

# SMALL WORLDS AND EXILES



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## INTRODUCTION

This adventure is intended as an introductory scenario for a Second World campaign. It's best suited for new characters and may even be suitable for players new to gaming, though you should provide new players with some guidance. The sequence of events in this scenario should be logical so one of the best forms of guidance is to simply ask players what they would do were they to be found in the situation their characters have gotten into.

**If you plan on playing in this adventure now would probably be a good time to give this to your gamemaster.**

The adventure is designed with **four first level characters** in mind; note that a few scenes can be dangerous and that adventuring in the First World is inherently difficult so you should point out to the players that they must exercise caution. For the most part the players don't have to fight much; in fact they'll probably only face three fights in the entire scenario. Instead they have numerous opportunities to talk with people and investigate leads. This requires a bit more thinking but some of that thinking involves how best to get weapons, big vicious weapons; that should mollify those offended by too much talking.

This is an event based scenario. These can be difficult to pull off right. The Cause and Effect section describes the method used to "map" out this scenario. This technique should provide a strong plot for the scenario, but not a plot for the players. Instead the antagonists have their own plots, follow their own agendas, and oftentimes those agendas place the players at risk. The players have only the plot they create themselves. They're the monkey wrench trying to break up the machinations of the bad guys; they're the targets trying to survive an array of forces bent on their destruction. How each group does that will be radically different from each other group. The fact that people hunt them makes it easier to have the adventure find the players, so there's less necessity to keep the scenario on track.

Despite the volume of material in this adventure it may play quickly. Much of what is written occurs off-screen and the players can turtle if they want, making events proceed quickly. You might want to push them a little to get out and do things, if nothing else just so that they can purchase some equipment (which they ought to do). However, it's ultimately up to the players how they want to proceed; turtling has its downsides too and they have to live with the consequences.

On the other hand, chatty players and those used to games with lots of investigation could easily drag this scenario out for quite a while; there's a staggering number of leads to pursue and if you had another scenario you wanted to throw in to side track them that could make the whole thing quite exciting. Unfortunately there's not too much in the way of d20 Modern scenarios yet but you could adapt scenarios from a number of other games and the prospect for modern day d20 adventures grows constantly. If you do combine this scenario with another adventure try to make it one that finishes within a few days of in-game time (it can take weeks of real-time though). As usual, try to keep the pacing right; go slow if the players like that, include the occasional danger to keep them from getting complacent, and have fun.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The adventure truly started a couple days ago when a minor thug named Raphael Hausmann stole a case filled with magical black stones from his employers. He then contacted some potential buyers in New York (the Chen family) and traveled there to arrange the sale. He plans to leave town for an island somewhere after all this is over. Of course it doesn't work out that way. A brief description of the players in this story follows, then some history with a slight view into the future, and, finally, a listing of various agendas at work in the adventure.

## IMPORTANT NPCs

### HARRISON JING-SHU

The Chens are going legit and during the transition they end up in conflict with both corporate and underworld interests. In particular, the Blue Conglomerate sees them as a threat. They get Hausmann's call and see an opportunity for some discounted material components. It's a lot of money so they dispatch Harrison and two support people to go to the meet; Harrison has the negotiating skills to make this sort of thing go smoothly.

### RAPHAEL HAUSMANN

Hausmann started in Montreal (First World) three days ago with Mikhail Cordova of the Cordova family (Buenos Aires). They arranged a meeting with Thomas Fauchard who sold them a case of black stones; Cordova was purchasing something else though, the stones plus a *wire gate* secreted within the case, everything one needs to launch a few explorations of the interstices. Cordova purchased the case without a hitch but shunted a bit early leaving Hausmann with the loot.

Hausmann doesn't know about the *wire gate* but sees an excellent opportunity in the stones and makes a phone call to a broker in New York; the broker contacts the Chens and they decide to deal. Hausmann travels to New York and finds some thugs to use as back-up at the meet, which will occur in a public place (a coffee shop). Hausmann links up with the thugs and goes to the meet; that's the last thing he'll ever do.

### EDWARD KREBS

Krebs spends as much time as possible in the First World; the Blue Conglomerate issued him a *ring of quiet* which suppresses his exile and allows him to stay in the First World for an extended time; these only work on lower challenge rating or level creatures, or those with few magical abilities. His job is to spy on random stuff going down around the city; one of the people he spies on is the broker, Harry Davitz, and this got him wind of the deal. Krebs feels some loyalty to the Blue Conglomerate but information is his business and he keeps it pretty tight. He told BlueCon First World that he had a Chen meet to check out but downplayed the thing. Not that it matters much; BlueCon doesn't want to make the Chens confrontational yet.

Krebs goes to the meet just to keep an eye out. He's an opportunist; he takes something if it's available.

**RING OF QUIET**

The *ring of quiet* doesn't suppress the sound you make; instead it suppresses whatever qualities you project that cause an exile to shunt. No one really knows what properties of a person make them shunt, or fully comprehends how to suppress those properties. One thing does seem clear, the ability to use magic or warden bindings causes one to shunt; and the more of that you have the quicker you go. Quite likely, even the potential for those abilities causes you to shunt. Regardless, arcane spellcasters have studied this since the Sundering and have developed a few tricks to help extend one's stay in the First World for a longer period. The *ring of quiet* represents one of the more successful inventions in this area. If you wear this ring you can remain in the First World for three weeks prior to rolling the dice for when you shunt. After that time you need to return to the Second World and remain there for one week; if you don't do this and return to the First World right away you'll shunt normally. With the *ring of quiet* you essentially get the ability to spend three fourths of your time safely in the First World.

While this item is one of the most effective means of staying in the First World it cannot suppress the signature of truly powerful wardens and characters. For simplicity you can handle this by simply saying the ring does not work on anything with a challenge rating or effective character level greater than 9. It may work for characters of higher level, but only if they lack a capacity for magic or wardenhood and aren't too wrapped in synchronicity. Merely lacking magic wielding classes doesn't mean much here though; it's the potential that matters and, for now at least, is best handled by a judgment call from the gamemaster.

*Caster Level:* 9th; *Prerequisites:* Forge Ring, *sustain travel*; *Market Price:* 20,000 gp; *Weight:* -.

**SUSTAIN TRAVEL**

Transmutation, Gate Warden

**Level:** Brd 4, Clr 6, Drd 5, Sor/Wiz 5

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 Action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** You and one other touched creature/3 levels

**Duration:** 1 week

**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

With this spell you suppress the synchronic signature of yourself and other touched creatures so that you may remain in the First World for a longer time. Normally, after traveling to the First World you shunt after 4d12 hours. By casting this spell you pause the countdown for one week. Multiple castings within a single trip do not work and, after shunting to the Second World you should remain there for close to the time you spent in the First World. If you spend too much time in the First World, i.e. keep popping back in as often as possible, the First World will start resorting to more extreme measures to expunge you. For instance, brakes might fail on busses as you're walking across a street; it might shunt you to someplace other than the Second World; synchronicity might place you in the middle of a revolution; all the doors you open might lead to alien places, and so on. Generally, you're safe if you spend less than one week out of every four in the First World; you may also spend two weeks in the First World close to each other so long as you then spend about 8 weeks back in the Second World. If you try to stretch it though you give the gamemaster a license to do really freaky stuff to your characters.

*Material Components:* a small, intricate brass clock costing no less than \$5,000 (or 500 gp) that disappears when you finally shunt. Many scholars suspect that the clock simply shunts to someplace else.

**GARY "MOJO" TEAD**

Gary's a minor tough with big ideas; he does some work with the mob and has a strong enough personality that a small cell of crooks has flocked to him. He treats his boys quite well so long as they bootlick properly. Hausmann just scoured the pool halls the previous night until he found this guy and his mini-gang. Tead has four guys and that's what Hausmann wanted. Unfortunately for Tead one of his boys got thrown in jail for a DUI about 3:00 AM and Tead needs to bring in an outsider; he calls Paul Torzano, who's always down on his luck, looking for work, fairly tractable, and moderately familiar.

Tead plans to double-cross Hausmann and take everything he can get. He'll simply put Torzano on a leash and tell him to blow (or give him a minor pay-off). If Tead had an inkling of what Steele was like he'd smack Hausmann early. As it is, Tead won't survive the day either.

Before the meet Hausmann says "no guns" and makes Tead's boys put them away; Tead carries a hidden one though.

**MIKHAIL CORDOVA**

Cordova cut a deal for the wire gate then shunted early. But the wire gate and the case were with Hausmann. Cordova then contacted his

people for a status update; Hausmann had disappeared. The Cordovas are on the trail now and have the clout to be dangerous.

**What they know and how they know it:** They traced Hausmann from the Montreal hotel to a local phone kiosk using mundane methods like asking around; pulling some strings with the local government got them a list of telephone numbers called from the kiosk, one of the numbers was in New York.

**PAUL TORZANO**

Torzano is a bit player at first but his importance increases over the course of the story; he becomes most important way down the line, after this scenario is well over, so he might go somewhat unnoticed here. Paul's a down on his luck former boxer and current tough guy. He's canny but doesn't know it and certainly doesn't believe it; this lack of confidence in his intelligence holds him back more than anything else. He's also a bit too honorable for his line of work; Tead's double cross surprises Paul as much as anyone. Tead recognizes this streak in Torzano and makes sure to keep him in check during the shakedown.

After the coffee shop scene Hausmann tracks Torzano down and pulls him in. When Hausmann shows up Torzano feels nervous but he doesn't know how bad the injury really was and feels guilty about not sufficiently protecting his employer, even if the double-cross

wasn't his fault. This amuses Hausmann. New Hausmann employs Torzano to show him around town and introduce him to the people he needs to employ.

## INCOGNITO CELEBRITY

Including a celebrity in a Second World campaign can be fun; use some movie star, musician, or other type of celebrity popular amongst your players. They can be sitting in the back wearing a baseball cap, sunglasses, and baggy sweatshirt. During the action perhaps the players protect the movie star from getting hurt which could lead to an invitation to a party or dinner later. Alternately, perhaps the celebrity is an athlete or a star in action movies and they can fight alongside the players; teaming up with an Austrian body-builder to beat an interstitial demon unconscious with coffee shop chairs can be a memorable experience for a player.

## HISTORY AND TIMELINE

**Monday: Cordova and Hausmann:** meet Thomas Fauchard in Montreal and deal for the case. Ready to leave the following day.

**Tuesday: Cordova:** Shunts early in the morning. Now he's stuck in Second World Montreal. Searches around for a bit to get in contact with a wizard or other sort using some of his pull then arranges a *sending* spell with the people back home; he has to wait until the following morning before they can prepare the spell though. He spends the rest of the day looking for other means of communication and trying to make sure that Hausmann hasn't crossed for some reason too.

**Hausmann:** Contemplates how he wants to handle all this then decides to gamble. He calls Davitz from Montreal then rents a car and drives to New York; he sweats like crazy at the border crossing but chooses a busy one to make it easier. Gets to New York late and finds a hotel room.

**Wednesday: Cordova:** Gets the *sending* spell off and his people follow up using various methods. They're going nuts because no-one was on the plane and they couldn't contact anybody. They've already sent some First World agents to Montreal to check things out. Cordova tells them to send a gate warden and feral warden to Montreal to help out. They arrive later that night and arrange to meet and bring Cordova across to the First World. They spend all night tracking Hausmann's motions and finally determine that he went to New York. They arrange a flight but won't arrive until Thursday morning; no sleep allowed for the time being.

**Hausmann:** Scouts for a meeting place in the morning; meets Davitz; sets up Chen meet for the next day; spends the rest of the day scouting for thugs.

**Thursday: Coffee Shop Incident (pg. 6)**

**Cordova:** Arrives in New York in the morning and heads for Davitz. Scare tactics work here and he gives them the site of the meeting. His people are exhausted but they'll have to drink a lot of coffee for a while. They head for the coffee shop but get there after it's been surrounded by police, ambulances, and television crews.

*News at Ten (pg. 12)*

**Friday: Morning Papers (pg. 13)**

After this the media continues to report anything it discovers (and given the kind of carnage going on there's a lot to report). Most events following the coffee shop occur as the result of other events and you should use the "waterfall" page to track them (see page 33).

## AGENDAS

Everyone's got an agenda; here's a list of them. Before reading these it might help to read through the first encounter, the Coffee Shop fight on page 6, in order to have a better feeling for the background to the NPC motivations.

### THE NIKDAV HAUSMANN

*Ice everyone that was in the coffee shop:* Torzano gets let off the hook because he's cooperative but somewhere down the line he'll probably feel the ice too. Hausmann does this because he's also got a scar, only his scar is black (with a little gray). In fact, the other scars are simply negative images of his scar (see page 21 for the player scars). Having one of these scars means that you bypass the rather tough resistances Hausmann possesses. He gets a +10 to spell resistance and damage reduction 20/- against anyone who lacks one of these scars. Even if you have a scar Hausmann's a tough bastard but he's loathe to engage people with scars directly since that places him in unnecessary danger.

*Find and recover the case:* the case won't have any crystal left given the intensity of the rift but Hausmann realizes that there's a *wire gate* somewhere in it and those provide all kinds of power.

*Destroy Emblazoned Material from Coffee Shop:* the emblazoned material can be fashioned into weapons or built into a structure. These would bypass Hausmann's resistances in the same way people with the scars do. This makes all that stuff a threat and something Hausmann wants eliminated.

### MIKHAIL CORDOVA

*Find Hausmann:* This rat took the loot and the gate and he'll probably hock it for a pittance to someone important. He has to die.

*Recover the Case/Wire Gate:* The black stones are nice but they're not the main goal. The real trick is getting the case back without revealing that the case is something special.

### GOVERNMENT

*Track people from shop:* It's been a good idea in the past to keep tabs on those who've experienced the truly strange.

*Find out what happened there:* This might occur naturally during the interview process. Once the data is in, Stiles tries to construct some possible explanatory scenarios.

*Identify the players:* Many of the people involved were merely bystanders. The Chens, thugs, and Hausmann were the instigators and Stiles wants to know what they were up to.

HARRISON JING-SHU

*Get out with the cash:* While a failed buy is unsatisfying, losing the cash would be awful. Harrison's first goal is to get out with the same stuff he had when entering.

*Find out what happened:* As much curiosity as anything else, Harrison wants to know what went wrong. Some bits are obvious (such as Hausmann's lack of skill in choosing backup) but why did the rift open, and what does the scar mean? Randolph Chen has a pretty good idea of what the scar means given his skills.

KREBS

*Investigate the case:* If Krebs gets away with the case he drools over the prospect of all that black; after his spirits have been crushed and he drowns his sorrows in some cheap wine he notices the scorch line on the outside of the case. He then cuts the case open and removes the wire gate.

*Evade Hausmann:* During the fight Krebs accidentally made eye contact with Hausmann's corpse. Hausmann's eyes popped open as the Nikdaw Oar moved in and the two looked at each other for what felt like an eternity to Krebs; eventually Hausmann's eyes closed and Krebs took the case and left. That eye contact was enough to create a permanent connection between them.

MEDIA

*Find out about drug connection:* The media thinks drugs are behind the entire thing and will do whatever it takes to prove that.

[After murders] *Investigate murders:* Not only did drug lords burn down a popular coffee shop but now they're also killing off all the witnesses.

[After disappearances] *Investigate disappearances:* Not only did the drug lords burn down a popular coffee shop and murder a bunch of the witnesses but now they're also kidnapping the witnesses. This likely occurs in earnest only after the players have left the dimension so isn't terribly important.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

*Find out what caused the fire:* The NYFD ropes off the coffee shop and scans through the ruins to find out what caused the fire. They notice all the strange runes and symbols emblazoned over the walls and furniture.

*Find out why pieces of the building are going missing:* They are perplexed at why someone would steal parts of the place and then set it on fire. This is easy to track so they pass off the stolen goods investigation to the police and complete the arson investigation themselves. With the fire destroying so much of the coffee shop much of the supernatural evidence disappeared. This allows the fire department to treat the incident as arson; it's the only reasonable explanation.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

*Interview Witnesses:* Most of this should be finished within the first day.

*Find missing people:* They continue to look for those described by the witnesses. Since many of them are Exiles this fervor fades with time and they're not likely to meet with much success.

## [After Murders]

*Protect other potential victims:* They call those they can find and put out a public announcement for the others that they'd like to take them into protective custody until they find the murderer. Players have the right to decline this but the police strongly recommend it. Agent Stiles might actually agree with the players if they resist the offer since she understands that whoever is doing this has some pretty special abilities.

*Track culprit:* They look for the killers and quickly realize that a group must be behind them. When Glopov's daughter dies (pg. 16) they follow that lead and discover that he's gone missing. This puts them close on the trail of Hausmann's gang but probably too late given that the gang moves around so frequently.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The adventure starts with the players caught up in a transaction gone bad at a coffee shop in First World New York. A gate opens and strange creatures pour through, leading to a multi-sided fight.

After this the players go on about their lives and investigate the changes they've undergone. They likely talk to the media, hospital staff, and police.

Other parties have dire goals. A powerful creature, Hausmann, possessed the body of one of the people at the shop and now hunts the players and other patrons present during the battle; he wants to kill them all. He gathers some troops and hunts those at the coffee shop.

Another group, the Cordovas, hunts the creature (or actually the person they knew before the possession). He had an item called a *wire gate*; they want it back and they want to punish him.

Over the next few days a corpse will walk, witnesses of the fight will be murdered, and the players will have to struggle for their lives while being hunted by powerful opponents.

The Cause and Effect map on page 33 can be useful as a reminder of what has happened, is happening, and where events are proceeding.

CAUSE AND EFFECT

The entire premise behind the system of this module is that the scenario should obey some simple rules of cause and effect. Players can do pretty much anything but their actions have consequences. Non-player characters do things as well, and the consequences of those actions may be felt or seen by the players. To make it easier to figure out what's going on there is a "waterfall" page at the back of the module (pg. 33); events earlier in time are at the top of the page and their effects cascade downwards towards the bottom of the page. It might have a flowchart like feel but it behaves a bit more like a pachinko machine since one really has no idea where the players end up at the end of this thing (other than in the Second World).

The cause and effect chart serves as the primary "map" for this scenario.

**Using the chart:** When an event occurs put a check next to it and make any special notes that might be needed. The event is a cause and lines lead out from it to its effects. Some effects may have more than one possible cause. Solid lines with arrows at the end indicate hard causation, these occur outside the players' control. Dashed arrows indicate causal lines that occur only if the players wish.

Events are broken into three broad categories.

- A) **Player driven events:** These are events that the players will likely pursue on their own. The players can do these at almost any time. The events are described somewhat generally since the players may do something that's very like the event in question, but different in subtle ways. An example of a player driven event is investigating the scars they've acquired.
- B) **Standard events:** These are events caused by forces other than the players but ones that will either directly impact the players or be highly visible to them. An example of a standard event is the ongoing media coverage to which the players have access.
- C) **Off-screen events:** Many of the events occur off-screen and the players may or may not find out about them. These events are necessary for later effects that the players definitely do feel. Descriptions of off-screen events are included for several reasons; here's three: They provide a better background for why things happen the way they do, and this can make running the scenario and dealing with unpredictable player behavior more easy. They give you information that your players may eventually discover; clever players can find all sorts of ways to dig into the background of a scene. The player's main job is to screw up the plans of the NPCs; by knowing what the NPCs are doing you can more easily figure out what the players need to do to throw things off track. An example of an off-screen event is Hausmann's meeting and negotiation with the mobsters.

Standard and off-screen events are listed by ID number and put in rough chronological order to make it easier to simply sit down and read through the scenario. Player driven events are listed alphabetically. A number of events on the map have no causal lines leading to them. The player driven events aren't caused because player characters operate outside the normal laws of cause and effect, or at least the world tries to promote that illusion. They can choose to do whatever they want whenever they want. Most other events without lead-in arrows result from the Coffee Shop incident.

## ENCOUNTERS

### THE COFFEE SHOP

This is it, the main thing that sets off the whole adventure and, for some, an entire Second World campaign.

### THE SITUATION

First World characters start off in the It's a Small World coffee shop. There is a tactical map of the coffee shop on page 34; this is printed

to scale so you can print it out and use it as a battle map. The coffee shop is in Manhattan, near Soho. It's not a big chain coffee shop, just a small privately owned business with the owner working the counter. It should be daytime, perhaps just a bit after the lunch crowd so the place will have some people in it but not be too busy. The players are simply customers; they likely either work or live in the area. A few other people also start off in the coffee shop. A brown-haired man who somehow manages to look scroungy even though he's wearing some fairly nice clothes sits in one of the easy chairs near the bottom of the map; this is Edward Krebs. A person in sweats, sunglasses, and baseball cap sits on the chair facing away from the window near the bottom of the map; this is the celebrity if you choose to include him or her. An attractive young Hispanic woman sits at the square table at the center right of the map facing the window. She has a notebook computer out on the table with some books and papers spread around it. She wears an NYU sweatshirt. A young white male stands nearby chatting her up holding a latté in one hand and babbling stuff such as "What are you reading? Oh, Michel Foucault; what does she write about?" A briefcase (his) sits on the round table directly north. A burly construction worker from the street outside stands near the condiments area switching back and forth between hammering down some obscure form of tea and adding lots of sugar to it. A 30-ish Asian man, somewhat younger Asian woman, and fossilized Asian man sit arrayed around the couch and easy chair in the lower left corner. The older man looks pretty placid but the two others check their watch a bit too often. They're dressed smartly, like business people; this is Harrison, Sally, and Uncle Carl.

