

The characters' goals are very straightforward at this point: get up to speed on the details of the crime and determine the next step in the investigation. The major facts of the case so far are easy to obtain, and mostly require the characters to ask the other officers present.

While the initial investigation may leave both Raimundo and Karl's players feeling left out, both characters are essential when it comes to interpreting what the cops come up

with. Raimundo knows more about Dogtown and its eponymous gang than anyone else in the cell, and is able to tell them where to look for a crew that might know something about Jessie. Likewise, Karl can take a stab at deciphering the runes.

Actions

This scene is all about gathering data before moving forward with the investigation. It is possible for many of the characters to bring their areas of expertise to bear here, resulting in a much clearer picture of how to proceed.

Getting up to Speed

Dice Pool: Presence + Socialize. The first responders and the medical examiner have most of the case's relevant details; the trick is asking the right questions.

Action: Extended. Each roll represents an hour spent grilling the officers who responded to the call.

Hindrances: Raimundo or Karl are present (-1), Darnell Waters is mentioned (-1)

Help: Jack takes point in the discussions (+1)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Your recent brush with the IAB has spooked the other cops, and they're only barely cooperative.

Failure: You learn only that the victim is homeless; you'll have to dig up anything else on your own.

Success: Even a single success yields the following three pieces of information:

☠ The victim's fingerprints have already been sent to the station, and quickly come back with a positive match. His name is Jessie Cabrera; he's 62 and has been picked up for vagrancy several times in Dogtown. This scene places him a long way from his usual haunts.

☠ The medical examiner's initial opinion is that the victim was still alive when mutilated. There don't appear to be any signs of a struggle, and he suspects the man went into shock from the pain and died from the blood loss.

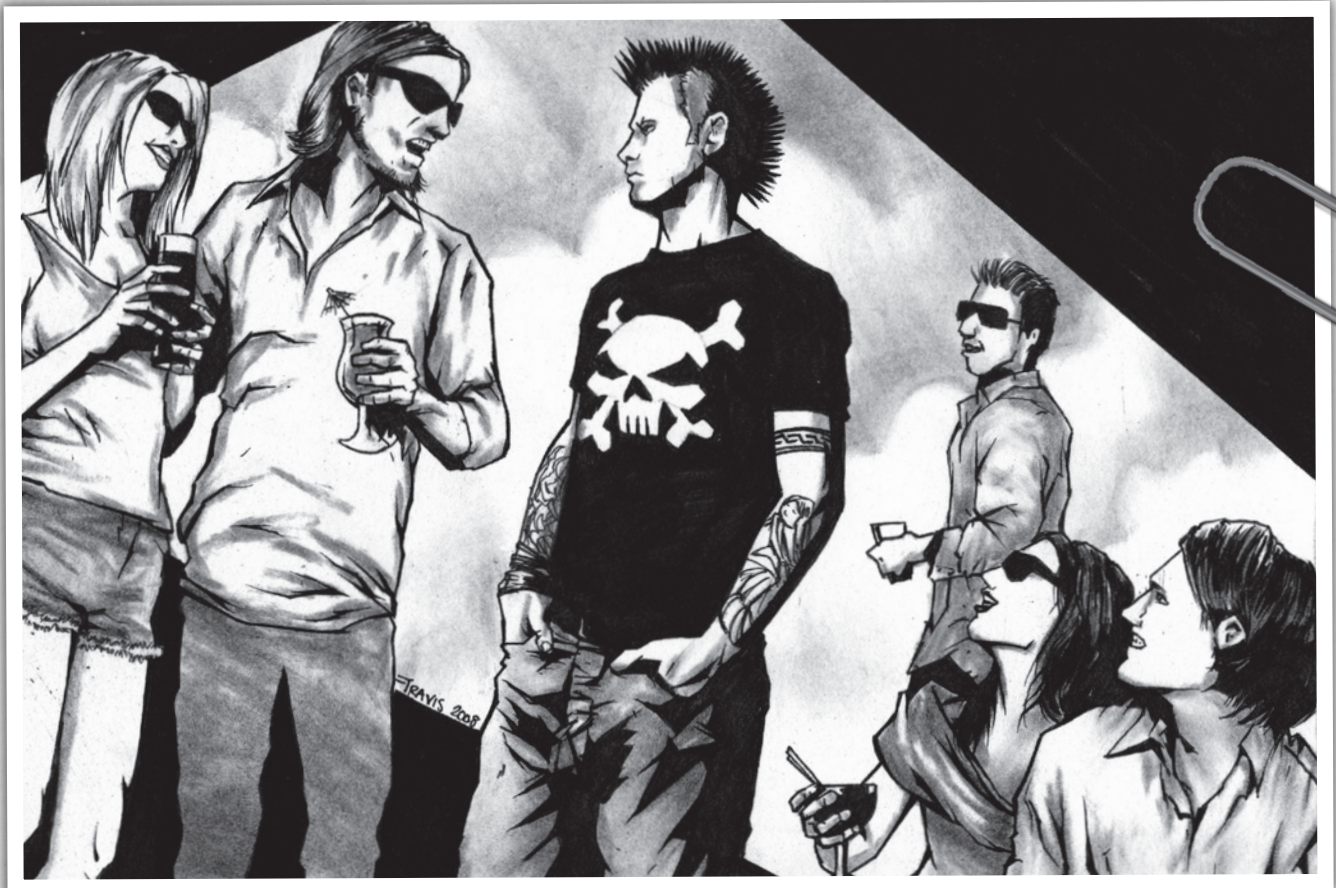
☠ The runes on the floor and walls are extremely obscure. Karl has difficulty identifying them, let alone reading them.

Exceptional Success: You not only learn the three major pieces of information listed above, but the medical examiner is able to make an accurate guess as to the time of death: only two hours ago.

Recalling Dogtown

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Streetwise. When it becomes known that Jessie is from Dogtown, Raimundo can be called upon to supply information about that area of town.

Action: Instant



Hindrances: Raimundo is distracted by the mutilated body (-1), the uniformed cops harass him (-1)

Help: Raimundo has a chance to speak with his crew first (+2)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Raimundo isn't up to date on Dogtown's latest actions and assumes they're still friendly toward the *Siete Muertos*.

Failure: Raimundo recalls Dogtown's hostility, but can't come up with the names of any of their members.

Success: Raimundo remembers the name of a dealer he's worked with before, and thinks he can convince the guy to talk to the cops.

Exceptional Success: Not only does Raimundo remember his Dogtown connection, he still has a phone number, enabling the cell to call and speak with him right away. The dealer seems eager to help and invites Raimundo to come talk face to face.

Reading the Runes

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Occult. Karl's knowledge of the occult is extensive, and even though he is unlikely to understand the runes, it is possible he might recognize their source.

Action: Instant

Hindrances: The ME is still around to interfere (-1), Karl doesn't have access to the Internet (-2)

Help: Karl posts a description of the runes on the Internet (+1), Karl posts a picture of the runes on the Internet (+2)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: In his excitement to study the runes, Karl slips in a puddle of blood and smears most of the markings beyond recovery.

Failure: Karl cannot positively identify the runes.

Success: Karl is unable to read the runes, but he does recognize them as a supposedly magical derivation of Sanskrit.

Exceptional Success: Karl recognizes the runes as a form of Sanskrit and recalls seeing one of them on a website claiming to impart the secrets of shape changing.

Conclusion

Regardless of which pieces of information the characters uncover, the investigation is likely to go to Dogtown and the next scene, "Pounding the Pavement," where they will put their new knowledge to work.

POUNGING THE PAVEMENT

Mental — Physical   Social    

Overview

After tracking down their initial leads, the cell arrives in Dogtown, a Northside neighborhood. There, the members track down a group of Dogtown gang members with the intention of interrogating them. If the characters aren't extremely careful with their actions, the situation can quickly escalate to violence, forcing the cell to take down the hostile bangers. When subdued, the thugs seem to come out of a trance, and are all too happy to point the cops at Rag Man, another homeless man in the area they suspect is the killer.

Description

You roll up to Dogtown and immediately spot the dealers. They're working the corner across from a hardware store, and aren't even bothering to hide the baggies of smack or wads of crumpled bills that change hands every couple minutes.

Provided the characters don't become overtly aggressive, the drug dealers stay on their corner and are even willing to talk, but it's mostly grandstanding and posturing toward Raimundo. The merchandise does disappear when the badges come out, though.

When the cell approaches the corner, use this description:

The four bangers eye you suspiciously, but don't seem afraid of you, though they've clearly read you as cops. "Whatcho want, man? One of the seven little Mexicans call you up and ask for an escort?" Raimundo recognizes the man as Russell Cameron,

a buddy from before he started the *Muertos*. "I know we got history, man, but you can't just roll up in here wit' your cop buddies without a good fuckin' reason. You better start talkin'."

Regardless of what the cell says or does, the Dogtowns are looking for a fight, even if it's with a group of cops who outnumber them. Though they're armed with guns, the Dogtowns won't pull them unless they're fired upon first. Instead, they attack the cell with fists and knives. No matter how badly they're being beaten, they won't run away.

After the last banger has been subdued, whether through diplomacy or a fight, read the following:

As things start to calm down, you can see a noticeable change come over the Dogtowns, almost as if they're coming out of a trance. They all seem to remember what just happened, but are at a loss when asked why they attacked you. Russell looks particularly sheepish: "You gotta believe me, Rai, I don't know why I had such a mad-on for you back there. It's like, I knew you weren't here to start shit, but I had to throw down anyway. Look, man, you gotta believe me!"

Whether the characters believe Russell or not, he is now all too eager to help them out, and responds immediately to questions about the murder, becoming increasingly sure of his answers if told about the occult symbols. He suggests that Rag Man, another local bum who has been murdering stray dogs, might be responsible.

"You ask me, only one man capable of that kinda cold, sick shit: Rag Man. We thought he was just some old vet in a raggedy coat, but a little while back we started findin' dead dogs all over the place."

DOGTOWN THUGS

Quote: *I got what you need, son, soon as I see some green.*

Background: Just like thousands of others in the city, these kids were born into a tough life and have only dug themselves in deeper. They were all beat into Dogtown at an early age, and though they've seen gang leaders come and go since then, the only way out for them is either in an orange jumpsuit or a body bag.

Appearance: Everything about them speaks of leanness: short hair, drawn faces and very little body fat. Dealing isn't as profitable for these guys as it is for their lieutenants, so they don't dress at the height of urban chic. A motley collection of tattered jerseys, dirty jeans and secondhand sneakers are the order of the day, but each banger sports a green bandana somewhere on his body.

Storytelling Hints: This life is all you've ever known, but it was either join the gang or get caught in the crossfire. You don't give much thought to the future, but you're certain no church or after school program can give you what Dogtown promises.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 1

Physical Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 3, Composure 2

Mental Skills: Academics (Law) 1, Investigation 2, Medicine 1

Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 1, Drive 1, Firearms 2, Larceny 2, Stealth 1, Weaponry 1

Social Skills: Intimidation 1 (Threats), Persuasion 1, Streetwise 3 (Drug Trade), Subterfuge 2

Merits: Allies (Dogtown) 2, Fleet of Foot 2, Resources 1

Willpower: 3

Initiative: 5

Defense: 3

Speed: 13

Virtue/Vice: The gang bangers' Virtue is Hope. Once per session of play they regain all spent Willpower when they refuse to let others give in to despair, even when doing so risks harm to their own goals or wellbeing. Their Vice is Greed. They regain one Willpower point whenever they acquire something at the expense of another. Gaining it must come at some potential risk (of assault, arrest or simple loss of peer respect).

