

D Penny dreadful

— NYTHERA —

THROUGH THE BREACH

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The Fatemaster's Almanac
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NYTHERA

OR

THE POLITICAL RAMIFICATIONS
OF THE DISCOVERY OF NEVERBORN
RUINS FOR THE CITY OF MALIFAUX

DPenny
Dreadful

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CREDITS

WRITING & DESIGN

Mason Crawford

ADDITIONAL DESIGN

Aaron Darland

EDITING

Brandi Edgmon

CREATIVE DIRECTION

Nathan Caroland

TTB LOGO ARTIST

Patrick Guinane

ART

Hardy Fowler, Jorge Gomez & Bram 'Boco' Sels

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Jorge Gomez

LAYOUT

Aaron Darland

PLAYTESTERS

Anthony Hicks, Paul Lippincott, and the Fatemasters of the Nythera Event.

Thank you all!



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INTRODUCTION

Nythera is a Penny Dreadful adventure supplement for the *Through the Breach* RPG. Unlike other Penny Dreadful adventures, the *Nythera* Penny Dreadful unfolded in tandem with the 2015 Worldwide *Through the Breach* Event. This allowed the players - such as yourself! - to influence the story and, with it, the destiny of Malifaux itself.

This adventure consists of four Acts, each one encompassing one to two play sessions. Twelve pre-generated characters have been provided for the players to control during these adventures, but the adventure will still play out just fine if the players decide to use characters of their own creation.

Over the course of this adventure, the Fated will find themselves entangled in the hype over the discovery of *Nythera* in the Badlands. Caught between the various factions of Malifaux City, the Fated will play an integral part in *Nythera*'s destiny... and it in their own.

From the dark alleys of Malifaux City to the cracked plains of the Badlands to the magical ruins of *Nythera* itself, this adventure will take the Fated on an epic journey across Malifaux and give them the chance to forever change the face of the world. The Fated will come into contact with some of the most powerful people within Malifaux, and their interactions and relationships with these larger-than-life personalities form the driving force of the adventure.

This adventure includes all the rules and stats you need to run this adventure. As a result, the only other book you truly need to use this supplement is the *Fated Almanac*.

As this is a Penny Dreadful, if you are not a Fatemaster who plans on running this adventure, read no further. You wouldn't want to spoil the surprise!

CONTENTS

This book is divided into five chapters. Each chapter focuses on a different aspect of the multipart adventure.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This is the current chapter. It provides some information on this supplement, how to best use it, and an overall summary of the adventure.

CHAPTER 2: ADVENTURE

The adventure makes up the bulk of *Nythera*. Each Act is presented individually and is intended to be played over one to two game sessions.

CHAPTER 3: PEOPLE

This chapter provides descriptions, details, and stat blocks for the various people the Fated will meet over the course of their journey.

CHAPTER 5: FATED CHARACTERS

This chapter contains pregenerated characters the players can use to play through *Nythera*. These characters are designed to work well with the adventure and were part of the 2015 *Global Through the Breach* Event, but *Nythera* will still work just fine if your players create their own creatures to play through the adventure!

APPENDICES

These appendices provide Tarot Tie-ins and a new Advanced Pursuit option for the players.

----- CALL OUT BOXES -----

There are many call out boxes like this one scattered throughout the adventure.

These boxes have two main functions. Boxes like this one highlight rules or special notes for the Fatemaster.

Boxes like the box on the right are used to show dialogue or description. They are intended to be read by the Fatemaster aloud to the players. Be careful, though; some are only intended to be read if the Fated take certain actions or are successful at certain challenges.



"Yeah, I was there." The drifter sighs, his shoulders slumping at the admission. "It only lasted a moment, and I still don't know how I lived through it. There was only the one Ortega, but she was so fast with that gun of hers..." He shakes his head. "Two of the bandits were dead before they even realized she had drawn on them."

His gaze becomes distant as the memory comes back to him. "It was a ballet of death."





ADVENTURE

The adventure for *Nythera* is comprised of four Acts, each divided into its own section. Each Act is designed to play out over the course of one or two sessions but can be lengthened and supplemented with side quests or additional encounters to create a longer campaign. For example, Act III could easily be divided into multiple sessions.

Fatemasters are encouraged to read the "Adventure" and "Complications" chapters in advance to get the feel of the adventure. In this way, they'll be better able to adapt the story if the Fated are having an easier or harder time of things (or if they start taking actions that are not anticipated by the adventure, which always seems to happen sooner or later).

Keep in mind that all of the information provided here is a guide, and Fatemasters are encouraged to change whatever details they wish in order to give their players a story unique to their campaigns.

TAROT TIE INS

There are different Tarot Tie-In options for the Fatemaster in the Appendix (page 147). These can be used (or not) at your discretion and are provided mainly as an inspiration for tying the destiny steps of the Fated into the story.

Each Tarot option provided is linked to a specific Act and references the events that unfold during that part of the adventure.

PREGENERATED CHARACTERS

Nythera was originally designed as an adventure for the 2015 Global *Through the Breach* Event. The adventure was intended to be used in conjunction with pregenerated characters, which we've included on page 131. Feel free to use these characters as you see fit; the adventure should unfold just fine regardless of whether your players use these pregenerated characters or play through with characters of their own design.

ACT I:

PROLOGUE

Nythera begins with the characters having been arrested by the Guild for a serious crime. Exactly what that crime might be is unimportant; they might have been framed by an enemy, or maybe it's all a misunderstanding that could have been cleared up if anyone had bothered to listen to the character's explanation. Of course, it's also possible that the Fated are simply guilty of whatever crime they've been charged with.

Whether because of the severity of the crime or simply because the Fated had a bad lawyer or the judge was in a foul mood that morning, the Fated are sentenced to death by hanging. They're stripped of their possessions, tossed into a small cell, and kept under watch until the next morning, when they're marched out toward the Hanging Tree and their "final justice."

I'M NOT A CRIMINAL!

If you want to take a slightly different approach to getting the Fated involved in the adventure, you could choose to have them be contacted by Klassen and Dohman in a more traditional manner. In this case, the Fated will serve either as fellow Guild Agents working to uncover the secrets of Nythera (if they have Guild connections) or as independent contractors who can investigate the matter without drawing undue suspicion (if they are unaffiliated with the Guild).

Making this change will require that a few other changes are made elsewhere in the adventure, most notably to the prologues of Acts I and II and to how Kirai learns of the Fated's investigation of Nythera at the adventure's beginning.

HANG 'EM HIGH

The Fated are all being marched out of their prison in Malifaux City towards the Hanging Tree, where they are scheduled to be hanged. None of the characters have any weapons or equipment other than the clothes on their back, and they're being guarded well enough to make escape unlikely.

Read the following text to the players:



The morning is dark and cold as you're pulled out of your holding cell and pushed into the street, alongside several other prisoners of the Guild. You can see your own weariness reflected in their tired faces; it doesn't seem like anyone got a good night's sleep. Then again, considering the circumstances, perhaps you shouldn't be surprised.

The guards bind your hands with rough rope and shove you into line as they move on to prisoner behind you. Sensing his chance for freedom, a scruffy man at the front of the line makes a break for it. His tattered longcoat flutters behind him like a banner as he darts for the nearest alley, only to tumble to the ground as a gunshot rings out from the rooftop above you.

One of the nearby guards checks his pocket watch. "Two and a half minutes. I'm under." The two guards nearest him grumble and pull out handfuls of wadded bills, which they hand over to the winner of their bet. When he notices you watching, he tucks the scrip into his pocket and pats in with a gloved hand. "There's always a runner," he explains.

One of the guards walks over to the fallen man, draws her gun, and shoots him twice in the back of the head to make certain that he's dead.



Once the Fated have had their hands bound, the guards will start marching them north towards the Hanging Tree. Read the following text:



The march through the city is long and somber. The wind is cold and biting, and by the time you've reached the northern gates, you can see the sun beginning to rise in the east. For some reason, you can't help but think of it as your last sunrise, and that feeling settles in your gut like a box of stones.

As you leave the city behind you, the twisted, sinister outline of the Hanging Tree becomes visible against the lightening sky. There are two bodies swaying from its branches, and above them, an empty noose where the infamous Jack Daw used to hang. Each step brings you closer to the tree and the death it represents, and despite yourself, you can't seem to look away from it. A small woman in a white kimono lingers near the fence surrounding the tree, no doubt the wife or sister of someone murdered by one of the prisoners.

Just then, the unnerving march is interrupted by a shrill whistle. The guards stop the march and raise their weapons in expectation of an ambush, but they lower them with groans of annoyance as they catch sight of the figure running towards them. He's wearing a rumpled suit and sporting a five-o'clock shadow that makes him look ruggedly handsome.

The guard nearest you swears under her breath. "It's one of McCabe's lackeys. Just shoot him." The man next to her sighs as he lowers his gun. "Too much paperwork. Let's see what this is all about."



The disheveled man is Howard Klassen, an uncouth good-for-nothing with too much time and money on his hands to be bothered with the burdens of regular employment. He's currently serving as an unofficial Guild agent underneath the poorly defined duties of Lucas McCabe. McCabe's position amongst the Guild is vague, but he's been given enough authority to countermand certain orders... such as the execution orders of the Fated. Needless to say, this tends to annoy the much more organized Guild Guard to no end.

GHOSTLY STALKERS

Kirai Ankoku, a Resurrectionist with unprecedented control over the spirits of the departed, had been quietly waiting for the Fated to be hanged so that she could enslave their spirits to her will; she is the woman in white that the Fated noticed lingering near the Hanging Tree. When the Fated receive their pardon, she grows curious about what's happening and sends one of her spirits to follow the Fated and spy upon them. As the adventure progresses, she watches the Fated through the spirit's eyes and learns about their search for Philip.

Kirai's spy doesn't have any significant effect upon the plot until Scene 3, but if you wish to have the Fated occasionally catch glimpses of the spirit in mirrors or hear faint whispers when they're alone, it will provide some fun foreshadowing for the eventual reveal of the ghost's presence.

Read the following text:



The man stops in front of you, breathing heavily as he flashes you a mischievous smirk. "Hello there, darlings." He turns to the guards, reaches into his coat, and produces a rolled up and slightly crumpled scroll. "By the order of Lucas McCabe, I'm going to be borrowing a few of this lot, if'n you don't mind."

One of the guards snatches the scroll from him and unfurls it as the man turns back to you. "Howard Klassen, at yer service." He tips his hat in greeting. "So, who wants to skip this whole execution business and come have a drink?"



If the Fated volunteer to go with Klassen, he'll have the guards cut their hands free before leading them back towards town. If the Fated decide to pass on his offer, he shrugs his shoulders and takes those that did volunteer with him back to town. The Fated who passed up their opportunity for salvation are marched the rest of the way to the Hanging Tree, where they are promptly hanged upon its twisted branches.

ACT I, SCENE 1:

REPRIEVE FROM DEATH

Klassen leads the Fated to the Rusty Bucket, a small tavern that lies a few blocks from the northern gate. It's closed due to the early hour, but he just walks right in and motions for the Fated to join him. Inside, there's another man, bald and mustached, standing behind a large crate containing the items the Fated had on them before they were arrested. He'll give them back to the Fated once Klassen has told the Fated what the Guild wants them to do.

Read the following text to the players:



Klassen pulls up a chair at a nearby table, turning it around backwards as he sits down. "Welcome to our lovely office," he chuckles. "This 'ere is Gervas Dohman, my partner." The bald man nods his head towards you as he's mentioned.

"The two of us," Klassen continues, drawing the conversation back to him, "are engaged in the business of doing bad things for good reasons. From your arrest reports, we think that makes us people of similar minds." He motions to Dohman, who hands you a manila folder. Inside it are a few dozen typed reports and some blurry black-and-white photographs of a towering structure that looks like a dead spider, spindly legs curled up towards the sky.

"This 'ere," Klassen explains, tapping one of the photographs with his finger, "is what the Neverborn apparently call Nythera. It's a big, scary place way down south in the Badlands, and it's got this whole city buzzing like a nest of hornets." He flashes you a wide grin. "And in exchange for savin' your lives, we want you to help us gather some information about it, all smart- and secret-like."



Klassen will go on to explain that the Guild doesn't know very much about Nythera, but that everything they do know is in those reports. At this point, the Fated can attempt TN 13 Scrutiny Challenges. On a success, the Fated realizes that Klassen is holding some information back, and if they call him on it, he's impressed that the Fated could tell that he was lying.

He'll go on to reveal that Nythera had a sister portal - Kythera - that was opened a few years ago by the Arcanists and Resurrectionists. He's only glanced at the reports, but it seemed pretty bad - "widespread eradication of all life in Malifaux as the personification of death was unleashed into the world" bad - up until Dr. Ramos, the leader of the Miners and Steamfitters Union, showed up piloting a titanic construct and blew Kythera into pieces.

That's part of the reason everyone is interested in Nythera - whatever power it contains, it's likely to be on a scale that human minds find difficult to comprehend.

A FOLDER OF DOCUMENTS

If any of the Fated look through the Nythera documents, they can attempt TN 10 Literacy Challenges. On a success, they realize that there are two sets of reports in the folder. The first are mostly grainy photographs and interviews with Pete Garrett, the Soulstone prospector who discovered the ruins. According to the reports, he returned to Malifaux City and attempted to file a mining claim, which earned him a few hours of interrogation at the hands of the Witch Hunters before the Elite Division intervened and took Garrett into custody. His current whereabouts are listed as "unknown."

The second set of reports has been transcribed from "Philip Tombers' Journal." A large number of the sections have been redacted by order of the Elite Division, but the remaining pages speak of a scar-shaped rent that holds "great turmoil and danger."

Tombers also made some rough translations from the language of the Neverborn that suggest that Nythera holds "the Queen's bloody salvation" and makes references to another paper he is in the process of writing that holds more information on the subject. That paper is not included in the folder.

BRING ME THE HEAD OF PHILIP TOMBERS

Once the Fated have had the opportunity to look over the folder (or not), Klassen will brief them on the specifics of their mission. Read or paraphrase the following:



“Right, so, here’s the rub: most of the information we have on Nythera came to us from Philip Tombers, an archeologist who had the misfortune of seeing one of the multitude of terrible things out in the world that can drive a man crazy.”