The players may or may not start the game knowing each other. They could be roommates (a necessity in New York) or co-workers or just friends. But none of that is necessary; this encounter can throw disparate people together and necessity should be able to forge bonds between characters who were, previously, complete strangers. People who've been through a bank robbery or some other traumatic experience often form quite strong bonds and this experience will certainly be traumatic.

**Second World Characters:** Characters with Second World backgrounds aren't present yet; they get dragged into the scenario later. Tell them they're doing their adventurer shopping right now, purchasing or just browsing weapons at a Second World New York weaponsmith.

### The Patrons:

NYU Student (Alyssa Hernandez, no write-up)

Guy going down in flames (Devon Walsh, no write-up)

Tea-drinking Construction Worker (Harold Blatz, no write-up)

Proprietor (Mike Spielen, no write-up)

Harrison Jing-shu

Sally Chen

Uncle Carl

Edward Krebs

Celebrity

HAUSMANN AND THE TEAD GANG ARRIVES

One of the Tead thugs enters first, followed by Hausmann, Tead, the other thug, and Torzano bringing up the rear. The thugs wear blue jeans and leather, sneer a lot, and leer at Ms. Hernandez. Mike Spielen looks up as these people enter the coffee shop as do most of the other customers so it's okay to make a special point of their entrance and let the players start getting nosy like they usually do. Hausmann heads directly for Harrison's crew and pulls a chair from the nearby table; he sits with his back to the windows and Tead standing behind him.

One thug stays at the door, tacitly blocking entrance and exit; he'll actually kneel down to lazily tighten up his shoelaces right in front of the door so that someone might just think him rude instead of actively hostile. He won't move if someone asks him, saying something like "keep yer shirt on I'll just be a minute." If time drags out he'll let the person go then proceed to spill a cup of coffee directly in front of the door. The other thug goes to the counter and orders some coffee "plain old Joe, none of that pansy stuff." Torzano stands back a ways, perhaps behind the central couch, and just keeps watch.

Tead is very anxious but fortunately for him Hausmann is even more so. A Spot check (DC 20) from behind notices the bulge in the small of Tead's back. Hausmann has the case with him and slides it across to Harrison; Hausmann has every intention of playing it straight with the Chens since all he wants is enough money to retire. Harrison carries his cash in a briefcase as well; he's dangerous enough that he doesn't worry about thieves.

Harrison and Hausmann talk in that sort of amateur code that only those with absolutely no Innuendo skill can master. Hausmann says things like "I've got all the documents here; as you can see the business is wholly in the black. I assume you've brought the papers; it must seem like there's a million of them." Harrison will respond such as "All our papers are in order and I have them here with me. I'd like to take a look at the documents first though." A) Tead understands perfectly the main point of this conversation and now knows enough to realize that there's no time like the present to begin your future; he waits just a second though to let Harrison check the case. That way he'll know for certain that he'll get something from the bust. B) Both Harrison and Hausmann can't keep up the metaphors for long; they eventually just lean forward and whisper to each other.

**Listen Checks:** If a player is nearby they can make a Listen Check (DC 15) to overhear snippets of the conversation. The coffee shop is a bit noisy but Harrison and Hausmann don't whisper initially (Sally does roll her eyes a fair bit though). If they do this just give them one or more of the Hausmann/Harrison quotes.

Remember that everything happens quite fast; Harrison and Hausmann get down to business almost immediately.

THE BRIEFCASE

This is a simple brown leather affair with a little combo lock; it's actually quite sturdy, the leather exterior coats a case made of steel. The inside of the case has wool padding (for expected travel to the Second World) and the inside is filled with black gem-like stones. These stones are generally oval shaped, of various sizes, and of a clear black coloring. However, all of the stones glow faintly, like a light was on inside them. This makes them look like a black light as they shed a purplish luminescence.

Between the leather exterior and the metal of the case someone has left a *wire gate*; this device looks like nothing more than a large (roughly 10 foot diameter) loop of wire. If you look closely at the wire you see that it's etched with tiny runes and patterns. Operating the *wire gate* requires special knowledge of how to lay it out on the ground; finding out how to do this should be something left for future scenarios (when the characters are significantly more experienced).

Anyone who cuts open the leather exterior and checks around discovers the *wire gate* easily. Just running your hands carefully across the surface of the leather grants a Search check (DC 28) to notice the wire. However, none of these methods will likely be necessary since, when the stones ignited and the gate activated, it did so with enough power to burn a looping figure into the surface of the leather. This should be a powerful enough clue to make anyone look for a knife.

After the stones burn a small pittance remains in the case, a few tiny pebbles worth \$500 in material component costs. Amazingly, the wool lining is in perfect condition.

BLACK STONES

The black stones are something called hard power. They're a form of crystallized raw arcane magic. The stones typically range in size from tiny pebbles to larger, perhaps one inch across, ovals. Black stones shine with an inner luminescence, giving them a purple glow like that of a black light. Hard power has the advantage that it can be used in place of any material component. Each stone has an effective gold piece value and can replace that value in material components. The material component market typically charges 25% to 50% over the effective gold piece value for hard power since it's so flexible. A one inch stone is typically worth 1,000 gp (or \$10,000) in material component value though the stones in the case average about half that (and there are about 400 of them in there). One uses hard power by simply touching it with their bare skin and summoning on the power when crafting an item or casting a spell with a costly material component. For example, many Second World wizards wear necklaces of the black stones in various sizes then use them when casting spells such as *stone skin*. Skilled spell casters can manipulate black stones, combining them or dividing them into smaller particles. When used the stone literally evaporates. They also evaporate naturally over time but their half-life is so long that this is seldom an issue. Larger stones evaporate less quickly than smaller ones so many users, always trying to squeeze the last drop of value from an item, keep their stones in the largest denomination that remains usable.

Hard power also comes in other colors; most of which are significantly less valuable than the black stones. White stones (perfectly clear, like diamonds) are more valuable; they're also quite rare.

The case has roughly \$2,000,000 worth of black in it and Hausmann is selling it for 1.5 million dollars, probably about half the market price. This is why the Chens made this excursion and this is why Hausmann is willing to risk so much.

**Spot Checks:** Hausmann slides the briefcase across to Harrison. Harrison opens it close to his chest. Anyone besides Harrison, Sally, or Uncle Carl will find it almost impossible to see inside but if they're looking at all they can't help but notice the purple glow emanating from the case. A successful Spot check (DC 20) can see the reflection in Sally Chen's eyeglasses; they'll see that the case has what looks like a lot of black, glowing gems in it.

Harrison won't bother counting the stones; he looks once at Uncle Carl who nods, then Sally who also nods, then closes the case and places it on the table in front of him and finally nods at Hausmann. Practically all the tension flows out of Hausmann at that moment; a bit too early in fact.

### TEAD'S BRILLIANT PLAN

Fortunately it doesn't take much brain-power to be a criminal; all you really need is a ruthless determination and a lack of consideration for anyone else. Unfortunately it doesn't take much brain power to be a criminal; it's so incredibly easy to simply point a gun at someone and take their stuff that eventually you figure that's all there is to it and start to try something really tricky that will get you the big score. That's when you end up in jail or dead. Tead will be doing the latter here in just a moment.

### FIRST WORLD EFFECTS ON FIGHTING

The First World obeys different laws than the Second World. The full set of those differences are detailed in the Second World Sourcebook but some samples are included here to add some flavor to the combat.

The First World has it's own Spell Resistance (20) that must be overcome any time you invoke a spell or spell-like ability. This applies even against effects that normally don't allow Spell Resistance, such as when you cast a *bull's strength* spell or *cure light wounds*. This also applies to devices that invoke magic, such as potions, scrolls, and wands. If your target also has Spell Resistance that must be overcome as well and requires a separate spell penetration check. Warden powers do not need to overcome this Spell Resistance; for some reason the suppression does not affect warden abilities. Psionics work a bit better but are still erratic; they must overcome a power resistance of 15. Casters may Take 10 on checks to overcome the World Resistance.

The world is more risky. For an attack check, a natural roll of 18 or higher is an automatic hit (as if you rolled a 20 in the core rules). Critical hits are still determined normally, which means you may score an automatic hit but not a critical threat. Attack checks and saving throws also automatically fail on a natural 2 or less.

It's also possible to die from a single hit in the First World. You can represent this using the Massive Damage Threshold rule from d20 Modern or via the Wounds rule described in the Second World Sourcebook.

These rules assume a Second World focused campaign. If running a First World centered campaign you should tone down some of these features. For example, reduce the World Resistance or give players a special ability that allows them to overcome the World Resistance.

As soon as Harrison shuts the case and puts it on the table in front of him all that tension that flowed out of Hausmann bops right into Tead. He gets all excited and happy at once and decides this is the time for the move. A sharper guy would wait until he was sure that Harrison brought the cash but Tead ain't that guy. Instead Tead whips out his pistol, points it at the back of Hausmann's head and starts shouting. The other thugs start shouting too, one saying "Torzano, just sit tight and don't do anything stupid," and Torzano just looks a bit lost. Uncle Chen raises his eyebrows, Sally looks rather surprised, and Harrison says, dryly, "Where do you get your help, Hausmann?"

**Listen Check:** These little throwaway comments are actually mildly important; these might be the only names that make it out of this scene. If players are specifically paying attention to this go ahead and simply play out the scene complete with dialogue. They still might not remember it later (the actual players that is) in which case ask for a Listen check (DC 15) to represent the way Listen also covers paying attention.

The thugs have knives out and wave them around at customers; the one near the counter also points his knife briefly at Torzano to keep him in check. Harrison sits patiently deciding whether or not he wants to start drawing steel or let the situation play itself out a bit. He's not terribly nervous for himself but Uncle Carl's an old man and could easily drop to a stray bullet. Hausmann's hands shoot up into the air and he starts blubbing things about how he doesn't want to be killed. He's in a bad situation though; Tead's gun points directly at the back of his head. The players might feel heroic here though most reasonable ones will at least wait a while to see what happens. You might take a moment to remind them of the rules of engagement in the First World.

### TENSE MOMENTS

Tead yells at Hausmann "Give me the case!" Hausmann dithers because he really wants to live but he also really wants 1.5 million dollars; he's quite bad at decisions in these kinds of circumstances so Tead yells the same thing a couple of times, makes a show of cocking the gun (which spits the previously chambered round onto the floor), and yells again. The other thugs get pretty high strung during this and look around a lot, waving their knives when possible. Torzano looks around a lot too and somewhere along the line decides that he should hold his hands up as well. All this tension is just too much for Tead; he says "\$%&^\* it," and shoots Hausmann in the back of the head. The tension flows out of him like water, a bit too early in fact. However, nothing relaxes Gary Tead like icing an uncooperative guy. If rounds matter here for some reason a total of maybe 3 pass between Tead pulling the gun and the bullet entering the back of Hausmann's head.

Hausmann flops forward over the case and his blood starts pouring from his head (that is, what hasn't been sprayed over the table already). For effect and pacing here you might want to pause for a moment and start counting, one-one thousand, two-one thousand, up to six. If you do this vocally the players will likely get antsy and start trying to do stuff. If you sit there silently you might be able to capture the feeling of this pause between the anxiety of the previous situation, and the storm about to break. For right now, everyone in the coffee shop (perhaps other than the players) sit in stunned silence for about six seconds, or one melee round, or the time it takes a shat-



tered brain to turn off, or the time it takes the first drop of blood to hit the floor, or the time it takes this guy standing outside the coffee shop across the street to light his cigarette. That's synchronicity. You should ask the players to make initiative checks now.

### THE HOLE

After getting the initiatives the fight starts in earnest. Hausmann knows something about power and he keyed the stones with a device that will burn them if he dies. When his brain turns off, the stones in the case release their power; this creates a bright flash and some smoke but all this happens inside the case and so normally wouldn't have much of an effect on the rest of the world (other than vaporizing \$2,000,000 worth of material). However, this much raw power activates the *wire gate* hidden in the space between the leather exterior and the metal case. In turn, a rip opens in space and the unbridled chaos of the Forge fills the coffee shop. Black roiling clouds roll out of the hole in space, accompanied by a swarm of sigils and runes, one Roa Intruder, one small fire elemental, and the shadow of the Nikdaw Oar. The sigils and runes emblazon themselves on everything in the shop, people, items, walls, and so on. The intruder comes through looking awfully hungry and chomping his teeth (creating a sound like wind chimes). The fire elemental comes through bent on burning stuff. The Oar flows into the body of Hausmann, seizing him before his soul passes on; he remains dead-looking for about 10 hours but his eyes briefly open and lock on Krebs.

**Effects of the Storm:** For the moment the rules of the Forge take over in the shop; this cancels the normal effects of the First World on combat meaning that spells don't suffer from the First World's Spell Resistance, automatic hit and failure chances remain normal, and no one needs to worry about massive damage (or Wounds).

First World natives who wanted to start out as spellcasters gain access to those spells now. Instead of training for years they spontaneously develop their powers when struck by the influx of magical energy from the gate. In game terms this simply means that those able to cast arcane spells can now do so. For the characters it's as if a vast new horizon opens to them. They feel the power flow through them, pulse in their veins, and open their mind to all the possibilities. The mind of a sorcerer or wizard opens up in a flash and sees this diverse array of magical techniques available to her; in moments she chooses the techniques she prefers (or perhaps the techniques choose her). For classes that need to prepare spells they do so as part of this process. Wizards receive a special benefit from this effect; their initial spells all count as **mastered spells**; thus, they do not need a spellbook to prepare them. Everyone can ignore the need for non-costly material components or focuses while bathed in the forces from the Forge; they'll need to acquire these normally later.

The black billowing clouds obscure all senses to such an extent that all attacks suffer a **40% miss chance**, as if under nine-tenths concealment. One can see well enough to target things, even at range. This also grants a **+4 circumstance bonus to Hide and Move Silently** checks. On the first round everyone in the shop must make a **Fortitude save (DC 12)** or be unable to act due to the pain and shock of the sigils bonding to them; they may still defend normally and this shock only lasts one round. It's hard to tell the specific cause of the pain due to all the chaos so you should describe the whole scene (throwing the sigils somewhere inside the description) then request the saves. Note that the effects described here are not the

standard effects of the Forge; the place is vast and variable so many different kinds of effects can be found there.

**Second World Characters:** Those players sitting on the sidelines in all this now get their chance. If you have Second World natives in your game have the gate also merge in the contents of the Second World side. This is the weaponsmith's shop mentioned earlier. Just like the people in the coffee shop, Second World characters get emblazoned with the sigils and need to make Fortitude saves and suffer all regular effects. They should roll initiative now as well. Second World characters have the distinct advantage that they're already loaded for a fight; they have nice weapons and likely wear armor. Since parts of the weapon shop come across you can have a longsword, short sword, and mace come across as well; that should provide First World characters with something to use. This whole thing leaves an empty space in the Second World where the front area of the weapon shop used to be.

If you have no Second World characters in your game it's probably best to leave this whole bit out; the handful of weapons aren't that much better than what the players can pick up in the coffee shop and you'd probably need to have the players baby-sit an NPC for a while if you brought the shop across.

### THE FIGHT

Characters without writeups do not fight; in fact most just leap out windows or doors (the proprietor goes out the small pantry door and to the back alley). That still leaves 2 thugs, Tead, 3 Chen ops, Torzano, Krebs, one Roa Intruder, one small fire elemental, and the players in the battle. That's 11 characters for the gamemaster to run, all pursuing different goals. It's not all that difficult to dice out; the main difficulty lies in deciding what to do with everyone each round and knowing how their abilities work. To make things easier a combat sheet is provided with all the NPCs' core stats on it and some spaces to put in player initiatives (pg. 36). This is a big, important fight in a scenario without much in the way of fighting, so it's probably okay to devote a bit more time to it; it should play like a massive cage match.

It can get unwieldy playing out all the NPC actions, especially when they're so indirectly related to what the players are doing. The fight will probably break down into two smaller fights, one between the Chens, Tead, and the Intruder, and the other between the players, any allies, and the thugs plus the fire elemental. If you'd like to have the Chen fight happen backstage a round by round account of what they do is provided. All the dice rolls and damage are pre-figured. Normally this method wouldn't work too well since the players would alter the process. But, since a group of introductory players probably won't be able to affect the Intruder, all their interference would do is waste their own attacks. After the first attack a player launches against the Intruder Harrison points out that it's likely immune to them. One additional benefit of having the Chen fight occur backstage is that by not rolling dice for them their actions don't overshadow the player's actions.

The write-out only covers the actions of the Chens, Tead, Torzano, Krebs, and the Intruder. The combat sheet (pg. 36) includes their initiative scores in the box with their bonus; fill in the empty spot with either their pre-rolled initiative, or the one you roll.

ROUND ONE

Fortitude Saves: Harrison (makes); Sally (fails); Uncle Carl (makes); Tead (makes); Krebs (fails); Intruder (doesn't need to roll).

25 Sally: recovers

21 Intruder: must have a sense for the true threat in the room and goes right after Harrison, jumping on the table, squishing Hausmann a bit and spilling coffee everywhere. It hits with both bites and successfully grabs hold with the second; total damage 20 points (Harrison to 64). Remember that Harrison hasn't invoked armor yet and Massive Damage doesn't apply within the storm.

20 Uncle Carl: casts *hideous laughter* at the Intruder and it washes away in black flecks.

15 Tead: Looks very nervous but realizes that he's got to shoot someone; the old guy did something funny so Tead figures that's the target; besides, the dog seems occupied. Concealment isn't rolling well in this fight yet and so Tead pops Uncle Carl for a vicious chest wound (9 pts, dropping UC to 3 hp). This really pisses the Chens off.

11 Harrison: Invokes his armor and attempts to break free from the grapple: making it on the first try. As he slips free, brassy red steel plate unfolds over him and a great sword extends from his hands.

9 Krebs: recovers

ROUND TWO

25 Sally: Draws her pistol from an ankle holster and attempts to pop Tead (who gets a little cover from Hausmann's body); she misses straight up.

21 Intruder: Harrison tasted good so he'll try that again; this time Harrison has full armor... Misses with both bites.

20 Uncle Carl (3 hp): hits Tead with *hideous laughter*, who fails miserably and falls prone.

15 Tead: Laughs uncontrollably on the floor (he recovers at the end of this round though).

11 Harrison (64 hp): Yells at Uncle Chen to protect himself and stop trying to die. Might have to do the same for some player characters. Hits Intruder twice drawing gaping wounds but low for him (28 damage; 35 hp left). Perhaps Concealment matters more for your group than these guys.

9 Krebs: Hides (at effective level 22, including concealment bonus)

ROUND THREE

25 Sally: Jumps up on back of couch and runs behind Harrison to get a good angle on Tead, then pops him while he's on the ground; this time concealment works.

21 Intruder (fast heals to 38 hp): Pushes forward with its heavy, clanking jaws; Hausmann's chair and body, plus the coffee table get mangled by all this. One of the bites hits but Harrison squirms free from the jaws. It was a hard hit though, almost a critical; Harrison's armor makes an awful squealing clinking sound as its crushed beneath the massive teeth (takes 16 damage, down to 48 hp). If the windows haven't been broken already they all shatter simultaneously at the sound.

20 Uncle Carl (3 hp): sees Harrison glaring at him and considers zapping the Intruder but throws up *mage armor* instead. Harrison relaxes a bit but shouts "go invisible" over the din

of the battle.

15 Tead: rolls around to the window side of the chair for cover and fires a shot at Sally, missing normally.

11 Harrison (48 hp): Swings twice with the greatsword, trying to push the large thing back and give Uncle Carl and Sally some room; two more great rips shove the thing back into the easy chair and now it's actually standing over Tead and bleeding all over him (31 dam; 7 hp left).

9 Krebs: Sees his opportunity, slips to the left of the fight concealed by the swirling vapors of the Forge and grabs the case; as his hand locks around the handle Hausmann's eyes pop open and for just a moment he's transfixed. He then slinks back towards the windows. Uncle Carl is the main person from the Chens who could spot him but he's not good enough for that. Players can make Spot checks (DC 22) to see Krebs move toward the window with the case; they'll get just one chance at this and you can have them roll this round or next round.

ROUND FOUR

25 Sally: Moves again to get a good angle on Tead; she's hating him with a passion right now; she's confused by the swirling chaos and the bullet tinks off the hide of the Intruder.