Size: 5

Health: 8

Equipment: Glock 17 pistol (+2 to Firearms rolls, with a range of 20/40/80 yards), army surplus knife (+1 to Weaponry rolls), several bags of heroin

Weapons/Attacks

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Knife	1(L)	n/a	5	
Punch	0(B)	n/a	4	
Glock 17	2(L)	20/40/80	7	

DOGTOWN THUGS CONTINUED

Merits

Allies: These guys may be simple foot soldiers, but their gang mates won't hesitate to retaliate against anyone who hurts them.

Fleet of Foot: Gang life offers many opportunities to practice sprinting, and the Dogtowns have gotten pretty fast. They add +2 to their Speed (this is already factored into their listed Speed).

Resources: The drug trade is lucrative, but most of the money that passes through their hands gets passed up to their superiors in Dogtown. What little remains is often spent on clothing and jewelry, leaving the gang members with little more than a couple hundred dollars to spend at any given time.

Damn' things was sliced up, missin' their faces, and some of 'em had this writing around 'em. Thought it was Arab. But I didn't look too close—shit was written in blood. I ain't seen him in a few weeks, so maybe he finally went all the way and moved up to people."

Storyteller Goals

This scene is the first chance for the characters to direct the course of the investigation, and it's your first chance to present some opposition. The key to this scene is to play the Dogtown members to the hilt: full of bravado, absolutely unafraid of either the cops or Raimundo. As the conversation goes on, have the dealers get angrier and angrier for no apparent reason, until they jump the characters. The possibility for a peaceful solution *does* exist, but don't be afraid to make it as miniscule as you can. The fight, and resulting revelation about the gang members' states of mind, will go a long way toward convincing the characters they're up against something serious and insidious.

Once the situation breaks down, be sure to point out what the characters would notice immediately: the bangers aren't going for their guns. They're clearly serious about a fight, but they don't seem to want to make it immediately lethal. If the characters resort to the use of their own guns, the Dogtowns will too, but will quickly surrender when one of them is taken down.

Finally, despite whatever else happens, Rag Man's name needs to be dropped. He's an important next step for the characters, and without his name to go on, their investigation will stagnate.

Character Goals

The cell's main goal at this point is to continue moving the investigation forward. The members should be cautious in the fight, though; sustaining serious injuries this early in the investigation could delay them significantly.

If you're worried they're a little too eager for a fight with the Dogtowns, remind them of the consequences of an officer involved in a fatal shooting: mountains of paperwork, the captain breathing down their necks, and a mandatory two-day suspension, none of which they can afford right now. Besides, dead gangsters can't tell you what they know.

Actions

The primary action in this scene is almost certainly going to be combat, but the characters have a small window they can utilize to avoid it. The Dogtowns are being influenced by some terrible power, but it hasn't completely subsumed their reason. A forceful appeal to their common sense and self-preservation has the possibility of giving them enough strength of will to overcome the suggestions buried in their minds.

Calming the Dogtowns

Dice Pool: Presence + Persuasion. This action may be attempted only once. If it fails, the Dogtowns attack immediately.

Action: Instant

Hindrances: The Dogtowns are excessively violent due to the mind control (-4), speaker verbally threatens the Dogtowns (-1), anyone touches the Dogtowns (-1)

Help: Speaker is Raimundo (+1), speaker pulls his gun (+1)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Dogtown dealers immediately draw their guns and fight until it is clear their only choices are to surrender or die.

Failure: The Dogtowns draw their knives and attack. They will all surrender after only one of them goes down.

Success: Though they still attack, the gang members use only their fists and surrender after trading only a few blows.

Exceptional Success: The drug dealers are talked down, and Jeremiah's hold over them is broken.

Consequences

The group proceeds directly from here to the search for its next lead in "Rag Man." The next scene is very straightforward, unless one of them has killed one of the Dogtown drug dealers. If that is the case, and you want to play out the consequences, you can easily use the thug stat block to represent a Dogtown crew of two or three sent to kill Raimundo in retaliation. The additional Dogtowns would most likely be encountered while looking for Rag Man, and could be the source of his skittishness.

RAG MAN

Mental  Physical  Social 

Overview

After learning about Rag Man from the Dogtown gang members, the cell is left with the task of locating him. He surfaces after a brief search, but is easily spooked, resulting in a chase through the streets of Dogtown before the members speak with him. Rag Man offers the characters anything they want in return for his continued well-being, and cooperates fully. He proudly admits to the dog killings, but becomes sickened at the mention of the murder and loudly protests his innocence. Should the cell believe him, the investigation is left with little forward momentum.

Description

Russell was able to narrow your search area to only a couple blocks, but it's been hours now, and Rag Man has yet to show his face. The van is beginning to feel stuffy, and everyone's just a little bit on edge.

Just as you're beginning to think he won't show, a man fitting his description slips out the front door of a grocery with a paper sack tucked under his arm. Even from across the street you can see the grime caked on his clothes and in his hair. He looks around nervously, takes a swill from a bottle hidden in the sack and hurries down the street, clutching at his ragged coat.

When the cell approaches Rag Man, whether on foot or in the van, he gets spooked and starts running. He's not very fast on two legs, and will duck into the first alley he sees in order to change shape unseen. From the characters' perspective, they see Rag Man go into an alley one second, and a mangy dog come out the next. Instead of using his new form to blend in, Rag Man continues to flee, drawing attention to himself.

Once the cell finally catches him, read the following:

The dog looks panicky and backs against the side of a building, whimpering. As you approach, its body suddenly warps and elongates amidst a chorus of wet crunches and snaps. It looks at first like the dog merely increased in size, but as it shifts and the long fur coat falls away from its face, you see Rag Man looking up at you. "Please don't hurt me," he says. "I saw you comin' after me, and I got scared. Thought you were with them Dogtown boys. They ain't right in the head lately."

Once the cell finally catches up to him, Rag Man spills his guts. He is eager to tell everything he knows, which isn't much. He freely admits to killing the stray dogs in the neighborhood, but insists he treats them well beforehand, feeding and caring for them when no one else will. Rag Man agrees with whatever else the characters might say, but he remains adamant that his killings are exactly what the dogs want him to do.

When the idea of killing people is brought up, Rag Man becomes immediately disgusted, protesting that he would never murder people. If the pictures of the scene are produced, he confirms that the runes *look* like his work, but are wrong in a few places. He also points out that he doesn't take their eyes.

After being interrogated for a while, he suddenly remembers someone snooping around one of his skinned dogs a few weeks back, but he admits to running away before he could find out what the guy wanted. In an effort to be helpful, he offers to look around the crime scene to see whether he notices anything magical they might miss.

Storyteller Goals

Your primary goal here is to connect the characters with Rag Man, but you shouldn't make it too easy on them. He's not all that bright, but you should make the cell work a bit to run him down or drive him into a blind alley.

If the interrogation comes around to it, Rag Man is willing to check out either photos or the crime scene itself. He becomes even more sure of himself when he can point to the differences between his symbols and those written near the body, and will try to discuss their meaning (and why those at the murder scene don't make any sense) with anyone who seems interested.

If the characters believe Rag Man's story about the man studying his work, they have a new suspect, but no leads to his identity. The trail goes temporarily cold, leaving the characters to resort to their usual contacts and procedures.

As a final note, you should emphasize Rag Man's pitiable state. His abilities shouldn't strike the characters as safe or harmless, but his attitude and demeanor should eventually convince them he's no threat to anyone—and a potentially useful street-level informant on the supernatural aspects of the city.

Character Goals

The characters should be focused upon the same goal as in the previous scenes: moving the investigation forward, one lead at a time. However, tracking down and interacting with Rag Man provides some unique challenges. Their first task in this scene is to simply prevent Rag Man from escaping. Whether they do this on foot or in the van is unimportant, so long as they run him down before he goes to ground.

RAG MAN

Quote: Hey, mister. Are you gonna finish that?

Background: Rag Man doesn't remember much about his life before the streets, just vague impressions of a family, a desk job and what he thinks might be a hospital. Other than these ghosts of his former life, Rag Man's mind is filled with the here and now, dominated by animal instinct. He doesn't clearly remember the entity that granted him the ability to shape shift-he just calls it Big Dog-but he has given himself over to it entirely. He now spends his time caring for the dogs he finds on the street, fattening and pampering them until he kills and skins them.

Appearance: Dirty, unkempt hair and beard, wild eyes and a powerful stink: everything about Rag Man says "stay away." He earned his nickname because of the patchwork coat he constantly wears. It's made up of the faces of the dogs he skins, and it allows him to assume canine shape.

As a dog, Rag Man looks much the same. His fur is going to grey and is patchy from mange. His eyes bulge out slightly, and what's left of his tail looks ready to fall off. When in this form he tends to stay away from people, coming close only when he thinks he can get fed.

Storytelling Hints: You are still capable of basic human interaction, but display more obvious dog-like tendencies than is comfortable to those around you. Forget them, though; you have more important things to do, like marking your territory.

Note: All numbers in parentheses represent Rag Man's dog form.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2 (1), Wits 2, Resolve 2 (3)

Physical Attributes: Strength 2 (3), Dexterity 2 (3), Stamina 3 (3)

Social Attributes: Presence 2 (1), Manipulation 1 (1), Composure 3 (3)

Mental Skills: Investigation 2 (Scent), Occult 2 (Animal Sacrifices)

Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Larceny 2, Stealth 4, Brawl 3 (Bite)

Social Skills: Empathy 3, Intimidation 1, Persuasion 2, Streetwise 3 (Avoiding Trouble)



RAG MAN CONTINUED

Merits: Brawling Dodge 1, Danger Sense 2, Unseen Sense 3

Willpower: 5 (6)

Initiative: 5 (6)

Defense: 2 (3)

Speed: 9 (13)

Virtue/Vice: Rag Man's Virtue is Faith. Once per session of play he regains all spent Willpower when he is able to forge meaning from chaos and tragedy. In Rag Man's case, his faith isn't in a specific being (though he does revere Big Dog), but rather a sense that things happen the way they do for a reason. His Vice is Sloth. He regains one Willpower point whenever he successfully avoids a difficult task but achieves the same goal nonetheless.

Dread Powers: Strange Form 4. Requires 3 Willpower and a Wits + Occult roll. Rag Man can assume the shape of any dog he has killed and skinned in the last two months as an instant action. The transformation lasts for a single scene, though an additional Willpower point can be spent to extend it by one scene per point spent.

Size: 5 (4)

Health: 8 (7)

Equipment: Ragged fur coat, mostly empty bottle of cheap bourbon

Weapons/Attacks

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Punch	0(B)	n/a	5	
Bite (dog form)	1(L)	n/a	8	

Merits

Brawling Dodge: Whenever Rag Man performs a Dodge, he may add his Brawl Skill dots to his Defense, rather than doubling it.

Danger Sense: This ability functions identically to the Merit possessed by Gabreski.

Unseen Sense: When Rag Man assumes his dog form, its heightened senses allow him to perceive the supernatural and emotional resonance of an area. His limited understanding of the occult prevents him from elaborating on his perceptions, but he is able to explain his general impressions.

After the cell captures Rag Man, its goal is to interrogate him, extracting everything he knows about the murder.

Actions

When Rag Man starts running, there are two options available to the characters: go after him on foot or hop back in the van. Once he starts talking, he's so eager to cooperate no roll is required.

Foot Chase

Dice Pool: Stamina + Athletics versus Stamina + Athletics

Action: Extended and contested (each roll represents one turn of running)

Roll Stamina + Athletics for each participant. This is not quite the conventional extended and contested task, however. Rolls are made for each participant in each stage, but the quarry has a different goal than the pursuer. The number of successes that must be acquired for the quarry equals the pursuer's Speed. So, if the pursuer has a Speed of 12, successes accumulated for the quarry must reach 12 for him to get away.