“Shattered his mind,” the Dohman adds, earning a nod of agreement from Klassen.

“Like a pane of glass. Anyways, it really didn’t bother him for too long, cause someone came along and cut off poor Tombers’ head.” Klassen runs a finger along his neck. “Course, ol’ Tombers was having a bit of bad luck that day and some Rezzet went ahead and brought ‘im right back as a talking, undead head.” He grins a bit wider.

“And if Tombers can still talk, that means we can interrogate him, can’t we? So that’s what we need you lovely creatures to do for us. Find the head of this Phillip Tombers and bring it back ‘ere so that we can shake whatever bits of knowledge we can outta the blasted thing.”

“Do that for us, and the Guild will forget about all those little crimes you committed.” Klassen leans forward, sliding a photograph across the table. In the picture, a pale woman with long hair is ducking down a dark alleyway.

“That’s Maura Connell, suspected Resurrectionist and fiery redhead, though you can’t tell either by the picture. Word on the street is that she’s become Philip’s right hand lady, now that he doesn’t have any hands of his own. Last we knew she was living down in the Howling Slums; I put the address on the back of the photograph. That’s probably your best lead.”



With that, Klassen will motion to Dohman and allow the Fated to retrieve their equipment and weapons from the crate he’s guarding. If any of the Fated attempt to talk the two men out of any further resources, have the character make a TN 10 Barter Challenge.

On a success, Klassen rolls his eyes, pulls out his wallet, and peels off five scrip of bills. “There you go,” he says. “Don’t spend it all at the same tavern.”

On a failure, he’ll just laugh and remind the character that they have their lives, and that they should be grateful for it.

ACT I, SCENE 2:

THE HOWLING SLUMS

The Howling Slums are a neighborhood in the Riverfront District, located along the southern bank of the river. Maura Connell's address is written on the back of the photograph Klassen gave them, and the Fated can track down the building without too much trouble.

Read the following text when they do so:



It's not too difficult to find the house matching the address written on the back of the photograph. It proves to be a two-story brick townhouse with an exaggerated front porch. The bricks have been stained with soot, lending it a dingy feel, but the bright yellow curtains hanging in the windows suggest that the interior is at least well-kept.

A young boy of perhaps eight years is lying down on his stomach across the porch, a battered school book stretched out in front of him. He's diligently reading the text, but his expression is one of utter boredom.



The boy is Neil Olson, son of Roger and Kathrine Olson. If the Fated attempt to speak with Neil, he'll be excited for any chance to get away from his schoolwork and will answer the Fated's questions to the best of his ability (though he doesn't know much).

He knows Maura Connell, though he thinks she is "a bit spooky."

After a few moments, Kathrine Olson will step out onto the porch to see what's distracted her son this time. Read the following text:



"Neil!" An overworked woman appears in the door of the house, looking cross. "How many times have I..."

When she notices you, her annoyance at her son disappears, leaving caution in its place. "Ah, good morning. Can I help you with something?"



If the Fated ask Kathrine about Maura Connell or show her the photograph, she will snort and say "Oh, that one." She'll explain that Maura had been living on the second floor until two days ago, when some men from the Smedley's Asylum showed up on her doorstep, informed her that Connell had been committed, and asked to collect a few of her things (which Kathrine allowed).



If the Fated wish to examine Maura's rooms, they can attempt a TN 9 Bewitch, Convince, Deceive, or Intimidate Challenge to convince Kathrine to let them inside. On a success, she leads the Fated up the steps to the second floor. Maura's rooms have been ransacked: drawers are pulled open, furniture has been cut open with knives and its stuffing pulled out, and rumpled clothing and loose papers cover the floor. This chaos has nothing to do with Philip or Nythera; this is just standard operating procedure for the employees of Smedley's Asylum (they get a bit too enthusiastic in their duties sometimes).

The Fated can attempt to search the room if they wish; Kathrine waits right outside the door, but otherwise doesn't object to them taking anything they find with them. As far as Kathrine is concerned, Maura Connell is a crazy woman who won't be back anytime soon. Searching the room requires a TN 9 Notice Challenge. For each success or Margin of Success, the Fated find one of the following bits of information (in the following order):

- A black-and-white photograph of a small child propped up in a coffin, with a somber Maura Connell standing beside it. Both are surrounded by numerous flower arrangements. (This is a photograph of Maura alongside her dead son, Wilbur. If the Fated take it with them, it will help them in Scene 3 when they speak with Maura in the Asylum).
- One of the Fated glances into the bathroom mirror and notices a dead man with a missing eye and a gaping mouth hovering behind them. When they spin around, the man is gone. (This is one of the spirits Kirai has instructed to follow the Fated. It's still nearby, but it will stay out of sight until it reappears in Scene 3).
- A stack of loose papers describing various necromantic rituals. (This is a Grimoire containing the Raise Undead and Elemental Engulf Magia, and the Increased Damage, Terror, and Reduce AP Immuto. It takes a Fated about an hour of study to gain access to these spells.)
- An Aethervox, a device that functions similar to a radio. If the Fated turn it on, it tunes in to one of the Guild's news broadcasts, which mentions the discovery of Nythera in the Badlands and describes it as "an interesting archeological discovery." The Guild's propaganda machine is downplaying Nythera's discovery quite a bit.
- A half-full bottle of strong whiskey. (Not relevant to the adventure, but booze is booze.)



If the Fated inquire as to the location of Smedley's Asylum, Kathrine Olson will mention that they gave her a business card "in case any of your loved ones find themselves in need of psychiatric care." It lists their address in the Central Slums and bears the motto "Service with a Smile!"

If the Fated don't ask Kathrine Olson about the Asylum, it takes about half an hour of asking around before they're finally able to get directions.

ACT I, SCENE 3:

SMEDLEY'S ASYLUM

Smedley's Asylum has only been in operation for a little over a year. The Asylum's proprietor, Dr. Ian Smedley, had intended for his institution to handle the overflow from the Guild's perpetually overcrowded asylum, but just before he opened the asylum's doors to the public, the Guild pulled his funding and instead chose to back the Blackwater Home for Mental Healing, which was much larger and more progressive in the treatment of its patients.

Dr. Smedley's attempts to block the opening of the rival asylum came to an abrupt end when he was discovered dead in his home, the victim of obvious suicide. Between Smedley's death and the lack of funding, it was assumed that Smedley's Asylum would have to shut its doors before it ever opened them, but those skeptics did not count upon the determination of Dr. Stanley Grimwell.

Dr. Grimwell opened the asylum despite the lack of patients, funding, or staff beyond his single assistant, Emily Heartsbane. Clients were initially scarce, but they eventually began to collect patients just by virtue of their location; the Malifaux Asylum and the Blackwater Home for Mental Healing were located on the western side of the city, but Smedley's Asylum was in the Central Slums, making it a much more convenient drop-off point for crazies discovered in the eastern districts of the city. Dr. Grimwell's experiments upon his first patients gave him the staff he needed to keep his asylum running at full efficiency, and since then business has been steady.

Smedley's Asylum isn't really seen as the sort of place one goes for treatment; it does cure people from time to time, but Dr. Grimwell's treatments are extremely painful and invasive: electroshock and hydro-therapy (essentially controlled near-drownings) are common, and Dr. Grimwell is fond of giving his patients lobotomies to curb their more violent behavior (such as trying to avoid having a lobotomy). If a particularly interesting case presents itself, Dr. Grimwell will sometimes pick around in his patient's brain in an attempt to "fix" them, often with mixed results. In short, Smedley's Asylum is a terrible place to visit and an even worse place to be a patient.



VISITING HOURS

When the Fated arrive at Smedley's Asylum, read the following text:



Smedley's Asylum consists of a central administrative tower with four two-story wards stretching out to either side of it. The buildings are constructed of red sandstone and brick, and a tall wrought iron fence surrounds the entire complex. Surprisingly, the gate is open when you arrive, despite the handful of patients in white uniforms who are wandering around aimlessly in the fenced-in area. Each one seems to be partially confused and distanced from reality, but as you get closer, the jagged surgical scars that run across their shaved heads offer an unpleasant explanation for their behavior.



The patients in the yard are docile and uncommunicative; if the Fated attempt to speak with them, they will just stare ahead blankly and mumble incoherent words. A few of the patients are loosely clinging to gardening implements such as trowels and rakes; they've been put outside so that they can help care for the facility's (mostly nonexistent) lawn.

When the Fated approach the building, they're greeted at the door by the Asylum's chief psychiatrist, Dr. Stanley Grimwell. Read the following text:



There's a man waiting to greet you as you approach the Asylum's arched doors, but he doesn't do much to inspire confidence in the Asylum or its methods. He's dressed simply enough, in black pants, white shirt, and a tie, with a long white coat thrown over all of it. His clothing is dirty and ruffled, however, and his chest and hands are splattered with fresh bloodstains.

Even more alarming is the man's visage: an iron plate – complete with glass viewports – has been bolted over his eyes, almost like a permanent mask. His lips are pulled back in a grin so wide that you can see his exposed gums, and there are even a few splatters of blood on his teeth.

Before you can do much more than stare in horror, the nightmare of a man has stepped towards you and stuck out his blood-splattered hand in the offer of a handshake. "Welcome to Smedley's Asylum! I'm Dr. Stanley Grimwell, the chief psychiatrist here at the facility. Are you looking to commit someone today?"



Dr. Grimwell is quite happy to see the Fated and quite happy to help them with whatever they need. In fact, the good doctor is always happy, as can be evidenced by the fact that he never stops smiling. Since all of his smiles are wide grins that make him seem like a crazy person, this habit tends to become disturbing pretty quickly.

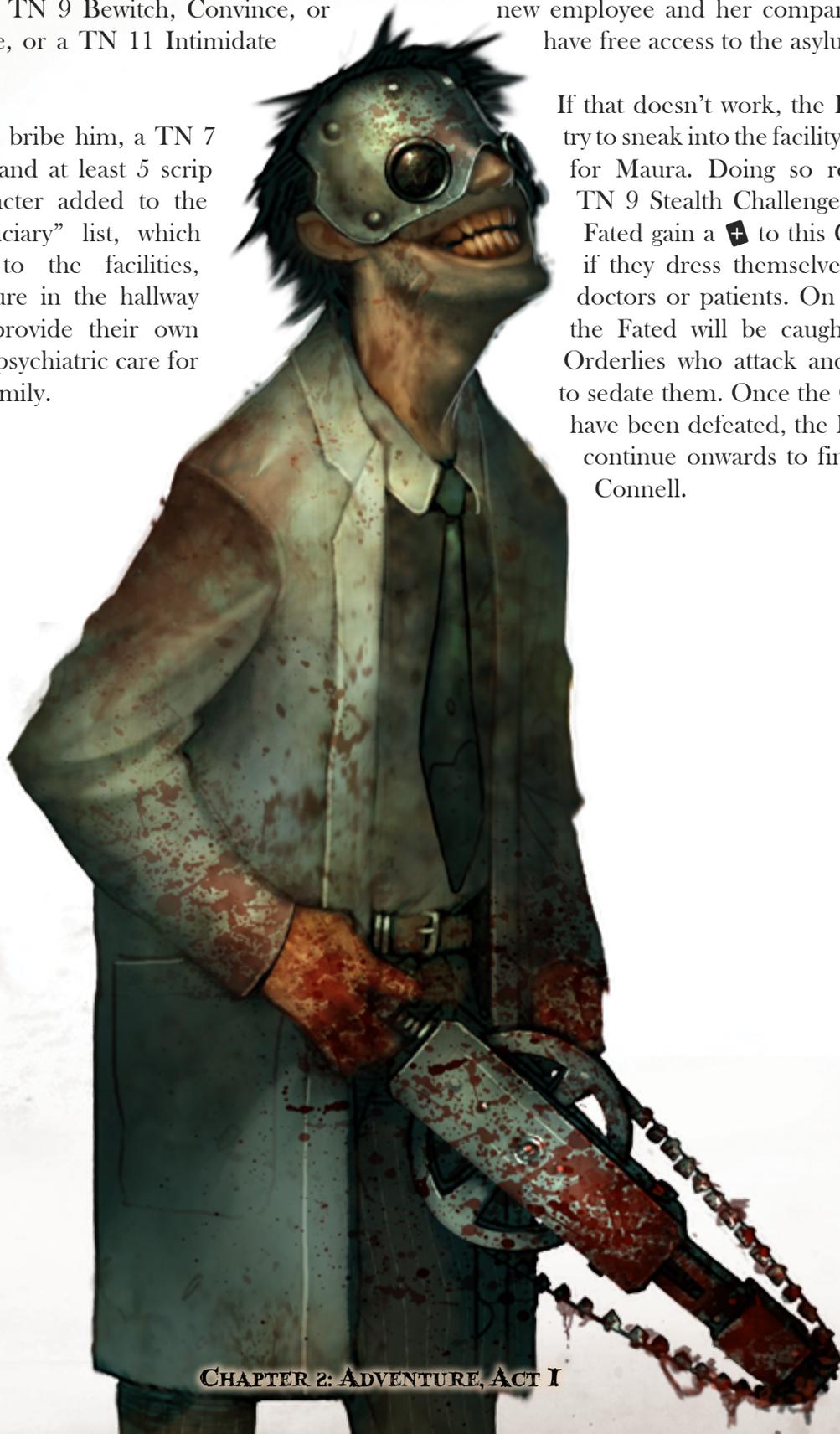


If the Fated ask Dr. Grimwell about Maura Connell, he'll openly admit that she's a patient at the asylum. However, if the Fated want to actually talk with her, he'll regretfully inform them that the asylum doesn't allow patients to speak with visitors. Fortunately, Grimwell isn't a slave to protocol, so the Fated can convince him to bend the rules and let them speak to Connell with a TN 9 Bewitch, Convince, or Deceive Challenge, or a TN 11 Intimidate Challenge.

If the Fated try to bribe him, a TN 7 Barter Challenge and at least 5 scrip will get the character added to the "Honored Beneficiary" list, which includes access to the facilities, their framed picture in the hallway (character must provide their own picture), and free psychiatric care for their immediate family.

Alternatively, a TN 10 Doctor Challenge is enough to convince Smedley that the character has medical training, and he'll offer them a job as an attending physician at the asylum. This requires about half an hour of time spent in Smedley's office filling out paperwork and going over the (surprisingly lax) work requirements. After that's finished, the new employee and her companions will have free access to the asylum.