21 Intruder (fast heals to 11 hp): Enraged and bleeding, it bites at Harrison in a frenzy; The first bite clomps down hard (7 damage; 41 hp left), grinding steel between large square teeth. It's a real struggle between Harrison and the Intruder, with Harrison matching the creature ounce for ounce in strength; in the end, size does matter and the intruder once more locks Harrison in it's powerful jaws. With its second attack the intruder grinds its teeth cracking a rib (13 dam; 28 hp left).

20 Uncle Carl (3 hp): He doesn't care if Harrison does get pissed off; he can't just watch the hound crush Harrison's bones; the creature is obviously barely hanging on so Uncle Carl lets loose with magic missiles, punches through the thing's spell resistance and strikes it to the ground, dead (14 damage; the intruder doesn't get to go into the negatives).

15 Tead: now has a corpse on him and a man with large sword standing nearby; he shoots at Harrison this time, missing.

11 Harrison (28 hp): Is still very upset about the potshot at Uncle Carl; that'll all be fixed shortly...but a swirl of chaos confuses him and he just hacks up the corpse of the Roa Intruder some more.

9 Krebs: Goes invisible, then completes the round by moving out onto the street.

ROUND FIVE

25 Sally: Tead loses his Dex Bonus to AC; Sally wants to finish it off; a bullet in the lung leaves Tead gurgling blood but still alive (11 dam; 8 hp left).

20 Uncle Carl (3 hp): Under the glowering stare of Harrison shimmers and vanishes from sight; actually he just turns invisible and heads for the counter area to go through the kitchen and out the back door. The Chens scouted the back alley before coming in to check for a rear escape route.

15 Tead: Can't really do much any more; he looks in Harrison's eyes and sees that he's not getting any quarter so decides to go out shooting; a bullet bounces off Harrison's armor.

11 Harrison (28 hp): The chaos confuses him with the first

attack but the second strikes Tead's neck; so ends the Tead gang.

### ROUND SIX

- 25 Sally: Looks around a bit, then looks for the case.  
 20 Uncle Carl (3 hp): Makes it out the back and is on his way to the rally point.  
 11 Harrison (28 hp): Kicks Tead's pistol to the players and tells Sally to throw her pistol to them as well; then also looks around.

### ROUND SEVEN

- 25 Sally: It's been 48 seconds since the first shot was fired; this is getting too long to stay in the place so Sally and Harrison rush out the back without spending any more time searching. Sally tosses her pistol to a player saying that they might need it for the next couple days.  
 11 Harrison (28 hp): Leaves as well; they get out in under a minute and the first cop will probably show up about round 10 or so.

### PLAYER SIDE OF THE FIGHT (EL 2)

The small fire elemental punches through the interstice and randomly chooses targets to attack. This might put the players on the same side as the thugs, for a moment. But the thugs believe in crowd control; they don't want anyone else getting the loot. They tell the players to scam; if the players fail to do so they use their knives. At the beginning Tead looks like he's doing okay so morale is high; after that their morale will depend on how well they're doing in the fight north of the couch. They tell Torzano to scam as well and he dithers for a bit. His only reason for being here died; he has no love for Tead and his lackies and so won't move to help them at all. Thus, the only natural choice is to simply be done with this whole thing. The one thing that will keep him around is if someone or some thing is attacking a woman (PC or NPC); Torzano will pick up a chair and club the elemental if that's the source, or just use some of his old boxing skills on one of the thugs. After the girl is clear Torzano zips out the front entrance. He likewise helps out a small character such as a halfling because he'll think they're a child. He won't stay around to chit-chat with any players; he's got a darker road to follow. As he's running away he gets picked up by the police because the police have a long and illustrious history of picking up Torzano; he's just the kind of guy that if you see walking away from the scene of a crime you feel the necessity to question.

The furnishings make fine clubs for this encounter. Just treat them as 1d6, 20/x2 simple weapons. They ought to take a penalty on attacks but chalk the lack of that up to the effects of the Forge and let the players go wild.

The players may very well waste an attack on the Intruder; so it goes. However, they may decide to go after Tead. This definitely brings the thugs down on them. What they do to Tead probably won't impact the flow of events too much between Harrison and the Intruder but, given how long Tead lasted they may very well score the telling blow against him. Regardless, they should take care of things near them first.

The other NPCs scatter as soon as possible; assume they all fail their saves (except the construction worker) in the first round and take off out the front during the second round (if possible). The owner

goes out through the kitchen.

**Tead Gang Members (2):** CR 1/2; Size M; HD 1d10; hp 7, 6; Mas 12; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; Def 12 (12 Touch); BAB +0; Melee Fist +3 (1d6+2 NL), or Melee Knife +2 (1d4+2, 19+/ $\times$ 2); AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Drive +5, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (street-wise) +4; Brawl, Confident, Improved Initiative.

**Small fire elemental:** CR 1; Size S; HD 2d8; hp 9; Init +5; Spd 50 ft.; Def 15 (12 Touch); BAB +3; Melee Slam +3 (1d4 and 1d4 fire); SA Burn; SQ Elemental, fire subtype; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +4, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Listen +5, Spot +5; Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse.

### AFTERMATH

How the players leave the scene matters. If they go out the front they see a crowd of people watching them. The construction worker, NYU student, and Romeo waits out here looking dazed. If it's round 9 or later a policeman stands outside talking into a radio and trying to keep the crowd in check. Shortly thereafter either an ambulance shows up or a news van; roll dice if you want to see who makes it to the scene first.

Going out the back requires going through the kitchen (the restroom only has a tiny window, though a halfling might make it through). This takes the character to an alley and from there she can find a nice back route out of the area. The main issue if the players do this comes from patrolling police cars which are all over the place. The patrol cars stop anyone running away from the area, carrying weird looking stuff, covered in blood, or otherwise unusual. A character can avoid these cars and make it outside the patrolled area completely by hiding on her way out; this requires one simple Hide check (DC 10). If the character's not suspicious looking, she shouldn't try to hide since doing so is one of the best ways to look suspicious; however, the players might not realize this. Naturally, invisible characters can do pretty much whatever they want.

### FROM HERE

Likely follow ups to this are the **Media Coverage**, **Police Interview**, and **Hospital** events; perhaps all three. Players who avoid the front exit avoid those events but they might seek them out independently. The other event that all players will likely end up at is the **Quiet Time** event.

## STANDARD AND OFF-SCREEN EVENTS

### ST) MEDIA COVERAGE (TRAP CR 2)

*The players face the toughest challenge of them all.*

Players are interviewed by television if they want. If so, they are challenged by such questions as "How did you feel?", "Do you think it involved drugs?", and the ever-popular "Were you frightened?" But before they arrive at this scintillating discussion the media asks some basic stuff, like their name and what they do. In fact, the reporter is so good at this you might even request a Will save (DC 13) to have the player rein in his tongue before he gets himself in trouble. The biggest danger here is that this splashes the players

across millions of television screens and may give Hausmann a name, face, and work address. Getting on television (think of the fame!) without revealing any vital information counts as defeating the trap.

### S2) POLICE INTERVIEW

*The police just want the facts.*

You could play this as the police thinking the players are somehow involved in the whole mess and give them a real hassle but, unless one of the characters has a criminal background, the police should be pleasant. They want eyewitness accounts, as many as possible, to help get a clear picture of what happened. They are especially curious in this case because the stories they hear are all so off the wall. They might go the standard mass-hallucination route; perhaps it was brought on by hallucinogenic drugs somehow getting dispersed in the air.

The police interview the players in one of those featureless interview rooms you see in cop shows all the time. Barren gray walls; a long, rectangular table made of metal, bolted to the floor and painted in that drab gray that's so common in the government it must be surplus battleship paint from World War II; a mirror on the wall (2-way of course); and a couple plain wooden chairs.

**Questions:** The police want to know the following; after they get this information they let the character go. 1) Name, address, and phone number. They want to see some identification and ask where the character works, what they do and so on. 2) A description of the events from the character's perspective; they want detail. Since they've likely done some of these interviews before they have some knowledge of the events and ask some pointed questions as follows. 3) Descriptions of Hausmann, the Asians, the thugs. They want to know how many, what they looked like, what they wore, what they carried, and so on. Since it's unlikely that you have provided that much detail allow the players to make it up if they like or simply say something like "you give them a description." They want to know about any names the characters overheard. 4) They're vitally interested in the case: what was in it, was there anything special about the case (it looked like a standard brown briefcase, probably leather covering, had those dial locks you see on such things), and, very important, did they see what happened to the case. 4) Description of the fight and some of the funky abilities people demonstrated. 5) Where did everyone go? In particular where did the Asians go?

**Questions for Second World Natives:** Obviously, characters from the Second World have it more complicated. They might know enough about the First World to pass off as people dressed up for a Renaissance Faire. If they tell the truth the police think they're nuts and want to put them in protective custody. However, Stiles will intervene. She first talks to one of the other characters if any came in and asks if they'd like to look out for the wanderers. She suggests that this might be beneficial to them in the future. Then she goes into the interrogation room and requests a private talk with the Second World character. She asks where the character came from, what the place was like, how they got into the coffee shop, and so on. She expects reticence and tries to re-assure the character but not press too hard for answers. She knows the character will disappear shortly and mainly wants to expand her knowledge of the strange world so close to her own.

Agent Stiles observes the interviews from behind the two-way mirror. If one of the players sticks to their story and describes events with clarity, Stiles may come around to question the player in person. Alternately, if a player makes too big a deal about the two-way mirror, talking to it all the time for instance, then Stiles might come around to speak in person. If she feels good about the character and wants to reveal a bit extra she shoos the police out, switches on a device in her pocket that blocks conventional recording machines, and speaks frankly with the player.

### S3) HOSPITAL

*The players go in for a checkup and find out something new has been added.*

Most normal people go to a hospital after something even drastically less significant than this. Ambulances swarm across the coffee shop after the break-out. Paramedics check the players on-site and recommend a ride to the hospital for a more thorough examination. They're concerned with a few possibilities: radiation damage, chemical warfare, and biological contaminants. The paramedics might even mention this to players reluctant to take a trip to the hospital. At the hospital the players should receive a clean bill of health other than any injuries sustained in the actual fight. Of interest is the fact that each of the people at the coffee shop has a pale white scar, almost like a rune or tattoo, carved somewhere into their body. The location appears to be random and the precise shape of the scar is irregular (as if hand written) but all scars appear to be the same symbol or character. No one at the hospital recognizes the character or even the language (though it looks somewhat like Chinese calligraphy).

### S4) INTERVIEW WITH AGENT STILES

*Agent Stiles has some clues for the players.*

Stiles doesn't know everything; but she does know that people who've had this kind of experience end up missing and that there are things in this world that science doesn't do such a good job of explaining. She tells the characters point blank that they will likely disappear in a few days, at most a week. She's not sure what happens to them but she doesn't think they die since she's seen the vanished occasionally re-appear, usually around bad situations like the one the players were just in. This is all the information she feels comfortable releasing; she knows that there's some kind of other world, perhaps many of them, and that sometimes things from those worlds come here. However, she does work for the government and takes her job, and the secrecy of the information she guards, seriously. She can get around that by hooking the First World characters up with the Second World characters. That satisfies her conscience because she's not divulging secret information and yet she manages to provide the players with as much as she could to help them survive whatever experiences they might face.

### S5) NEWS AT TEN

*The media grabs hold like a rabid pit bull and won't let go.*

The late evening news reports the breakout as a possible drug deal that evolved into a gun battle. The reporters indicate that the gunfire might have hit a gas line in the shop, causing a fire. Any interviews the reporters got are also aired and the anchors and reporters banter about possible causes for the strange reports from the victims. The

anchor might even mention something like this: “Well, from my time as a war correspondent during the Gulf War I can tell you that the stress of a life or death situation can cause one’s mind to invent all kinds of things. It was called Gulf War syndrome. Psychologists refer to the more general version of it as post-traumatic stress.” He then looks gravely at the camera.

### S6) CORDOVA TALKS TO THE CHENS

*Mikhail makes contact with the Chens.*

After seeing what happened at the It’s a Small World coffee shop Cordova realizes that the meet already happened and that there’s a decent chance the Chens already have the case. This irritates him but he figures he might be able to cut a deal; they’re both noble families after all. He contacts the Chens and arranges an interview for the afternoon at their First World New York offices. William Chen comes across for the talk and they’re both quite civil to each other. The Chen’s have no interest in antagonizing a powerful Buenos Aries family and vice versa; moreover, the personalities of the two families have a lot in common. William points out that they were happy to just get out without taking any serious losses other than the expense of First World travel. He brings Sally in to describe the scene and what happened; being the kind of person she is, she gives exacting details and Selina takes notes. Cordova is a man of class speaking to people of class so doesn’t bring in a *truth sigil* for this interview. William sees this as an excellent opportunity to expand their influence and thus talks about possible future dealings between the two families, trade opportunities and so forth. He spices the deal by placing some Chen First World New York resources at Cordova’s disposal but points out that, as far as the Chen family is concerned, the Hausmann incident is over. They won’t actively pursue any investigations themselves.

Cordova walks away with support, information, and confidence that the Chens don’t have the case. William walks away with a strong potential trade agreement.

### S7) KREBS INVESTIGATES THE CASE

*Krebs takes some time to look at his loot.*

After getting away from the coffee shop, Krebs drops the case off in a secure location and checks in with BlueCon. He tells them what happened, leaving out the bit about him taking the case. He could just turn it over and earn a couple kudos but he knows that the executives don’t like him that much and they’d try to take all the credit. With the case he might get enough leverage to finally pull some respect in the company, or strike out on his own. When he finally opens the case he’s pretty upset to see all the black gone. He tosses it around the room, complains bitterly to the heavens about the way fate dumps on him whenever it gets the chance and opens up some expensive wine to swill (he’s a weasel, but a well-paid one). After a while he notices the scorch mark in the leather and cuts it open. When he finds the *wire gate* he grumbles that finally he’s managed to catch a break, just once in his miserable life, and then tries to figure out what he wants to do with it. One thing he can do is hide it on his body quite easily (he’s not letting this get away from him). He slips it into a secret slot in his belt (DC 24 Search check to find). None of this secrecy matters since everyone he has reason to fear either already knows about the gate and can beat the information out of him or can simply tell when he’s hiding

something. He spends the next couple days doing research around town at libraries and occult shops until someone finally takes the gate away from him.

### S8) HAUSMANN WAKES UP

*Hausmann leaves the hospital and finds Torzano.*

After being delivered to the coroner Hausmann gets up and leaves. He doesn’t go out of his way to kill anyone but may do so in order to get some clothes.

He tracks down Torzano by going to the pool hall old Hausmann visited the previous evening and asking some questions. Torzano stopped by the place for a strongly needed drink after the police released him late last night. Hausmann gets Torzano’s address from some of the lowlife then moves on to Torzano’s apartment. Once there, he gets Torzano to show him around town and link him up with some people who can get business taken care of. This is all agreed to by about 4 AM.

### S9) MORNING PAPERS

*The papers fill in a few more details but who reads them anymore?*

The morning papers give a recap of the information the players already know, but in much greater detail. Some of the details include: a list of all deaths; names and a brief history of those involved (assuming the papers can get this info); they mention that “A group of three persons of Asian descent were involved in the encounter and they have since disappeared;” some conjecture as to cause.

### S10) DEVELOPING STORY

*Newsradio is the key to staying on top of things in the First World.*

Radio and television report that the corpse of Raphael Hausmann disappeared from the coroner’s office; no one was seriously injured though the coroner working the case was knocked unconscious. They start broadcasting the Hausmann story late in the morning the day after the coffee shop fight.

The news has constant updates on major events; anytime an off-screen event leads to “Developing Story” that means the aftermath of the event will make the news. The details may be sparse or in-depth based on the particulars of the story.

### S11) HAUSMANN MEETS THE MOB

*Hausmann hires some thugs.*

Hausmann lets Torzano sleep until morning. During this time he watches the news, gets a paper, and looks up names in the phone book. If Torzano had a computer with an internet connection Hausmann would be pleased but Paul can’t afford that. From the evening news Hausmann gets the names of the four NPCs, Alyssa Hernandez, Devon Walsh, Harold Blatz, and Mike Spielen. He then checks the phone book and gets the phone number of all but Hernandez (who has an unlisted number). He also gets the names players provided to the media and looks them up in the book. He’s making a list of every person in the coffee shop and, with the info he got from Torzano and the info he can suck out of the old Hausmann, he’ll possess a complete set of descriptions and list of people without names; with the information from the television that list is filling in.

Hausmann lacks the kind of magical influence powers available to wizards and traditional demons. In fact, he's something of a combat monster (though an odd one). He also lacks any money or influence at the moment. This means that his only means of coercion is threat, which is a pretty bad means of coercion, especially with guys who are used to risking death. Certainly Hausmann would be terrifying to mundane gangsters; watching another thug shatter as if frozen and hit with a sledge hammer and seeing how ineffective their bullets were would leave them quaking. But with absolute helplessness comes resignation; many of these people have had guns pointed at their head and so they've gotten used to the threat of death, even torture.

Hausmann does have one ability that, with the right implementation, makes him very convincing. He's got the people in a room; they cannot leave without dying. He's already demonstrated his powers so they think he's the devil or something close to it. Now he starts to talk; he asks the previous boss (Max Glopov) minor little questions like where does he live and so on. At first Max answers, sometimes with a lie. When he lies Hausmann knows; that's one of his powers. So he tells Glopov about it.

Now comes the tricky part. Hausmann needs to get Glopov to agree to work for him and Hausmann needs to be able to trust that Glopov will follow through. Glopov can't just say he'll go along because Hausmann will know if he's lying, and shatter one of Glopov's fingers to show he's serious. Glopov might give up then and go silent, just waiting for his inevitable death. So Hausmann starts asking other questions; how does Glopov feel about his wife, his mistress, his kids, which kid, his mother. Glopov stays dead silent in all this but Hausmann can see right through him and with Sense Motive checks can find out which of the names strikes a nerve and which of the names don't matter much (wife and mistress not so big a deal but he's got one daughter who ice-skates well and he keeps her away from all his sordid business). Now Hausmann has **leverage** and this whole thing is all about leverage. Now Glopov is convinced; he's willing to do anything for Hausmann to protect his daughter and he tells Hausmann this and he's as honest as possible about it and Hausmann knows that Glopov is being as honest as possible about it. But, little notions of taking those he cares about and sending them away flash in and out of Glopov's mind; he can't help himself; he always looks for the angle and the easy way out. So Hausmann points out these glimmers of treachery and says that the girl might have to die anyway. Now Glopov wants more than anything to truly **feel** loyal to Hausmann; to be the kind of person Hausmann can trust. But Glopov has no control over the kind of person he is (at least not on short notice), only over the decisions he makes. No matter how committed he is to serving Hausmann well in the office, both he and Hausmann know that when he's on his own there's a good chance he'll rabbit; and that dooms him.

Hausmann discusses all this out loud in the room so that everyone can hear. He then sighs and kills Glopov, wondering for a moment whether he has some kind of commitment to kill the girl since, technically the threats relied on that commitment. He's too busy though so he goes to the next in command, Gregor Schinsky, and does a brief interview. Fortunately for Schinsky he's used to blind obedience, enjoys violence, and Hausmann can see all this. He's got his gang and they're completely terrified of him. These are hard men and some of them think they might be getting in on the ground floor of something really big.

In the morning Torzano takes him around to various small criminal groups; they need to check out several people since Hausmann wants hard men for this; men without a conscience. Eventually they find a group that fits the purpose and Hausmann convinces the new boss (Gregor Schinsky) to work for him. Gregor has 5 additional men that he feels are capable of this sort of messy work. Hausmann breaks them up into six teams of individuals, gives each a cell-phone (after some shopping). Hausmann keeps in contact with these people over cell phones; he knows that he'll shunt fairly soon and he'll try to bring along his lackeys so he's not concerned about the police listening in on his conversations (which is unlikely anyway). Before they leave, Hausmann casts *endurance* on them several times until he gets a result he likes; he keeps this up constantly for the thugs.

## ST 2) ~~KNOWING THE NAMES~~

*Antagonists need to learn the names of those involved.*

Both Hausmann and Cordova need to know the names or locations of the people from the coffee shop to proceed. This significant off-screen event is required for other, on screen, events to follow. The event map includes a list of NPC names with checkboxes for both Cordova and Hausmann. When you check the box next to a name then Hausmann or Cordova knows it and can act on that knowledge. Typically, once one of these people knows a name they can find a home address quickly (perhaps through as simple a method as looking in the phone book, or by using police or other contacts).

Put the names of the player characters in the blank lines of the table; check these off accordingly whenever Hausmann or Cordova discovers a player character name.

Once a name has been checked for Cordova he eventually gets around to talking to that person. He starts the scenario already knowing about the Chens and can get a few more names from them possibly.

Once a name has been checked off for Hausmann he sends a two-man thug team to take them out.