The pursuer, however, does not seek to get away. His goal is much more specific: to stop the quarry from escaping. The number of successes the pursuer needs is therefore different. He seeks to tally a number that equals or exceeds the quarry's current total of successes

at any point in the chase. If the pursuer gets that number, he catches up.

Hindrances: (All) Crowded street (-1)

Help: (Rag Man) +1 for every three points his Speed exceeds that of his fastest pursuer

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The participant trips, falls or wipes out. He may suffer a Health point of bashing damage at the Storyteller's discretion. The race is over.

Failure: The participant gains no ground in the pursuit.

Success: The participant gains some ground in the chase, whether fleeing or in pursuit.

Exceptional Success: The participant gains a great deal of ground through a mixture of luck and capability.

Car Chase

While Rag Man's dog form is built for running, he's not nearly fast enough to outrun a vehicle. Any character who opts to chase him down in the van need only accumulate three successes on an extended Dexterity + Drive roll to pull in front of him and block his escape. An exceptional success on a single roll results in Rag Man

smashing into the side panel and temporarily stunning himself. Should this happen, he changes back to human form immediately.

Consequences

This scene not only brings the cell one step closer to finding the murderer, it also reveals more of the city's occult character, almost certainly to the surprise of the characters. Rag Man's attitude and utter pacifism stand in stark contrast to the other supernatural entities the characters have encountered so far. But regardless of how they feel about Rag Man, he provides the characters only a vague description of the man he saw, leaving them to turn to other, more mundane, sources.

If the characters decide to take Rag Man to the crime scene, move on to "Bloodhound." Otherwise, if they feel they're finished with him, skip ahead to "When It Rains, It Pours." If you do skip "Bloodhound," this is an ideal time for the characters to utilize their Professional Training before moving on (see the "Bloodhound" Storyteller Goals section for more details, p. 19).

BLOODHOUND

Mental   Physical — Social  

Overview

This scene finds the cell back at the murder scene with Rag Man in tow. Other than a pair of uniformed officers left to watch the site, the place is deserted, leaving the characters free to bring their new ally in without incident. After checking out the place, in both human and dog forms, Rag Man reveals that magic was definitely used there not long ago, and he thinks it might be the same kind that left the Dogtown bangers so violent before.

Description

It's late by the time you pull up to the scene, and the crowd of onlookers seems to have finally dispersed. In fact, the only people left anywhere near the alley are two uniformed officers, one watching each end. They recognize you on sight, and don't even bother to stop the civilians. Rag Man's presence gets you a puzzled look as you pass, but he isn't stopped.

The hall just inside the service entrance is now lit by a pair of high-powered lamps, lending a surreal quality to the gore that still spatters the walls. The absence of the body leaves the whole scene feeling incomplete somehow, and it creeps you out. The feeling only intensifies when you look over to see Rag Man's hair standing on end. It's clear he senses something here, and from the low growl coming from him, you're pretty sure he doesn't like it.

Rag Man can immediately feel something isn't right, and he says so. He also claims he has to turn into a dog in order to get a more complete picture, but doesn't wait for permission before doing so. After sniffing around the hallway for nearly five minutes, he changes back to human form and explains there was definitely magic used during the murder.

"Mind, I ain't sure what it is exactly, but I know some bad magic happened here. Seein' all this blood, and smellin' the anger and fear that's floatin' around the air, I think it's the same stuff that's hangin' 'round the heads of them Dogtown boys. I ain't no expert, though, just tellin' you what I smell. You want me to read you those words on the wall, too?"

After explaining the auras he senses to the best of his ability, Rag Man also offers to decipher the runes for Karl. He explains they're meant to be a prayer from the dead dog to the Big Dog, and that some of the letters in the hallway are off. He thinks the mistakes make the prayer useless, and doubts they actually do anything other than frame him.

If the characters present pictures of the corpse, or bring it up after showing them to him in the last scene, he will (again) point out that he doesn't take the eyes; he wants only the skin.

Storyteller Goals

The optional nature of this scene, along with its brevity, leaves you with one simple goal: use Rag Man's heightened sensitivity to magic to increase the characters' awareness of

the nature of Jeremiah's powers. The lack of any other new information regarding the case is likely to leave the cell stymied at this point, making the latter part of the scene ideal for each of the characters to exercise their Professional Training Merit. The answers won't come right away, but rather at the beginning of "When It Rains, It Pours."

Character Goals

The characters continue their search for the murderer, potentially learning more about his capabilities and desires from Dog Man. It's possible they might still be leery of the bum and the powers he uses so lightly, but his desire to please them should at least be beginning to convince them he's no threat to anyone.

Should the characters decide to make use of their Professional Training Merits, they will begin their individual procedures, but will not see any kind of return until the beginning of "When It Rains, It Pours."

Actions

Karl's Professional Training

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Persuasion or Socialize

Action: Instant

Karl can get his contacts working on further identifying the runes or identifying the magic used on the victim.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Karl's lack of tact upsets his contacts, and they refuse to speak with him for the remainder of the story.

Failure: No one is familiar with either the symbols or the magic. He's on his own.

Success: A poster on Network0.net, a site Karl frequents, suggests the runes look like a script used by an ancient Sumerian cult whose members could supposedly change their shapes.

Exceptional Success: As a success, but a second person also suggests the lack of a struggle and the strange behavior of the gang bangers might indicate mind control.

Raimundo's Professional Training

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Persuasion or Socialize

Action: Instant

Raimundo can ask his crew whether they've had any weird run-ins with the Dogtowns.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Raimundo's focus upon helping with this case has strained his relationship with his crew members, and he has to put them back in line before they'll go out of their way to help him. He cannot use this Merit for the rest of the story.

Failure: None of the *Siete Muertos* knows anything unusual.

Success: One of Raimundo's lieutenants admits to dating a girl in Dogtown, and remembers seeing a well-dressed white guy giving a group of the Dogtown boys the business. He thought it was weird that the bangers just stood there and took it.



Exceptional Success: As a regular success, except the banger saw the man drive away in his new Mustang.

Andrea, Jack or Vince's Professional Training

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Persuasion or Socialize

Action: Instant

Any one of the cops can follow up on any leads their colleagues may have uncovered.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Before they get a chance to talk to the rest of the detective pool, Captain Johnston pulls the trio into his office and grills them about the investigation so far, tying them up for hours.

Failure: The other detectives are still leery about being involved with the trio so soon after the IAB investigation was mysteriously called off and refuse to help.

Success: A detective sent to knock on doors around the area of the murder reports that a security guard down the

block remembers seeing a sports car drive off in a hurry the night of the murder. He couldn't make out the model, but he's sure it was a sports car.

Exceptional Success: As a normal success, except a uniform reports that after the medical examiner removed the body, he discovered tire marks down the street. They fit the pattern for a new Ford Mustang.

Consequences

The information the characters could potentially learn in this scene is significant, but it does not move the story forward in the same way as previous scenes. Ideally, what the characters learn here will better prepare them to face Jeremiah, but the vague nature of the information available to them, coupled with the scene's optional nature, makes it highly unlikely they will be able to solve the case just yet—they will have to wait for the next scene for things to fully develop. Once the cell has finished up at the crime scene, progress the story 48 hours and move on to "When It Rains, It Pours."

WHEN IT RAINS, IT POURS

Mental ☠☠☠ Physical — Social ☠☠

Overview

The characters have reached a dead end in their investigation, and are faced with the hardest part of police work: waiting for something else to develop. After nearly 48 hours with no further leads, they're finally presented with a new piece of evidence, a second murder scene. The victims this time are a couple found dead in their low-rent apartment in Chinatown. Again, there's no sign of a struggle. The cell catches a break when it's discovered that the neighboring shop's security camera also covers the front door of the apartment building. As they're looking into this, a battered and bruised Rag Man shows up at the precinct house looking for the cell. He claims he was attacked in the night by the man he saw before, the same man seen on the security tape. As evidence, he offers up something he managed to take in the fight: the man's right index finger. The prints on the finger come back with the name of an accused rapist from a case several years ago: Jeremiah Quaker, a wealthy socialite.

Description

It's been two whole days since you last spoke with Rag Man, and you can't shake the feeling that the case has gone cold. Every lead you dig up just ends up another victim, another person manipulated by whoever killed that old bum, and you're left with nothing else to look into. So when word of a double murder fitting the same MO as the last one comes in, you're almost relieved. Almost.

The victims this time are a young husband and wife, Khaek and Syphay Soungpradith, found dead in their apartment in Chinatown. Both were in their early thirties and only recently emigrated from Laos. Just like Cabrera, their faces have been skinned and their eyes are missing, but unlike him they appear to have put up a fight. The apartment is wrecked, and the strange runes written on the wall are noticeably sloppier, as if written in a hurry. Mrs. Soungpradith has bruises on her arms and shoulders and a gunshot wound on her chest. Her husband is still clutching a revolver, and has no visible wounds.

The second murder scene is slightly more complex than the first, but still shouldn't take the characters long to analyze before leaving the ME and forensics teams to do their work. Eventually, they should stumble upon the neighboring grocery store's security camera. When they do, read the following:

As you're looking around the apartment, you find yourself glancing out the window to the storefront next door. You notice a security camera clumsily attached to an awning. It's hanging at an odd angle, and looks like it may catch the front door of the apartment building in its field of view.

When the cell investigates the camera, the manager of the grocery store is unwilling to cooperate, but after some persuasion (and possibly threats), he hands over last night's security tapes with only a few grumbles.

After returning to the precinct, and handing the security tapes over to forensics (probably along with Jack) for analysis, Rag Man barges in, demanding to speak with Gabreski. He sports several large bruises, and is still bleed-

ing from a gash over his left eye. He claims to have something for them, but doesn't want to talk about it out in the open.

Rag Man looks around nervously and says, "I, uh, I've got something for you guys, something that will help you catch the guy you're lookin' for." He lowers his voice and leans in close; you can smell the stink of blood and sweat on his coat. "It's in my pocket, but I can't show you here. Don't want no one to see it an' lock me up for the murder or nothin'."

After Rag Man is taken somewhere he feels safe talking, he produces a bloody finger from his coat pocket. It extends from the fingertip to the second knuckle, and looks like it was chewed off. Rigor has set in, and it feels cold and hard to the touch.

"That man I saw talkin' to them gang boys came after me last night. I was diggin' through some scraps behind a Mexican place when he steps out the door from the kitchen. He starts tellin' me to sit and shit, like I'm some kinda pet, and pulls out a gun. He looks kinda confused when I don't listen to him, so I go for his throat. He hits me with the piece, then we get into it, him with his fists and me with my teeth. I manage to chew off his trigger finger, and while he's cryin' out to wake the dead, I tear off down the alley." Rag Man sighs and slumps his shoulders, "Man, I hope this helps you catch the sick fucker. I hate the way people taste."

Analysis of the finger's print and the surveillance videos come back at roughly the same time, and for once, both are good news. Both pieces of evidence point to the same man: Jeremiah Quaker.

When Jeremiah's picture in the police database is compared to the surveillance videos, it is an exact match, leaving little doubt that he is the murderer. Other than the rape allegation, there is little in the way of public records on Quaker. He is a wealthy socialite, a descendent of some of the city's oldest money, and he leads a very private life funded by real estate investments. Should the cell speak with Agent Carver, he paints an entirely different picture of the man.

Carver informs the cell that the Quaker family is a central player in a utopian secret society, the Parliament of Philosophers, which has operated in Philadelphia for nearly a century. His intelligence initially reported them to be nothing more than a bunch of old white men giving to charity and playing at mysticism, but recent rumors have been painting Jeremiah as something different. Carver had come to suspect he had developed strange powers, but couldn't be sure until he had the cell look into it.