If that doesn't work, the Fated can try to sneak into the facility to search for Maura. Doing so requires a TN 9 Stealth Challenge, and the Fated gain a \oplus to this Challenge if they dress themselves up like doctors or patients. On a failure, the Fated will be caught by two Orderlies who attack and attempt to sedate them. Once the Orderlies have been defeated, the Fated can continue onwards to find Maura Connell.



THE TRAGIC FATE OF MAURA CONNELL

Since the flow of patients through the doors of Smedley's Asylum tends to be somewhat inconsistent, the staff sometimes makes "house calls," which mostly involve heading out into the surrounding slums, finding people who look insane, sedating them, and bringing them back to the asylum for further treatment. Dr. Grimwell considers this to be the "civic duty" of the asylum and a good way of "giving back" to the community.

Maura Connell fell victim to one of these house calls. The asylum's orderlies jumped her as she was returning from a meeting with Philip, injected her with a sedative, and then carried her back to Smedley's Asylum. When she attempted to use her magic to escape, Dr. Grimwell decided that she was violent and lobotomized her on the spot. Now Maura is a shadow of her former self. Read the following text when the Fated go to see her:



The orderly leads you to a large laundry room where a dozen women with shaved heads are slowly cleaning the asylum's dirty laundry. The room is bathed in a perpetual cloud of warm steam, and through it, you can see that most of the washer-women have surgical scars on different parts of their skulls.

Maura Connell proves to be almost unrecognizable without her long hair, and from her blank stare and the raw scar on her head, it's clear that she's spent some time beneath the knife. She continues to slowly fold laundry as you approach her, not even looking up from the pressed linens.



Maura is generally unresponsive to any questions. If the Fated wish to get her to talk about a specific topic (such as Philip's location), they have to succeed on a TN 12 Bewitch, Convince, Deceive, or Intimidate Challenge. If they show Maura the photograph of her son (found by searching her home in Scene II), the TN drops to an 8 and the Fated gain a  to their flip.

If the Fated successfully ask Maura about Philip's location, read the following text:



"Philip...?" Recognition flickers in Maura's eyes as she turns to face you. "We met... Teak's Tavern. They..." She raises a hand to the scar on her head, flinching slightly as her fingers touch the raw flesh there. "My... head...." Her lip twitches as she tries to focus, her tone becoming angry. "What.. happen... head...?!"

In a sudden burst of speed, Maura grabs the sheet she had been folding and throws it behind her in frustration, where it strikes an invisible person. There's a moan from beneath the sheet as a spectral man gradually fades into view, his missing eye and gaping mouth half-hidden beneath the white linen.

Oblivious to the spirit, Maura drops to the ground and clutches her head as she screams in outrage, while the other patients begin to scream in horror at the ghost that has appeared in their midst.



When Kirai's spy is revealed, she orders it to kill the Fated and then goes to Teak's Tavern to have a discussion with Philip about Nythera (which the Fated will eventually interrupt in Scene 4). Kirai considers the Fated to be agents of the Guild, regardless of their true allegiances, and now their usefulness to her has come to an end.

MAURA WON'T TALK

If the Fated are unable to get the information they need out of Maura, Kirai will press the matter. Read the following text:



Suddenly, Maura's eyes snap open as she's yanked into the air, her head tilted backwards as she dangles two feet above the ground. Gradually, a spectral man fades into existence in front of her, revealing his hand around her throat.

"Where is Philip?" the spirit demands, its voice that of a woman with a discernable Japanese accent.

Maura's eyes dart from side to side as her face begins to turn purple. "T-Teak's... Tavern..." she chokes out, her arms flailing uselessly as they pass through the spectral creature. As soon as the words are out of her mouth, the spirit snaps her neck and drops her to the ground, drawing screams of horror from the other washer women. As chaos breaks out in the laundry room, the spirit floats toward you with obvious malevolence. "Sayonara," it hisses in the woman's voice.



As above, Kirai severs her connection with the spirit once she has the information she needs from Maura. Her final command is to order the spirit to kill the Fated, as she sees them as agents of the Guild.

GHOSTLY LAUNDRY BATTLE!

The laundry room is 18 yards long and 9 yards wide, with barred windows along one wall and numerous large washing machines and water basins taking up floor space. The spirit, being incorporeal, can move through these obstacles without hindrance, but the Fated will be more hampered. There are fourteen washer women here, including Maura, and they cower and run around the room being a distraction; each is considered to have a Defense of 4 (7) and 4 Wounds, should it become relevant to the battle. The stats for the Laundry Spirit can be found on page 101.

At the end of the second round of combat, Orderlies rush into the room and start sedating people... including the Fated. There is one Orderly for each Fated present in the room. If all of the Fated end up sedated by the Orderlies, they will eventually wake up in an asylum cell, relieved of their possessions and strapped to the bed. This is essentially the end of the adventure for any Fated who succumb to this unfortunate fate. The stats for the Orderlies can be found on page 102.

Once the Fated have defeated the Laundry Spirit and Orderlies, they can escape from the Asylum without further incident. The remaining Orderlies will be too busy trying to lock down the other patients to care about the escaping Fated.

The primary clue here is Maura's reference to Philip being at Teak's Tavern, which can be found in the nearby Central Slums.



ACT I, SCENE 4:

TEAK'S TAVERN

Teak's Tavern is a rundown and abandoned tavern in the Central Slums. It's been abandoned for years, and the boarded up windows don't attempt to disguise that fact. Philip Tombers has been using the tavern as his hideout for a few weeks now, mostly so that he has someplace to keep his books.

Unfortunately, the Fated are not the first to catch up with Philip; Kirai Ankoku has beaten them to the tavern and is in the process of questioning Philip when they arrive.



Read the following text:



Teak's Tavern is an abandoned single-story building that has clearly seen better days. The wooden walls have swollen with moisture and age, giving it a distinctly bulging appearance, and the wood has an unpleasant discolored complexion to it that immediately brings to mind rotting flesh.

Philip Tombers and his baby carriage are both in front of the tavern, but unfortunately, he's not alone. A short Asian woman with in a white kimono is standing in front of the carriage, the talking head held aloft in her hand. Behind them, a dead woman in a stained black dress lies in a collapsed heap on the ground, a huge pair of gardening shears protruding from her back.

"I believe we were discussing Nythera," the woman says, regarding the severed head with a flat, emotionless expression. "You have been holding things back from me."

The head begins to blather a stream of apologies and excuses, but the Asian woman is distracted by your arrival and glances in your direction. "Konnichiwa." She drops Philip's head into the baby carriage and turns to face you, revealing a kimono that has been splattered with blood. "Thank you for bringing Philip's knowledge of Nythera to my attention. In repayment, I will allow you to leave with your lives."



A FLAME IN YOUR HEART

Kirai's flat and emotionless voice makes her difficult to read, but she is being quite serious with what is (in her mind) a very generous offer to the Fated.

Allow the Fated a chance to react to her ultimatum; she is uninterested in a long discussion and plans on wheeling Philip to somewhere more private where she can question him properly.

An incredibly difficult TN 19 Bewitch, Convince, or Intimidate Challenge will persuade Kirai to allow the Fated to accompany her, though they will never get the chance. If the Fated attempt to attack her, she has a Defense of 4 (17) and a Willpower of 6 (19).

Regardless of whether the Fated attempt to negotiate with Kirai, attack her, or back away, the situation quickly becomes complicated by the arrival of a third party in the form of Anasalea Kaeris, an Arcanist agent and troubleshooter. The Arcanists discovered Tombers' research notes in Duer's Library (see Scene 5) but have not been able to decipher it. Kaeris was dispatched to retrieve Philip after the Oxfordian Mages in the library discerned his location with a magical ritual.

Read the following text whenever it seems appropriate (such as after the Fated have attacked Kirai or begun to back away to leave Tombers in her care):



Suddenly, a spear of flame flashes down from the sky. The Asian woman shoves the baby carriage to one side, sending it rolling down the street as she leaps in the other direction. The flames strike where she had been standing a moment before, exploding outward with a great whoosh of flame and a wave of heat. Teak's Tavern catches fire and begins to burn as the flames spread rapidly across its surface.

Looking upwards, you see a winged figure hovering in the air, the flames lending a warm glow to the beating brass wings that hold her aloft. They're artificial in construction, but there's nothing artificial about the flames which engulf her closed fists and burn in her eyes. "Give me the skull!" she shouts down, following the demand with another blast of fire that nearly strikes the Asian woman.

"Nythera does not belong to the Arcanists!" With a sharp gesture of her hand, the Asian woman summons a horde of swirling, skeletal wraiths into existence and sends them twisting through the sky towards her attacker. The winged woman darts through the sky, throwing blasts of fire at the spirits, boiling away their spectral forms even as the fireballs strike the buildings below and burst into flames.

Amidst the chaos, you hear a worried voice calling to you from the forgotten baby carriage, the top of which has caught fire. "Um, excuse me? Is anyone still out there? I'm quite ready to talk about Nythera now, if we could please just move away from all the fire."



The battle raging around the Fated is rapidly spiraling out of control, but they should have no problem retrieving Philip from his baby carriage. They can either pick him up and carry him in their arms or extinguish the fire on the carriage and wheel him away while he's still inside it.

Unfortunately, the battle between Kirai and Kaeris is rapidly turning the surrounding slums into a blazing inferno, and escaping from the chaos will be quite challenging. Buildings are on fire, flames are raining down indiscriminately from the sky, and the temperature only seems to be climbing.



The escape from the burning district is handled with an Ongoing Challenge:

FLEE THE INFERNO!

- **SKILLS ALLOWED:** Acrobatics, Athletics, Evade
- **TARGET NUMBER:** 10
- **DURATION:** 1 minute
- **SUCCESS REQUIREMENT:** (3 per Fated)
- **FAILURE REQUIREMENT:** (1 per Fated)

Every character present must participate in this Ongoing Challenge.

Whenever a character fails a Challenge made as part of this Ongoing Challenge, that character suffers 1 damage from the heat and flames of the burning slums.

At the end of each Duration, one of the following Battle Events occurs. These are primarily intended to add drama to the scene and make it feel more like the Fated are trying to escape from a raging inferno while a battle between two very powerful Masters rages around them.

BATTLE EVENTS (IN NO SPECIFIC ORDER)

- *Stray Fireball:* A fireball strikes the road in front of the Fated, knocking them back with the force of its explosion. The Fated must pass TN 8 Acrobatics Challenges; those who fail are knocked down and have the TN of their next Challenge made as part of this Ongoing Challenge increased by +1.
- *Spirit Blockade:* A wraith-like mass of darkness appears and claws at the Fated carrying Philip or pushing his carriage. The Fated in question has to pass a TN 10 Defense Challenge or suffer 2 damage as the spirit claws them. The Fated can easily outrun the spirit after its initial appearance.
- Philip strikes up an inane and complete inappropriate conversation with the character holding or pushing him, asking them their name, where they're from, and other topics of light conversation... which proves to be quite distracting under the circumstances. The TN of the next challenge the character makes as part of this Ongoing Challenge receives a \square .
- Kaeris lands in front of the Fated, her brass wings spread out to either side of her. She demands that the Fated give her the head... only for a dark cloud of clawing hands and biting teeth to descend upon her from the sky, forcing her to take flight and flee back into the air.
- There's a bright flash of light from overhead, then it begins raining fire from the sky. The Fated must pass TN 8 Evade Challenges to leap into cover. Those who fail suffer 2 damage from the falling flames.
- Philip shouts at the Fated, demanding that they stop, because he wants another Fated to carry him instead.
- The path is suddenly blocked by four dead men in flowing kimono and porcelain masks. As one, they point at Philip and speak in Kirai's voice, demanding that the Fated return Tombers. Then there's a scream from behind them and the ghosts dart forward, floating through the Fated as they rush to protect their mistress.

On a catastrophic failure, the Fated turn down the wrong street and find themselves at a dead end, blocked by flames. As they attempt to backtrack, they're attacked by 2 Fire Gamin, plus 1 Fire Gamin per Fated character. The stats for Fire Gamin can be found on page 103. Once defeated, the Fated can escape to safety.

On a success, the characters manage to escape the burning slums, leaving it - and the two fighting women - behind them.

Read the following text to the players:



“Oh my,” the severed head of Philip Tombers says, his tone one of relief. “What a mess that was! I always knew that Kirai was cruel, what with all those terrible outfits that she and Molly would dress me up in, but I never thought that she would murder my nanny!”

He looks up at [Fated holding/pushing him] and attempts to smile pleasantly, though it comes across as more of a grimace. “I don’t think we’ve been properly introduced, have we? My name is Philip Tombers, and it is a pleasure to meet you. You’ll forgive me if I don’t offer to shake your hand.” The head giggles. “Shake your hand... oh, that never ceases to amuse.”

Philip’s eyes dart from one of you to the next. “So! Someone said something about Nythera? Or was it Kythera? It’s so hard to remember these days. Why, this one time...”



Philip will happily ramble on endlessly if the Fated allow him, but if they bring him back around to the topic of Nythera, he’ll tell the Fated that he remembers doing some research on Nythera prior to his expedition to Kythera. He kept a series of encoded notes at Duer’s Library as he researched the two sites, but after his incarceration in the Malifaux Sanitarium, his research notes were confiscated by Duer’s Library and rolled into the general collection. “My research notes are probably still there, tucked away on some shelf somewhere.”

If the Fated press Philip to just tell them what he knows now, he’ll get huffy and inform them that “It’s been over five years since then, and in that time, I’ve died, been raised from the dead, and shoved into more sacks and bags than I care to recollect! My memory is not what it once was, [sir/madam]!”

Similarly, if the Fated ignore Philip and focus on bringing him back to Klassen or Dohman, Philip will attempt to bargain with them to avoid such a fate. “Hold on a minute, can’t we talk this over? There’s very little useful information in my head, just ask Molly. Well, if Molly was here... you know, nevermind that! The point I’m trying to make here is that I’d rather not be turned over to the Guild when we could just give them my research notes instead. Doesn’t that sound better for everyone?”

If the Fated decide to head to Duer’s Library to search for Philip’s research notes, proceed to Scene 5. If they instead decide to take Philip back to Klassen and Dohman without heading to Duer’s Library, then skip Scene 5 and proceed directly to the Returning to Klassen (pg. 27).