Some names are easy to find; Spielen is obvious since he's the proprietor of the store. The no-write-up NPCs talk to the media so their names go public at about 10 PM. Both Cordova and Hausmann can get names in other ways. If they're missing names from the list they interrogate people at the coffee shop and ask them the names of the other customers. Spielen will be able to give some information regarding regular customers, occasionally first names, or the place where they work, or the names of people they've come into the coffee shop with. The hospital, ambulance teams, and police also have lists of names. Cordova can get much of this information from dealing with the Chens. Hausmann resorts to the torture and see if they're telling the truth method but Torzano points out that Schinsky could probably get some of that information through the grapevine. If you need to resort to these other methods add a couple off-screen events to account for contacting or interrogating the police/hospital. If Hausmann uses his favorite method these off-screen events should probably result in an on-screen news report about hospital/ambulance workers related to the incident being killed.

SI 3) KILL THE NPCs

*Hausmann's mob kills one or more NPCs.*

After getting the names one of the mobsters tracks the NPC to his residence and simply shoots him a couple times; if the residence is secured they wait until the NPC comes out, then kills him in the street. Blatz and Spielen can be killed easily since they live in unsecured buildings; that's maybe two hours each. Walsh takes a while to track down (2d6 hours) but can easily be shot on his way to the subway.

Hernandez lives in campus housing, a large secure apartment complex near NYU. The man assigned to her waits for a while to see if she comes out then attempts to sneak in during the night when he realizes she might just hole up for a while. Sneaking in isn't too difficult, requiring a Hide check (DC 12) to get past security. If he gets caught he claims that he's lost. If he gets through he heads up to her apartment and simply knocks on the door; she or her roommate answers and he kills them both. By this time the other killings might have surfaced in which case she is already under police protection. If so he has to call in Hausmann for assistance.

Hausmann arrives with another backup mobster, summons an ethereal filcher, and has it pop into the room to remove stuff (like guns, phones, and radios). Then he shatters the lock and lets the thugs blow everyone away. The killings make big news after this and the police move those in protective custody to hidden locations.

Hausmann's team leaves the celebrity alone; that's just too much security for his nascent organization and he's unwilling to risk his own life when he knows he'll be getting more powerful in the near future.

SI 4) CORDOVA LOOKS FOR SOME ANSWERS

*Cordova tracks down the witnesses.*

Between the three of them (especially a Feral Warden and Gate Warden) they make an excellent tracking team. Cordova holds off on using Lorqua's *instinctual tracking* unless it seems important or he has a pretty good idea of who has the case. In particular, he uses *instinctual tracking* on Hausmann after he discovers the body has gone missing and on Krebs after he figures that only the bystander sitting closest to the case is completely unaccounted for (or if he gets even better info from one of the witnesses). The players had a very different angle on the fight than Sally so Cordova likely goes to them early if he's got any names. They might even get a visit from him early Friday morning, prior to the killings or Hausmann's disappearance. He reserves the third *instinctual tracking* use for whatever you think best as a gamemaster; you could have him use it on the players if you need it for the encounter.

SI 5) DESTROY IT'S A SMALL WORLD

*Hausmann's mob takes down the coffee shop.*

Hausmann tasks two men to this, Schinsky and one other. Schinsky grabs some more mundane hoodlums and gets a big truck and a bunch of gasoline. Late at night they park the truck in front of the coffee shop (to block the view of it); by Friday night the place only has a police line to protect it. They then take everything they can from inside and load it in the truck. After they're done Schinsky pours gasoline over the entire place and sets the fire. They then go

out of town with the goods, burn them as well, and toss any metal parts into a quarry filled with water. This likely occurs Friday night (throughout the night) and Shinsky's team doesn't recover until Saturday afternoon. News of the fire hits the media in the morning.

SI 6) CORDOVA INTERVIEWS

*Cordova interviews the people from It's a Small World.*

Cordova goes through the list of people from the coffee shop and interviews each one. Unlike Hausmann Cordova has no desire to kill anyone (other than Hausmann) and will be pleasant if he thinks the person isn't hiding anything important to him. He also understands (after the murders) that people might feel reticent to meet anyone new so he tries to set them at ease and isn't upset if they rabbit on him.

When he talks to the players he tries to set them at ease (he's got a scary looking group though). He just wants information and he's willing to give up some of his own to get it. He won't say anything about the case other than that it belongs to him and that no one steals from the Cordovas. However, he is frank about the First/Second World cosmology, magic, wardens, and anything else salient to the players. He likely points out that the First World is more dangerous; it's easier to die here than in the Second World. He's the best source of big picture information the players get. In return for this he has a little map of the coffee shop (use the tactical map earlier) and asks the players to help him fill it out and give descriptions of who was there and what they did. If any of the players actually saw Krebs grab the case and vanish, Cordova will be ecstatic and tell them everything they want to know. He can even give them a small reward, perhaps 3 potions of *cure light wounds* with a warning to wait until they're in the Second World to use them.

SI 7) TRACK THE PLAYERS (EL .5)

*Mobsters are on the player's trail.*

Once Hausmann has the players' names he sends a man to take them down. This typically begins with the thug going to the character's residence and scoping the place out. If one or more players are inside, the thug makes a call to inform Hausmann, then locks and loads and walks up to the door. He does the old knock then shoot whoever answers trick. The mobster is a generic First World thug with an automatic pistol (see the NPC section for details).

If the players aren't at their home the mobster knocks on a couple doors and asks the neighbors if they've seen the characters around or where they might have went. He passes himself off as a friend of the character and mentions that they had plans for lunch (or whatever meal is appropriate for the time of day). At first this method works fine but after the media announces the murders the mobsters need to be more subtle.

If the murders have made it to television the neighbors are uncooperative and the players are likely cautious. Assuming Hausmann has been successful so far at taking out the NPCs he can devote some more time to the players.

**Hausmann's Generic Thug (1):** CR 1/2; Size M; HD 1d10+1; hp 7 [9]; Mas 12 [16]; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; Def 11 (11 Touch); BAB +0; Melee Fist +3 (1d6+2 NL), Melee Knife +2 (1d4+2, 19+/ $\times$ 2), or Colt M1911 +0 (2d6, PEN 3); AL NE; SV Fort +2 [+4], Ref +0, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 11, Con 12 [16], Int 10, Wis

10, Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Drive +4, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (street-wise) +4; Brawl, Improved Initiative, Personal Firearms Proficiency.

### ST8) HAUSMANN KILLS GLOPOV'S DAUGHTER

*Worried about philosophy Hausmann kills the girl.*

Earlier Hausmann thought that it would just be a waste of time to kill the girl but the issue keeps nagging at him. After all, had Glopov been able to commit fully to serving Hausmann he'd still be alive but they both knew that Glopov wouldn't. Perhaps Hausmann hadn't been convincing enough; perhaps if he killed the girl now he could guarantee that he was committed in the way that Glopov wasn't, or perhaps this would just establish a habit in himself that would make him appear more convincing in the future. Regardless, the cost to him for this peace of mind is just one small murder so he goes ahead and does the deed. This will make the papers since he kills the girl gangland style, with a couple bullets.

He frequently discusses this out loud with Torzano who's appalled at what he's gotten into. But what can he do? He's let the devil into his house and now he has to live with the consequences; he's damned no matter what. He talks to Hausmann, typically trying to argue him out of these things and mentions stuff like "no backwards causation," decisions now don't affect the past, and Hausmann likely doesn't need to murder anyone else to convince people he's bad news. Up until this point Hausmann has been contemplating when he wants to off Torzano but having a sharp person to argue with fascinates him to no end so he decides that Torzano might have to stay around. He's also amazed that Torzano doesn't realize that he's a sharp person; but Hausmann doesn't let Torzano know that, at least not yet.

This might happen later Friday or, more likely, Saturday, when she's at skating practice.

### ST9) CORDOVA HUNTS KREBS

*Cordova tracks the mysterious guy using Instinctual Tracking.*

Once Cordova puts the picture together he notices that the only missing piece is the guy in the chair next to the deal. To him that's like how a 50 foot long dead-end hallway with no doors appears to a bunch of players in a dungeon. He starts at It's a Small World and gets Garcia on the job. If it's early enough the chair is still there and his Chen contacts get him past the police and fire department lines.

The *instinctual tracking* check has a base DC 17, raised to 19 because his aura is faint. Roll this check when the event occurs to make each playing of the scenario a bit different. Cordova knows that he needs to get to the tracking start point within 24 hours so if it's already late Friday he has to try some other methods, typically just asking around town (the Chens for instance) with a description of Krebs. A strong enough description gets info from the Chens that Krebs works for the Blue Conglomerate. Cordova then goes there to ask questions. From BlueCon he can pick up a more recent trail since Krebs checks in regularly.

Once Cordova finds Krebs, Krebs coughs up the case and the *wire gate* right away. Cordova also asks if anyone else has been around but it's unlikely Hausmann got there before them so that won't reveal any clues. Unfortunately for Cordova, he sticks around to

take out Hausmann.

### S20) PLAYERS KNOCKED OFF A THUG

*The players managed to ice a thug.*

If the players ice the guy or guys coming after them they get a bucket load of clues. The thug carries his weapon, cell phone, house keys (people don't drive in New York), and wallet. Hausmann has told these guys not to worry about the police; as long as they can avoid getting picked up in the next seven days they'll be clear (and in the Second World). Thus, they're sloppy.

The cell-phone: The thugs have all the numbers of the other cell phones programmed in along with names; most of them are stolid, eastern European thug names, but Hausmann's name is actually on the list. If the players decide to call one of the other thugs or Schinsky they simply get some profanity and a hang up. If they call Hausmann refer to the **Talking to Hausmann** event (pg. 17).

The players can use this information to track down the thugs in their homes. If they track down Hausmann they're in real danger; he wants to avoid people who can bypass the Yasfati sigil but if pressed fights it out; in which case the players will die. Have him talk for a bit then try to escape, or shatter one player then have Hausmann try to escape. Remember that the players can get lucky against him unlike anyone else.

Hausmann should be difficult to track since he's got so much to do. However, if the players ask around a bit near the thug's house, they can discover that he hangs out at a local pool hall with his friends and they can get some descriptions. His neighbors (mostly working class families) don't like him much so they are receptive to players who seem to be out to teach him and his friends a lesson and less receptive to players who pass themselves off as pals. If the players don't dress like thugs the neighbors start out with a good reaction to them.

### S21) POOL HALL (ELI)

*The players set up an ambush.*

The players can wait by the pool hall, either inside or outside, for some of the other thugs to show up. A pair of thugs show up eventually to down a couple beers after a hard day of murder. It's up to the players what they want to do with this; the pool hall itself only has a bartender on site. The pool hall is a basement affair; a map's provided on page 35.

**Hausmann's Generic Thugs (2):** CR 1/2; Size M; HD 1d10+1; hp 8, 5 [10, 7]; Mas 12 [16]; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; Def 11 (11 Touch); BAB +0; Melee Fist +3 (1d6+2 NL), Melee Knife +2 (1d4+2, 19+/x2), or Colt M1911 +0 (2d6, PEN 3); AL NE; SV Fort +2 [+4], Ref +0, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 11, Con 12 [16], Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Drive +4, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (street-wise) +4; Brawl, Improved Initiative, Personal Firearms Proficiency.

### S22) HAUSMANN HUNTS KREBS

*Hausmann goes after the man with the case.*

Hausmann made special eye contact with Krebs. This gives him a link and the link gives him a target. However, he lacks any real ability to find someone in a city of eight million people. He knows



about the Blue Conglomerate connection (via the eye contact) and heads to their offices to ask a few questions. He doesn't go overboard here but can manage to get a current address from BlueCon headquarters by talking to some people, sneaking around, and using the ever-convenient ethereal filcher. Hausmann has a lot to do so this won't happen until at least Saturday night.

After getting this information he goes to Krebs' hideout for an interview. If this occurs after Cordova got to him then Krebs won't have the case and Hausmann just asks about the Cordovas. He contemplates killing Krebs but the possibility of getting hurt bothers him so he slots that away for the future when he can get someone else to do the messy work.

If Krebs has the case Hausmann takes it and the *wire gate* then leaves the man alone. Krebs' natural cowardice prevents him from putting up a fight and thereby saves his life.

### S2/3) TALKING TO HAUSMANN (OR 2)

*The players reach out and touch Hausmann.*

Cocky players might give Hausmann a ring and talk to him for a bit. His powers don't work over the phone so they are safe. Alternately, they might talk to him during the brief time he spends in jail after the **Police Get a Cell Phone** event.

**Before the Call:** Make sure you ask the players where they are and what they're doing when they make the call; this puts them on guard and nervous but they certainly ought to be by now. Ask them to be detailed about this.

It can be difficult to run an interview with the devil. What does he have to say and why would he say it? Hausmann doesn't get much pleasure from gloating (though he doesn't mind it either). Instead he talks because he wants information that he can use to kill the players. Here is a list of his motives and what he's willing to offer.

### MOTIVES

**Listen for Background Noise:** Hausmann's skilled at listening. He tries to keep the conversation going and listens for clues from background sounds; if the caller is in a car Hausmann might hear mechanical noise, in a public place he could hear background conversations, and so on. Give him one Listen check (DC 20 for moderate sounds, DC 15 for loud sounds like public announcements, DC 25 for quiet background noise, and DC 30 for other players whispering to each other near the phone) to see if he picks up any clues. He also listens to see if the signal fades in and out; that indicates that the players are traveling.

**Get miscellaneous clues:** The caller likely lies about everything here. So does Hausmann. But the caller probably won't hide his accent or manner of speech. Hausmann might use technical language and abbreviations when talking to gauge if the character has a technical background.

Hausmann fishes and says that he's going to kill all X of them where X is simply the number of people he's missing off his list, not including Krebs. If the player pauses Hausmann suspects that he guessed wrong; if the player reacts, Hausmann assumes he guessed right and now operates as if the remaining people are operating as a team.

That the players called him at all indicates they're dangerous and too heroic. He might ask something as simple as how they expect

to kill him (if the player says with a sword Hausmann has gotten another clue).

### INFO FOR SALE

Hausmann is willing to talk about pretty much everything he's done up until the interview, even describe it in great and gory detail.

### INFO NOT FOR SALE

He says nothing about himself or what he is. He does not talk about his abilities though the caller may be able to figure a lot of that out from the description of what he's done.

He does not discuss what's special about the briefcase other than that it belongs to him.

### RESULTS

Most of the information Hausmann gets this way probably won't matter much in the grand scheme of things but he likes to play these kinds of detective games. It keeps him sharp and may turn out useful. He thinks that the information he sacrifices isn't important.

### S2/4) CORDOVA HUNTS HAUSMANN

*Cordova plans to exact a toll on his wayward employee.*

It's a dice roll if this comes first or the Krebs tracking comes first; if Cordova has talked to the players and found out about the mysterious guy near the transaction then he goes after Krebs right away. Otherwise he suspects that Hausmann has an inside line and goes after him. He starts at the coroner's office, getting any info along the way, then activates Lorqua's *instinctual tracking*. If he's got a Hausmann sighting from later on he starts there instead, trying to start the tracking from as close as possible.

The base difficulty for the *instinctual tracking* check is DC 24 but Garcia has a personal connection (blood sample provided by the Cordovas) and has met him quite frequently, taking the difficulty down to 14. Being a Nikdaw Oar now he counts as having a moderate aura strength. Since Garcia has a +14 bonus this is enough for an automatic success. If you don't use automatic successes for these, roll a d20 to see if he scores a 1. This is easier than they thought so Cordova might be wary but chalks it up to the effects of the Forge. They're in for a real surprise when they find him.

Hausmann going to prison might also trigger this event. His incarceration and subsequent escape gives Cordova an excellent start point for the tracking.

When they get to Hausmann he sits down and talks with them, telling his thugs to lay back. Cordova's team is fully loaded for battle, just to be safe. Hausmann asks Cordova how they found him and Cordova points to Garcia. That's enough to get some people dead since Hausmann could really use Garcia's talents. A fight ensues with Hausmann trying to kill Cordova first then chase down Garcia and capture him.

**The Fight:** Selina lays in with magic, Hausmann's thugs rabbit (at his command), and Mikhail and Garcia lay in with melee. Even in the First World they can't do enough to affect him through the Yasfati sigil. So he just shatters pieces of Cordova and attempts a few stunning strikes on the others. While Hausmann is incredibly dangerous and almost immune to damage he doesn't dish out damage that quickly. For instance, even if he hits with every attack (not

too difficult against a fighter since Hausmann does touch attacks) he only averages 26 points of damage per round; remember that everyone gets one point of hardness against him when he uses the World like Shattered Glass ability. Cordova can withstand this for perhaps five rounds and somewhere along the line he'll figure out that leaving might be a good idea. Cordova's team tries out some various tactics then decides to retreat when nothing works; by this time Cordova's armor and shield have been destroyed. They scatter for the car but Hausmann is fast and incredibly mobile. All Hausmann cares about is Lorqua so he target's Lorqua, first causing regular damage and taking out Lorqua's chain shirt then turning off the World like Shattered Glass and switching to subdual damage. Cordova won't let his man die like this so he returns and orders Selina to go on without him. She has loyalty trouble too, especially since she thinks Cordova is doomed.

Torzano comes down to watch and suggests to everyone that Hausmann just wants to use Lorqua's abilities for a little while; they have to leave soon anyway. He points out to Hausmann that if he kills Cordova, Lorqua probably won't cooperate and he points out to Lorqua that probably the best way to save Cordova's life, plus his own and Selina's, is to simply work for Hausmann until the shunt. Hausmann doesn't listen to emotion but he certainly listens to practicality so he agrees to go along with this if Lorqua buys in; Lorqua agrees and Cordova grumbles but acquiesces, pointing out that he'll hunt Hausmann to the ends of the earth if Lorqua dies.

If the ownership of the wire gate is in question they also agree (after some fierce negotiation) that whoever started the scene with it gets to keep it.

### S25) POLICE GET A CELL PHONE (CR 2)

*The players give the police one of the Hausmann mob's cell phones.*

Upstanding citizen players might turn the phone over to the police; this is a very sharp move (give out a Challenge Rating 2 experience award for it). This gives the police names and cell phone numbers which they promptly use by tapping all the lines; they get a court order so fast for this other cops in the department drip jealousy. Hausmann and the thugs aren't so sharp regarding the technology and its implications so it takes them a while to figure out that a missing thug plus a missing cell phone might mean their communications are unsecure in a way that's really dangerous. Hausmann sees the main danger as coming from the police collecting info to throw them in jail, which won't matter.

The cops certainly want Hausmann and his rampaging thugs pretty bad. We get fairly blasé in roleplaying games about massive carnage but just think about how much press a string of murders gets in the media and how much heat must fall down on the police to put a stop to this, then remember that this is New York, the worldwide capital of screaming media. The cops play it cool. They put a massive force on the mission, and task a couple teams to each individual cell-phone. They then locate and track their targets and attempt to hold off bringing any single man in until they've located and tracked all the phones; after that they swoop down on the entire gang at once. If one of the thugs is getting ready to kill someone they move in early.

### CELL PHONE TRACKING TECHNOLOGY

Cell phones, in order to receive calls, must "tell" their local network where they are. The phone then works off the local cell provider with the strongest signal strength. This means that somewhere in the network data structure there's a constant stream of information giving a general location of each active (that is, simply turned on) cell phone. As of now, this information is highly private and not generally available to the police; that doesn't mean it's not available to the super-secret organizations floating around most role-playing settings though. This could get a triangulation team in position near the target. Triangulation should be familiar to most fans of science-fiction, techno-thrillers, and spy stories. The simple idea is that if you have a device sending radio signals and three receiving devices capable of measuring time delays precisely, then you can get an accurate readout of the location of the device. You could do this with fewer devices if they had direction finding; or do it with one device that moved frequently so long as the target unit didn't move. This is essentially the way passive sonar works in submarines, but with radio signals instead of sound waves. What it all boils down to is that if the police want you bad enough, have the necessary resources, your cell-phone is turned on, and they know what cell-phone it is, then they can find you.

Schinsky has a 65% chance of dying in this since he ain't goin' to the gulag. The others have a 35% chance each of dying since some of them ain't goin' to the gulag either but most get scared pretty easy. Not a one of the thugs will escape. Torzano gives up immediately if caught (he's with Hausmann).

Hausmann is another story. While he could probably fight his way out of the mob of cops and SWAT team members this is the First World and the police might have people with really big guns, or there might be some people with special powers backing them up. Or the players might open up with M-16s (and get a critical hit or two). He goes along peacefully and just escapes from prison later by shattering his way out or summoning an ethereal filcher to open some doors for him.

The police, or, more specifically, Agent Stiles, lets the players come along for the crackdown if they wish. The police forces them to wear special response vests (see the d20 Modern rules or the Second World Sourcebook). They don't allow them to carry guns but the players can watch the events unfold. This puts an end to the Hausmann section of this scenario; he lives and he gets Torzano and any other thugs out of prison, then hits the road until they shunt.