Storyteller Goals

This scene reveals the final pieces of the puzzle, finally giving the cell a suspect on which to pin three murders, an assault and a host of strange occurrences. Your primary goals in this scene are to reveal the last bits of information the cell needs before it can move to put a stop to these murders, and finally be accepted into Task Force: VALKYRIE.

If you're playing up the antagonism between Gabreski's Boys and their captain, this scene is an excellent opportunity to give him ammunition. Not only has the team failed to turn up any good leads, but the killer has struck again, mutilating two more innocent people. Very few witnesses have been brought in for interrogation, and he (rightly) suspects the cell is hiding something about the case from him. In particular, he doesn't trust its association with Rag Man, and if he learns about the finger, he will try to prevent the Boys from running the print. Playing up Johnston's impotent outrage here is a great way to make the characters' eventual triumph over Jeremiah all the sweeter.

Finally, should you decide to add more emotional weight to the Soungpradiths' deaths, you can add another character witness to the mix: Khaek's brother, Choummaly. He is also a recent immigrant to the country, and adamantly denies any accusation against either his brother or sister-in-law. He steadfastly maintains their marriage was ideal, though he does mention their stress over the hostile grocer next door.

Character Goals

After their investigation stalled due to the lack of evidence, the characters should be extremely eager to capitalize on the new developments that crop up in this scene. Though the new murders are likely to leave them feeling angry and a little helpless, the evidence Jeremiah leaves behind at the scene should make them feel as if the end is in sight.

Once the fingerprint comes back, you should emphasize the importance of double-checking the facts before moving on Jeremiah. When the characters discover he's in the police database due to an alleged rape case, they will undoubtedly be ready to take him down, but you should take the extra steps to make sure they're ready to do whatever it takes to stop Jeremiah, including killing him.

Actions

Most of the actions in this scene involve processing the new evidence that comes in.

Investigating the murder scene

Dice Pool: Wits + Investigation

Action: Extended. Each roll represents 10 minutes spent combing the scene for clues.

This roll can only be made by the officer who takes point, but the others may assist.

Hindrances: The characters are rushed for time (-1)

Help: Each additional character assisting (+1)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The characters misinterpret the scene as a combination domestic dispute and a copycat mutilation.

Failure: The scene is obviously the work of the same killer, but the presence of the gun and fatal gunshot wound throws them off.



Success: The characters learn one piece of information for every success rolled. Regardless of the number of successes rolled, they also notice the security camera outside the building.

☠ **Syphay's bruises:** She sports livid bruises on both arms, all the way up to her shoulders. They appear consistent with defensive wounds, but her husband has no similar marks. She was clearly assaulted by a third party.

☠ **The gun:** Mrs. Soungradith's gunshot wound appears consistent with the weapon found near her husband. The revolver contains a spent shell, and burns on Khaek's right hand indicate that he probably fired it.

☠ **Causes of death:** The wife's cause of death is definitely the gunshot to her chest. She was skinned after death. The husband's cause of death is a bit more uncertain, but it appears he was skinned while still alive, most likely resulting in him dying due to shock and blood loss, just like Jessie.

Exceptional Success: If the lead investigator manages an exceptional success on a single roll, the characters not only learn all the above details, but they also reason that Jeremiah's control over people is undoubtedly behind the shooting.

Interrogating the grocery manager

Dice Pool: Presence + Intimidation versus the manager's Stamina + Resolve (4)

Action: Extended and contested. The characters require a number of successes equal to the manager's Willpower (4) to succeed in getting him to cooperate. He must score a number of successes equal to the lead interrogator's Willpower to successfully resist.

The characters need to convince the manager to give them access to his surveillance tapes, but he is unwilling to cooperate. He freely shares his vitriolic and racist opinions about the Soungradiths, and refuses to help bring their killer to justice.

Hindrances: (Characters) The characters speak too highly of the victims (-1), Choummaly is present (-1); (Grocer) The manager is shown pictures of the murder scene(s) (-1)

Help: (Characters) Raimundo threatens to bring his crew in to trash the store (+1), each additional cop participating (+1)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Not only are the cell members unsuccessful in obtaining the tapes, but the manager files a complaint against them, provoking the captain to further harass them.

Failure: The shop manager refuses to help, and asks the cell to leave.

Success: The characters succeed in convincing the grocery store manager to turn over his security tapes, albeit with protest. He also, very reluctantly, voices his doubts that the couple would kill each other.

Exceptional Success: If the lead interrogator scores an exceptional success on a single roll, the manager offers to help locate the exact footage of the killer, adding a +2 bonus to the roll to analyze the videos.

Analyzing the surveillance videos

Dice Pool: Stamina + Investigation

Action: Instant. The roll represents several hours spent watching the night's tapes.

Whoever volunteers to analyze the security tapes is in for a grueling marathon of grainy surveillance footage. The trick to stay sharp-eyed enough throughout to spot the killer.

Hindrances: The character hasn't slept in awhile (-1), the viewing room is warm (-1)

Help: The character drinks some coffee (+1), each additional person watching (+2), exceptional success in interrogating the grocery manager (+2)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character falls asleep and is discovered by Captain Johnston. He not only has to re-watch everything, he must do so with the captain present.

Failure: The character fails to locate the proper footage, and must double-check everything.

Success: The video shows a young white man leaving the apartment at four thirty, only five minutes after the first report of shooting was received. He can be seen climbing into a new Mustang and driving off in a hurry.

Exceptional Success: The footage of Jeremiah entering the building at four o'clock is also located. His face is difficult to make out, but he can be identified by his clothing. He can be seen drawing a gun.

Running the fingerprint

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Computer

Action: Instant. This roll represents several hours of work.

The officer who volunteers for this duty must spend time identifying the print's unique marks and ruling out the computer's suggestions.

Hindrances: A thunderstorm flickers the power (-2), Johnston catches wind of the finger (-1)

Help: The forensics tech offers to help (+1)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The computer crashes, and can't be reconnected to the database for several hours, delaying the investigation.

Failure: The character fails to find a match and must double-check his work.

Success: The finger comes back as belonging to the prime suspect in a rape case from several years ago, Jeremiah Quaker. The file says Quaker was released shortly before the case went to trial, and cites the girl's refusal to press charges as the reason. The file shows the victim dropped her complaint at the last minute, and claimed to have made it all up. When police attempted to contact her several weeks later, it was discovered she had left town almost immediately after recanting.

Exceptional Success: As a success, except the process takes only a little over an hour.

Consequences

Once the cell has identified the killer, and settled on a course of action, move immediately to "Tiger by the Tail." Should the members decide to consult with Agent Carver, he will reveal what he knows about Jeremiah and the Parliament of Philosophers and suggest the cell move against the warlock before he manages to complete whatever unholy ritual he's planning.

TIGER BY THE TAIL

Mental ☠☠☠ Physical ☠☠☠ Social —

Overview

The cell converges on the row house and confronts Jeremiah, the warlock responsible for the murders. They find him in the middle of an inexplicable ritual that looks quite different from the bogus markings left near the bodies. He seems to be consuming the murder victims' missing eyes, and after only a brief moment of gloating that they're expected, he sets the spirits of his victims on the cell while attempting to mind control Gabreski. During the fight, a strange watery vortex seems to be flowing up from the symbol on the floor, and a glowing stone slowly emerges from within.

After Jeremiah is killed, the vortex winks out of existence, taking the ghosts, Jeremiah's body and a large chunk of the floor with it. Most of the water stays, left to splash down onto the level below (along with the characters).

Description

You pull up outside Quaker's row house and immediately feel the hair on the back of your neck stand up. There's a strange energy in the air, and you can't help but feel your spirits lift—everything seems a little bit brighter, like nothing can go wrong. You manage to catch yourself before you actually smile, and look around the car, hoping no one saw you. The unnatural brightness you feel just fills you with more disgust for Jeremiah and what he's done. Nothing he could be planning is worth doing that to innocent people.

Jeremiah's two-story row house is in the middle of a block that overlooks the Schuylkill River. If the characters arrive at night (which is likely, given their intentions) it is the only house still illuminated. Unknown to them, Jeremiah is upstairs in the middle of his dowsing ritual. Fearing for his safety after

**GHOSTS OF
JEREMIAH'S VICTIMS**

Quote: *(Complete and utter silence)*

Background: These three restless spirits were enslaved by Jeremiah's power and summarily murdered, but he was not content to simply let them pass on. He controls them now, even in death. He plans to put their ghostly corpus to use in the activation of the artifact, but sees his own defense as a more immediate concern.

Appearance: Each apparition is a pale reflection of the person it once was. All three appear just as they did at the moment of death, contorted and bloodstained, with gaping holes in place of their eyes. They appear human in a dark room, but once exposed to light become indistinct and almost transparent. Their faces are twisted by the impotent rage that fills them, making them appear maddened and desperate (which they are).

Storytelling Hints: The ghosts are bound to serve their master, Jeremiah, but they still retain enough self-awareness to resent him. They will follow his every word to the letter, but always hesitate slightly before carrying out an order, trying in vain to resist his commands.

Attributes: Power 2, Finesse 2, Resistance 2

Willpower: 4

Initiative: 4

Defense: 2

Speed: 14

Virtue/Vice: The ghosts' Virtue is Hope. Once per session of play they regain all spent Willpower when they refuse to let others give in to despair, even when doing so risks harm to their own goals or wellbeing. While they remain under Jeremiah's control, they cannot act on this. Their Vice is Wrath. They regain one Willpower point whenever they unleash their anger in a situation where doing so is dangerous. If a fight has already begun, no Willpower points are regained. It must take place in a situation where anger is unwarranted and inappropriate.

Dread Powers:

Manifestation: The ghosts are only barely there, physically. Subtract one point of damage from every successful attack upon a ghost before reducing its corpus. Once a ghost's corpus has reached zero, it loses its hold on the physical world, returning to its normal Twilight state.

Telekinesis: Each of the ghosts was brought into existence amidst overwhelming feelings of anger, pain and helplessness, and their very nature continues to echo with these emotions. By spending a point of Essence and concentrating for a turn, a ghost may focus this negative emotion into raw kinetic force. They lack any fine control with the power, making it essentially a ranged attack.

Terrify ():** see p.26

Size: 5

Essence: 5

Corpus: 7

Weapons/Attacks

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Telekinesis	1(B)	10	5	

TERRIFY (••)

The ghost spends a Willpower point and an action engaging the target in eye contact and activates this power with a Power + Finesse + Terrify roll (6 dice), reflexively resisted by the target's Resolve + Composure. If the attack succeeds, the target flees the scene as quickly as possible, via the nearest available escape route. She will not stop running until she reaches a location she considers to be safe.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The target is unimpressed by the ghost's attempt to frighten her. It in fact emboldens the target, and she may gain a point of Willpower.

Failure: The ghost fails to frighten the target, but may spend another Willpower in the next turn and try again.

Success: The result for success is described above. If the target cannot escape (or spends a point of Willpower to remain), she suffers a penalty to all rolls equal to the ghost's dots in Terrify (-2). This effect lasts for one scene. Multiple uses of the power against the same target do not accumulate; instead, the most successful use of the power is used to determine the target's dice pool penalty.

Exceptional Success: The effect so terrifies the target that she also loses one Willpower point.

his failed assault on Rag Man, he has surrounded himself with the ghosts of his victims. He intends to sacrifice the ensnared souls as a means of activating the stone once he recovers it, but sees them as adequate protection for the time being.