ACT I, SCENE 5:

DUER'S LIBRARY

Duer's Library is actually a vast network of vaults and towers which are filled with all manner of strange knowledge. The library was discovered in the days of the first Breach, and in the years since - both before the Breach closed and after it reopened - it has become a repository for much of the knowledge that has been discovered within the city. Most of the tomes and scrolls stored here are written in the language of Old Malifaux, and a team of scholars works around the clock to study and translate them into human languages.

Unfortunately for the Fated, Duer's Library is also located in Upper Downtown, right in the heart of the Guild territory. Normally that wouldn't be a problem, but the Fated are also carting a severed (and quite talkative) head around with them, which might make it difficult to avoid drawing unwanted attention. Just because they're technically working for the Guild doesn't mean that some paranoid guard won't shoot the Fated dead on suspicion of being Resurrectionists.

The character carrying or pushing Philip's head has to make a TN 10 Stealth Challenge to avoid drawing the attention of the Guild Guard. If the character wishes to hand the head over to someone better able to conceal it before making this Challenge, that's perfectly acceptable (and probably a smart move). Shoving Philip's head inside a bag or sack gives the Fated a **+** to this Challenge (and makes Philip quite upset in the process).

On a success, the Fated manage to reach Duer's Library without incident. On a failure, however, they are stopped by four Guild Guard. The Fated can persuade the Guild Guard that nothing is wrong (or that they're on a secret Guild mission) with a TN 10 Deceive or Leadership Challenge. Alternatively, they can attempt to bribe the guards with a TN 8 Barter Challenge and 4 scrip. If the Fated fail either Challenge, however, the Guild Guard will draw their weapons and place the Fated under arrest... which likely means that the Fated are in for a fight. The stats for the Guild Guard can be found on page 104.

OXFORDIAN INFILTRATION

Unbeknownst to the Fated, the Arcanists have already slipped into Duer's Library, murdered the scholars present, and discovered Philip's research notes. They had not planned on the notes being encoded, however, and eventually realized that they would have to find Philip Tombers in order to decipher them. The Oxfordian Mages performed a divination ritual to locate the severed head, and Kaeris was dispatched to retrieve him. Obviously, that plan didn't work out so well for the Arcanists.

When the Fated arrive, the Oxfordian Mages are still attempting to decipher Philip's research notes. Read the following text:



Spanning a dozen connected vaults and towers, Duer's Library is a truly massive treasury of mystical tomes and arcane knowledge. The prospect of locating a single stack of papers within such an expansive compound is intimidating, to say the very least... or rather, it would be, if someone hadn't already done the hard work for you.

As you enter the central hub of the library, you can't help but feel that the library is having something of an off day. Dead scholars and researchers are strewn across the floor and draped over desks, some of them horribly burned, others frozen solid beneath an inch of sparkling ice. A few even seem to have been electrocuted, though you can't quite make out just how that might be possible. Books and papers are strewn haphazardly across the room, torn from the shelves as if someone had been looking for something. It's hardly a stretch of the imagination to guess what the object of their search must have been.



The Fated can explore this portion of the library; it's very large, but the ground floor is empty. A spiral staircase leads up to the second floor, where the Oxfordian Mages have gathered to wait for Kaeris' return. There is one Oxfordian Mage per Fated, and their stats can be found on page 105.

If the Fated make a great deal of noise downstairs (shouting at each other, firing weapons, etc.), the Oxfordian Mages will come down the steps to eliminate the trespassers. Otherwise, the Fated can attempt TN 10 Notice Challenges when they draw near the spiral staircase to overhear the Mages talking on the floor above.

Read the following text:



There are voices drifting down from the second floor, but the curvature of the staircase prevents you from seeing them. The voices seem to be arguing over something.

"...hasn't returned yet," states a female voice. "We can't abandon the mission without her."

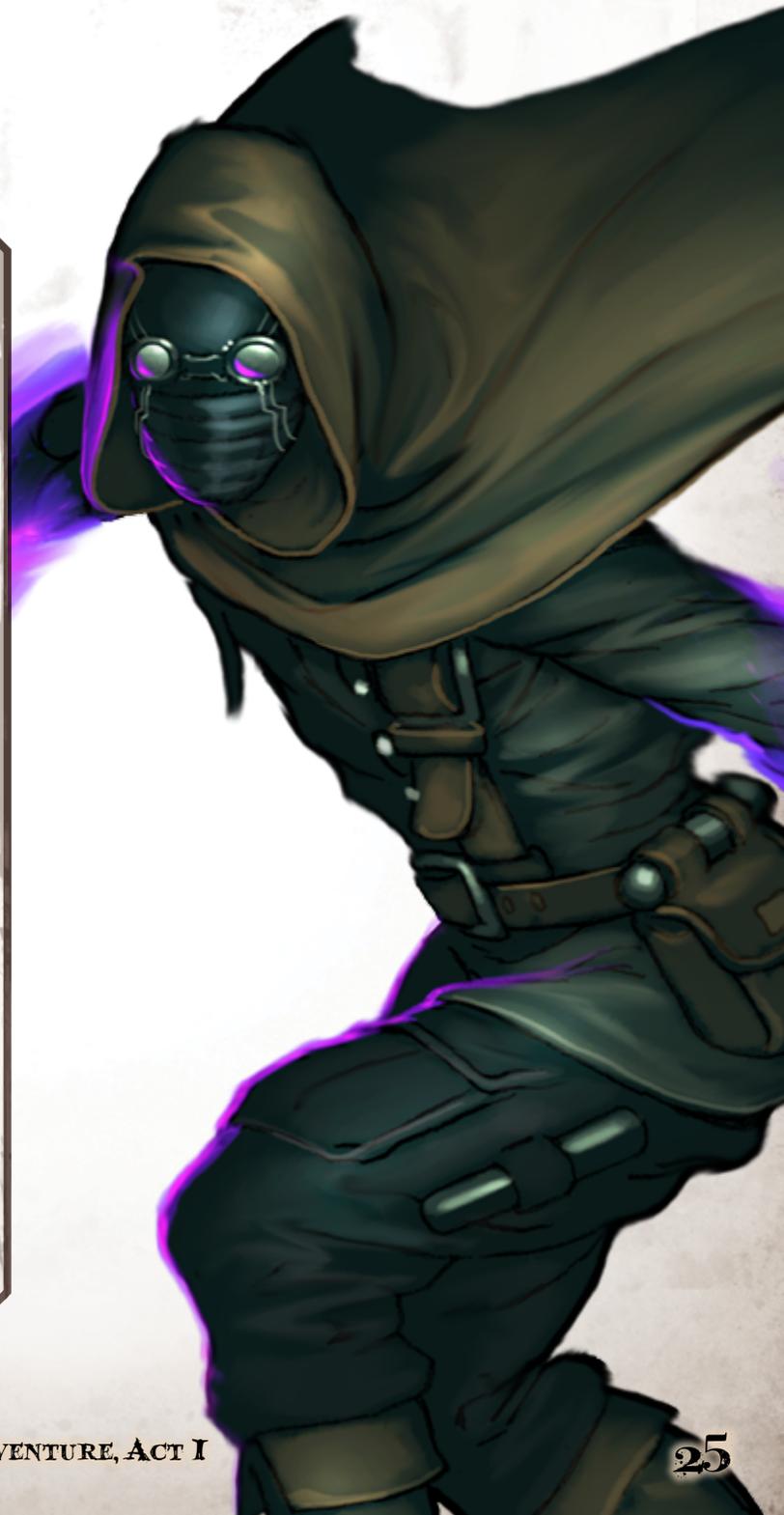
"The mission is complete," a man counters. "The longer we wait here, the more we place ourselves at risk. Let's just take the notes and go."

There's a frustrated sigh from the woman. "Kaeris told us to stay put. Do you want to be the one to explain to her why we're not here when she gets back?" When there isn't any response, the woman barks out a short laugh. "Yeah, I didn't think so."



Anyone heading up the steps will find the Oxfordian Mages gathered around a table, upon which a stack of bound papers – Philip's research notes – is resting. If Philip is with the Fated as they sneak up the steps, he'll ruin their attempt at surprise by stating "Oh, look! It's my research notes!"

If the Fated get the drop on the Oxfordian Mages, the Mages will be **Slow** on the first round of combat. They will fight to the death to defend the research notes.



A GRAVE TRANSLATION

Once the Oxfordian Mages are dealt with, Tombers will be eager to look through his research notes. The Fated will have to help him do so - by holding him up and turning pages for him, most likely - but it won't be too long before Philip finds the relevant passages.



Read the following text:



“It’s been so long since I’ve looked back on these notes. Being dead does not afford as much time for study and quiet reflection as you might imagine. I really don’t recommend it.”

Philip’s voice takes on an excited tone as he licks his cracked lips. “Let’s see... ‘All of these places reveal the presence of a vanished people as ruins of their occupation...’ blah blah blah... ‘...many of these ruins exist as mysterious machines...’ I certainly did blather on back then, didn’t I?”

“Ah, here we go!” Philip squints his eyes as he regards the encoded notes. “...oh, yes! I remember this now. I hypothesized that Kythera and Nythera were both constructed by the people of Old Malifaux as a vault or a tomb. Of course, we now know that Kythera was a dimensional portal built to allow a... well, I’m not entirely sure what it was, but it was very large and quite scary, let me tell you.”

“Anyways,” he continues, “knowing what we do now, and based on the data I collected here, I would have to assume that Nythera is a prison of some sort. Kythera functioned like a lock on a doorway to keep the Grave Spirit out of the world... and it was the portal as well, I suppose... but Nythera doesn’t seem to be drawing upon the same type of power. I can’t tell for certain, of course, but if anything, it seems to be drawing life energy inward towards itself.”

The talking skull rolls his eyes up towards you. “You know, if I didn’t know better - and I don’t, to be honest - I would suspect that Nythera was leeching all the life out of the Badlands to keep something very powerful locked away inside it.”



RETURNING TO KLASSEN

Now that the Fated have Philip, his research notes, or both, they can bring them back to either Klassen or Dohman, both of whom are waiting patiently at the Rusty Bucket near the northern gate. If the Fated turn over Philip's head or research notes, they'll happily offer the Fated some tall glasses of beer as way of congratulating them on their success.

If the Fated fail to return with either Philip's head or his research notes, the two Guild agents will instead express their disappointment that the Fated failed in their mission. Once the Fated have left the Rusty Bucket, Klassen will return to the Guild Enclave and rescind their pardons. It's only a matter of time before the Fated find themselves hunted by the Guild and tossed back in line for the Hanging Tree.

PHILIP'S HEAD

If the Fated chose not to turn Philip's head in to the Guild during Act I, then they will have a potent weapon at their disposal. So long as Philip is not overly upset at the Fated carrying him, that character gains access to the following Tactical Action for as long as Philip is carried:

(1) **Reveal Philip:** Make a single Intimidate Challenge with a \oplus to the flip and compare the result to the Willpower + Rank Value of every Living enemy within (X)4. If your total is higher than an enemy's total, that enemy becomes **Slow**. You may only take this Action once per Dramatic Time.

Alternatively, if the Fated also managed to rescue Maura from Smedley's Asylum, it's possible that she could become Philip's new nanny, which means that the two of them can happily wander off to their own adventures, Philip happily chattering away and Maura unable to concentrate long enough to complain.



ACT II

Act II finds the Fated arrested on suspicion of arson after being spotted fleeing from the conflagration in the Central Slums, but this proves to merely be a ruse to bring the Fated to another meeting with Klassen, Dohman, and Lucius Mattheson, the Governor's Secretary. They inform the Fated that the Guild is searching for Edgar Keen, a mercenary who disappeared from their custody while on the train from Edge Point to Malifaux City.

The Guild is interested in Keen due to him being the first person to return from Nythera since it was discovered, and they are quite eager to learn everything he knows about the ruins. They picked him up outside Edge Point and shipped him north to Malifaux City only to have him and his two escorts disappear somewhere between the two stations.

There is some concern among the Guild that it might have been an inside job: two of its agents are missing, nobody claims to have seen anything, and the Witch Hunters have been unable to locate any signs of magical involvement. In actuality, Keen was abducted by the Ten Thunders, who had been clued into his existence by Howard Klassen.

Klassen had thought that the Guild would launch a small investigation and then forget about Keen, but he didn't count on the case attracting the personal attention of Lucius Mattheson, the Governor's Secretary. In addition to being quite terrifying on a personal level, Mattheson also heads the Guild's Special Division, which handles most of the Guild's secret assassinations, as well as a host of activities that are never properly explained to anyone.

Needless to say, Klassen panicked when Mattheson suggested bringing in the Fated to help with the case, given how well they did on the last one. He sends them to Jacob Samuels for information, but the meeting is a trap. Samuels attempts to capture the Fated and force them to fight in the Pits, an underground fighting arena from which the only escape is death.



LUCIUS MATTHESON

Whether the Fated avoid the trap or are forced to fight their way out, they are eventually able to return to Klassen and confront him with his betrayal. If they give him a chance, he caves in and tells them about his Ten Thunders contacts, who might know where the shadowy crime syndicate is keeping Keen.

After asking some questions (and possibly breaking some legs), the Fated eventually find Keen being held and tortured for information in a closed brothel. After a battle to defeat Keen's guardians, the Fated can free him... and then decide whether or not to turn around and hand him over to the Guild, who will surely do the same to the poor mercenary.

ACT II: PROLOGUE

After having had a day or two to wind down and enjoy their freedom, the Fated are paid visits by the Guild, who arrest them for starting the fires that ravaged the Central Slums. Or at least, that's the cover story that the Guild uses to bring the Fated in without tipping their hand to any potential Ten Thunders spies that might be lingering within their ranks.

Read the following text to the players:



It's been a few days since your near-execution and the chaos that followed, but you've earned your freedom and are finally starting to get your feet back underneath you. Lying in bed and listening to the rain falling outside your window, it's easy to imagine that things might finally be turning around for you.

Suddenly, something slams against the door, drawing your gaze just in time for the second kick to break the cheap lock and send the door flying open. Three members of the Guild Guard storm into the room, their red and gray uniforms dripping water onto the ground as they pull you out of your bed and slam you face-down against wooden floor. A fat cockroach skitters back underneath the bed as one of the guards presses a gun against the back of your head.