### S26) HAUSMANN ESCAPES

*Hausmann busts out of the big house.*

If the police capture Hausmann they put him in jail along with anyone else they managed to pick up (likely Torzano). Jail doesn't hold Hausmann so well; he looks around a bit and summons an ethereal filcher to look for Torzano if he isn't nearby. Unless the other thugs are very close he won't bother with them and, in all likelihood, the group is pretty spread out. Hausmann then starts shattering his way out, finds Torzano, then takes him along on the way out the back wall.

S27) HAUSMANN WITH LORQUA

*Using Lorqua's Instinctual Tracking Hausmann hunts down another player.*

Hausmann likely has a number of good starting points and some personal items from the player's apartment. Choose a player randomly that Hausmann cannot find through other means then let Lorqua go to work. Lorqua makes the check with a +14 bonus against a difficulty class equal to the player's Hide bonus + 10 + 4 (for dim aura) + 0 (for physical connection) + 5 (for not having met the target) for a total of 19 + Hide bonus. Hausmann chooses someone with a background indicating a lack of stealth skills (or someone who demonstrated magical powers during the fight at the coffee shop). Likely difficulty class will be 21, not automatic but pretty good. If this technique works, Hausmann finds the player wherever he is, and sends in the remaining generic thugs to finish off the job (EL variable). If it doesn't work they have to hoof it and ask questions. Lorqua's mundane tracking skills may work okay here as well, but given that this occurs in a city, standard tracking isn't terribly effective.

Lorqua refuses to help kill anyone, "that wasn't part of the deal" he says and Hausmann's philosophical worry about past commitments holds him to his word here. In fact, Hausmann grows to take this quite seriously making him someone you can trust, after a sense, but not because he has anything resembling an ounce of honor in him.

If Hausmann has lost all his thugs to the police he scares up some weaker thugs (armed only with knives or clubs) and sends them in after the players.

S28) TALKING TO TORZANO (CR 1 OR 2)

*Either the players call Torzano or he calls them.*

When the players get the cell phone they see Torzano's name on the number list as well as the others. From the talk in the coffee shop they might guess that he's a decent person to question. If the players call Torzano reward them as for a challenge rating 2 encounter; if Torzano calls them reward as for a challenge rating one encounter.

More likely, Torzano calls the cell phone the players have after Hausmann acquires Lorqua. His conscience catches up to him eventually and figures he can save a few more lives by warning them to get out of town as far and as fast as possible. He wrestles with this since he possesses a healthy survival instinct but there's been a bit too much killing lately for his tastes so he makes the call. The cell phone actually reports that the call is from Torzano so the players have advanced warning. If they take the call Torzano warns them. If the players have questions he's willing to talk about everything he's witnessed so far (examine the off-screen events for details on this). If they try to talk him into breaking his connection with Hausmann, or accuse him, he says "look, it's a hard old world and someone has to look out for me; so far I've been the best at that and I'll continue to do so to the best of my ability." The players should be careful here because Torzano takes these kinds of criticisms hard, thinks that most other people have led pretty pampered lives, and that they don't really understand what it takes to survive on the streets; the last thing he'll do is accept moral advice from someone with a nice family, college education, and comfortable background. He's a

gold-mine of information though since he can tell the players almost everything that's been going on in the background.

This scene can flesh out the story for the players; a lot happens behind the scenes here and the players only get to observe the surface effects. With this scene they discover just how much has been happening around them and may come to realize exactly how dynamic the situation really is. This also allows you to give them a better idea of what Hausmann is like. In a film or book we get to see the antagonist and what he does; we get a feel for the kind of evil he represents. However, in a roleplaying game you can't transmit this information very well while retaining the sense of immersion, the sense of players knowing no more than what their characters know. Thus it's difficult to give a villain any depth or make him something more than just a monster you fight for several rounds. Second-hand information like that provided by Torzano can bypass this problem.

If Torzano has been captured by the police the players could also talk to him in jail. He provides information similar to the above. Hausmann busts him free shortly so the players need to move fast if they want a captive audience.

If Torzano calls the players, Hausmann notices that he was up to something. After a bit he asks Torzano for his phone and checks the call log; since this occurs well after Torzano has proved his usefulness Hausmann just looks calmly at Torzano and mentions that parts of a person could get broken this way. Hausmann's not terribly concerned at any rate; he's got Lorqua.

S29) QUIET SHUNT

*The players move across the divide during some quiet time.*

If the players have defeated all the bad guys and managed to find someplace safe to go they shunt the old-fashioned way, perhaps while driving through a tunnel, or perhaps when they wake up one morning. This occurs within a week of the incident at the coffee shop. If the players have accomplished a lot let them wrap things up in the First World then shunt them when they start spinning their wheels. The First World recognizes this too.

S30) FINAL FIGHT AND THE SHUNT (EL 3)

*Hausmann catches up with the players and tries to kill them before they shunt.*

This likely follows the **Hausmann with Lorqua** off-screen event and Hausmann may or may not have a decent set of thugs with which to prosecute the attack. What he likely does is send the thugs in to do some damage then summon an ethereal filcher to deposit a firebomb in the room with the players.

If he uses the mobsters he sends in all the generic thugs he has left. If he uses some scared up guys he has three generic thugs armed with knives to send after the players (EL 3 roughly since the players likely have some firearms by now and the thugs don't). The firebomb is something of a plot device, it does 3d6 fire damage (Reflex save against DC 11 for half) to everyone in the room but doesn't explode right away; drop it after there's one thug left then have it explode two rounds later. The players shouldn't go out the front since that's where Hausmann is and he has some summoned scorpions meandering around outside.

The bathroom window is too small to escape through but that won't matter. You see, the First World knows when to provide a shunt such that the people will want to use it; it's almost sentient in this. The door to the bathroom (or some other room or closet depending on where the players are) swings open to reveal the Second World. The precise scene they see through the door depends on what happens to be across the divide, likely forest if they've left town or Second World New York if they've remained in the city. Once they step through they're free of Hausmann and First World dangers for a time.

“As you step through the door to this strange, new world you catch, out of the corner of your eye, a glimmer of deep darkness and chaos. Then the last character moves through the door, the door swings shut, and the bomb explodes.”

**Gregor Schinsky:** CR 2; Size M; HD 3d10+3; hp 24 [30]; Mas 12 [16]; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; Def 13 (13 Touch); BAB +2; Melee Fist +5 (1d6+2 NL), Melee Knife +4 (1d4+2, 19+/ $\times$ 2), or Colt Python +3 (2d6, PEN 3); AL NE; SV Fort +3 [+5], Ref +2, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12 [16], Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 9.

**Skills and Feats:** Drive +8, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (street-wise) +7; Brawl, Improved Initiative, Personal Firearms Proficiency, **Point Blank Shot**.

**Hausmann's Generic Thugs (3):** CR 1/2; Size M; HD 1d10+1; hp 8, 7, 5 [10, 9, 7]; Mas 12 [16]; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; Def 11 (11 Touch); BAB +0; Melee Fist +3 (1d6+2 NL), Melee Knife +2 (1d4+2, 19+/ $\times$ 2), or Colt M1911 +0 (2d6, PEN 3); AL NE; SV Fort +2 [+4], Ref +0, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 11, Con 12 [16], Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Drive +4, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (street-wise) +4; Brawl, Improved Initiative, Personal Firearms Proficiency.

**Large monstrous scorpions (2):** CR 2; Size L; HD 4d8+8; hp 22, 18; Mas 19; Init +0; Spd 50 ft.; AC 14 (9 Touch); BAB +2; Melee Claws +5/+5 (1d6 + 3), Sting +0 (1d6 + 1 and poison); SA Improved grab, squeeze, poison (DC 18, 1d6 Str); SQ Vermin; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 17, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 0, Wis 10, Cha 2.

**Skills and Feats:** Climb +11, Hide +3, Spot +7; Improved Grab, Poison.

## PLAYER DRIVEN EVENTS

This section includes events the players might bring about through their own actions. Naturally, all these occur on-screen. As with any product of this nature one cannot hope to cover all the possible actions of the players. Hopefully the other material provided will aid in handling that most unpredictable of creatures, the player character.

### BUYING SOME FIREPOWER

*The players want to get their hands on some guns.*

**The Legal Way:** The following information should be relatively up to date. To purchase a gun you must undergo a background check at the time of purchase; this applies to all states. This is a quick computerized check that usually involves the store owner contacting a federal bureau (called the NICS). So long as the characters

don't have a criminal background they should be okay. Some states perform a state level background check, again computerized. This helps catch people who've committed lesser crimes or who have a history of mental illness; this also checks at the federal level. For roleplaying purposes a character will probably fail a state check if and only if they also fail a federal check. Thus, just assume there's a computerized background check at the time of purchase regardless of state.

Some states require permits or waiting periods for a gun purchase; the two are collapsed together here since all that typically matters for a player is how long from desire to ownership.

**New York:** Has a 6 month waiting period to get a permit to purchase a handgun; no permit required for a long gun.

**New Jersey and Massachusetts:** 30 day waiting period for permit to purchase handgun or long gun.

**Pennsylvania and Vermont:** No permits required and no waiting period. Pennsylvania is a couple hour drive from New York city, and you could get to Vermont in about 4 hours.

**Connecticut:** 14 day waiting period for a permit for a handgun; no wait for a long gun.

**The Illegal Way:** The players likely lack the skills and pull to do this as of yet but here are some rules anyway. They can make Gather Information checks (DC 17) for handgun and long gun purchase. Each checks costs 5 social stress and, if successful, allows them to contact a gun dealer who can get them firearms without a background check. They have to purchase these guns at a 50% markup on the regular prices.

If they want to purchase one of the really spiffy guns (like a submachine gun) they must gamble the Influence cost and make the Gather Information check; if it works they get the weapon, if it fails they've burned some Influence points and have nothing to show for it.

### DINNER WITH THE CELEBRITY (CR 1)

*The players rub elbows with the glitterati.*

If you included a celebrity in the coffee shop then he or she will invite the players over for dinner, or perhaps even out to a nightclub or celebrity party. If going out, they should have a private dinner first where they can talk to each other privately the way trauma survivors do then head out afterwards and have some fun. This is pure roleplaying and is meant to give players a taste of the high life; they're special now and, in the future they'll be celebrities in the Second World, but it has a greater impact when the circles they move in are recognizable to the players.

### GO TO GROUND

*The players go into hiding.*

Of the hiding out methods this is actually one of the best but also one of the most dangerous. If you don't move you don't leave a trail, cannot be seen, and so on. However, you've also taken control of the situation out of your hands and placed it in the hands of others. Have the players tell you where they want to lie low and then track the actions of the opposition (particularly Hausmann and Cordova).

Cordova and Hausmann likely need to resort to Lorqua's instinctual tracking to find the players if they go to ground. They resort to that

first if available. Otherwise they try mundane tracking methods such as asking questions around their apartments or family.

### GOING SHOPPING

*The players want to buy some almost mundane stuff.*

The First World characters likely have some money, meaning they effectively start off with better funds in this scenario than normally for those with a First World background. Double their initial starting money and consider that their fluid assets. They may double this amount again by maxing out their credit cards. Players with a conscience may have a problem with this. They shouldn't be penalized too heavily for that though; point out that they could use their credit cards now and pay the company back (perhaps anonymously) later on. This isn't completely the right thing to do but it's not horrible either.

If using the Wealth system from d20 Modern First World characters may purchase items normally using their wealth bonus. Second World characters lack any kind of credit rating but they can try to sell their gear or sponge off their First World allies.

With this money they can only purchase First World gear, the cash is almost worthless when they get to the Second World. Note that most of what's available in the Second World can be found in the First World. Cutlery shops, curio stores, and even the odd role-playing game store carry Second World weapons and armor. Players won't be able to get masterwork versions of anything since they lack the time to find anyone with those kinds of skills. They may try to scare up some material components or focuses for their magical abilities. Almost everything a low level character needs in this regard can be found somewhere in the city; occult shops, Asian markets, and even health food stores stock a wide variety of goods. You can get caplets of bee's wax, pretty much any kind of herb one could imagine, and so on. They might need to stop at several places but they come out of this with a supply of material components that would put a smile on any wizard's face.

### INTERVIEW SECOND WORLD NATIVES

*The First and Second worlders talk to each other.*

If some Second World natives came across during the rift the players may decide to interview them. Perhaps they've already banded together. Just let the players talk to each other. The Second World characters likely know a fair bit about the First World but a lot of what they know is false information, rumors, and myth. This should get all the characters to knowing roughly what the players know from reading the book.

### INVESTIGATE SCARS (CR 2)

*The players try to find out about the scars.*

After discovering their scars the players may want to learn more about them. As mentioned before, the scars are pale white and shot through with gray in a few places. They're small; you could hide one completely with your outstretched hand. They detect as evocation magic with a *dim* aura. They also detect as good with a *dim* aura. Neither of these auras disappear in an anti-magic field (if there were some way to detect such in an anti-magic field).

The symbol itself appears ancient, perhaps Sanskrit or Chinese. Yet it's not a character from either one of those languages or any other

earthly language.

A Knowledge (arcane lore) check (DC 15) points the character towards someone in the First World who knows about such things. A few people might actually know but one example is the proprietor of a used book store who specializes in new age and occult literature. The store is called the Glass House and specializes in crystal, quartz, and incense as well as books on new age healing and so on. It's run by Clarisse Mauideux and she's got the New York attitude in spades. She's absolutely rude to new age customers but they come in anyway since she has an encyclopedic knowledge of the strange and stocks the best crystal in town. She can tell the players the information as for a DC 25 check.

With a Knowledge (arcane lore) check (DC 25) and some background regarding the circumstances under which they were acquired, the character can learn that the scars are likely interstitial in origin and probably represent a sigil or icon. Thus, they might hail from the deep Forge.

Randolph Chen's the best for this sort of thing though the College could likely provide similar information with some research time. Chen could tell the players all the DC 25 information and more. He thinks the sigil died in the transition and that there was actually only one sigil. The type of sigil (a Yasfati Doom Sigil) has a fatal touch; it destroys you both magically and physically. However, the players don't have that sigil; what they have is a reversed image of that sigil, as if it were reflected in a mirror, or perhaps many mirrors. Chen has already seen this on Harrison's body so he's put a theory together. Somewhere there's an unreflected copy of the sigil, just one, and a bunch of the other people in the coffee shop were branded with the reflection of the original sigil. The original sigil came through the rift and, like many creatures of the deep Forge, died in the harsh environment of the First World. Whoever this thing landed on should be dead, so there shouldn't be a real issue but the situation troubles Randolph. Perhaps it's all just coincidence, synchronicity and so on. But synchronicity doesn't mean that things happen for no reason; it means that things happen, pretty odd things, but they do happen for a reason. And if the Yasfati Sigil came through that gate it probably came through intentionally; which means that someone wanted it to come through; which means that someone wanted to kill somebody. However, the most important target there was already dead. So either one of the other corpses has the sigil emblazoned on its body and it was far more important than anyone ever thought or something even worse happened. Randolph Chen has no idea what that could be; and that makes him edgy. Chen is a high level Rune Warden, one of the very best in the city of runes.

The Yasfati Sigil is obscure, especially since you have to work from a reflection. Assume that a Knowledge (arcane lore) check that hits DC 35 will give the basic information (but not the theorizing) Randolph knows. Specializations in the Forge could grant a +5 bonus and a specialization in Sigils and Icons could grant as much as a +10 bonus to the check. These are high numbers for an introductory scenario so it might be a long time before the players discover this about the scars they bear.

Roll (d8)	Location (roll 1d6 for side, 1-3 left, 4-6 right)
1	Arm
2	Upper leg
3	Lower leg
4	Small of back
5	Back of shoulder
6	Chest
7	Stomach
8	Scalp

### LEAVING TOWN

*The players go on the run.*

Otherwise known as running away; this might not be what knights do but it is what the heroes in lots of novels do. It makes sense that if you're being hunted by the mob and have little to no combat experience that you should attempt to escape. Don't fault your players for this but recognize that the adventure might be cut short this way.

Have the players choose a direction and take off whenever they feel like it. One advantage of running is that they put time between themselves and any potential chasers; moreover the players can move towards a state with easy access to firearms if they wish.

Unless the players keep constantly on the move Hausmann can track them with Lorqua and quite possibly catch up.

### LOOK AT HAUSMANN'S CORONER'S REPORT (CR 1)

*The players try to get access to the coroner report on Hausmann.*

It might occur to the players that the coroner had access to Hausmann's body for at least a little while and thus might have some useful information. To get access to the report they need to head over to the coroner's office and talk to some people. A Sense Motive Influence check (DC 20, 2 stress) gets them a look at the report. A player with a First World police background or something similar receives a +5 access bonus to this check. Alternately, they can contact Agent Stiles and tell her that this information might be important for them. As mentioned before, she's helpful (within reason) and does this for the players.

The report has some plain English talk and some coroner talk. In plain English Hausmann apparently died from massive head trauma caused by a 9mm bullet which went all the way through the skull and out the front. He appears to have been shot some time in the past as well since he has a small scar on his upper right leg that was likely caused by a bullet; this is assumed to be at least a couple years old. He also had a black scar or tattoo on his chest, right side; there's a photograph of this and the players should be able to see that it looks like a mirrored, negative version of their own scars. Papers on the body indicate that his name is Raphael Hausmann, he hails from Buenos Aries, and recently (within the last week) traveled to Montreal. He even had the receipt for the rental car in his wallet and the keys in his pocket as well as some hotel room keys (all of which have been given to the detectives working the case).

### LOOK AT HAUSMANN'S POLICE REPORT (CR 1)

*The players try to get access to the police report.*

This event might be collapsed with the previous one but they take place in different parts of police headquarters so they're separated out. As before, talking to Stiles can get the players access. Otherwise they need to make a Sense Motive Influence check (DC 20, 2 stress) to get the police report. Grant a +5 access bonus for police backgrounds as usual. Note that the players use Sense Motive for this check because that skill generally serves as the Influence skill for use with police and security organizations (better cops have a good feel for people). If they've already succeeded at getting the Coroner's report grant another +5 bonus for the police report, and vice versa.

The report reveals the contents of Hausmann's wallet and pockets and the information from there. Most importantly, the report includes the Buenos Aries police file (which the police get late Thursday night). Hausmann has a checkered criminal background, mostly minor stuff and frequently acquitted of any crimes. The latter has less to do with his innocence and more to do with his ability to call in high-powered lawyers when the need arises. The Argentine police connect him with the Cordova family, a shadowy bunch of people that appear to straddle the line between criminal organization and old-world aristocracy. They have serious pull in Argentina, both political and economic, so the police don't press them much.

### POLICE PROTECTION

*The players take up the offer of police protection.*

After the murders start up, the police offer protective custody to anyone from the coffee shop who wants it. While this puts two cops in the room with you it also means the cops know where you're at and forces you to stay in a fixed location. As with going to ground, Hausmann's main method of finding players in this situation is Lorqua.

Hausmann could interrogate some cops as well; the media mention that the police have taken some of the people from It's a Small World into protective custody and flash an image of the captain in charge of this on television. If Hausmann has no other means of getting to the players he just goes to the chief's house and uses the interrogation technique mentioned earlier. This is effective, especially since the chief has a family. Hausmann might need to follow up with talking to someone else if they compartmentalize the information but that won't be a problem so long as Hausmann works fast (which he does).

The main advantage of going into police custody is that the players get some guys with guns to protect them. Hausmann summons some scorpions to help his thugs if they need to take out cops too.

### QUIET TIME

*The players relax for a bit.*

Eventually the players may slow down and spend some time not doing much of anything. This might occur simply because the players feel like they've run out of leads, or feel that to roleplay their characters correctly they should go home, break open some alcohol, and try to relax. Also, the players might feel that they should be doing something (after all, it's game night and they're obviously in the midst of a scenario) but not know what.

For example, after the coffee shop scene and any hospital, media, and police business, they are cut loose to do whatever they want.

With no constraints and no obvious leads they have all this freedom and nothing to use it on. It can be worthwhile here to simply ask them what they think their characters would do under the circumstances. Would they go to a bar, go home, break out the alcohol and watch some television, spend some time with family, or what? Their answers to this can help establish a feel for their characters, what kind of routines they follow, and perhaps reinforce the idea that they're normal people who have gotten caught up in extraordinary circumstances. Roleplay this a bit but don't drag it out; the players shouldn't have to wait around too long for some action.

By establishing character routines in quiet time you also find out what sort of information you can leak to them. If a character watches television he sees news reports about the coffee shop. If a character normally reads the paper in the morning he sees the more thorough article printed there. These pieces might provide a lead the characters want to follow; or perhaps they just now discover the scar (while taking a shower) and decide to investigate that.

It's also worthwhile to establish for your players that sometimes they need to let time pass. Finally, sometime on Friday they hear about the missing body of Hausmann. While they went about their business others in the world were moving; this should help generate a sense of being part of a dynamic universe and indicate that what the character sees is just the surface, unless he goes out of his way to dig deeper.