When the characters enter the house, read the following:

As you move into the kitchen and toward the stairs, you can hear the sound of rushing water coming from upstairs. As you crest the stairs, you can see Jeremiah in the room at the end of the hall. He is chanting in what sounds like Latin, and gesturing wildly over a luminescent spot on the floor. What started as the sound of a bath being run now grows louder and louder, until it becomes the roar of river rapids. As the sound increases, the spot on the floor widens, turning into a swirling vortex of water. Jeremiah pauses his chanting long enough to pop something small and round into his mouth. He stares into the whirlpool and pulls back his lips to reveal one of the missing eyes clenched between his teeth. He bites down, squirting vitrious ichor into the pool of water, and reaches for another eye. He is missing his right index finger.

Once the characters have Jeremiah's attention, read the following:

"I see that stupid dog put my finger to good use," Jeremiah shouts over the roar. "It doesn't matter, though. Once I recover the stone, you won't be able to thank me fast enough for putting you out of a job."

Regardless of how the characters gain entry to the house, Jeremiah reacts in the same way: he sends the ghosts to distract them and attempts to control the most obvious threat with his Command power. His righteous certainty prevents him from accepting the possibility of defeat; thus he fights to the death.

After Jeremiah is dead, read the following:

The warlock crumples to the floor, and you can feel his control over the forces around you lapse. The last of the ghosts quickly fades from view, a smug smile on its face, and the crash of the water begins to subside. As the whirlpool shrinks, it appears to be sucking in anything around it, including the floor. After it finally dissipates, Jeremiah's body, along with a large section of floor, is gone, presumably sucked into the river.

Storyteller Goals

Your goal in this scene is to provide an exciting climax to the investigation. Though he is no tougher than a normal person, Jeremiah's offensive capabilities (along with his ghostly servants) make him a formidable opponent. He should not go down easily, but the odds are stacked in favor of the characters, ensuring their eventual victory.

Character Goals

By this point in the story, the characters should want to take down Jeremiah hard. Once they locate and gain entrance to his house, it's really just a matter of surviving his assault long enough to bring him down.

Consequences

Once Jeremiah is dead, and the vortex has dissipated, the cell is left to clean up the mess. Officers will quickly respond to the house after receiving numerous reports of gunshots, and the characters will likely be at a loss to explain the situation. Their captain will attempt to pin accusations of murder and conspiracy on them, but Carver and Task Force: VALKYRIE will take care of any official inquiries into the characters' actions. After all, they are now fellow operatives.

Should you not wish to leave the ending ambiguous, you may rule that police find Jeremiah's body floating in the river several days later, and through regular forensics can determine his guilt in the Chinatown murders. Unless the cell can produce any evidence linking him to the first killing, Jessie's case is never officially solved.

JEREMIAH QUAKER, WARLOCK

Quote: *I'm going to make this city a paradise. It's too bad you won't be here to enjoy it.*

Background: Jeremiah was introduced to the occult at a young age by his father. The Parliament of Philosophers, the secret society to which he belonged, saw potential in his boy, and demanded he be all but given over to them. Raised as much by the society as by his parents, Jeremiah developed both an aptitude for magic and a warped sense of morals. His powers allowed him to easily take control of the Parliament, bending its members toward what he sees as the greater good. Several years ago, Jeremiah's attention was drawn to the legend of a powerful artifact, lost somewhere in the Schuylkill River. He is convinced it will give him the power to transform Philadelphia into the idyllic city it was always meant to be.

Appearance: Jeremiah is in his early thirties, with short, thinning brown hair. Though he stands only 5'9", his bearing makes him seem taller. He dresses for comfort-mostly sweaters and chinos-but always has at least one accessory that shows off his wealth (gold watch, expensive shoes, etc.).

Storytelling Hints: You're the most powerful warlock in the city, able to bend others to your will with just a glance. You're not dumb enough to be blind to your own arrogance, but your power makes up for so many of your shortcomings that you often mistake it for competence. The artifact you seek will allow you to bring about such positive change in the world that nothing you do in its pursuit can be considered immoral-even murder. You genuinely think you're doing the right thing, and that's what makes you most dangerous.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 3

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Academics 2, Computer 2, Investigation 2, Medicine 1, Occult 4 (Philadelphia secret societies), Politics 1

Physical Skills: Athletics 1, Firearms 2, Larceny 1, Stealth 2

Social Skills: Empathy 1, Expression 3, Intimidation 1, Persuasion 2, Streetwise 3

Merits: Danger Sense 2, Fast Reflexes 2, Resources 4, Retainer (souls of his victims) 3

Willpower: 6

Initiative: 8

Defense: 3

Speed: 10

Virtue/Vice: Jeremiah's Virtue is Fortitude. Once per session of play he regains all spent Willpower when he withstands overwhelming or tempting pressure to alter his goals. This does not include temporary distractions from his course of action, only pressure that might cause him to abandon or change his goals altogether. His Vice is Pride. He regains one Willpower point whenever he exerts his own wants over others at some potential risk to himself.

**JEREMIAH QUAKER,
WARLOCK CONTINUED****Dread Powers:****Command (.....):** see below**Size:** 5**Health:** 7**Weapons/Attacks**

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
M9 Beretta	2(L)	20/40/80	7	

Equipment: M9 Beretta (+2 to Firearms rolls with a range of 20/40/80 yards), book of occult rituals, 6 human eyeballs**Merits****Danger Sense:** This Merit functions as the Merit of the same name possessed by Gabreski.**Fast Reflexes:** This Merit functions as the Merit of the same name possessed by Raimundo.**Resources:** Quaker is heir to an impressive collection of real estate holdings throughout New England. Though most of his money is tied up in property at any given time, he still has easy access to roughly \$10,000 at any given time.**Retainer:** Jeremiah isn't content to allow his control of a person to lapse when they die. He has enslaved the souls of his three murder victims, and plans to use them to fuel the artifact. They are under his total control.**COMMAND (.....)**

The target is entranced by Jeremiah's voice and gaze. After spending a Willpower and making a Manipulation + Expression + Command roll (10 dice, resisted reflexively by the target's Wits + Resolve), he needs to hold the target's attention long enough to implant a verbal suggestion. That suggestion could be simple, such as "Take your clothes off," or complex, such as "Go to Riley's bar, wait until you see a brunette in a blue dress and ask her if she's a Libra." A suggestion may overtly involve violence.

Roll Results**Dramatic Failure:** The target sees right through the trick, and can't be hypnotized again for the rest of the scene.**Failure:** Jeremiah may try again next turn.**Success:** The target obeys to the best of her ability, for up to one round**Exceptional Success:** The target goes so far as to believe the suggestions are her own idea in the first place, following them for the rest of the scene.

Lt. Vince Gabreski

Quote: *You think you're hot shit, huh? Let's see how you feel after a couple hours talkin' to me.*

Background: Vince has spent nearly his whole life in Kensington. He ran with the street gangs as a kid, and did odd jobs for the crime bosses, eventually working his way into an enforcer position. As he got older, he realized he had no future as a criminal, and transferred to the other side of the law. His firsthand knowledge of the criminals he faced helped him rise through the ranks quickly, and he made detective after only a couple years.

The Special Cases Unit was created by the Mayor's Office to deal with the stranger cases, mostly the drugs and violence that surround the city's gangs, and Gabreski was handpicked to lead it. Unfortunately, the lure of easy money was too much for him and his unit, and they started working with the gangs, rather than against them. The SCU was nearly shut down by an Internal Affairs investigation, but it was ordered shelved by Agent Carver, a Task Force: VALKYRIE operative, shortly after Gabreski's Boys helped him take down a family of ghouls.

Description: Vince is in his early forties, but his light brown hair and muscular physique make him seem younger. His eyes have a sleepy look to them, and at slightly over three hundred pounds, he is often mistaken for a dull-witted goon.

Roleplaying Hints: You are the leader of the cell, and for good reason. Take charge of every situation, but allow your teammates to play to their strengths. You didn't get to where you are today by not trusting your partners. Also, call Karl "Junior." He hates it.

Equipment: Detective's badge, Beretta Model 92 (+2 to Firearms rolls with ranges of 20/40/80 yards), clasp knife (+0 to Weaponry rolls)

Virtue/Vice: Gabreski's Virtue is *Justice*. Once per session of play he regains all spent Willpower when he does the right thing at risk of personal loss or setback. The "right thing," to Gabreski, is less what's in the law books and more a sense of decency and honor. His Vice is *Greed*. *He regains one Willpower point whenever acquires something at the expense of another. Gaining it must come at some potential risk (of assault, arrest or simple loss of peer respect).*

Tactics

Moral Support

Dice Pool: *Primary (Andrea):* Manipulation or Presence + Empathy. *Secondary:* Wits + Expression.

Action: Instant

Description: A monster might be able to tear a man's arm off or bite through his throat, but the truly terrifying



ones are those that can control his thoughts and feelings. Hunters have long been aware that many creatures of the World of Darkness can do this sort of thing—some even cause memory loss by their very presence. The Moral Support Tactic, hopefully enacted *before* it becomes an issue, gives a cell some protection against this kind of attack.

The secondary actors exchange words of encouragement and support, psyching each other up, as it were. The primary actor then says a few words to the cell: last-minute advice, reminders about Tactics, or just an admonition to “kill the bastards.” The cell can then enter a dangerous situation knowing the members have each other’s backs. While this isn’t a foolproof method of preventing infiltration or mind manipulation, it’s certainly better than nothing.

Note, though, that moral support does *nothing* to help with existing mental manipulation. If a vampire catches a hunter out alone and implants a hypnotic suggestion, this Tactic does nothing to remove or weaken it. The hunter is protected from other mental incursions, but the prior one stands.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The cell is demoralized. Each member loses a point of Willpower, and all Tactics rolls suffer a -2 penalty for the next 24 hours.

Failure: The cell isn’t in synch today, for whatever reason. No special protection from mental attacks.

Success: For the next scene, successes on the primary actor’s roll are added to the hunters’ Resistance traits for purposes of countering mental and emotional supernatural attacks. For example, the primary actor rolls three successes. If a vampire attempts to mind-control a member of the cell during the scene and the usual resistance roll is Resolve, the appropriate player rolls Resolve +3.

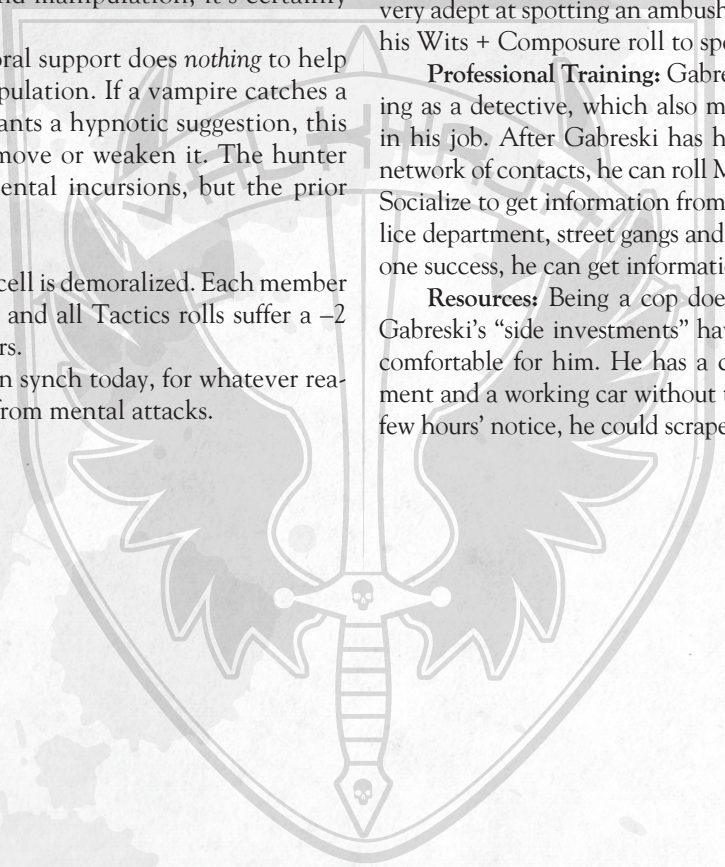
Exceptional Success: As above. In addition, the characters are inspired by the primary actor’s words, and ready to go into battle. Each participant regains one Willpower point.