"You're under arrest," the man snarls. "We've got witnesses that saw you fleeing from the Central Slums fire a few days ago, and in our book, that makes you guilty of arson. Let's go." The guards roughly bind your hands behind your back and then march you out into the falling rain.



ACT II, SCENE I:

THE SOUTHERN BELLE

Instead of being taken to the Guild Enclave or the Hanging Tree, the Fated are marched through the rain to Industry Station in the Industrial Zone to find Klassen and Dohman waiting for them in a train yard. Read the following text:



The Guild Guard march you through the rain to the Industrial Zone, past hulking factories and to an expansive train yard behind Industry Station. Two men in rumpled suits – Howard Klassen and Gervas Dohman – are waiting near one of the trains, protected from the rain by black umbrellas. Klassen raises his fingers to his brow in way of a salute as he catches sight of you.

Two other men stand near them, the first – a thin man wearing a simple suit – holds an umbrella up for the second, who is dressed in an elegantly tailored frock coat, matching cape, and high riding boots. His white-gloved hands are crossed over the top of his walking cane, and his face is hidden by a bronze mask. As the guards march you up to them, the masked man snaps open a pocket watch and checks the time. “Three minutes late, Captain.”

One of the men behind you stammers out a nervous response. “Th-They dragged their feet, m’lord. It ain’t our fault.”

The masked man closes his pocket watch with an audible snap. “Leave us,” he commands, his soft voice threatening violence with every perfectly annunciated syllable.

The guards murmur frightened apologies and quickly take their leave, walking much faster than they had been when marching you out here. Once they’re out of sight, Klassen steps forward and starts untying your hands. “Apologies about the rough treatment,” he says, a bit of mirth to his tone. “Had to make certain that everything looked all proper-like, didn’t we? Have you met Mr. Mattheson yet?”



Lucius Mattheson is the Governor’s Secretary, and TN 10 Scrutiny Challenges reveal that Klassen and Dohman are cowed and uncomfortable with his presence. Once the Fated have been freed from their bindings, Lucius will motion to Klassen and Dohman, who will reluctantly hand over their umbrellas to the Fated. Their expressions make it clear that they’re not fond of being in the rain, but

they have no intention of arguing with the Governor’s Secretary over an issue of personal comfort. Once the Fated have taken (or refused) the umbrellas, Klassen will introduce the Fated to Mattheson, who he notes is the Governor’s Secretary.

Read the following text once he's finished:



Mattheson turns his full attention upon you, and the emerald green lenses of his mask flicker wickedly. "We are all busy people, so I shall dispense with the pleasantries. I do not believe that our current surroundings are formal enough to warrant them, in any case." He glances to the other men, and the servant holding Mattheson's umbrella angles it slightly to keep the Secretary dry. "Mr. Klassen, if you would be so kind as to explain the situation to our friends?"

Klassen steps forward, pulls a folder from his jacket, and hands it to [FATED]. "This here's our file on Edgar Keen. Bounty hunter, mercenary, professional assassin... apparently an amateur horticulturist as well, if you can believe it. Normally we wouldn't be all that interested in him, save that he's the first person to return from Nythera."

He pops his collar to help protect against the rain. "According to our sources, the Arcanists showed up and ran his mercenary group out of the place, but he's the only one of 'em that decided to head back to the city. First-hand knowledge of Nythera and what he found inside them ruins... well, you can see why we're interested."



The folder contains a few black-and-white photographs of a stocky man with close-cropped hair and a jagged scar running down his left eye, papers detailing the various bounties he's collected from the Guild, and a rough timeline of his activities since arriving in Malifaux. A TN 8 Literacy Challenge will reveal that he seems to have been moving up in the world, from smaller bounties to larger bounties, and that he's either quite skilled, quite lucky, or both. The final entries mention that he recently joined a mercenary group led by "the Viktorias," who were last seen in the vicinity of Nythera.

Klassen continues to talk as the Fated look through the folder and its papers; read the following text:



"Our agents picked him up outside Edge Point, put him on a train, and sent him north to Malifaux City, but he never got here. Keen and his minders vanished right off the train." He motions to the nearest train, a hulking iron beast with a "Southern Belle" painted on its side. "This train, to be precise. We've searched it up and down, but everything seems to be in place. We had the Witch Hunters..."

Lucius Mattheson cuts him off with a curt gesture. "Thank you, Mr. Klassen. We believe that Mr. Keen's handlers may have been involved in his disappearance, but we are not certain. It is possible that they may have simply been using their position within the Guild to serve their own interests, rather than the greater good of what we are trying to accomplish here."

Klassen and Dohman exchange a subtle glance behind Lucius's back as he continues speaking. "It is clear from Mr. Klassen's report that you have some skill at finding people, and we wish to take advantage of that. Take whatever measures you must to find Mr. Keen. Once you have located him - and you *will* locate him - bring him directly to the Guild Enclave and relinquish him to my personal custody. I will make certain that you are suitably rewarded for your efforts."



Lucius will make certain that the Fated are willing to go through with their assigned mission before departing; if they refuse or claim to be uninterested, he will casually point out that the false charges that were used as a cover to bring the Fated to the meeting could very easily become real charges. In any case, he does not oversell the matter; if the Fated are truly unwilling to cooperate, it's far easier for him to simply place bounties on their heads and turn the assignment over to someone else.

Attempting to get a read on Lucius or to discern the truth of his statements is nearly impossible and requires a TN 19 Scrutiny Challenge. On the off-chance that a Fated succeeds, they learn that Lucius is being sincere in his request, but that he seems distrustful of Klassen and Dohman.

Eventually, Lucius and his servant take their leave, drawing a sigh of relief from Klassen and Dohman once he's out of sight. They'll apologize for getting the Fated involved in "this hot mess" and will note that Lucius isn't the sort of person that they want to cross.

KLASSEN, MAN OF MYSTERY

Klassen is secretly working against the Fated in their investigation. Both Klassen and Dohman (and Lucas McCabe, their superior) have ties back to the Ten Thunders, and word has come down from the crime syndicate that they want the Guild's investigation of Keen's disappearance to end.

Klassen had intended to just slack off and drag his heels on the investigation, but Lucius Mattheson's unexpected interest in the case threw Klassen's plan into chaos. Now he's trying to buy as much time for the Ten Thunders to question Keen and dump his body as possible, all while trying to appear as if he's doing everything he can to find the man.

The involvement of independent investigators was Mattheson's idea; he knows that the loyalty of McCabe and his underlings is less than trustworthy, and the Fated were already reasonably effective at locating Tombers' head and/or research notes, making them excellent choices for another assignment.

Klassen plans to push the responsibility of the investigation onto the Fated and then have them "disappear," which should give his Ten Thunder superiors enough time to deal with Keen. He plans to take over the investigation once the Fated's absence is noticed and reluctantly admit that the case seems to have gone cold. Of course, this plan means that Klassen needs to get rid of the Fated, which is a shame; he was rather fond of their roguish ways.

He's just more fond of keeping his kneecaps intact.

KEEN'S ABDUCTION

Edgar Keen was abducted by the Ten Thunders, who learned of his arrest and placed a small strike team on the Southern Belle. Keen's passenger car held six people - Keen, his two Guild guards, and three other passengers of various intent. The first member of the strike team approached the car from the rear of the train and used her magic to put the three other passengers to sleep, after which the second member entered the car from the front and killed his guards with two well-placed arrows to the chest (which, unlike a gunshot, went quite unnoticed over the sound of the train).

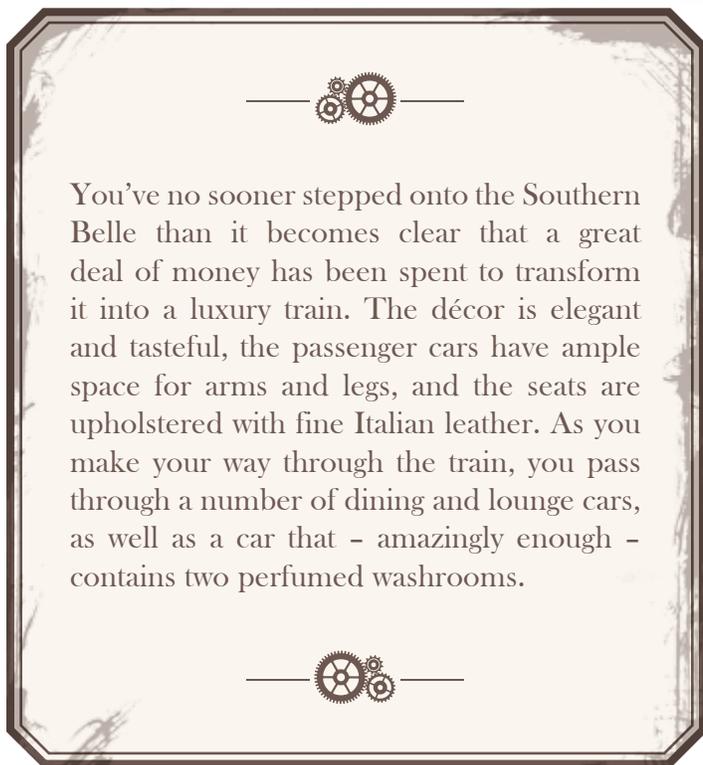
The spellcaster attempted to put Keen to sleep, but he resisted her magic and went for the pistol of a dead guard, which earned him an arrow through the hand. Realizing that the odds were against him, Keen surrendered to the strike team, who bound him with rope and tossed him (and the bodies of the guards) off the train as it passed the designated drop-off point. The two Ten Thunders agents then wiped up a bit of the blood, returned to their seats on the train, and disembarked normally as the third member of the team - who was waiting at the drop-off point - retrieved Keen and the bodies.

This ensured that the train manifesto didn't show any missing passengers other than Keen and the two guards, which was intended (and succeeded at) sowing suspicion among the Guild that one of the guards might have been involved in the disappearance.

SOUL TRAIN

Klassen will invite the Fated to investigate the train if they wish to look over it for clues, but he's a bit pessimistic about their chances of finding anything.

Read the following text when the Fated enter the train:



Searching the train requires a TN 9 Notice Challenge and roughly four hours of work, during which time the rain will gradually slow to a lazy drizzle and eventually cease completely.

For each success or Margin of Success, the Fated find one of the following bits of information (in the following order):

- A green feather that has been cut into a narrow triangle shape is found beneath a seat in the third passenger car. Any character with at least one rank in the Archery Skill immediately recognizes the feather as arrow fletching. (The fletching came from the arrow of the strike team's archer.)
- A few drops of blood on one of the dark leather seats in the third passenger car. (The strike team missed these drops when they were quickly wiping up blood.)
- A small puncture hole in one of the leather seats. It's flat and about an inch wide, as if it were caused by a knife blade, and the fabric stuffing is slightly stained with dried blood. (The hole was caused by the arrow that struck one of the Guild guards and passed partially through him and into the seat behind.)
- A leather wallet beneath a seat at the back of the third passenger car. It contains 2 scrip, a shopping list (milk, eggs, etc.), and a ram-shaped Guild badge. (This is the wallet of one of the Guild guards, which fell out of his pocket as he was being carried to the open connection area between the two passenger cars.)

If any of the information is discovered while Klassen is watching (and they try to stick close to the Fated if possible), he'll either be dismissive of the discovery ("It's just a feather...") or ambivalent ("Why, I suppose that *is* blood, isn't it?"). Dohman is more supportive, but Klassen posts him out front to "keep a look out." Exactly what he's supposed to be looking out for is never really clarified.

KLASSEN'S TRAP

Once the Fated have had the opportunity to investigate the train, Klassen will suggest that they seek out someone with mercenary connections who might know more about Keen. Read the following text:



Klassen runs a hand through his hair as he considers the situation. "Well, it seems to me like we're still on the dark side of what happened. I'm not entirely sure where things should go from here, unless..."

He snaps his fingers, as if he had just thought of something. "Tell you what," he says, pulling out a pencil as he scribbles something down on a piece of paper. "This is probably a long-shot, but I'm going to give you the name of a man who has his fingers in a couple of less-than-legal pies. He'll be able to tell us whether or not this Keen fellow has been moving around in the city's mercenary circles since his escape. Rats like him always scurry back to the nest sooner or later."

He holds the note out, but pauses before giving it to you. "This is just between us, hear? This man is important in the way that the Governor General was important, so you'll have to best behavior this one. Just mention my name and he'll take care of the rest."



The note contains the name of Jacob Samuels. Klassen will explain that Samuels runs Ringside, the premier location to see bare-knuckle boxing and prize-fighting within the city.

The Fated can attempt TN 13 Scrutiny Challenges at this point; on a success, the character gets the feeling that Klassen isn't telling them something, but if they bring it up, he denies withholding anything relevant to their investigation. "A man has to have some secrets," he'll say, laughing as he casts them a knowing wink.



ACT II, SCENE 2:

RINGSIDE

This scene finds the Fated placed into a trap by Klassen. Whenever Klassen needs someone to disappear - whether it might be a political prisoner, honorable witness, or nosy investigator - he sends them to Jacob Samuels, the owner of Malifaux's famous Ringside boxing arena. Samuels traps these unfortunate souls and throws them into combat in the Pits, the underground "no holds barred" fighting pits beneath Ringside. Very few people make it out of the Pits alive, and none do so through fighting in the deadly matches.

WELCOME TO RINGSIDE

Ringside is located in the Easterly Slums, which - contrary to their name - can be found in western Malifaux City. Though still technically slums, the proximity of Downtown makes this area safer than the city's other slums, especially around businesses that bribe Guild patrolmen for extra protection (such as Ringside).

Walking to Ringside from the train yards takes around three and a half to four hours. If the Fated took the time to search the Southern Belle, they will be arriving in the early evening, which is roughly when Ringside opens and people begin to filter in to watch the night's fight.

If the Fated hire a carriage or don't search the Southern Belle, they will arrive to find Ringside closed and will have to wait for it to open later in the evening.

Read the following text as the Fated arrive at Ringside:



Ringside's limestone steps lead past towering statues depicting two bare-knuckled boxers and to a façade that looks like something straight out of the French Renaissance. A standing sign in front of the building bears a chalkboard which announces that this evening's fight is between Angel "One Punch" Alescio and Sally "Sledgehammer" Moses. Beneath their names are a string of weird fractions and plus and minus signs, no doubt explaining the odds being offered on each boxer. Smaller letters describe four less interesting fights scheduled to take place prior to the main event.