## AFTERMATH

Once the characters make it to the Second World the scenario has ended. There shouldn't be a fight on this side; that's too much raw coincidence and the players have more than enough to do with getting a feeling for this new place they've discovered. Everything feels more present here; colors shine more intensely; smells strike with the rich fragrance of the surroundings; even the sounds ring more clearly, like trading in a your muffled eight-track tape for a digital recording. It's as if the gauze has been peeled away and now you can see the world for the very first time in perfect clarity.

Most likely, the players end up somewhere around New York or in the Northeast. Now they're the wandering adventurer group that begins off most campaigns; however they've been brought together in a way that should allow them to feel some connection to each other.

If you're playing with Freeport in your setting you can have local NPCs or Second World players direct them to that city for some exciting adventures. If you'd like to do this, fiddle things around a bit to push them out towards the northeast; the easy access to firearms in Vermont can provide a powerful incentive and the threat of powerful people still wandering around New York can impel them to avoid that place for a time.

If the players ended up somewhere else you can easily drop them near your next scenario or the area in which you'd like to run your early campaign. One advantage of having some First World characters in the group (or characters carrying some First World gear) is that they stand out to the locals who will automatically think they're capable adventurers, potential Wardens, and thus someone they can ask for help regarding that small matter of the infested

Encounter Table	
Event	CR or EL
The Coffee Shop	EL 2
Tead Gang Member	0.5
Tead Gang Member	0.5
Small Fire Elemental	1
Dinner with the Celebrity	1
Media Coverage	2
Police get a cell Phone	2
Pool Hall	EL 1
Hausmann's Thug	0.5
Hausmann's Thug	0.5
Talking to Hausmann	2
Talking to Torzano	1 or 2
Track the Players	EL .5
Hausmann's Thug	0.5
Final Fight and the Shunt	EL 3+
Gregor Schinsky	2
Hausmann's Thug	0.5
Hausmann's Thug	0.5
Hausmann's Thug	0.5
Investigate Scars	2
Look at Hausmann's Police Report	1
Look at Hausmann's Coroner's Report	1

fort, missing livestock, or goblin mob that's been bothering them so much. Regardless, player character likely need to do some shopping. Wizards need to get around to buying a spell-book (when they complain about the cost remind them of the free spell-mastery they got) and rogues might want some tools.

In the continuing adventures try to emphasize the newness of things. Exploration is an enjoyable part of the game and you can generate that feeling of exploration in a variety of ways. Just spending a moment talking about the kind of food they get at the inn (rich haunches of beef, heady ale, fresh-baked bread) can help the players remember that they're not eating fast food anymore. The stars at night (same constellations but so many that it looks like a carpet), the immensity of untamed forest, the wildlife prowling the lands, these are all features different from our everyday experience and yet may become familiar here, eventually. The first visit to any city or town can be exciting, let alone a great city or forgotten citadel. This is the world that has opened to the players.

Finally, if you want to run a First World centered campaign, perhaps sticking with the d20 Modern rules, you can simply have the players **not** shunt. If you like having the Second World exist for occasional low-tech high-fantasy scenarios, or to explain the presence of the supernatural in the First World, one good solution is to have Hausmann and his allies shunt but not the players.

The reflected Yasfati sigils that the players bear allow them to stay in the First World without shunting. The sigils could also allow them to ignore the First World's suppression of magic and psionics. This

gives the players unique access to powers in the modern setting and their uniqueness explains why they're the ones doing the heroics. Agent Stiles could bring them into HabRec-7 as freelance agents, giving the campaign some structure while granting the players flexibility and freedom. By separating Hausmann from the players with the world divide, you prevent the players from encountering him until they're better prepared. The final confrontation could occur in the First or Second World. If going the First World route try to include a few simple adventures in the Second World within the next eight sessions or so. Short dungeon crawls work well and help establish a feel for the world.

Alternately, you could run a First World centered campaign but include a shunt at the end of this scenario. The shunt occurs automatically because so much has happened but the reflected sigils mask the players' signatures in such a way that if they later travel back to the First World they don't shunt. This allows you to run a few adventures in the Second World then return to the First World for the remainder of your campaign. Again, you can fiddle with Hausmann and say that he doesn't shunt due to his special nature; this keeps the players and him away from each other for a time.

## ADAPTING THE ADVENTURE

Naturally this adventure won't work very well if you're not using a multi-world setting. However, it adapts easily to any kind of dual world setting. Perhaps the First World is a science fiction or cyberpunk world; the Second World can be your personal favorite medieval-fantasy campaign setting or something similar. You could even use this scenario as a brief one-shot where modern day earth is just one of many parallel worlds (but significant enough that there's relatively frequent traffic with it).

If adapting it for use with other levels you should have some of the characters hail from the modern world, otherwise it's too contrived to draw a crowd of medieval warriors and sorcerers into the First World just so they can be shunted back later. However, if you've been running a d20 Modern game already, and perhaps have some Second World characters of the appropriate level, you could start the scenario off with them.

The following section gives some suggestions for adapting the scenario to higher character levels. Alternately, giving the bad guys submachineguns makes them dangerous. The First World is friendly to the weak and unfriendly to the outnumbered so a crowd of first level toughs with SMGs can be bad news for almost anyone.

**Roleplaying Encounters:** Increase the challenge rating by 1 if your group has an average level of 3 or higher. Raise any associated skill difficulty classes by 3, save DCs by 1, and increase the challenge ratings by 2 if the group has an average level of 5 or higher.

### EIGHT SCENE ADJUSTMENTS

**Level 2:** Toughen the fight scenes by replacing Tead Gang Members with Tead Gang Toughs and Hausmann's Generic Thugs with Hausmann's Tough Thugs.

**Level 3:** In addition to the adjustments for level 2, replace the Small Fire Elemental in the coffee shop scene with a Medium Fire Elemental. At the Pool Hall (S21) raise the number of toughs to 3.

Send two toughs after the players in the Track the Players scene (S17). Also, have Hausmann send one of the monstrous scorpions in with the gang in the Final Fight and Shunt scene (S30).

**Level 4:** As for level 3 but have Hausmann send 3 monstrous scorpions in to help the gang in the Final Fight and Shunt scene (S30).

**Level 5-6:** As for level 4 with the following changes. If your players have some magic items by now replace the Medium Fire Elemental in the coffee shop with a second Roa Intruder; this one eats the Tead gang members and fights the players. Assign 4 Hausmann Tough Thugs to the Track the Players scene (S17). In the Final Fight and Shunt scene (S30) drop the bomb, have it explode, *then* send in the gang members and monstrous scorpions.

## APPENDIX

The NPCs in this appendix use the Defense Bonuses Make Sense and Massive Damage Threshold options from the Second World Sourcebook to make it better suited for a d20 Modern scenario. The heroic NPCs also have an action point entry.

### HARRISON'S CREW

#### HARRISON JING-SHU

**Human Fighter 5, Metal Warden 5**

**Medium-size Humanoid**

**Hit Dice:** 10d10+20 (84 hp)

**Massive Damage:** 14

**Action Points:** 5

**Initiative:** +1 (+1 Dex)

**Speed:** 20 ft.

**Def:** 29 (+12 full plate, +1 Dex, +6 class)

**Attacks:** Great sword +18/+13 (2d6+11; 19+/x2)

**Special Abilities:** Proficiency with all metallic exotic weapons; Second World New York Background

**Saves:** Fort +11, Ref +4, Will +6

**Abilities:** Str 16 [18], Dex 12, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 12, Rep +2

**Skills:** Appraise +2, Craft (Armorsmith) +6, Craft (Weaponsmith) +6, Diplomacy +2, Disable Device +16, Gather Information +3, Move Silently +2 (+7), Open Lock +16, Repair +7, Sense Motive +10, Tumble +2 (+7)

**Feats:** Big City Education (Disable Device, Open Lock), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Great Sword), Iron Will, People Smart, Tensile Mercury Expertise, Tensile Mercury Mastery, Weapon Focus (Great Sword), Weapon Specialization (Great Sword)

**Bindings:** Armoring at +4 (as full plate usually), Blading at +3 (typically a great sword), Martian Steel, **Minor Steel Shaping, Sharpen** (PEN 3, 10/day)

**Languages:** English, Mandarin

**Challenge Rating:** 10

**Alignment:** lawful neutral

**Description:** Harrison was born and raised in Second World New York; all his life he's had a taste for steel and fine goods. Harrison does a lot of the front work for the Chens; going to meetings, field actions, and so on. He usually needs a bit of support since, while



he has good skills for a fighter type, there's still a lot he cannot do. Harrison uses *sharpen* freely since he has so many charges but hates wasting it on someone wearing Martian Steel or creatures with any kind of damage reduction. This means he usually saves it for the second attack in a full attack against more mundane foes. Minor steel shaping allows him to open doors from a distance, or even pick the lock; he enjoys doing this and in his rare humorous moments makes a beep-beep sound when he pops the lock.

**Possessions:** *Silk tiger tattoo*, *cloak of resistance* +1, *ring of protection* +1, *gauntlets of ogre power* (+2)

### SALLY CHEN

**Human Fast Hero 4 (Investigative)**

**Medium-size Humanoid**

**Hit Dice:** 4d8 (21 hp)

**Massive Damage:** 10

**Action Points:** 2

**Initiative:** +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

**Speed:** 35 ft.

**Def:** 17 (+2 Dex, +5 class)

**Attacks:** Berretta 92F +5 (2d6; 20/×2; PEN 3)

**Special Abilities:** Evasion; increased speed

**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +4

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12, Rep +1

**Skills:** Drive +9, Gather Information +8, Hide +9, Move Silently +9, Search +7

**Feats:** **Defensive Martial Arts**, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Personal Firearms Proficiency, **Point-blank shot**

**Languages:** English, Mandarin

**Challenge Rating:** 4

**Alignment:** neutral good

**Description:** Sally Chen does recon work when out with Harrison since he's so much better at opening locks. She hangs back during a fight but attempts to cover Harrison's back. In the first world she carries a pistol and she even has a license to carry it. If the players have been helpful, Harrison tells Sally to toss them her gun on the way out of the coffee shop.

Sally is a First World native and one of Randolph Chen's nieces. She can remain in the First World indefinitely; one reason for this is that she lacks the ability to ever learn magic or become a Warden.

**Possessions:** Berretta 92F with three 15 round magazines, Sap, \$80

### UNCLE CARL

**Human Sorcerer 6**

**Medium-size Humanoid**

**Hit Dice:** 6d4-12 (12 hp)

**Massive Damage:** 7

**Action Points:** 3

**Initiative:** +3 (-1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**Def:** 12 (-1 Dex, +3 class)

**Attacks:** he better use magic

**Saves:** Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +7

**Abilities:** Str 7, Dex 9, Con 7, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 17, Rep +2

**Skills:** Alchemy +10, Concentration +7, Spellcraft +10

**Feats:** Improved Initiative, Toughness, Spell Focus (Enchant-

ment), Spell Penetration

**Languages:** Mandarin

**Challenge Rating:** 6

**Alignment:** neutral good

**Description:** Uncle Carl is a bit long in the tooth but he's still got a sharp mind. He only speaks Mandarin which gives Harrison and Sally an excuse to not speak English all the time. He mostly just looks harmless. He left his familiar at home in the Second World for this mission. Spells marked with a (\*) in the spellbook are enchantment spells and thus have a +2 to their save difficulty classes; the base save DC for Carl's spells is 13 + spell level.

**Possessions:** Fine clothes, \$250

**Sorcerer Spells** (castable)

Level 0 (6): *Daze\**; *Detect Magic*; *Light*; *Mage Hand*; *Prestidigitation*; *Ray of Frost*; *Read Magic*

Level 1 (7): *Charm Person\**; *Mage Armor*; *Magic Missile*; *Sleep\**

Level 2 (6): *Hideous Laughter\**; *Invisibility*

Level 3 (4): *Hold Person\**

### THE TEAD GANG

#### GARY "MOJO" TEAD

**Human Strong 2, Tough 1 (Criminal)**

**Medium-size Humanoid**

**Hit Dice:** 2d8+1d10 (19 hp)

**Massive Damage:** 11

**Action Points:** 1

**Initiative:** +1 (+1 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**Def:** 14 (+1 Dex, +3 class)

**Attacks:** Fist +5 (1d6+2 NL; 20/×2), Knife +4 (1d4+2, 19+/×2), or Colt M1911 +3 (2d6; 20/×2; PEN 3)

**Special Abilities:** Melee smash; Robust

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +0

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 12, Rep +0

**Skills:** Gamble +6, Knowledge (streetwise) +5, Intimidate +3

**Feats:** Brawl, Endurance, Personal Firearms Proficiency, **Point Blank Shot**, **Power Attack**

**Languages:** English

**Challenge Rating:** 3

**Alignment:** neutral evil

**Description:** Tead likes his beer and, while drinking his beer, likes to talk about what a big-shot he'll be someday.

**Possessions:** Colt M1911 with two 7 round magazines, knife, \$20

#### TEAD GANG MEMBER

**Human Tough 1 Ordinary (Criminal)**

**Medium-size Humanoid**

**Hit Dice:** 1d10 (6 hp)

**Massive Damage:** 12

**Initiative:** +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**Def:** 12 (+1 Dex, +1 class)

**Attacks:** Fist +3 (1d6+2 NL; 20/×2) or Knife +2 (1d4+2; 19+/×2)

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +1, Will -1

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 11, Rep +0

**Skills:** Drive +5, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (streetwise) +4

**Feats:** Brawl, Confident, Improved Initiative

**Languages:** English

**Challenge Rating:** 1/2

**Alignment:** neutral evil

**Description:** Tead's gang honestly likes him; if they didn't they wouldn't be part of his gang. But Tead also treats them well; he splits the takings reasonably, takes the gang for dinner, and buys pitchers of beer. They go along with anything he says.

**Possessions:** Knife, \$20

### PAUL TORZANO

**Human Strong 1 (Athlete)**

**Medium-size Humanoid**

**Hit Dice:** 1d8+1 (9 hp)

**Massive Damage:** 12

**Action Points:** 1

**Initiative:** +2 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**Def:** 13 (+2 Dex, +1 class)

**Attacks:** Fist +4 (1d6+2 NL; 20/x2)

**Special Abilities:** Melee Smash

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +2

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 10, Rep +0

**Skills:** Drive +4, Craft (structural) +5, Knowledge (streetwise) +3, Repair +5, Swim +6

**Feats:** Brawl, **Defensive Martial Arts**, **Dodge**

**Languages:** English

**Challenge Rating:** 1

**Alignment:** neutral

**Description:** Torzano is one of those complicated characters. The players probably won't like him, though they might appreciate his call if it comes. Don't worry if they despise the guy; he's not too keen on himself either.

**Possessions:** \$10

### CORDOVA'S TEAM

#### MIKHAIL CORDOVA

**Human Fighter 3, Ranger 2, Lightning Warden 4, Metal Warden 3**

**Medium-size Humanoid**

**Hit Dice:** 12d10+48 (124 hp)

**Massive Damage:** 15 [19]

**Action Points:** 6

**Initiative:** +1 (+1 Dex)

**Speed:** 20 ft.

**Def:** 31 (+8 full plate, +1 Dex, +4 shield, +8 class)

**Attacks:** Longsword +15/+10/+5 (1d8+4; 19+/x2); Heavy Revolver +13/+8/+3 (2d8; 20/x2; PEN 4); or Hunting Rifle +13/+8/+3 (2d8; 20/x2; PEN 6)

**Special Abilities:** Second World Background (Buenos Aires Nobility)

**Saves:** Fort +16, Ref +6, Will +9

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 12, Con 15 [19], Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 12, Rep +3

**Skills:** Appraise +17, Concentration +12, Craft (Armorsmith) +8, Craft (Weaponsmith) +8, Disable Device +12, Knowledge (Nature) +10, Open Locks +11, Ride +9, Spot +9

**Feats:** Big City Education (Disable Device, Open Lock), Great

### NEW SECOND WORLD BACKGROUND: BUENOS ARIES NOBILITY

Buenos Aries is an odd blend of old world class structure and modern urban environment. The aristocracy of old has moved into corporate and political life, exchanging the privileges of class for those of wealth and influence. These people combine the charm of chivalry with the pragmatic business sense of modern corporations.

**Prerequisite:** Age 15+

**Skills:** Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Appraise, Diplomacy, Handle Animal, Perform, Ride, Swim.

**Bonus Feats:** Spend two skill picks to select either Big City Education or Cutting Remark

**Languages:** Automatic: Spanish; Bonus: English, German, Russian, Portuguese, and many other First World languages.

Fortitude, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Personal Firearms Proficiency, **Pont Blank Shot**, Tensile Mercury Expertise, Track

**Bindings:** **Charge** (25 points), Lightning Arc (C6), Lightning Bolt (C4), Lightning Stroke (C6, attack as free action, +1 damage), Power Minor Electronics, Burst of Power, Engine Power, Fire and Steel (precision guns)

**Languages:** English, Russian, Spanish

**Challenge Rating:** 12

**Alignment:** Neutral

**Description:** Cordova can be a complicated opponent to run simply because he has such a wide variety of abilities. His lightning powers have a save DC of 14 + power level (or invocation power level). His firearms do an additional +2 damage in the First World due to his Fire and Steel power (and this is why he no longer uses modern firearms in the First World though, technically they're still a bit better). He can use electronic equipment such as flashlights and personal stereos almost at will in the Second World and can import almost any car or truck into the Second World and drive it there. He prefers to soften up his opposition with lightning then pick off anyone left over with his firearms; he's capable of fighting in melee as well, but others do that better and Mikhail is a consummate manager.

**Possessions:** *Tensile mercury armor* +1 (typically full plate), *longsword* +2, *large shield* +2, *amulet of health* +4, 3 potions of *cure light wounds*; heavy revolver with 30 extra rounds in belt; hunting rifle with 10 extra rounds in pocket

#### GARCIA "HUNTER" LORQUA

**Elven Ranger 5, Feral Warden 3**

**Medium-size Humanoid**

**Hit Dice:** 8d10 (49 hp)

**Massive Damage:** 10

**Action Points:** 4

**Initiative:** +2 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**Def:** 23 (+5 chain shirt, +3 Dex, +5 class)

**Attacks:** Great sword +11/+6 (2d6+4; 19+/x2)

**Special Abilities:** Immune to sleep, +2 on saves against enchantments; Lowlight Vision; Automatic secret door detection; Favored Enemy (Magical Beasts, +2); Favored Enemy (Aberrations, +1)

**Saves:** Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +5

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 10, Rep +2  
**Skills:** Animal Empathy +5, Hide +15, Listen +23, Move Silently +15, Search +19, Spot +23, Wilderness Lore +14  
**Feats:** Alertness, Endurance, Track  
**Bindings:** Feral Instincts, Instinctual Tracking (3/week), Keen Senses

**Languages:** English, Spanish

**Challenge Rating:** 8

**Alignment:** Neutral

**Description:** Garcia Lorqua has to hold the front lines a bit too often given his talents but Mikhail makes certain to come to his aid if he needs it. What Lorqua does extremely well is track; both the old-fashioned way and the Feral Warden way. As he advances within the organization they'll probably fund even higher levels of his bindings.

**Possessions:** *Great sword* +1, *chain shirt* +1, *boots of elvenkind*, *cloak of elvenkind*, \$150

**Ranger Spells** (castable)

Level 1 (1): *Speak with Animals*

### SELINA TROULOSE

**Human Wizard 5, Hsüan 1, Gate Warden 4**

**Medium-size Humanoid**

**Hit Dice:** 5d4+5d6 (36 hp)

**Massive Damage:** 10

**Action Points:** 5

**Initiative:** +2 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**Def:** 22 (+4 mage armor, +2 Dex, +6 class)

**Attacks:** Glock 17 +7 (2d6; 20/×2; PEN 3)

**Special Abilities:** Second World Background (Montreal); Affinity for power (+2 to effective caster level); Observe Synchronicity (*detect magic* at will)

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +9

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 10, Cha 16 [18], Rep +2

**Skills:** Concentration +13, Diplomacy +17, Knowledge (Arcane) +16, Knowledge (Interstitial Lore) +16, Sense Motive +13, Spellcraft +16

**Feats:** Abstract Thinker; Big City Education (Diplomacy, Sense Motive); Craft Wand; Hsüan Spirit; Personal Firearms Proficiency, Scribe Scroll; **Spell Penetration** [total spell penetration is +12]

**Bindings:** Lord of the Threshold; Pact Gate (Uebinoex); Shift Gate; Sustain Travel

**Languages:** French, English, Spanish, Escidi

**Challenge Rating:** 10

**Alignment:** Neutral

**Description:** Selina is a Gate Warden; this class will be fully detailed in a forthcoming supplement. Since it's unlikely that the players will actually encounter these people and they certainly won't be fighting Cordova's Encounter Level 13 crew this temporary version of Selina should suffice.