Merits

Danger Sense: Used to watching his back, Gabreski is very adept at spotting an ambush. He receives a +2 bonus on his Wits + Composure roll to spot one.

Professional Training: Gabreski has a great deal of training as a detective, which also means he meets many people in his job. After Gabreski has had some time to talk to his network of contacts, he can roll Manipulation + Persuasion or Socialize to get information from one of three groups: the police department, street gangs and the media. If he gets at least one success, he can get information on a particular topic.

Resources: Being a cop doesn’t pay much, but some of Gabreski’s “side investments” have made things a little more comfortable for him. He has a comfortable (if small) apartment and a working car without too much rust on it. Given a few hours’ notice, he could scrape up \$1,000 during this story.



HUNTER

THE VIGIL

Name: LT. VINCE GABRESKI Concept: BLUNT LEADER Profession: DETECTIVE
 Player: _____ Virtue: JUSTICE Cell: GABRESKI'S BOYS
 Chronicle: THE HUNT Vice: GREED Compact/ _____
 Conspiracy: _____

ATTRIBUTES

POWER	INTELLIGENCE ●●●●	STRENGTH ●●●●	PRESENCE ●●●●
FINESSE	WITS ●●●●	DEXTERITY ●●●●	MANIPULATION ●●●●
RESISTANCE	RESOLVE ●●●●	STAMINA ●●●●	COMPOSURE ●●●●

SKILLS

MENTAL (-3 unskilled)

- Academics _____ ○○○○
- Computer _____ ○○○○
- Crafts _____ ○○○○
- Investigation ^{BODY} _{LANGUAGE} ●●●●
- Medicine _____ ●○○○
- Occult _____ ○○○○
- Politics _____ ●○○○
- Science _____ ○○○○

PHYSICAL

(-1 unskilled)

- Athletics _____ ●○○○
- Brawl _{DIRTY TRICKS} ●●○○
- Drive _____ ●○○○
- Firearms _____ ●●○○
- Larceny _____ ○○○○
- Stealth _____ ○○○○
- Survival _____ ○○○○
- Weaponry _____ ●○○○

SOCIAL

(-1 unskilled)

- Animal Ken _____ ○○○○
- Empathy _____ ●○○○
- Expression _____ ○○○○
- Intimidation _{INTERROGATION} ●●○○
- Persuasion _____ ●●○○
- Socialize _____ ○○○○
- Streetwise _{GANGS} ●●○○
- Subterfuge _____ ●●○○

OTHER TRAITS

MERITS

- DANGER SENSE ●●○○○
- PROFESSIONAL TRAINING ●●●○○
- RESOURCES ●●●○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○

FLAWS

TACTICS

- MORAL SUPPORT _____
- _____
- _____

HEALTH

-
-

WILLPOWER

-
-

MORALITY

- 10 _____ ○
- 9 _____ ○
- 8 _____ ○
- 7 _____ ○
- 6 _____ ○
- 5 _____ ●
- 4 _____ ●
- 3 _____ ●
- 2 _____ ●
- 1 _____ ●

Size 5
 Speed 10
 Initiative Mod 4
 Defense 2
 Armor _____

WEAPONS

- BERETTA MODEL 92 _____
- CLASP KNIFE _____

DICE MOD

EQUIPMENT

DICE MOD

Experience _____

Attributes 5/4/3 • Skills 11/7/4 (+3 Specialties) • Merits 7 • (Buying the fifth dot in any area costs two dots) • Health = Stamina + Size • Willpower = Resolve + Composure • Size = 15 for adult humans • Defense = Lowest of Dexterity or Wits • Initiative Mod = Dexterity + Composure • Speed = Strength + Dexterity + 5 • Starting Morality = 7

Raimundo Gutierrez

Quote: *You better watch where you point that thing, vato. You don't know who's watching my back now.*

Background: In many ways, Raimundo's story is a mirror of Vince's. He moved with his parents from Guatemala, and grew up in the gangs of Kensington, but unlike Gabreski, he never got out. Instead, he worked his way slowly through the ranks, earning enough respect to put together a crew of his own, the *Siete Muertos*. With the SCU's help, Raimundo led the *Muertos* to prominence in the district, dominating the gun and drug trades.

He has a sister, Lupe, who is a nurse. She is his only surviving family member, and he loves her dearly, but not enough to find a safer occupation.

Description: Raimundo's complexion and speech mark him as an obvious Latino gang member. He tends to wear thick jackets over sweatshirts, but regardless of the details his clothes are always excessively baggy. He has a boyish face that would normally make him look ten years younger than the twenty-five he is, but his constant scowl more than makes up for any softness.

Roleplaying Hints: The world is a hard place, and the only way to get what you want is to take it. You don't take crap from anyone except Lupe, and go out of your way to remind your men why you're in charge. Rewarding loyalty is important, but not as important as punishing disobedience. You have no time for social niceties, and swear constantly in both English and Spanish.

Equipment: *Siete Muertos* jacket, Luger 9mm pistol (+2 to Firearms rolls with a range of 20/40/80 yards), roll of cash

Virtue/Vice: Raimundo's Virtue is *Hope*. Once per session of play he regains all spent Willpower when he refuses to let others give in to despair, even when doing so risks harm to his own goals or wellbeing. His Vice is *Lust*. He regains one Willpower point whenever he satisfies his lust in a way that compromises others.

Tactics

Moral Support

Dice Pool: *Primary (Andrea):* Manipulation or Presence + Empathy. *Secondary:* Wits + Expression.

Action: Instant

Description: A monster might be able to tear a man's arm off or bite through his throat, but the truly terrifying ones are those that can control his thoughts and feelings. Hunters have long been aware that many creatures of the World of Darkness can do this sort of thing—some even cause memory loss by their very presence. The Moral Support Tactic, hopefully enacted *before* it becomes an issue, gives a cell some protection against this kind of attack.

The secondary actors exchange words of encouragement and support, psyching each other up, as it were.

The primary actor then says a few words to the cell: last-minute advice, reminders about Tactics, or just an admonition to "kill the bastards." The cell can then enter a dangerous situation knowing the members have each other's backs. While this isn't a foolproof method of preventing infiltration or mind manipulation, it's certainly better than nothing.

Note, though, that moral support does *nothing* to help with existing mental manipulation. If a vampire catches a hunter out alone and implants a hypnotic suggestion, this Tactic does nothing to remove or weaken it. The hunter is protected from other mental incursions, but the prior one stands.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The cell is demoralized. Each member loses a point of Willpower, and all Tactics rolls suffer a -2 penalty for the next 24 hours.

Failure: The cell isn't in synch today, for whatever reason. No special protection from mental attacks.

Success: For the next scene, successes on the primary actor's roll are added to the hunters' Resistance traits for purposes of countering mental and emotional supernatural attacks. For example, the primary actor rolls three successes. If a vampire attempts to mind-control a member of the cell during the scene and the usual resistance roll is Resolve, the appropriate player rolls Resolve +3.

Exceptional Success: As above. In addition, the characters are inspired by the primary actor's words, and ready to go into battle. Each participant regains one Willpower point.

Merits

Fast Reflexes: Living on the streets has made Raimundo incredibly fast. He has a +2 to his Initiative (already calculated on the sheet).

Language (Spanish): Raimundo speaks fluent Spanish.

Professional Training: Raimundo has learned a great deal about being a criminal on the streets, and he's gotten to know many shady characters. After Raimundo has had some time to talk to his network of contacts, he can roll Manipulation + Persuasion or Socialize to get information from one of two groups: street gangs and gun dealers. If he gets at least one success, he can get information on a particular topic.

Resources: Raimundo's drug and gun trafficking has made him a little bit of money. He has a small apartment and a used car. Given a few hours' notice, he could scrape up \$1,000 during this story.

Retainer (bodyguard): Raimundo doesn't go anywhere dangerous without his personal bodyguard, Miguel. If you need mechanics for Miguel, use Raimundo's Attributes and Skills as a basis. Miguel is a character handled by the Storyteller.

HUNTER

THE VIGIL

Name: RAIMUNDO GUTIEREZ Concept: GANG LEADER Profession: CRIMINAL
 Player: _____ Virtue: HOPE Cell: GABRESKI'S BOYS
 Chronicle: THE HUNT Vice: LUST Compact/ _____
 Conspiracy: _____

ATTRIBUTES

POWER	INTELLIGENCE ●●●●	STRENGTH ●●●●	PRESENCE ●●●●
FINESSE	WITS ●●●●	DEXTERITY ●●●●	MANIPULATION ●●●●
RESISTANCE	RESOLVE ●●●●	STAMINA ●●●●	COMPOSURE ●●●●

SKILLS

MENTAL (-3 unskilled)

- Academics _____ ○○○○
- Computer _____ ●○○○
- Crafts _____ ○○○○
- Investigation _____ ●○○○
- Medicine _____ ○○○○
- Occult _____ ○○○○
- Politics GANGS _____ ●○○○
- Science _____ ○○○○

PHYSICAL

(-1 unskilled)

- Athletics _____ ●○○○
- Brawl _____ ●○○○
- Drive _____ ○○○○
- Firearms _____ ●○○○
- Larceny CONCEAL STOLEN GOODS _____ ●○○○
- Stealth _____ ●○○○
- Survival _____ ○○○○
- Weaponry _____ ●○○○

SOCIAL

(-1 unskilled)

- Animal Ken _____ ○○○○
- Empathy _____ ●○○○
- Expression _____ ○○○○
- Intimidation THREATS _____ ●○○○
- Persuasion _____ ○○○○
- Socialize _____ ●○○○
- Streetwise DEALERS _____ ●○○○
- Subterfuge _____ ●○○○

OTHER TRAITS

MERITS

- FAST REFLEXES _____ ●○○○
- LANGUAGE (SPANISH) _____ ●○○○
- PROFESSIONAL TRAINING _____ ●○○○
- RESOURCES _____ ●○○○
- RETAINER (BODYGUARD) _____ ●○○○
- _____ ○○○○
- _____ ○○○○
- _____ ○○○○

FLAWS

TACTICS

- MORAL SUPPORT _____
- _____
- _____

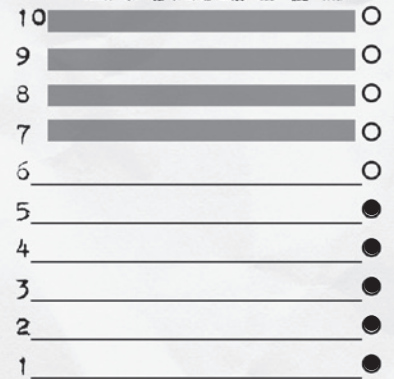
HEALTH



WILLPOWER



MORALITY



Size 5
 Speed 11
 Initiative Mod 8
 Defense 2
 Armor _____

WEAPONS

DICE MOD

LUGER 9MM PISTOL

EQUIPMENT

DICE MOD

Experience _____

Attributes 5/4/3 • Skills 11/7/4 (+3 Specialties) • Merits 7 • (Buying the fifth dot in any area costs two dots) • Health = Stamina + Size • Willpower = Resolve + Composure • Size = 15 for adult humans • Defense = Lowest of Dexterity or Wits • Initiative Mod = Dexterity + Composure • Speed = Strength + Dexterity + 5 • Starting Morality = 7

Karl Rivers

Quote: *I've seen this before, and...well, if you'd calm down, I'd be happy to show you.*

Background: Karl worked as an investigative reporter for the *Philadelphia Inquirer* until he was fired six months ago for his wild conspiracy theories. He has been living in his car ever since. He has spent the time working freelance for various tabloids and calling the SCU with all sorts of strange cases, trying to convince them to help him find evidence of the Truth he knows is out there. When Gabreski took out a restraining order against him, he turned to his Internet contacts, many of whom work with Network 0.