A weedy-looking man in a suit stands near the sign, and as you approach he flashes you a smile that showcases his stained teeth. "Hey there! Name's Bramson. Looking to bet on the fight?"



If the Fated succeed on a TN 7 Gambling Challenge, they are able to work out that the boxers seem evenly matched, though Sally "Sledgehammer" Moses is favored to win. Gareth Bramson will take any bets the Fated wish to make on the fight, which just means that they can make Gambling flips here instead of at The Match (see page 37 for more details).

If the Fated arrived early, Bramson will inform them that Ringside doesn't open until later and that he's just taking early bets. If they wish to use this time to ask about Ringside or Samuels (either from Bramson or the various people of the district), they can attempt TN 9 Bewitch Challenges to learn that although Ringside draws plenty of high-profile people who enjoy watching the fights, the real show takes place in the Pits, which are located beneath Ringside and feature fights involving weapons, magic, and the occasional captured beast. It's an open secret that Samuels bribes the Guild to look the other way and ignore anything that happens at the Pits.

Once evening arrives and the Fated enter the building, read the following text:



Ringside's cavernous central hall is hazy with cigarette and cigar smoke. Men in fedora and bowler hats mill around the square ring at the center of the room, which is brightly lit by Soulstone-powered spotlights that hang from the ceiling high overhead. The first match has yet to begin, but already a cadre of journalists is lingering near the edges of the ring, bulky cameras and trusty notebooks in hand.



If the Fated attempt to ask anyone where they can find Samuels, the other spectators will point him out in the crowd. Read the following text as the Fated meet him:



All of the noise and confusion of Ringside seems to revolve around a well-dressed black man with an impressive mustache, and as you approach him, he claps a journalist on the back and flashes you an impressive smile. "Welcome to Ringside, friends. Should be a good match tonight, don't you think?"



Samuels will be friendly but distant until the Fated mention Klassen's name, at which point he'll immediately become more friendly and open. Read the following text:



"Klassen, you say? That old rogue's got you doing his dirty work, does he?" Samuels chuckles and looks you up and down. "Well, I tell you what. Why don't you enjoy the match for now, and we can talk afterwards? It'll look a bit suspicious if I'm not around for the opening fights, but once the main event starts, all eyes will be on the ring and we can talk in private."



The Fated can attempt TN 11 Scrutiny Challenges to get the feeling that Samuels' friendly nature is a bit disingenuous, but this is unlikely to scare them away from their meeting. If the Fated do decide to leave Samuels and return to Klassen, proceed to Scene 4 (pg. 43) instead.

If the Fated insist that they can't wait to speak with him, Samuels capitulates and asks for a few moments to make his farewells. He then speaks with an underling and leaves to get things set up for their capture. The underling returns to the Fated a few moments later and directs them to the Samuel's meeting room (see The Recruitment on page 38 for more details).

THE MATCH

As the Fated settle in to whatever seats they can find, the first of the boxing matches begin. If they wish to find a bookie to place some bets, they can spot Bramson in the crowd, taking scrip from gamblers and giving them blue and yellow tickets in return.

The first fight is between Bentley “the Barbarian” Kovac and Alesander “Roaring” Raskob, while the second fight features Adam “Murdering” McEachern and Renato “Bruiser” Bretz and the third is between Donny “the Dragon” Taggart and “Raving” Rahman Lorenz.

If the Fated choose to bet on the fights, a TN 10 Gambling Challenge allows them to pick the winning boxer and win back half of their initial bet (e.g., a Fated who bets 10 scrip will win back 15 scrip: the initial 10 scrip they bet, plus 5 scrip in winnings). If multiple Fated bet on different opponents, the character with the highest total picks the winning boxer (reflip any ties). The Fated should have enough time between matches to mingle with the crowd and place any bets they wish.

The fights are bare-knuckle boxing matches in the “Irish stand down” style, with an emphasis upon punching and taking punches over maneuvering around the ring. There’s a great deal of showmanship to the fights, and by the time the match is over, the crowd is cheering and both boxers - winner and loser - are beat up and bleeding from their broken noses and shattered teeth.

The fourth fight - the one before the prize match - is altered by Samuels in an attempt to get the Fated a bit roughed up prior to his “recruitment” plan.

Read the following text:



A large, burly man with a shaved head climbs into the ring, and alongside him is a blonde woman with bright blue eyes and a black dress. The man glowers at the crowd with his good eye as the woman raises her hands to quiet the arena.

“I hope that you’re enjoying the matches!” she calls out, to the cheers of the crowd. “That’s good to hear! However, we have a bit of a problem with the next match - Gabriel Nathans has come down with a case of food poisoning and won’t be able to compete this evening!”

The woman waves down the boos of disappointment from the crowd. “That doesn’t mean that we’re not going to keep you entertained, however! We’re opening this one up to the crowd! Mr. Samuels has agreed to pay out twenty scrip to anyone able to go a full three rounds with Francesco ‘the Murderer’ Marek!”

Murmurs pass through the crowd as disappointment turns to surprise and intense interest. The woman flashes a glance in your direction, seemingly looking right at you. “How about it?” she asks, still shouting to the crowd. “Any takers?”



The woman is Christina Dalton, one of Samuels’ promoters. If any of the Fated choose to take her up on the offer, they’re brought up on stage to the cheers of the crowd. The ensuing match can be run just like a normal fight, save that the Fated can only take attack actions involving the Pugilism or Martial Arts skills; any other attacks will get the Fated disqualified. Any open use of magic will not only get the Fated disqualified, but will also draw gasps of surprise from the crowd (and will no doubt result in the Witch Hunters paying the Fated a visit after the adventure has ended). Marek's stats can be found on page 106.

NO PUGILISM? NO PROBLEM!

If a Fated doesn't have any ranks in the Pugilism or Martial Arts Skill, they can still make attacks using either their Strength (for Pugilism) or Speed (for Martial Arts). These attacks have the following profile:

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE
Weak Punch	/// 1	0/1/2

If the Fated wish to bet on the fight, Bramson is offering two-to-one odds in favor of Marek. If the Fated bet on Marek and he wins, they'll win back one-third of their bet as winnings (e.g., a Fated that bets 9 scrip will win a total of 12 scrip; the initial bet of 9 scrip plus 3 scrip in winnings). If the Fated bet on their companion, they'll win back two-thirds of their initial bet as winnings.

The fight continues until one of the boxers is knocked unconscious. If the Fated wins, Samuel makes a big show of paying him or her the twenty scrip from his wallet, much to his amusement and the cheering of the fans.

If Marek wins, his unconscious opponent is taken off by Samuels' men for "medical attention," though they're really just getting dumped in the Pits. Should another Fated wish to step up to fight Marek, he'll laugh and claim to be willing to "take on everyone in Ringside!" After some quick medical attention (which restores four of Marek's Wounds), he's ready for his match with the next Fated.

If none of the Fated take Marek up on the offer, a young man calling himself "Tex" steps up to the ring and ends up getting knocked out in the second round, to the cheering of the crowd and the boasting of Marek.

Once Marek's fight is finished, the main match between Angel "One Punch" Alescio and Sally "Sledgehammer" Moses begins. After the first round, Samuels slips away and sends a messenger to fetch the Fated and bring him to his "meeting room."

THE RECRUITMENT

The "meeting room" that the Fated are escorted into is actually the locker room for the boxers. It's 20 feet wide by 30 feet long, but the lockers and benches take up a good deal of this space. Towels hang from pegs on the walls, and in the back, a 5 foot by 5 foot area holds two tall iron tubs that are used as baths by battered boxers. Read the following text as the Fated arrive:



You're led to a spacious locker room that has been packed with changing benches, lockers, and massage tables. The air is tinged with the scent of old sweat, though none of the five men waiting for you seem to notice it. One is Jacob Samuels, but the other four are burly men with crooked noses and permanent scowls.

"It's really unfortunate that we have to meet like this," Samuels says as he starts unbuttoning his cufflinks and removing his coat. "You see, I like you folks. I *like* you. But, you seem to have run afoul of Howard Klassen, and he's asked me to remove you from the equation. I'm guessing that you started poking your nose around one of his little 'side projects.'" The man who escorted you into the room locks the door behind you, and Samuels flashes you a grin. "Now, we can do this the easy way, or the hard way."



Samuels doesn't rush into combat, so if the Fated wish to solve their differences peacefully, they have a chance to do so. He and Klassen have a good arrangement worked out between them, but a TN 14 Bewitch, Convince, or Intimidate check is enough to convince him that maybe it's time for that arrangement to end. On a success, he decides not to toss the Fated into the Pits and will arrange for any fighters knocked out in the bout with Marek to be released. On a failure, however, Samuels orders his men to attack.

Samuels isn't one to leave loose ends dangling, however. He says that if he's letting the Fated go, it's just a matter of time before Klassen comes to settle the score, and that he's willing to pay the Fated a tidy sum (15 scrip) to deal with Klassen once and for all. A TN 12 Barter Challenge talks Samuels up to 22 scrip. If the Fated are willing to kill Klassen - and Samuels points out that Klassen just tried to have them killed if they're hesitant - then he agrees to pay them once the deed is done.

If the Fated decide to fight Samuels (or fail to talk him down), he and his five Former Boxers will attack. Samuels and four of the Former Boxers begin the fight three yards from the Fated, while one of the Former Boxers (the one that locked the door) begins 1 yard behind them. The Boxers spread out among the Fated as evenly as possible, while Samuels hangs back, supporting the Boxers with his magic. Stats for Samuels and the Former Boxers can be found on pages 108 and 109, respectively.

If the Fated win the fight, Samuels surrenders (if he's not unconscious or dead). If he is incapacitated, Christina Dalton (pg. 107) unlocks the door and peeks inside to see what all the commotion is about, only to immediately step back in surprise. She asks the Fated to spare the lives of her coworkers, if only because she doesn't want to have to search for a new job if Samuels is killed.

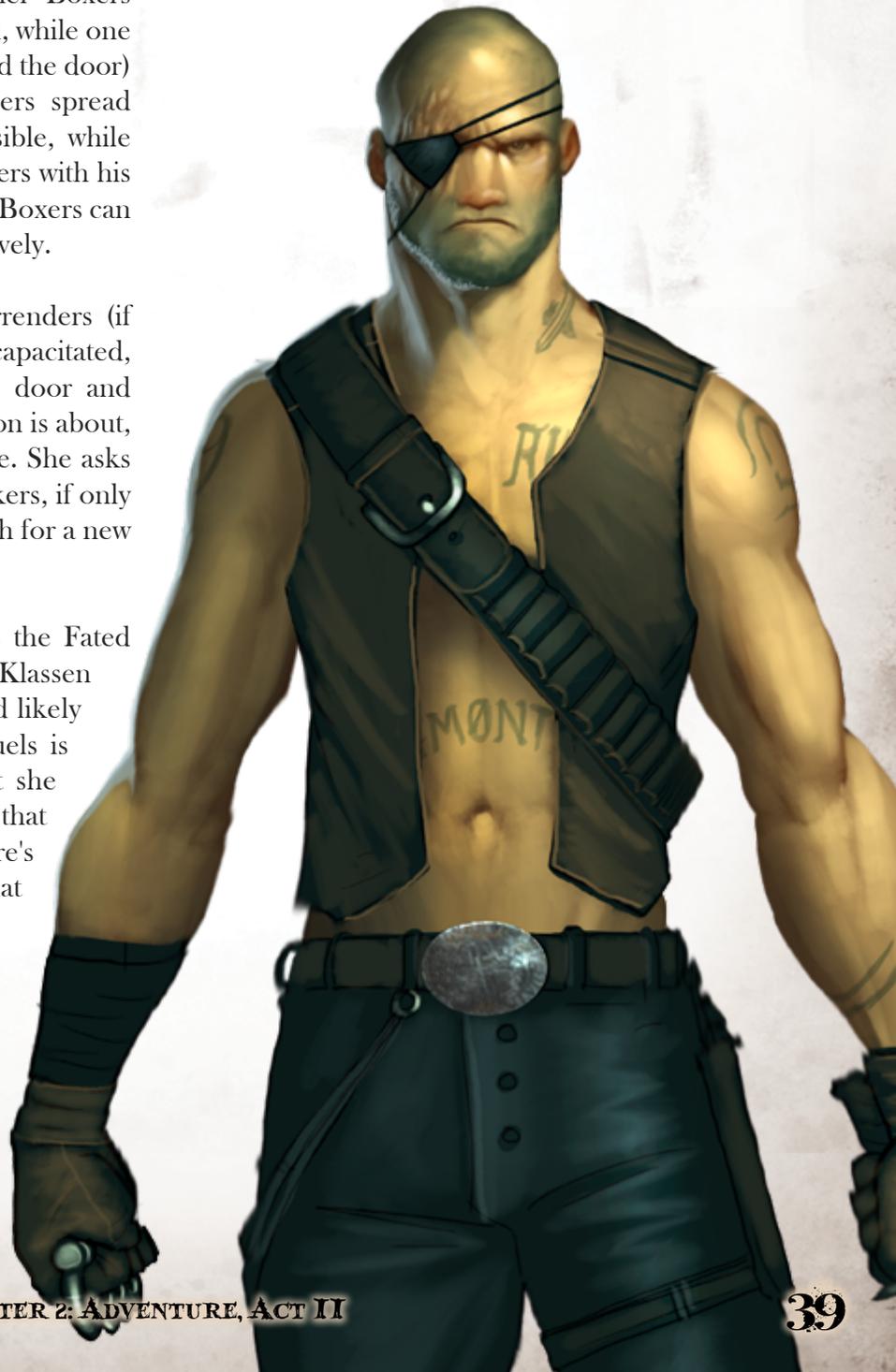
The defeated Samuels (or Dalton) tells the Fated that they're free to go, but will note that Klassen already tried to have the Fated killed and likely won't stop at just one attempt. If Samuels is unconscious, Dalton will point out that she didn't have anything to do with "the man that sent you here to be killed," and that there's no reason to kill any of her coworkers that aren't already dead.