**Possessions:** *cloak of charisma* +2, *wand of magic missiles* (6th, 40 charges, spell penetration +12), Glock 17 with 2 spare magazines, \$150

**Wizard Spells** (castable) cast at caster level 6

Level 0 (4): *Daze* x1; *Light* x1; *Prestidigitation* x1; *Read Magic*

x1

Level 1 (4): *Charm Person* x1; *Mage Armor* x1; *Magic Missile* x1; *Shield* x1

Level 2 (3): *Alter Self* x1; *Invisibility* x1; *Locate Object* x1

Level 3 (2): *Fireball* x1; *Suggestion* x1

### GATE WARDEN PROVISIONAL BINDINGS

**Lord of the Threshold:** The gate warden is the master of portals, of all kinds; they tap into the concept of door and passage and use that for their abilities. Some gate wardens develop this talent. Assume this allows Selina to use *open/close*, *knock*, or *arcane lock* at will, as the spells, as spell-like abilities.

**Pact Gate (Uebinoex):** Gate wardens derive many of their powers through the interstitial pacts they enter and join. In order to make the best use of these pacts they develop highly specialized gates that quickly open to other members of the pact. This unusual power combines magic and influence. She can bring through the following interstitial creatures (and invoke their powers) at the indicated cost in social stress; she doesn't need to make a request check for these abilities in this version of the rules but also assume she can no longer use these powers once her stress exceeds 10.

*Toxin Symbiotes* (stress 4): These small creatures flow through the gate and over a person, neutralizing any poisons and diseases in them. They don't work on Flesh Wardens (in fact, it's even worse than that).

*Reflecting Orb* (stress 4): This creature looks like a six inch diameter, floating, chrome sphere. It bobs around in the air at the user's command. Upon entry into the world it begins to absorb sensory information. This process lasts for 2 hours, at the end of which the orb dies. For a corpse, reflecting orbs are quite informative. Any arcane caster with the spell, *arcane eye*, on his list may activate the corpse as a **spell trigger** item (see the DMG). This means that one can also activate the corpse by using the Use Magic Device skill (DC 20). When activated the corpse starts replaying the sensory information it absorbed. Orbs absorb and transmit information across a wide spectrum, both visual and auditory. The impressions they receive include sensory information outside the range of normal human ability such as infrared, ultraviolet, ultra-high pitch and low level sound. This expanded range of perceptions is played back as well, but the observer must be able to sense it in some fashion.

With a Spellcraft check (DC 20) you can use a *major image* spell to construct a three-dimensional scene from the images played out on the surface of the orb. You need to concentrate on maintaining the *major image* spell throughout the playback.

Typically these creatures are used for scouting and surveillance. You should give the orb ample time to travel to its destination and back. They are not invisible by any means, though they can be hard to detect in cluttered environments (since they reflect the appearance of their surroundings). Unlike most summoned creatures, reflecting orbs do not return to their plane after the duration ends; in fact, the orb body is simply a side effect of the spiritual essence of the creature entering the world. At the end of the duration the essence returns to its home plane, leaving the 'shell' behind. However, the shell does rot and decay like a regular corpse (albeit more slowly since it's pretty durable). Within roughly a week it will have rotted to the point where it's unusable; however, one could freeze the

corpse or use magic to prevent the rotting.

**Reflecting Orb:** CR 2; Tiny Outsider; HD 2d8 (Outsider); hp 9; Init +4; Spd Fly 90 (Perfect); Def 16 (+2 size, +4 Dex); Melee: +0 Slam (1d6-4); SQ: All-around vision (Ex), Blindsight (Ex), DR 5/+1, SR 13, Evasion (Ex), Immune to Gaze attacks (Ex), Resistances: Acid 10, Cold 10, Electricity 10, Fire 10; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +4; Str 3, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 6, Wis 13, Cha 10.

**Skills and Feats:** Hide +14 (+18), Intuit Direction +5, Listen +3, Move Silently +6, Search +2, Spot +3, Tumble +6; **Dodge.**

+4 racial bonus to Hide checks due to reflective surface.

*Truth Sigil (stress 10):* Truth sigils hail from the Forge. They look like a twisting and glowing piece of neon tubing twisted into a letter from an alien language; they're about 1 foot in size and hang in the air. Everyone bathed in a truth sigil's glow (this covers a 30 foot radius burst) must speak the truth. Individuals in the area can still withhold the truth, or lie by omission or implication, but the words they speak must be truthful. Note that this only applies to spoken words, not thoughts or mental communication. Thus it can prevent disinformation but it cannot force someone to reveal information she wants to keep hidden. Once summoned you can command a truth sigil to move up to 10 feet per round.

**Shift Gate:** Selina's shift gate transposes everything with a 10 foot radius of her to the First World. Whatever is on the far side gets shifted on the Second World. This also works in the opposite direction. She may use this ability once per week.

**Sustain Travel:** This power allows Selina to use the *sustain travel* spell once per week as a spell-like ability (see page 3).

## ● THEIRS

### RAPHAEL HAÜSMANN (● ORIGINAL)

**Human Smart 3 (Entrepreneur)**

**Medium-size Humanoid**

**Hit Dice:** 3d6+3 (17 hp)

**Massive Damage:** 12

**Action Points:** 1

**Initiative:** +1 (+1 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**Def:** 12 (+1 Dex, +1 class)

**Attacks:** Fist +2 (1d3 NL; 20/x2)

**Special Abilities:** Savant (forgery); Trick

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +1

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 12, Rep +2

**Skills:** Bluff +8, Computer Use +9, Diplomacy +8, Disable Device +9, Forgery +12, Investigate +9, Knowledge (business) +9, Knowledge (civics) +9, Profession +6, Repair +9, Research +9

**Feats:** **Dodge**, Lightning Reflexes, Personal Firearms Proficiency, **Point Blank Shot**

**Languages:** English, German, Spanish

**Challenge Rating:** 3

**Alignment:** Neutral evil

**Description:** Hausmann simply knows that he never catches a break. Everyone else gets the money and the girls and he just gets dumped on by life. No one truly respects him and that's because no one really understands him or what he's capable of doing. His

disappointment with the world makes him want to get out of it all; just rack up a good score and go hide in a place with nice beaches and women who can appreciate his wealth; the black stones might provide this opportunity.

**Possessions:** The case; \$150

### RAPHAEL HAÜSMANN (NEW)

**Nikdaw Oar Monk 4**

**Medium-size Humanoid/Outsider**

**Hit Dice:** 10d8+40 (93 hp)

**Massive Damage:** 12 [18]

**Action Points:** 7

**Initiative:** +4 (+4 Dex)

**Speed:** 40 ft.

**Def:** 27 (+4 natural, +4 Dex, +3 Wis, +4 insight, +2 class)

**Attacks:** Unarmed attack +16/+11 (1d8+3; 19+/x2) [likely x2 damage from Shatter power]

**Special Attacks:** Spell-like abilities; The World like Shattered Glass; Monk Abilities: Unarmed Strike, Stunning Attack

**Special Qualities:** Damage reduction 20/+2; SR 21; Darkvision (60 ft.); Bound Yasfati Doom Sigil; The World like Glass; Unbounded Motion; Nikdaw Oar qualities; Resistances and Immunities; Physical Empowering; Monk Abilities: Evasion, Deflect Arrows, Still Mind, Slow Fall (20 ft.)

**Saves:** Fort +13, Ref +17, Will +12

**Abilities:** Str 10 [16], Dex 12 [18], Con 12 [18], Int 20, Wis 16, Cha 16, Rep +2

**Skills:** Appraise +8 (from old Hausmann), Balance +14, Bluff +19, Concentration +14, Diplomacy +23, Gather Information +19, Hide +14, Innuendo +19, Intimidate +19, Jump +7, Knowledge (Arcana) +9, Listen +13, Move Silently +14, Search +11, Sense Motive +19, Spot +9, Tumble +8

**Feats:** Combat Casting, Dodge, Power Attack, Sunder

**Languages:** English, German, Spanish, Olmec, Ethereal Filcher (note though that filchers themselves don't speak), Escidi, and Abyssal.

**Challenge Rating:** 14 (assuming fighting an emblazoned creature)

**Alignment:** Neutral evil

**Description:** Hausmann was right; he never catches a break. He dies in the coffee shop and before his soul leaves his still-warm body the stones catch fire, the wire gate opens, and a Nikdaw Oar tears its way into this world and takes over Hausmann's corpse. Even worse for Hausmann, the Oar doesn't let him leave; so his soul is stuck inside the body with the Oar as its only companion. The Nikdaw Oar are reflected versions of the Roa. They are always unique, either obey something even more convoluted than the Tower Coda or demonstrate a kind of free will completely liberated from any moral system. They exhibit abilities which often make no sense whatsoever. Nikdaw Oar have no standard set of powers or qualities other than the basic fact that they are Nikdaw Oar.

The new Hausmann starts off fairly weak; his powers take a while to transfer over and he needs to learn how to fully utilize them in this world. As such, the attributes above should be considered temporary. Most of them increase significantly in the next few months. He develops into a challenge rating 20 creature over the course of several months. The specifics of that development aren't described here. Remember also that he starts with no magic items; that changes once he gets to the Second World. Also note that simply adding

monk levels to Hausmann doesn't necessarily raise him one challenge rating for each added level; it should be more along the lines of one challenge rating per two monk levels though magic items he acquires may modify that.

If you wish to use Hausmann as a more standard opponent simply drop the Bound Yasfati Doom Sigil ability and assign him a challenge rating of 14. In a straight up fight he might be underpowered but even then he's dangerous to certain kinds of opponents.

**Possessions:** \$150

### POWERS AND ABILITIES

**Bound Yasfati Doom Sigil (Ex):** It didn't kill him so it must have done something else. This grants Hausmann damage reduction 20/-, immunity to critical hits, and +10 spell resistance against everything except creatures with the reflected scar or items with the reflected image of the Yasfati. He also loses this power when in the original coffee shop but that place doesn't last long.

**The World like Glass (Ex):** Hausmann can see things, almost the way a Hsüan sees things but he observes all the way through. When he looks at creature he sees all of it, the internal workings, the way the brain operates, and so on. When he looks at an object he sees what's inside (like X-ray vision but no limitations due to material). He can even see through the world itself, observing what's happening in the currently local area of the Forge or the cross-world counterpart in the First or Second World. Finally, he can see right through the workings of the world, observing the patterns and flows of causal forces; even the dynamic principles at work. He can see this way out to 60 feet and it's one of his most potent powers.

Some of the effects should be easy, he can look behind closed doors and walls, into closed objects (though he needs to rely on his darkvision to actually see anything inside a closed chest), and see what's happening on the First World side of his current location. Other effects are less obvious and are listed like separate abilities.

*Workings of the Body:* By observing the inner workings of things he has an easier time scoring critical threats; double his critical threat range.

*Workings of the Mind:* His ability to see both the way one's brain and psychology work gives him a +10 insight bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Innuendo, Intimidate, and Sense Motive checks. He can automatically tell when someone is lying to him unless they have an ability that protects against that. The truth detection ability (and this one only) does not work against those emblazoned with the reflected Yasfati image.

*Workings of the World:* By observing the physics of the world he can better predict how things operate. This grants him a +4 insight bonus to attacks, Reflex saving throws, and armor class. This bonus is lost whenever he loses his Dexterity bonus to armor class or if he is blinded somehow.

*Workings of Magic:* This gives Hausmann constant *true seeing* as the arcane version of the spell.

**The World like Shattered Glass (Ex):** Not only does the world look like glass to him, but he can touch and shatter it like glass. This is the way he usually attacks in melee. He can make a normal melee attack against anything and break it; the damage takes the form of pieces of the thing falling off in awful shards. This is treated as a touch at-

tack and the victim of the attack gets a hardness of 1 against it. This hardness supersedes any damage reduction or hardness the target might already have. The attack does double damage to flesh, paper, and rope; triple damage to ice; 10x damage to wood; 15x damage to stone; 30x damage to iron, steel, mithral, and most other metals; and 40x damage to adamantine and black iron. If you look at the attacking objects section in the PHB you'll see that these numbers effectively convert his attack against an object to an attack against glass. Note, that even these egregious numbers won't be enough to harm an artifact. People might be pretty nervous around Hausmann but Iron Golems would be downright terrified if they had a mind.

This only works on melee attacks and then only within 5 feet (thus it won't work with a reach weapon). Against normal people this is dangerous but not truly awful. However, they'll likely feel pretty bad if he shatters their weapons and armor. He likes to attack armor for intimidation as well as for combat effectiveness; use the standard rules for attacking a weapon to handle this. This ability also has some non-combat applications, such as shattering the wall of a building so that he can step through the jagged hole. As a small concession, when jagged pieces of you or your armor fall off your body they're sharp enough to use as a weapon; typically they do 1d6 damage (critical 19+/x2) and have a penetration of 2.

**Unbounded Motion (Ex):** While Hausmann can't fly, he isn't bothered by conventional physics. He can walk on anything, up air as if it were a slope, upside down on the ceiling, sideways, and so on. This operates like the Motion Warden binding, *motion without boundaries*.

**Nikdaw Oar (Ex):** These things are so alien that many things just don't work right against them. Everyone takes a -2 penalty on attacks, damage, spell penetration, and skill checks against them. They also receive a +2 bonus on saves against most everyone. None of these effects apply to those with the Shadow Warden binding, *shadow fighting*.

**Resistances and Immunities (Ex):** Hausmann has fire, lightning, cold, sonic, and acid resistance of 20. He is also immune to poison, disease and all third and seventh level spells (based on the level at which they're cast).

**Physical Empowering (Su):** Hausmann's nature empowers his physical body, granting him a +6 enhancement bonus to Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution.

**Spell Casting (Sp):** Hausmann can cast the following spells as a 10th level sorcerer (but use Intelligence as the basis for saving throws); all spells have their spell level in brackets and Hausmann cannot use any of those spells until his effective caster level is greater than or equal to twice the spell level; this means that he cannot cast *etherealness*, *demand*, or *weird* yet. While his effective level increases over time, the number and type of spells will not. Hausmann can use the following spells at will: *floating disk* (1), *protection from chaos* (1), *endurance* (2), *find traps* (2), *fog cloud* (2), *hold animal* (2). He may cast up to 5 spells from the following list per day: *dimensional anchor* (4), *antiplant shell* (4), *summon monster IV* (4) [1 ethereal filcher or 1d3+1 large monstrous scorpions], *wall of iron* (5), *etherealness* (6). He may also cast the following spells: *demand* (8) 1/week, *weird* (9) 1/week.

Don't try to make sense of his spell-list; Hausmann doesn't work that way. Saves against his spells have a DC of 15 + the level of the spell. Being one of the Oar he's not subject to the First World's suppression of magic.

### EDWARD KREBS

#### **Human Charismatic 5, Dream Warden 2**

#### **Medium-size Humanoid**

**Hit Dice:** 5d6+2d8+7 (39 hp)

**Massive Damage:** 12

**Action Points:** 4

**Initiative:** +2 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**Def:** 15 (+2 Dex, +3 class)

**Attacks:** Glock 17 +6 (2d6; 20/×2; PEN 3)

**Special Abilities:** Second World Background (New York); Fast-Talk (+5); Charm (+5); Favor

**Saves:** Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +4

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 15, Rep +4

**Skills:** Bluff +14, Concentration +11, Diplomacy +12, Disguise +14, Gather Information +12, Knowledge (business) +12, Knowledge (streetwise) +12, Scry +12, Sense Motive +10

**Feats:** Big City Education, Deceptive, **Dodge**, **Double-tap**, Personal Firearms Proficiency, **Point Blank Shot**, Quick Draw

**Bindings:** **Know Attack** (10/day; +2 Def), Mind Probe

**Languages:** English, Dutch, Spanish

**Challenge Rating:** 7

**Alignment:** Neutral

**Description:** Edward Krebs possesses an odd sort of weasel-Charisma. Nothing appeals about the man, but he can squirm and cower and wheedle just right to get others to do what he wants.

**Possessions:** *ring of quiet*; Glock 17 with 1 spare magazine; \$150

### AGENT STILES

#### **Human Smart 2, Fast 2 (Investigative)**

#### **Medium-size Humanoid**

**Hit Dice:** 2d6+2d8+4 (22 hp)

**Massive Damage:** 12

**Action Points:** 2

**Initiative:** +2 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**Def:** 20 (+2 armor, H4, +2 Dex, +6 class)

**Attacks:** Baton +3 (1d6; 19+/×2) or Colt Python +6 (2d6; 20/×2; PEN 3)

**Special Abilities:** Evasion; Savant (Investigate)

**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +6

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 14, Rep +1

**Skills:** Computer Use +7, Decipher Script +7, Demolitions +7, Disable Device +7, Drive +9, Investigate +11, Knowledge (civics) +7, Knowledge (earth and life sciences) +7, Move Silently +9, Repair +7, Research +7, Search +7, Sense Motive +9

**Feats:** Armor Proficiency (light), Attentive, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Personal Firearms Proficiency, **Point Blank Shot**

**Languages:** English, Spanish, Russian, Cantonese

**Challenge Rating:** 4

**Alignment:** Neutral Good

**Description:** Think of your standard no-nonsense but good-hearted investigator and you've got Agent Stiles. She works for a part of

the government that's not terribly accountable.

**Possessions:** Baton, Colt Python with 2 extra fastloaders, Light Undercover Shirt, \$50

### TYPICAL NEW YORK COP

#### **Human Tough 1, Dedicated 1 Ordinary (Law Enforcement)**

#### **Medium-size Humanoid**

**Hit Dice:** 1d10+1d6+2 (11 hp)

**Massive Damage:** 12

**Initiative:** +4 (+4 Improved Initiative)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**Def:** 15 (+3 body armor, H4, +2 class)

**Attacks:** Baton +0 (1d6; 19+/×2) or Ruger Service Six +0 (2d6; 20/×2; PEN 3)

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +2

**Abilities:** Str 11, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 10, Rep +0

**Skills:** Drive +4, Intimidate +4, Sense Motive +6, Spot +5

**Feats:** Armor Proficiency (light), Improved Initiative, Personal Firearms Proficiency

**Languages:** English, Spanish

**Challenge Rating:** 1

**Alignment:** typically lawful

**Description:** New York's finest might have a checkered past but the people walking the streets face difficulties most of us could hardly imagine.

**Possessions:** Baton, Ruger Service Six with two speed loaders, Undercover Vest, \$50

### CELEBRITY (ACTION STAR)

#### **Human Fast 1 (Entertainer)**

#### **Medium-size Humanoid**

**Hit Dice:** 1d8+1 (9 hp)

**Massive Damage:** 12

**Action Points:** 1

**Initiative:** +2 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**Def:** 15 (+2 Dex, +3 class)

**Attacks:** Fist +2 (1d6+2; 20/×2)

**Special Abilities:** Evasion

**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +2

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14, Rep +4

**Skills:** Balance +6, Bluff +6, Drive +6, Ride +6, Tumble +6

**Feats:** Brawl, Defensive Martial Arts, First World Celebrity

**Languages:** English, one other (perhaps Cantonese or German)

**Challenge Rating:** 1

**Alignment:** any

**Description:** An action star can be a lot of fun for players to fight alongside. The action star can also represent a professional athlete.

**Possessions:** \$150

### CELEBRITY (ARTISTE)

#### **Human Charismatic 1 (Entertainer)**

#### **Medium-size Humanoid**

**Hit Dice:** 1d6+1 (7 hp)

**Massive Damage:** 12

**Action Points:** 1

**Initiative:** +1 (+1 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**Def:** 11 (+1 Dex)  
**Attacks:** Fist +0 (1d3 S; 20/x2)  
**Special Abilities:** Charm (+1)  
**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +3  
**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 16, Rep +6  
**Skills:** Bluff +8, Diplomacy +10, Disguise +7, Gather Information +10, Knowledge (popular culture) +5, Perform (pick two) +8, Profession +6  
**Feats:** First World Celebrity, Presence, Trustworthy  
**Languages:** English, one other  
**Challenge Rating:** 1  
**Alignment:** any  
**Description:** This is a more serious performer. This character also works well as a love interest for a player.

**Possessions:** \$150

### HAÜSMANN'S GENERIC THÜGS

#### **Human Tough 1 Ordinary (Criminal)**

##### **Medium-size Humanoid**

**Hit Dice:** 1d10+1 (7 hp) [9 hp]

**Massive Damage:** 12 [16]

**Initiative:** +4 (+4 Improved Initiative)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**Def:** 11 (+1 class)

**Attacks:** Fist +3 (1d6+2 NL; 20/x2), Knife +2 (1d4+2; 19+/x2), or Colt M1911 +0 (2d6; 20/x2; PEN 3)

**Saves:** Fort +2 [+4], Ref +0, Will +0

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 11, Con 12 [16], Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11, Rep +0

**Skills:** Drive +4, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (streetwise) +4

**Feats:** Brawl, Improved Initiative, Personal Firearms Proficiency

**Languages:** English

**Challenge Rating:** 1/2

**Alignment:** neutral evil

**Description:** These are the cheap tough guys that hang out in bars and on street corners. They'd much rather just scare someone into giving up their cash than actually fight for it. Unless they're in a bad mood, in which case they like to do both.