After he started uncovering what was really out there, he purchased a handgun for protection.

Description: Karl has always looked a little crazed and disheveled, and living out of his car isn't helping any. His T-shirts always look like they've been slept in (which is frequently true), and his cologne doesn't always cover up the smell of body odor and cigarettes. His lack of regular grooming has left his black hair long and greasy, and his wispy beard is starting to fill in.

Roleplaying Hints: You have a certainty to your attitude that many people find unsettling, and you're frequently labeled as a crazy. You're aware of these reactions, and even their cause, but that doesn't sway you from your search for the Truth. People need to know about the things that stalk them, whether or not they want to.

You don't let on, but the things you read about often rattle your nerves, so you smoke constantly in an effort to calm yourself. You hate it when Gabreski calls you "Junior."

Equipment: Battered laptop (+1 to Computer rolls), cell phone with built-in camera, pack of cigarettes, Colt M1911A1 pistol (+3 to Firearms rolls with a range of 30/60/120 yards)

Virtue/Vice: Karl's Virtue is *Faith*. Once per session of play he regains all spent Willpower when he is able to forge meaning from chaos and tragedy. In Karl's case, his faith isn't in a divine being, but rather in the belief that everything ties together in the end. His Vice is *Gluttony*. He regains one Willpower point whenever he indulges in his addiction or appetites at some risk to himself or a loved one.

Tactics

Moral Support

Dice Pool: *Primary (Andrea):* Manipulation or Presence + Empathy. *Secondary:* Wits + Expression.

Action: Instant

Description: A monster might be able to tear a man's arm off or bite through his throat, but the truly terrifying ones are those that can control his thoughts and feelings. Hunters have long been aware that many creatures of the World of Darkness can do this sort of thing—



some even cause memory loss by their very presence. The Moral Support Tactic, hopefully enacted *before* it becomes an issue, gives a cell some protection against this kind of attack.

The secondary actors exchange words of encouragement and support, psyching each other up, as it were. The primary actor then says a few words to the cell: last-minute advice, reminders about Tactics, or just an admonition to “kill the bastards.” The cell can then enter a dangerous situation knowing the members have each other’s backs. While this isn’t a foolproof method of preventing infiltration or mind manipulation, it’s certainly better than nothing.

Note, though, that moral support does *nothing* to help with existing mental manipulation. If a vampire catches a hunter out alone and implants a hypnotic suggestion, this Tactic does nothing to remove or weaken it. The hunter is protected from other mental incursions, but the prior one stands.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The cell is demoralized. Each member loses a point of Willpower, and all Tactics rolls suffer a -2 penalty for the next 24 hours.

Failure: The cell isn’t in synch today, for whatever reason. No special protection from mental attacks.

Success: For the next scene, successes on the primary actor’s roll are added to the hunters’ Resistance traits for purposes of countering mental and emotional supernatural

attacks. For example, the primary actor rolls three successes. If a vampire attempts to mind-control a member of the cell during the scene and the usual resistance roll is Resolve, the appropriate player rolls Resolve +3.

Exceptional Success: As above. In addition, the characters are inspired by the primary actor’s words, and ready to go into battle. Each participant regains one Willpower point.

Merits

Encyclopedic Knowledge: Karl is extremely smart and knows minute facts about a variety of strange and unusual topics. Whenever he is confronted by a situation outside his normal realm of knowledge, he may roll his Intelligence + Wits to produce a helpful fact about the given topic.

Fame: Karl has gained a small following for his exposés and reports. He gets +1 to his Socialize or Persuasion rolls among those who follow his career or otherwise respect his work.

Professional Training: Despite his checkered past, Karl’s made a few contacts as a reporter. After Karl has had some time to talk to his network of contacts, he can roll Manipulation + Persuasion or Socialize to get information from other reporters. If he gets at least one success, he can get information on a particular topic.

Resources: Karl makes just enough money from his freelance reporting to pay for food and gas.

HUNTER

THE VIGIL

Name: KARL RIVERS Concept: REPORTER Profession: JOURNALIST
 Player: _____ Virtue: FAITH Cell: GABRESKI'S BOYS
 Chronicle: THE HUNT Vice: GLUTTONY Compact/ _____
 Conspiracy: _____

ATTRIBUTES

POWER	INTELLIGENCE ●●●●○	STRENGTH ●●●○●	PRESENCE ●●●○●
FINESSE	WITS ●●●○●	DEXTERITY ●●●○●	MANIPULATION ●●●○●
RESISTANCE	RESOLVE ●●●○●	STAMINA ●●●○●	COMPOSURE ●●●○●

SKILLS

MENTAL (-3 unskilled)

- Academics CONSPIRACY THEORY ●●○○○
- Computer INTERNET ●●○○○
- Crafts ○○○○○
- Investigation PUZZLES ●●○○○
- Medicine ○○○○○
- Occult ●○○○○
- Politics ○○○○○
- Science ○○○○○

PHYSICAL

(-1 unskilled)

- Athletics ○○○○○
- Brawl ○○○○○
- Drive ●○○○○
- Firearms ●○○○○
- Larceny BREAKING AND ENTERING ●●○○○
- Stealth ●●○○○
- Survival ○○○○○
- Weaponry ○○○○○

SOCIAL

(-1 unskilled)

- Animal Ken ○○○○○
- Empathy ●○○○○
- Expression ●●○○○
- Intimidation ○○○○○
- Persuasion ○○○○○
- Socialize ○○○○○
- Streetwise ●●○○○
- Subterfuge ●○○○○

OTHER TRAITS

MERITS

- ENCYCLOPEDIA KNOWLEDGE ●●○○○
- FAME ●○○○○
- PROFESSIONAL TRAINING ●○○○○
- RESOURCES ●○○○○
- ○ ○ ○ ○
- ○ ○ ○ ○
- ○ ○ ○ ○
- ○ ○ ○ ○

FLAWS

TACTICS

- MORAL SUPPORT _____
- _____
- _____

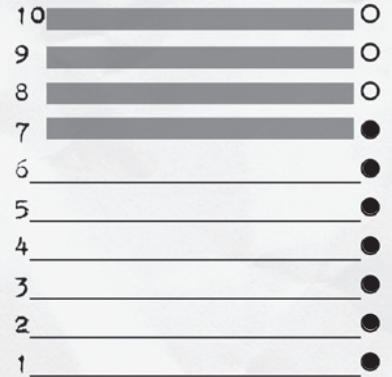
HEALTH



WILLPOWER



MORALITY



Size 5
 Speed 9
 Initiative Mod 4
 Defense 1
 Armor _____

WEAPONS

DICE MOD

COLT M1911A1 _____

EQUIPMENT

DICE MOD

Experience _____

Attributes 5/4/3 • Skills 11/7/4 (+3 Specialties) • Merits 7 • (Buying the fifth dot in any area costs two dots) • Health = Stamina + Size • Willpower = Resolve + Composure • Size = √5 for adult humans • Defense = Lowest of Dexterity or Wits • Initiative Mod = Dexterity + Composure +5 • Starting Morality = 7

Sgt. Andrea Taggart



Quote: *Up against the wall, hands on your head! Do it now!*

Background: Andrea comes from a line of cops so long and spread out over New England it's often referred to as a "dynasty." Her father wanted her to surpass him, and take on a white collar job, but he had always defined himself by his job, and more than a little of that rubbed off on Andrea. She saw it as her duty as an only child to carry on the Taggart family legacy.

She joined the Academy alongside Gabreski, and the two quickly took to each other. They rose through the ranks together, and when he was given command of the SCU, Andrea was at the top of his list for the team.

Description: If asked to describe Andrea in one word, anyone who knows her would quickly choose "hard." The time spent amongst criminals and her hyper-masculine co-workers has inured her to almost anything, and she wears a perpetual scowl on her already hatchet-like face. Though she would never admit it, the stress of her job has caused her black hair to start turning prematurely grey.

Roleplaying Hints: You've had to prove yourself to everyone around you time and again, but you don't mind so much anymore. You know you're one of the most capable detectives in the city, and have come to almost enjoy roughing up the scum who assume the lady cop will be the nice one. Take pride in your defiance of stereotypes, and always make sure to give back better than you get.

Equipment: Detective's badge, .45 ACP autoloader (+3 to Firearms rolls, with a range of 30/60/120 yards), police baton (+2 to Weaponry rolls)

Virtue/Vice: Andrea's Virtue is *Fortitude*. Once per session of play she regains all spent Willpower when she withstands overwhelming or tempting pressure to alter her goals. This does not include temporary distractions from her course of action, only pressure that might cause her to abandon or change her goals altogether. Her Vice is *Wrath*. She regains one Willpower point whenever she unleashes her anger in a situation where doing so is dangerous. If a fight has already begun, no Willpower points are regained. It must take place in a situation where anger is unwarranted and inappropriate.

Tactics

Moral Support

Dice Pool: *Primary (Andrea):* Manipulation or Presence + Empathy. *Secondary:* Wits + Expression.

Action: Instant

Description: A monster might be able to tear a man's arm off or bite through his throat, but the truly terrifying ones are those that can control his thoughts and feelings. Hunters have long been aware that many creatures of the World of Darkness can do this sort of thing—some even cause memory loss by their very presence. The Moral Support Tactic, hopefully enacted *before* it becomes an issue, gives a cell some protection against this kind of attack.

The secondary actors exchange words of encouragement and support, psyching each other up, as it were. The primary actor then says a few words to the cell: last-minute advice, reminders about Tactics, or just an admonition to “kill the bastards.” The cell can then enter a dangerous situation knowing the members have each other’s backs. While this isn’t a foolproof method of preventing infiltration or mind manipulation, it’s certainly better than nothing.

Note, though, that moral support does *nothing* to help with existing mental manipulation. If a vampire catches a hunter out alone and implants a hypnotic suggestion, this Tactic does nothing to remove or weaken it. The hunter is protected from other mental incursions, but the prior one stands.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The cell is demoralized. Each member loses a point of Willpower, and all Tactics rolls suffer a -2 penalty for the next 24 hours.

Failure: The cell isn’t in synch today, for whatever reason. No special protection from mental attacks.

Success: For the next scene, successes on the primary actor’s roll are added to the hunters’ Resistance traits for purposes of countering mental and emotional supernatural attacks. For example, the primary actor rolls three successes. If a vampire attempts to mind-control a member of the cell during the scene and the usual resistance roll is Resolve, the appropriate player rolls Resolve +3.

Exceptional Success: As above. In addition, the characters are inspired by the primary actor’s words, and ready to go into battle. Each participant regains one Willpower point.

Merits

Favored Weapon: Andrea’s had her ACP autoloader since she first joined the force, and it’s served her well all these years. As long as it’s on her person or within reach and easily accessible, she gains a +2 to Resolve + Composure rolls.

Iron Stamina: Andrea is as tough as nails, and she’ll keep on kicking long after some of the other guys are curled up in a ball and crying. She ignores up to a -2 modifier for wound penalties, meaning she loses only one die when she’s close to going unconscious, instead of -3.

Professional Training: Even though Andrea is in the detective division, at heart she’s a cop, and that’s where her training lies. After Andrea has had some time to talk to her network of contacts, she can roll Manipulation + Persuasion or Socialize to get information from the guys in the police department. If she gets at least one success, she can get information on a particular topic.

Resources: Being a cop doesn’t pay much, but Andrea has spent enough time in the force to net a few good raises. She has a small, comfortable apartment and a car that doesn’t need too many repairs. Given a few hours’ notice, she could scrape up \$1,000 during this story.