If the Fated ask Dalton about what's going on, she'll tell them that she's heard that Klassen sends people he wants to disappear to Samuels, and Samuels tosses them into the Pits to fight each other. "I guess Klassen really wanted you to disappear forever..."

Searching Samuels produces a golden pocket watch worth 4 scrip at any local pawn shop and a wallet with 22 scrip (minus whatever scrip he's given the Fated to assassinate Klassen).

If the Fated lose the fight, they wake up in separate cells in the Pits. If the Fated surrender, Samuels has his men bind their hands and lead them down to their cells. See Scene 3: The Pits on page 40 for more details.

If the Fated managed to defeat Samuels and avoid capture, skip Scene 3 and go right to Scene 4 (pg. 43).



ACT II, SCENE 3:

THE PITS

If the Fated were knocked unconscious or otherwise captured in Scene 2, they will awaken in a cell in the Pits, the underground fighting arena beneath Ringside. If they defeated Samuels or convinced him not to attack them, however, then they will fortunately bypass this scene (and can probably proceed directly to seeking their revenge on Klassen in Scene 4).

Fated who were knocked unconscious (either from fighting Marek or Samuels) wake up with full Wounds and a good number of bandages. None of the Fated have their possessions, and any Fated that surrendered to Samuels are stripped of their possessions prior to being imprisoned.

Read the following text to the Fated as they wake up (paraphrasing as necessary if the Fated surrendered and were not knocked unconscious):



You awaken with a splitting headache to find yourself in a cramped room containing a single shelf-like slab of iron that's probably intended to serve as a bed. The walls are crafted from old, stained stone, and there's a mushroomy smell to the air that doesn't quite cover up the lingering scent of urine. The room's only door is bolted shut, but through the window-slat, you can see out into a gloomy hallway lit only by two dim hanging lanterns.

Doors similar to your own line the hallway, and through the slats you can see the faces of your companions.



If any of the Fated can teleport, they can easily slip out into the hallway. Alternatively, the Fated can attempt to break down a door with a TN 14 Athletics Challenge, though more than six total attempts to do so (from anyone) will bring a Pit Guard (pg. 110) around to check on the Fated. A TN 12 Deceive Challenge can be used to convince the Guards that a Fated is injured or sick, which results in the Pit Guard opening the door to that character's door.

Each of the Guards has a key that opens the cell doors of the Pits, but the locks can be picked as well. This requires the appropriate lockpicking tools, which are likely confiscated by the Pit Guards when the Fated are captured. If a character manages to keep their lockpicking tools, however, a TN 8 Lockpicking Challenge will open one of the Pits' doors.

Once a character has escaped into the hallway, they can open the other doors to release their companions (doing so in combat requires the use of a (1) Action while the Fated is in front of the door).

MANCATCHERS

These devices are hollow iron poles with a noose looped through the end. They're used to control prisoners in the Pits by wrapping the noose around the prisoner's neck and then guiding them from a safe distance. If the prisoner resists, the wielder can pull the loop on their end of the mancatcher to tighten the loop around the prisoner's neck. See the Pit Guard stat block on page 110 for more information on mancatchers.

There are a number of Pit Guards equal to the number of Fated, and the Fated will have to get past all of them to escape. See The Escape on page 42 for more information.

THE IRON WARRIOR

If the Fated are unable to escape their cells, the Pit Guards eventually come to round them up. One Guard opens the door while the other Guards - one per Fated - each snare a character with mancatchers and wrestle them out of the cell. Once the Fated are in the hallway and under control, they are walked down the hallway to the arena, where they are released. Read the following text:



With their snares firmly around your necks, the Guards march you down the hallway, past a heavy iron door, and into the bottom of a pit. It's circular and at least thirty feet across, with a stone floor that is heavily stained with blood and littered with weapons. Twenty feet above you, a throng of people press against the pit's railing, screaming for blood as they wave their yellow or blue betting stubs in hands.

"We have something special for you today!" an unseen man bellows into a microphone. "A group battle, pitting human ingenuity against unstoppable industry!"

The heavy door opposite you swings open and a machine stomps out into the pit, ducking down in order to fit through the doorway. The guards quickly pull the door shut behind them as the machine releases a burst of steam and turns its visored head toward you. The announcer shouts "FIIIIIGHT!" over the roar of the crowd, and the machine stomps toward you...



A Fated can pick up a weapon from the Pit's floor with a (1) Ready Weapon Action. The exact type of weapon grabbed by the Fated is random, but all use the following weapon profile:

WEAPON (MELEE)	RANGE	DAMAGE
Crude Weapon	2	2/3/4

The fight here is against the Pit Warden (pg. 111). At the end of the first round, the Fated get some unexpected help from a drunken gambler. Read the following text:



"At least make it a fair fight!" shouts a woman pushing against the railing. "I've got good money on this!" A moment later, a man in a ruffled duster screams as the shouting woman tosses him over the railing with her pneumatic arm.

He lands with a sickening crunch and lays unmoving and probably dead on the ground... but you can see the handles of two revolvers peeking out from his gun belt.

"Come on!" the woman shouts, grinning as she jabs a pneumatic finger at the construct. "Shoot it up! I've got a bar tab to pay off!"



The pistols are custom revolvers and each have the following stats. They are each fully loaded.

WEAPON (PISTOLS)	RANGE	DAMAGE
Custom Ganten Pistol	10	2/3/5

Special: Capacity 7, Reload 3 AP.

If the Fated are defeated, the Warden uses its steel fist to pound them into paste as useless blue tickets flutter down from above. If they win, there are equal shouts and cheers from the crowd as yellow tickets flutter down from above like confetti.

The Pit Guards return with their mancatchers to disarm the Fated and take them back to their rooms, but they leave the door open behind them, allowing the Fated one final chance to escape. Read the following text:



The iron door you entered from grinds open, allowing two of the Pit's guards to enter with their long snare-sticks. They approach you hesitantly, their eyes on your weapons. "Don't make a fuss and you'll get breakfast in the morning," one of the warns. "The Pits ain't so bad if you just save the fighting for the matches."



The two guards attempt to snare the Fated, but any Fated with one of the pistols can attempt a TN 9 Tenacity Challenge to force the guards to back down immediately. If the Fated succeed at intimidating them (or at simply beating them to near-unconsciousness) they tell the characters how to escape the Pits and where they can find the strongbox with their gear.

Regardless of whether the Fated escape through fighting or intimidation, proceed to The Escape as they flee from the Pits.

THE ESCAPE

There are other people in the Pits - those who cook food for the prisoners or tend to their injuries - but they slink aside and don't attempt to stop the Fated as they flee the dungeon. A TN 8 Notice Challenge (or a TN 6 Intimidate Challenge made against a frightened Pits worker) allows the Fated to locate the large strongbox containing their gear.

As the Fated move through the dungeon-like complex, they also come across other people locked in cells similar to the ones they had been in earlier. The Fated can stop and open these doors by either bashing them in (TN 14 Athletics), picking the locks (TN 8 Lockpicking), or just opening them with the guards' keys. If they linger too long, feel free to have two Pit Guards arrive on the scene and attack the Fated while shouting for reinforcements. Every three rounds thereafter, another Pit Guard (pg. 110) arrives upon the scene until the Fated have either resumed their flight or cut down a total of eight Pit Guards.

Read the following text if the Fated escape without having to fight the Warden:



With a great heave, you push the trap door open and climb the rest of the way up into the basement of Ringside. You can hear voices nearby, but instead of another guard, two men in a suit pass by the door as they talk eagerly about a pit fight. "I'm not sure where Samuels got it," the first man is saying, "but it's going to be one hell of a fight!"



If the Fated did fight the Warden, read the same text, changing the man's dialogue to comment upon some aspect of their fight (preferably one that made the Fated seem heroic or skilled).

The men are spectators who have lingered after the boxing match to watch the more interesting (to them) pit fights. They're excited about the prospect of watching some new fighters go up against the Warden that Samuels has been featuring in the past few pit fights.

The Fated can escape Ringside without any further incident by mingling in with the departing boxing crowd and walking out through the front door.

ACT II, SCENE 4:

THE WASTREL

In this scene, the Fated return to Klassen, presumably to either seek revenge their revenge or to ask him some hard questions about why he's hamstringing their investigation. Klassen spends the evening at the Rusty Bucket, the tavern near the northern gate where he first met with the Fated in Act I. Walking to the tavern from Ringside takes about an hour and a half, so the Fated should arrive around midnight if they don't stop along the way.

If the Fated decide to rest up and wait until the next day to confront Klassen, he'll still be at the tavern when they arrive, but his fellow Wastrels won't be present; it will just be Klassen and Dohman in the tavern.

TRAIN YARD DIVERSION

If the Fated instead head back to the train yards to find Klassen, they find the area either patrolled by bored guards and dogs (if night) or engineers and laborers (if day). The Southern Belle has already been returned to service, so it is no longer present at the train yard. If the Fated seem a bit lost as to where they might be able to find Klassen, feel free to have an engineer approach them. Read the following text:



A man in a long overcoat and a newsy cap raises his hand as he shuffles toward you. "Pardon me," he says, reaching up to tip his cap in greeting. "You folks look a bit out of place here. Anything I can do to help?"



The engineer is Felious Marsh, and he's currently working to get one of the trains repaired and back in order (if it's night, he's pulling a late shift). If the Fated ask about Klassen, he remembers seeing him hanging around the train when it was brought in, and will mention that the "fella looked really paranoid about something." Klassen isn't around, but Marsh will mention that "that sort of man probably spends more time in a tavern than out, I'd wager."

If the Fated still have issues realizing that Klassen is hiding out in the Rusty Bucket, they can check with the Guild, who will (grudgingly) point them towards the Tavern as the informal base of operations for Klassen and Dohman.

THE RUSTY BUCKET

If the Fated arrive at the Rusty Bucket at night, Klassen is in the middle of a poker game with some of his associates. There's one such Wastrel (pg. 112) per Fated. Read the following text:



The Rusty Bucket is tucked away in the shadows of the street, with only a single street lamp casting light onto the small tavern. The windows are bright, however, and peering inside, you can see Klassen and his bald companion, Dohman, sitting at a table with [NUMBER] other men. They seem to be playing poker, and as you watch, Klassen laughs at an unheard joke and throws his cards down onto the table. It seems to be a fairly festive gathering.



If the Fated arrive at the Rusty Bucket during the day, Klassen and Dohman are nursing hangovers. There are no Wastrels present at this time (they've already gone home). Klassen's and Dohman's stats can be found on pages 113 and 114, respectively.

If the Fated arrive during the day, read the following text:



The Rusty Bucket is quiet, as is the street in front of it. Peeking through the window, you can see Klassen sitting at a table inside, his head resting on his arms. Dohman sets two cups and a coffee pot down on the table and collapses into a chair next to the thinner man, looking exhausted. From the way they're behaving, you're pretty certain that they're both pretty hung-over.



If the Fated kick in the door and rush in guns blazing, they'll have surprise and their opponents will be **Slow** on the first round of combat. Since none of them have weapons drawn, they will have to take the (1) Ready Weapon Action before they're able to attack the Fated. Furthermore, because they're seated with their backs to the door, any Wastrels that are present (but not Klassen and Dohman) all have  to their Defense flips, which translates into a  to the Fated's attacks against them until they stand on their initiative.

Klassen will swear loudly when the Fated storm in, and frequent shouts of "Kill 'em!" should be commonplace during the fight. Since they're being attacked seemingly for no reason, Dohman will side with Klassen and the other Wastrels during the fight.

If the Fated take a less direct approach and attempt to speak with Klassen, he immediately becomes very nervous (and a TN 8 Scrutiny Challenge reveals that he's surprised the Fated are still alive). He holds his hands out as if to stop the Fated from coming closer and tries very hard to keep the violence to a minimum, to the point of saying that "this 'ere's just a misunderstanding, is all. Nobody wants anyone to do anything brash or ill-advised."

If the Fated confront Klassen about trying to get them tossed into the Pits, Dohman will immediately turn suspicious of Klassen (most likely with a shocked "You did what?!") and won't participate in any ensuing combat. If there are any Wastrels present, they will sit confused at the table, unsure just how to behave in the current situation. If the Fated or Klassen tell them to leave, they'll happily make their exits (and will try to take the game's 12 scrip pot with them; a TN 8 Notice Challenge catches them trying to fill their pockets as they stand up).

A PUPPET WITH MANY STRINGS

If the Fated leave Klassen alive and try to interrogate him, each Fated may attempt a TN 6 Intimidate Challenge to force him to reveal one of the following pieces of information, plus one additional piece of information per Margin of Success.

The pieces of information (in order) are as follows:

- Klassen knows some people who might know where Keen is being held, and he'll trade that information to the Fated in exchange for his life (see *Incriminating Papers*, pg. 45, for more details).
- Klassen did send the Fated into a trap, but it was to save his own hide. Some powerful people wanted the Guild to stop investigating Keen's disappearance, and when Mattheson brought the Fated into the investigation, Klassen panicked. He's really sorry about having to do it, but he was facing the very real chance of having his kneecaps broken if the investigation continued.
- It's not just about Keen. There have been rumors that Keen took something from Nythera, a Neverborn relic of some sort, but he didn't have it on him when the Guild arrested him. The Ten Thunders are searching for the relic for a purpose unknown to Klassen.

- The Ten Thunders crime syndicate was involved in Keen’s kidnapping. They kidnapped Keen from the train and are holding him in a location unknown to Klassen, but he’s likely being tortured for information about Nythera. Klassen suspects that the Guild agents that kidnapped Keen were killed and their bodies hidden to make the Guild suspicious of agents in their own midst. The irony is not lost on him.

- Klassen technically works for the Ten Thunders as well as the Guild, but he’s not happy with the arrangement. He does his best to balance the interests of both factions, but the Ten Thunders didn’t leave him any room when it came to the Keen investigation. They wanted Keen, they wanted the Guild off their trail, and they didn’t want any arguments.

Dohman is also involved with the Ten Thunders but not to the extent that Klassen is under their thumb, and he knew nothing about the Keen kidnapping or Klassen’s attempts to cover it up. He’s surprised that Klassen took such drastic action to hamstringing the Guild’s investigation and isn’t very happy with his partner in crime after learning about the cover-up.