**Possessions:** Knife, Colt M1911 with one spare 7 round magazine, \$20, *Endurance* spell

### GREGOR SCHINSKY

#### **Human Tough 3 Ordinary (Criminal)**

##### **Medium-size Humanoid**

**Hit Dice:** 3d10+3 (24 hp) [30 hp]

**Massive Damage:** 12 [16]

**Initiative:** +4 (+4 Improved Initiative)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**Def:** 13 (+1 Dex, +2 class)

**Attacks:** Fist +5 (1d6+2 NL; 20/x2), Knife +4 (1d4+2; 19+/x2), or Colt Python +3 (2d6; 20/x2; PEN 3)

**Saves:** Fort +3 [+5], Ref +2, Will +1

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12 [16], Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 9, Rep +1

**Skills:** Drive +8, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (streetwise) +7

**Feats:** Brawl, Improved Initiative, Personal Firearms Proficiency,

##### **Point Blank Shot**

**Languages:** English

**Challenge Rating:** 2

**Alignment:** neutral evil

**Description:** Shinsky backs other thugs off with a stare then goes about his business. He can probably duck the first shot from a pistol but, like everyone else in the First World, recognizes that gunfights require luck as well as skill to survive.

**Possessions:** Knife, Colt Python with 20 extra rounds in pocket, \$50, *Endurance* spell

### TEAD GANG TOUGH

#### **Human Tough 2 Ordinary (Criminal)**

##### **Medium-size Humanoid**

**Hit Dice:** 2d10 (11 hp)

**Massive Damage:** 12

**Initiative:** +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**Def:** 13 (+1 Dex, +2 class)

**Attacks:** Fist +4 (1d6+2 NL; 20/x2) or Knife +4 (1d4+2; 19+/x2)

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +1, Will -1

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 11, Rep +0

**Skills:** Drive +6, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (streetwise) +5

**Feats:** Brawl, Confident, Improved Initiative

**Languages:** English

**Challenge Rating:** 1

**Alignment:** neutral evil

**Possessions:** Knife, \$20

### HAÜSMANN'S TOUGH THÜGS

#### **Human Tough 2 Ordinary (Criminal)**

##### **Medium-size Humanoid**

**Hit Dice:** 2d10+2 (13 hp) [17 hp]

**Massive Damage:** 12 [16]

**Initiative:** +4 (+4 Improved Initiative)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**Def:** 12 (+2 class)

**Attacks:** Fist +4 (1d6+2 NL; 20/x2), Knife +3 (1d4+2; 19+/x2), or Colt M1911 +1 (2d6; 20/x2; PEN 3)

**Saves:** Fort +3 [+5], Ref +0, Will +0

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 11, Con 12 [16], Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11, Rep +0

**Skills:** Drive +5, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (streetwise) +5

**Feats:** Brawl, Improved Initiative, Personal Firearms Proficiency

**Languages:** English

**Challenge Rating:** 1

**Alignment:** neutral evil

**Possessions:** Knife, Colt M1911 with one spare 7 round magazine, \$20, *Endurance* spell

### NPC STATBLOCKS

**Tead Gang Member:** CR 1/2; Size M; HD 1d10; hp 6; Mas 12; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; Def 12 (12 Touch); BAB +0; Melee Fist +3 (1d6+2 NL), or Melee Knife +2 (1d4+2, 19+/x2); AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Drive +5, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (streetwise) +4; Brawl, Confident, Improved Initiative.

**Tead Gang Tough:** CR 1; Size M; HD 2d10; hp 11; Mas 12; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; Def 13 (13 Touch); BAB +1; Melee Fist +4 (1d6+2 NL), or Melee Knife +3 (1d4+2, 19+/x2); AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9,

Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Drive +6, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (street-wise) +5; Brawl, Confident, Improved Initiative.

**Hausmann's Generic Thugs:** CR 1/2; Size M; HD 1d10+1; hp 7 [9]; Mas 12 [16]; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; Def 11 (11 Touch); BAB +0; Melee Fist +3 (1d6+2 NL), Melee Knife +2 (1d4+2, 19+/ $\times$ 2), or Colt M1911 +0 (2d6, PEN 3); AL NE; SV Fort +2 [+4], Ref +0, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 11, Con 12 [16], Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Drive +4, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (street-wise) +4; Brawl, Improved Initiative, Personal Firearms Proficiency.

**Hausmann's Tough Thugs:** CR 1; Size M; HD 2d10+2; hp 13 [17]; Mas 12 [16]; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; Def 12 (12 Touch); BAB +1; Melee Fist +4 (1d6+2 NL), Melee Knife +3 (1d4+2, 19+/ $\times$ 2), or Colt M1911 +1 (2d6, PEN 3); AL NE; SV Fort +3 [+5], Ref +0, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 11, Con 12 [16], Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Drive +5, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (street-wise) +5; Brawl, Improved Initiative, Personal Firearms Proficiency.

## MONSTER STATBLOCKS

**Roa Intruder:** CR 7; Size L; HD 8d8+24; HP 63; Mas 21; Init +1; Spd 40 ft; Def 20 (10 touch); BAB +8; Melee Bite +12/+7 (1d12+4), Melee Slam +12 (1d8+4); SA Improved Grab; SQ Damage Reduction 10/+1, Ringing teeth, Fast Healing 3, SR 18; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 12

**Skills and Feats:** Hide +9, Listen +8, Move Silently +3, Spot +9, Search +8, Sense Motive +9; Power Attack, Improved Bull Rush, Sunder

**Small fire elemental:** CR 1; Size S; HD 2d8; hp 9; Init +5; Spd 50 ft.; Def 15 (12 Touch); BAB +3; Melee Slam +3 (1d4 and 1d4 fire); SA Burn; SQ Elemental, fire subtype; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +4, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Listen +5, Spot +5; Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse.

**Medium fire elemental:** CR 3; Size M; HD 4d8+8; hp 26; Init +7; Spd 50 ft.; Def 16 (13 Touch); BAB +5; Melee Slam +6 (1d6 + 1 and 1d6 fire); SA Burn; SQ Elemental, fire subtype; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Listen +7, Spot +7; Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse.

**Ethereal filcher:** CR 3; Size M; HD 5d8; hp 22; Mas 11; Init +8; Spd 40 ft.; Def 17 (14 Touch); BAB +3; Melee Bite +3 (1d4); SQ Ethereal jaunt, detect magic; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 7, Wis 12, Cha 10.

**Skills and Feats:** Listen +8, Pick Pocket +12, Spot +8; Improved Initiative.

**Monstrous Scorpion, Large; Large monstrous scorpion:** CR 2; Size L; HD 4d8+8; hp 26; Mas 19; Init +0; Spd 50 ft.; AC 14 (9 Touch); BAB +2; Melee Claws +5/+5 (1d6 + 3), Sting +0 (1d6

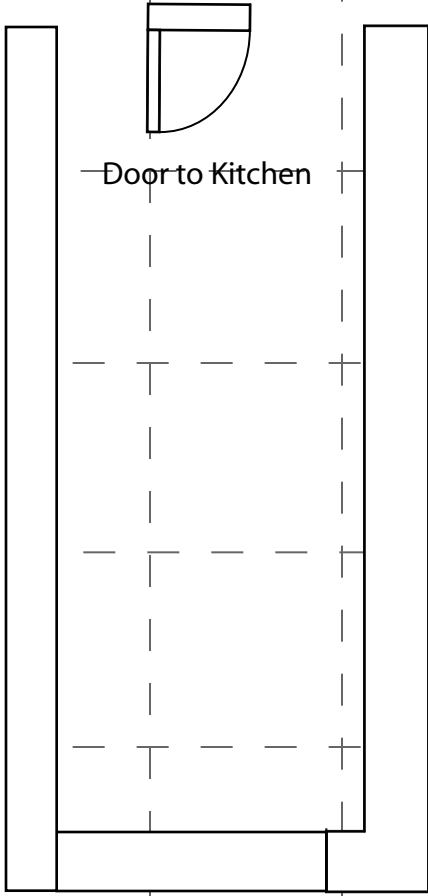
+ 1 and poison); SA Improved grab, squeeze, poison (DC 18, 1d6 Str); SQ Vermin; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 17, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 0, Wis 10, Cha 2.

**Skills and Feats:** Climb +11, Hide +3, Spot +7; Improved Grab, Poison.

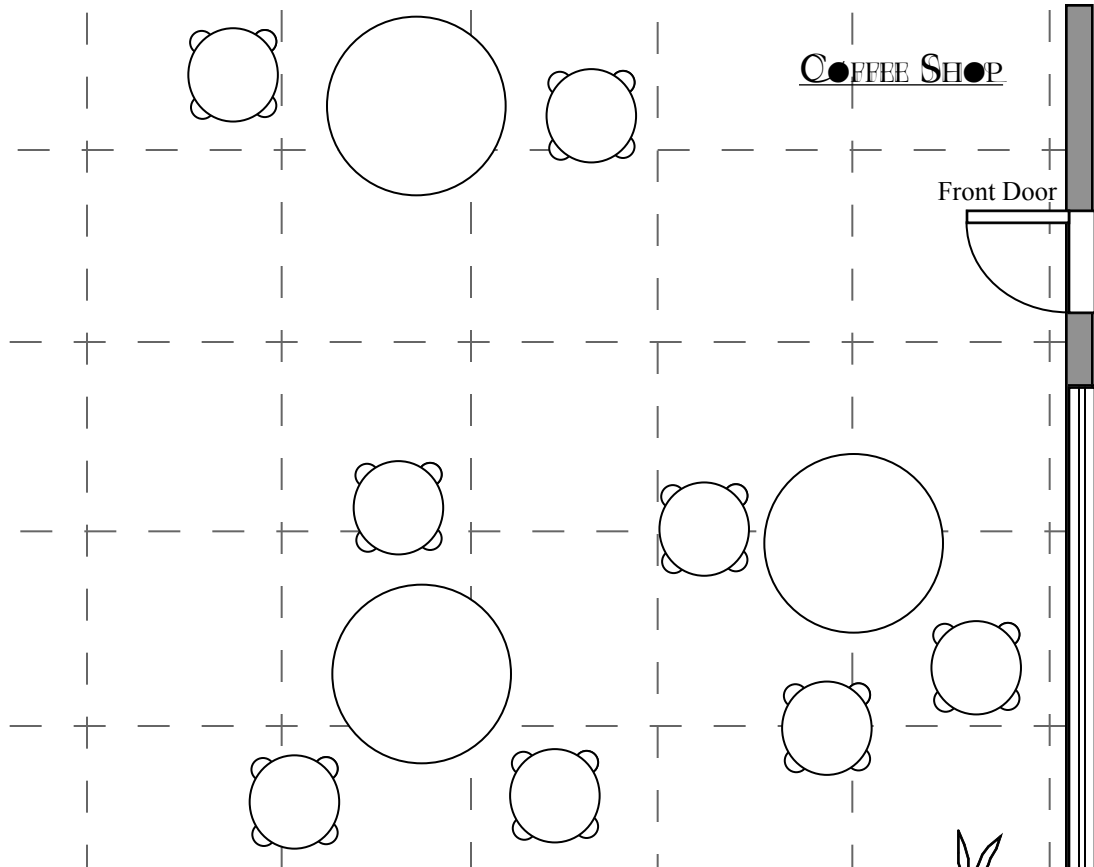
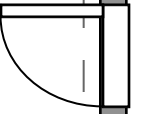




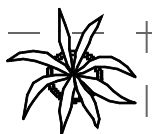
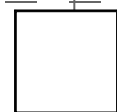
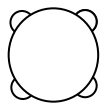
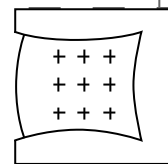
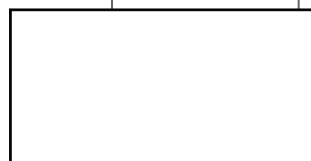
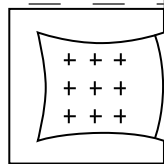
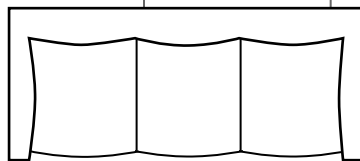
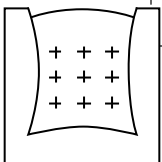
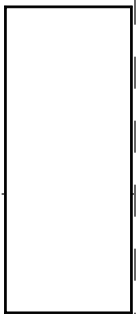
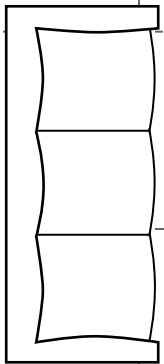
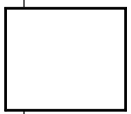
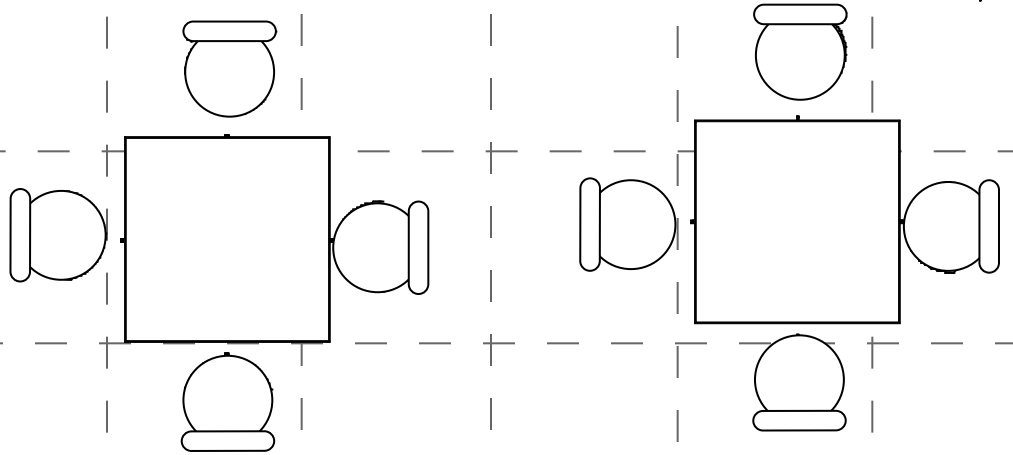
COFFEE SHOP



Front Door

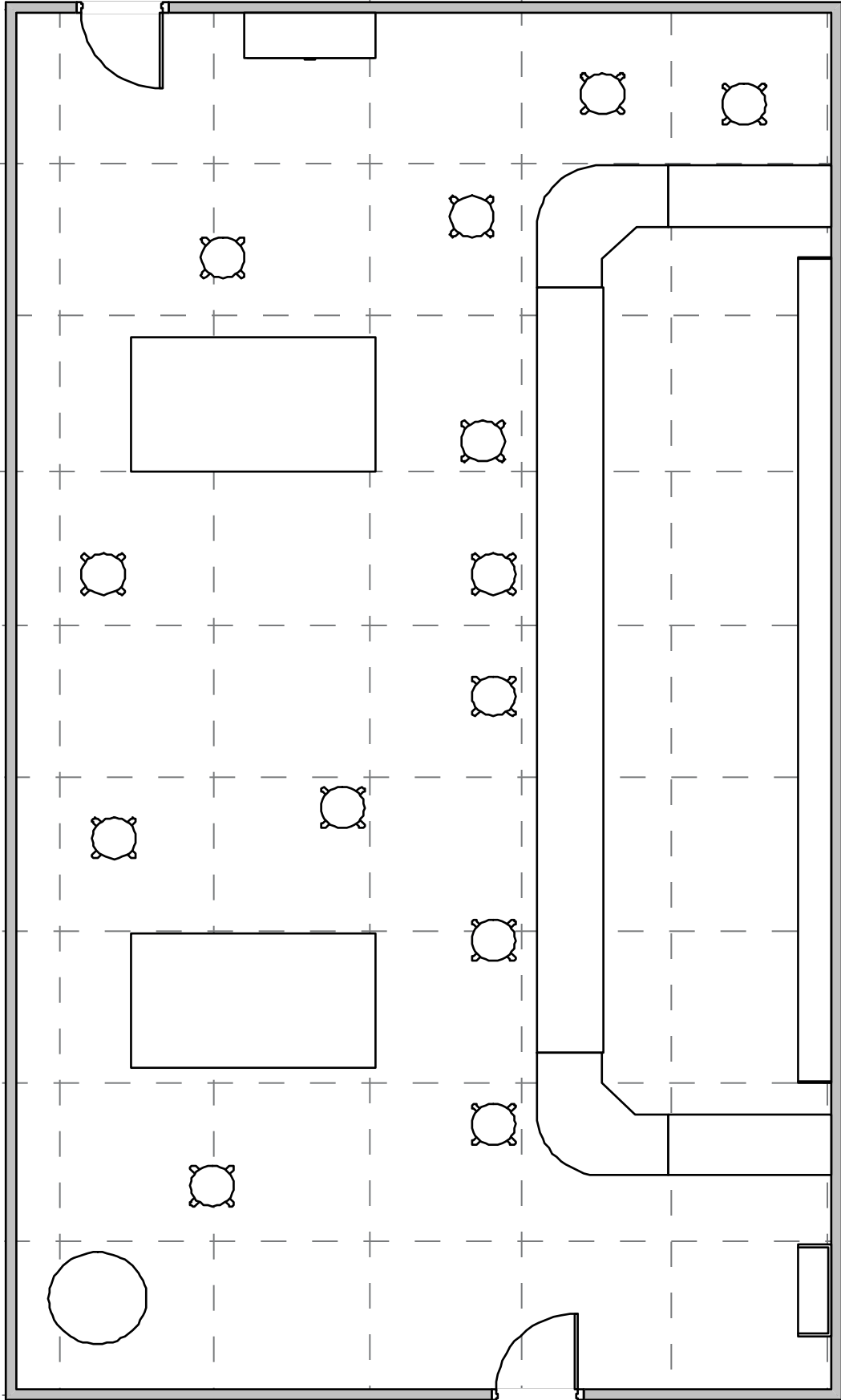


Door to Restroom



Restroom

Pool Hall



Front Door

Name	Attacks	Def	Specials	Saves			Skills			Initiative Bonus	Actual	HP	Damage Taken	
				F	R	W	Spot	Listen						
Harrison	Great sword +18/+13 (2d6+11; 19+/x2)	29	Sharpen 10/day	+11	+4	+6	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	84	
Sally Chen	Pistol +5 (2d6; PEN 3)	17	Point Blank Shot; Def. Martial Arts	+1	+6	+2	+1	+1	+1	+6	(25)		21	
Uncle Carl	spells	12	Spell Pen +10	+0	+1	+7	+2	+2	+2	+3	(20)		12	
Gary Tead	Knife +4 (1d4+2 19+/x2), Pistol +3 (2d6; PEN 3)	14	Point Blank Shot; Power Attack	+3	+1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+1	(15)		19	
Krebs	Pistol +6 (2d6; PEN 3)	15	Point Blank Shot; Double-tap; Dodge; Know Attack	+4	+5	+4	+0	+0	+0	+2	(9)		39	
Intruder	Bite +12/+7 (1d12+4), or Slam +12 (1d8+4)	20	Improved Grab, DR 10/+1, Ringing Teeth, Fast Healing 3, SR 18; Power Attack, Improved Bull Rush, Sunder	+9	+7	+6	+9	+8	+1	(21)			63	
Tead Gang 1	Knife +2 (1d4+2; 19+/x2)	12		+2	+1	-1	-1	-1	+5				6	
Tead Gang 2	Knife +2 (1d4+2; 19+/x2)	12		+2	+1	-1	-1	-1	+5				6	
Torzano	Fist +4 (1d6+2 NL)	13	Dodge, Def. Martial Arts	+3	+2	+2	+2	+2	+2	+2			9	
Small Fire Elemental	Slam +3 (1d4 +1d4 fire)	15	Burn	+0	+4	+0	+5	+5	+5				9	
	Players and Allies													
Schinsky	Pistol +3 (2d6; PEN 3)	13	Point Blank Shot	+3	+2	+1	+0	+0	+0	+4			24	
Generic Thug	Pistol +0 (2d6; PEN 3)	11	Brawl	+2	+0	+0	+0	+0	+4				7	
Generic Thug	Pistol +0 (2d6; PEN 3)	11	Brawl	+2	+0	+0	+0	+0	+4				7	
Generic Thug	Pistol +0 (2d6; PEN 3)	11	Brawl	+2	+0	+0	+0	+0	+4				7	
Generic Thug	Pistol +0 (2d6; PEN 3)	11	Brawl	+2	+0	+0	+0	+0	+4				7	
Generic Thug	Pistol +0 (2d6; PEN 3)	11	Brawl	+2	+0	+0	+0	+0	+4				7	

## APPENDIX: LEGAL NOTICE

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