HUNTER

THE VIGIL

Name: SGT. ANDREA TAGGART Concept: TOUGH COP Profession: COP
 Player: _____ Virtue: FORTITUDE Cell: GABRESKI'S BOYS
 Chronicle: THE HUNT Vice: WRATH Compact/ _____
 Conspiracy: _____

ATTRIBUTES

POWER	INTELLIGENCE ●●●●	STRENGTH ●●●●	PRESENCE ●●●●
FINESSE	WITS ●●●●	DEXTERITY ●●●●	MANIPULATION ●●●●
RESISTANCE	RESOLVE ●●●●	STAMINA ●●●●	COMPOSURE ●●●●

SKILLS

MENTAL (-3 unskilled)

- Academics _____ ○○○○
- Computer _____ ●○○○
- Crafts _____ ○○○○
- Investigation _____ ●○○○
- Medicine _____ ●○○○
- Occult _____ ○○○○
- Politics _____ ●○○○
- Science _____ ○○○○

PHYSICAL

(-1 unskilled)

- Athletics CHASES ●●●●
- Brawl _____ ●●●●
- Drive _____ ●○○○
- Firearms PISTOL ●●●●
- Larceny _____ ○○○○
- Stealth _____ ○○○○
- Survival _____ ○○○○
- Weaponry BATON ●●●●

SOCIAL

(-1 unskilled)

- Animal Ken _____ ○○○○
- Empathy _____ ●○○○
- Expression _____ ○○○○
- Intimidation _____ ●○○○
- Persuasion _____ ●○○○
- Socialize _____ ○○○○
- Streetwise RUMORS ●●○○
- Subterfuge _____ ○○○○

OTHER TRAITS

MERITS

- FAVORED WEAPON (.45 PISTOL) ●●○○○
- IRON STAMINA ●●○○○
- PROFESSIONAL TRAINING ●○○○○
- RESOURCES ●●○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○

FLAWS

TACTICS

- MORAL SUPPORT _____
- _____
- _____

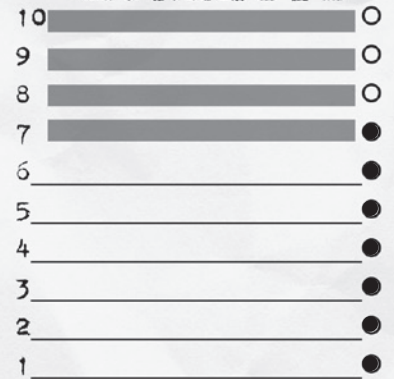
HEALTH



WILLPOWER



MORALITY



Size 5
 Speed 9
 Initiative Mod 3
 Defense 2
 Armor _____

WEAPONS

DICE MOD

- .45 ACP AUTOLOADER
- POLICE BATON

EQUIPMENT

DICE MOD

Experience _____

Attributes 5/4/3 • Skills 11/7/4 (+3 Specialties) • Merits 7 • (Buying the fifth dot in any area costs two dots) • Health = Stamina + Size • Willpower = Resolve + Composure • Size = \5 for adult humans • Defense = Lowest of Dexterity or Wits • Initiative Mod = Dexterity + Composure • Speed = Strength + Dexterity + 5 • Starting Morality = 7

Det. Jack Dean

Quote: *Look, let's just take this joker down quick so I can get home.*

Background: Jack was born in Co. Cork, Ireland. He immigrated to the United States with his mother when he was just a baby, a few months after his father died of cancer. She tried to care for Jack as best she could, but her search for a replacement father led her from one abusive man to the next. Jack joined the force immediately out of high school, out of a desire to protect people like his mother, but was quickly disabused of his righteous notions. Jack is a little more jaded now, but he still hopes he is doing more good than harm.

Description: Jack looks every bit the Irish cop: freckled face, red hair, and big dimples on his baby face when he smiles. He tends to dress in simple, functional suits, and tries to lend an impression of respectability to the SCU. He doesn't feel any strong connection to his roots, but when he gets upset his faint accent becomes more pronounced.

Roleplaying Hints: You see the actions of the SCU as a necessary evil. Sure, you've done bad things in your career, but you've tried to make those ethical compromises mean something. If a drug dealer is taken off the street, who cares if the evidence against him was planted? The strange things going on make you nervous, but you're trying to hold it together as best you can.

Equipment: Detective's badge, small flashlight, Glock 17 pistol (+2 to Firearms rolls, with a range of 20/40/80 yards)

Virtue/Vice: Jack's Virtue is *Charity*. He regains all spent Willpower when he gives something of himself to help another. This does not include giving something of which he has an abundance, only those things that will cause him hardship through their absence. His Vice is *Sloth*. He regains one Willpower point whenever he successfully avoids a difficult task but achieves the same goal nonetheless.

Tactics

Moral Support

Dice Pool: *Primary (Andrea):* Manipulation or Presence + Empathy. *Secondary:* Wits + Expression.

Action: Instant

Description: A monster might be able to tear a man's arm off or bite through his throat, but the truly terrifying ones are those that can control his thoughts and feelings. Hunters have long been aware that many creatures of the World of Darkness can do this sort of thing—some even cause memory loss by their very presence. The Moral Support Tactic, hopefully enacted *before* it becomes an issue, gives a cell some protection against this kind of attack.

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Note, though, that moral support does *nothing* to help with existing mental manipulation. If a vampire catches a hunter out alone and implants a hypnotic suggestion, this Tactic does nothing to remove or weaken it. The hunter is protected from other mental incursions, but the prior one stands.

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Exceptional Success: As above. In addition, the characters are inspired by the primary actor's words, and ready to go into battle. Each participant regains one Willpower point.

Merits

Common Sense: Jack is exceptionally grounded and pragmatic, and can be depended upon to make sound, straightforward decisions after a few moments' thought. The Storyteller can make a reflexive Wits + Composure roll once per session if Jack is about to embark upon a disastrous course of action, or if you find yourself at a point in the story where you're completely stumped for ideas. If the roll succeeds, the Storyteller may point out the risks of a particular course, or suggest possible actions Jack can take that might get events back on track.

Professional Training: Jack is still learning how to be a detective, but he's made a few friends on the force. After Jack has had some time to talk to his network of contacts, he can roll Manipulation + Persuasion or Socialize to get information from his friends in the detective division. If he gets at least one success, he can get information on a particular topic.

Resources: Being a cop doesn't pay much, but Jack's managed to spend his money well (or let other people spend money on him). He has a modest apartment and a modest car that's only a few years old. Given a few hours' notice, he could scrape up \$1,000 during this story.

SCENE: Back on the Street

MENTAL ☠ ☠
 PHYSICAL ☠
 SOCIAL ☠ ☠

HINDRANCES

Getting up to speed: Raimundo or Karl are present (-1), Darnell Waters is mentioned (-1)

Recalling Dogtown: Raimundo is distracted by the mutilated body (-1), the uniformed cops harass him (-1)

Reading the Runes: The ME is still around to interfere (-1), Karl doesn't have access to the Internet (-2)

HELP

Getting up to speed: Jack takes point in the discussions (+1)

Recalling Dogtown: Raimundo has a chance to speak with his crew first (+2)

Reading the Runes: Karl posts a description of the runes on the Internet (+1), Karl posts a picture of the runes on the Internet (+2)

STs Help evoke the proper mood and understanding of the characters' motives.

PCs Get up to speed on the details of the crime and determine the next step in the investigation.

SCENE: Pounding the Pavement

MENTAL ☠
 PHYSICAL ☠ ☠
 SOCIAL ☠ ☠ ☠

HINDRANCES

The Dogtowns are excessively violent due to the mind control (-4)

Speaker verbally threatens the Dogtowns (-1)

Anyone touches the Dogtowns (-1)

HELP

Speaker is Raimundo (+1)


Speaker pulls his gun (+1)

STs Give the cell with a chance to direct the course of the investigation, and provide some opposition.

PCs Continue moving the investigation forward.

HUNTER: THE VIGIL QUICKSTART

SCENE: Rag Man

MENTAL 
PHYSICAL 
SOCIAL 

HINDRANCES

Crowded street (-1)

HELP

Every three points the Ragman's Speed exceeds that of his fastest pursuer (+1)

STs Connect the cell with Rag Man, but don't make it too easy on them.

PCs Track down the Rag Man to move the investigation forward.

SCENE: Bloodhound

MENTAL 
PHYSICAL 
SOCIAL 

HINDRANCES

Rag Man isn't quite sane
Leave the tunnel alive.

HELP

Rag Man has heightened sensitivity to magic

STs Use Rag Man's heightened sensitivity to magic to increase the characters' awareness of the nature of Jeremiah's powers. Also, get some information from the cell's professional contacts

PCs Learn more about the murderer, and get information from your professional contacts.
Investigating the murder scene: The characters are rushed for time (-1)

SCENE: When It Rains, It Pours

MENTAL   
 PHYSICAL 
 SOCIAL  

H I N D R A N C E S

Interrogation: The characters speak too highly of the victims (-1 to cell), Choummaly is present (-1 to cell), the manager is shown pictures of the murder scene(s) (-1 to grocer)

Analyzing videos: The character hasn't slept in awhile (-1), the viewing room is warm (-1)

Running fingerprint: A thunderstorm flickers the power (-2), Johnston catches wind of the finger (-1)

H E L P

Investigating the murder scene: Each additional character assisting (+1)

Interrogation: Raimundo threatens to bring his crew in to trash the store (+1 to cell), each additional cop participating (+1 to cell)

Analyzing videos: The character drinks some coffee (+1), each additional person watching (+2), exceptional success in interrogating the grocery manager (+2)

Running fingerprint: The forensics tech offers to help (+1)

STs Reveal the final pieces of the puzzle and give the cell a suspect.

PCs After the investigation stalls, capitalize on this latest development.

SCENE: Tiger by the Tail

MENTAL   
 PHYSICAL   
 SOCIAL 

H I N D R A N C E S

Vortex

Controlled ghosts

H E L P

Jeremiah distracted by ritual

STs Provide an exciting climax to the investigation.

PCs Survive Jeremiah's assault long enough to bring him down.

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MANY GO MAD.

BUT SOMEONE ELSE ALWAYS PICKS UP THE
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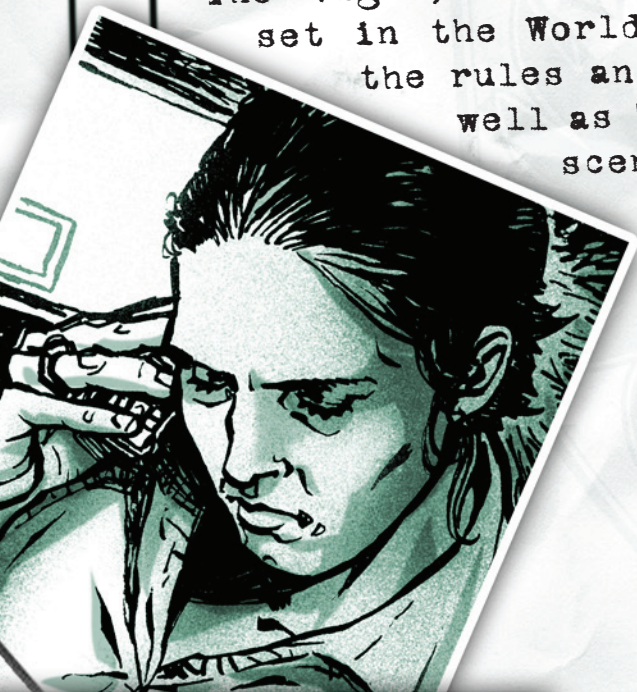
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DATE TIME GROUP