INCRIMINATING PAPERS

If Klassen is questioned, he’s very likely to offer the Fated a list of people who might know where Keen is being held (as determined in the Puppet With Many Strings section, pg. 44). If the Fated kill Klassen or knock him unconscious, a quick search of the tavern will automatically turn up the papers (they’re just sitting on the bar in a large envelope stamped “Sensitive Information: Not To Leave Premises”).

If the Fated don’t think to search the tavern for information, Dohman (if alive and conscious) will hand them the envelope, claiming that it’s something Klassen stole from the Guild Enclave the day before; he didn’t think anything of it at the time (they steal paperwork from the Guild on a semi-regular basis). He’s hoping that they can use it to get back to the case and that handing it over makes them even (though he doesn’t mind heading outside for a smoke if the Fated feel like working Klassen over a few times).

The papers are a list of about a dozen names, many of them Asian. There are notes beneath each as to their function, such as “laundering,” “brothel,” and “collections,” along with various numbers. A TN 8 Literacy or Barter Challenge is enough to work out that the numbers are regular payments; it appears to be a list of Guild contacts and snitches in the Little Kingdom. From the stamp on the envelope, it would seem as if someone “liberated” it from the Guild’s file cabinets.

With the knowledge that these people might know something about Keen, it’s just a matter of heading down to the Little Kingdom, tracking down the people on the list, and asking them what they know. This is handled in Scene 5: Back on the Trail.



ACT II, SCENE 5:

BACK ON THE TRAIL

In this scene, the Fated finally get back on the trail of hunting down the kidnapped Keen using Klassen's list of names. None of the contacts on the list know the full story, but taken as a group, they're able to give the Fated enough clues to find Keen's hiding place. All of the people on the list are found in the Little Kingdom, the slum that houses a great number of immigrants from the Three Kingdoms.

Traveling from the Rusty Bucket to the Little Kingdom takes roughly seven hours by foot - it's approximately halfway across the city - so it's probably a good idea for the Fated to take a carriage or train to cut down on the travel time (which should only cost them around half a scrip per person).

Once the Fated have arrived at the Little Kingdom, read the following text, making adjustments as necessary if the Fated arrive at night:



The Little Kingdom district is a bustling and somewhat cramped display of foreign culture in all its exotic glory. The buildings have been constructed with a distinctly Asian theme to them, and many of the colorful buildings sport balconies, curved eaves, pagoda tops, or prominent dragon motifs.

Every third building seems to be a tea house, herbalist shop, massage parlor, or acupuncturist, and many of the people in the crowded streets are dressed in billowing kimono and tight cheongshams. The signs are all labeled in multiple languages, sometimes English, but more often Japanese, Vietnamese, and one or more dialects of Chinese. It's hard to shake the feeling that you've wandered into another world entirely.



Now that they're in the Little Kingdom, the Fated can begin searching for the people on their list. This is handled with an Ongoing Challenge:

TWISTING ARMS, ASKING QUESTIONS

- **SKILLS ALLOWED:** Intimidate, Leadership, Pugilism, Scrutiny
- **TARGET NUMBER:** 10
- **DURATION:** 1 hour
- **SUCCESS REQUIREMENT:** (3 per Fated)
- **FAILURE REQUIREMENT:** (1 per Fated)

If the Fated manage to successfully complete the Ongoing Challenge, they learn that the Qi and Gong - a combination brothel, opium den, and hookah lounge - has been closed all day today and yesterday. It's rumored that they're hosting a private party for some American politicians, but one of the contacts saw a large, tattooed man dragging a second man in a hood through a back door. With this information, the Fated can proceed to the Qi and Gong.

On a catastrophic failure, however, the Fated arrive at their next contact to find them dead: killed in a brutal manner and left hanging from their second story window as a reminder about what happens to those who talk to outsiders. Nobody else will speak with the Fated on the subject after this point, causing their investigation to come to an end. See *The Investigation Ends* on page 49 for more details.



THE QI AND GONG

When the Fated arrive at the Qi and Gong, read the following text:



The Qi and Gong is much larger than you would have expected, but the closed sign hung on the door - written in Japanese, Mandarin, Vietnamese, and English - makes it clear that there are no illicit pleasures to be found within the brothel today. In fact, as you stand in the sparse street outside the building, you notice that people seem to be actively avoiding it; many of the passers-by cross the street and hurry past, never turning their heads to glance in its direction.



Getting into the Qi and Gong isn't difficult... but getting in quietly is another matter entirely. If the Fated attempt to batter down the doors, A TN 12 Athletics Challenge will knock the door in.

If the Fated have the appropriate tools, a TN 10 Lockpicking Challenge will open a door silently. The building's windows are a bit easier to get into; the shutters are closed and locked, but a TN 8 Lockpicking Challenge (that does not require tools) is enough to get a thin object between the shutters to push the latch up.

If the Fated knock or otherwise attempt to openly talk their way into the building, a Ten Thunders Brother (pg. 115) eventually shouts at them that the brothel is closed and that they will have to come back at another time. The Fated can talk the man into opening the door with a TN 15 Social Skill Challenge, but otherwise he ignores them. Attempting to bust the door down - even a single attempt - will draw the attention of two Ten Thunders Brothers from within, who will rush outside to attack the Fated.

Once the Fated are inside the Qi and Gong, read the following text:



The interior of the Qi and Gong is garish and extravagant, with bright red walls and jade green carpeting. Chairs and reclining couches sporting embroidered flowers are spread through the brothel's rooms, and lighting is provided by red paper lanterns that hang from the ceiling, casting everything in a slightly unwholesome reddish tint. The air is thick with incense that does little to cover up the sickly sweet floral scent of opium.

Just as you've almost come to terms with the ostentatious décor, you hear a gurgle of pain from the next room, followed by a muffled, indistinct voice.



In the next room, the Fated find Edgar Keen, his torturer Lawrence Kramer (pg. 116), and one Ten Thunder Brother (pg. 115) per Fated. If the Fated attracted the attention of the Ten Thunders Brothers when they were breaking into the Qi and Gong, then there are two fewer Ten Thunders Brothers here; the Fated already encountered them.



Read the following text, adjusting as appropriate if the Ten Thunders have been alerted to the Fated's presence:



You enter what must have once been a room designed for opium addicts to lounge about without distracting the brothel's other guests; there are sitting couches pushed against the walls and the air is tinged with the lingering scent of opium. Now, however, it seems to be serving as a make-shift torture room: a burly Caucasian man is strung up in the center of the room, his hands tied above his head by rope that stretches up to the rafters, keeping him upright regardless of how many times he falls unconscious. The prisoner's bare chest is bruised and cut in so many places that at first you suspect he must be dead, but then he releases a soft wheeze of pain.

The man standing in front of him is dressed like a butcher, though you have little faith that the blood splattered across his apron came from any sort of livestock. [Number of Ten Thunders Brothers] masked men lean back against the wall, watching the scene with cold disinterest from behind their painted masks.



As soon as the Fated arrive, the Ten Thunders Brothers immediately attack them in an attempt to keep Keen's presence a secret. They take no prisoners, even from those who claim to be working with the Ten Thunders; their orders allow nothing less.

The Ten Thunders Brothers charge into combat with the Fated, while Kramer hangs back and attacks whatever Fated seems strongest; he tries to weaken them so the Ten Thunders Brothers can finish them off.

After the fight, the Fated can cut or lower Keen down, though he has difficulty staying on his feet. He's been worked over by Kramer to extract information about Nythera and is now missing a few toes and fingers, as well as an ear. A TN 5 Doctor Challenge is enough to bring him back around to full consciousness, though he's still a bit disoriented. Keen thanks the Fated for saving him from "those madmen."

If the Fated search the room, they'll find Kramer's notes, which detail the questions he asked Keen and the mercenary's responses. The questions all concern Nythera, but a TN 7 Literacy Challenge reveals that they seemed more concerned with the location of a Neverborn relic that Keen supposedly brought back with him from the ruins. Keen professed his ignorance as to the location of the relic, but the torturer didn't seem to believe him.

If the Fated decide to take Keen back to the Guild Enclave, they'll need some alternate means of transporting him across the city, most likely a carriage or train costing them around half a scrip per person. If they attempt to force Keen to walk to the Enclave, he passes out after only a few blocks. Attempting to carry Keen across the city requires a successful TN 12 Labor Challenge; on a failure, he proves too heavy and the character is unable to carry him any further. Of course, carrying an unconscious person through the city is the sort of thing that draws the attention of the Guild Guard, but the guards hail a carriage and escort Keen and the Fated to the Guild Enclave if the situation is made clear to them.

Keen doesn't want to exchange one torturing captor for another, however. If the Fated mention that they're taking him to the Guild, he begs them to just tell the Guild that he's dead and let him go ("Haven't I suffered enough?"). If that doesn't move their heartstrings - and he's not surprised if it doesn't - he offers to tell them where he hid the relic he stole from Nythera. He doesn't care what the Fated do with it; he just wants the nightmare of the past few days to end.

THE INVESTIGATION ENDS

If the Fated fail to bring Keen back to Lucius Mattheson at the Guild Enclave - either because their contacts all fell silent or they chose to let him go free - the Governor's Secretary is displeased with them. He openly ponders the idea of carrying through with his threat to hold them responsible for the arson in the Central Slums but can be swayed from his decision by a number of factors.

First, if the Fated bring up the matter of Klassen's betrayal, Lucius will consider the mission's failure to be Klassen's fault, rather than that of the Fated. If Klassen is still alive, Lucius schedules another meeting with the Fated for the following day, which turns out to be Klassen's hanging upon the Hanging Tree. Unless the Fated specifically mentioned that Dohman was ignorant about Keen's kidnapping, he gets a branch right next to Klassen's.

Secondly, if the Fated turn over Kramer's notes detailing the results of Keen's interrogation, it's enough to mollify Lucius. He notes that he is not accustomed to tolerating half-measures from his agents, but since the Fated are only mercenaries, he will let it pass... this time. He allows them to leave without further repercussions.

Finally, the Fated could mention the Nythera relic to Lucius. If they turn it over to him or tell him where it is hidden, Lucius will offer a token statement about "a silver lining to your failures" if they do not also turn over Keen. He will still be pleased to have the relic in his possession, however, and has an accountant pay the Fated 5 scrip each for their trouble. There are no further repercussions for the Fated.

If none of these events occur, then Lucius decides to have the Fated arrested. He sends his scribe to fetch "Captain Muldoon," which is just a code word for "please send in a bunch of armed guards." The guards arrive in force, point a wall of guns at the Fated, and take them into custody. Resistance is clearly suicide against this many guards, and any Fated that attempts to fight instead of surrendering is blown away by the massed gunfire.

THE NYTHERA RELIC

The relic that Keen looted from Nythera is a triangular stone whose surface is etched in a spiraling pattern of strange runes. A TN 10 Literacy Challenge reveals that the runes are a language of some sort, though it's nothing that anyone in Malifaux City has seen before. It glows with a faint purple light and feels tingly to the touch.

Keen hid the relic in Edge Point, behind a moonshiner's distillery. The moonshiner found it and has it propped up in his house, but he's willing to hand it over the moment someone comes asking for it; some weird glowing rock isn't worth a bullet to the face. The fare for a trip down to Edge Point is 1 scrip per person, and it's the same coming back.

The relic has a Soulstone embedded in its core, allowing it to function as if it had a Lade of 3 (see the *Fated Almanac*, pg. 226).

Should a character attempt to escape by teleporting away or diving through a window (a TN 10 Athletics Challenge dealing 2/3/4 damage from the sharp glass and subsequent fall), Lucius orders the guards to search the area and then puts a 50 scrip bounty on the Fated's head.

In contrast, if the Fated bring Keen back to the Guild, Lucius is quite pleased with their work. He'll arrange for them to receive comfortable apartments Downtown as a reward (rent-free for the next six months) and will offer them some of his expensive brandy (which he does not drink).

If Klassen's betrayal is brought up, it plays out as described above, with a public hanging.

ACT III

Act III begins with the Fated being asked to meet with Misaki Katanaka, a representative of the Ten Thunders. Misaki is upset that the Fated have been meddling in the affairs of the Ten Thunders, but she also acknowledges that they were wronged by a Ten Thunders agent and makes an attempt to settle the conflict between their two groups in a peaceful manner.

As way of doing this, Misaki offers the Fated a line of credit at the Honeypot Casino, then asks them to verify whether one of its patrons - a Freikorps mercenary by the name of Otto Pletcher - is being honest when he brags that the Freikorps have found a way to open the Nythera ruins.

At the Honeypot Casino, the Fated learn that the Freikorps have halted their advance toward Nythera to investigate a second set of ruins, called Kethsora. It is there that the Freikorps discovered the way to unlock Nythera, but the Ten Thunders are not the only ones who have heard his boasting. Some mutating Brilliance addicts attempt to rough Pletcher up, but the Fated manage to save him... only for Jakob Lynch, the casino's owner, to reveal that he's also informed his allies about the Freikorps, and they're on their way to ambush the mercenaries at Kethsora.

This kicks off a harrowing ride through the Badlands to reach Kethsora before Lynch's allies - an army of vicious Nephilim - can ambush the mercenaries. If the Fated can survive the dangers of the Badlands and arrive in time, then they can help the Freikorps fight off the Nephilim... but if they are too late, the Nephilim defeat the Freikorps, dealing a heavy blow to the strength of the mercenary unit.

Regardless of whether or not the Fated are able to save the Freikorps, they discover the secrets to opening Nythera within Kethsora. They've come this far, and all roads lead toward Nythera...

ACT III, PROLOGUE:

THE THUNDER'S CALL

The morning after the Fated finish their business with the Guild, they are paid a visit by a monk that invites them to a meeting with a representative of the Ten Thunders. Read the following text:



It's only been a day since your business with the Guild concluded, but you still can't shake the feeling that your leash has only been given some slack, rather than been completely removed. It's difficult to avoid tensing up whenever a Guild Guard passes you on the street, and you woke up multiple times during the night thinking that the Guild was about to burst down your door and drag you off again.

Thus it comes as something of a surprise when, midway through your breakfast, you're approached by a small Asian man wearing the robes of a monk. He bows in a respectful manner and introduces himself as Makoto, an agent of the Ten Thunders.

The monk folds his hands together and smiles serenely. "My lady knows that you were involved in the unpleasantness in the Little Kingdom last night. In any other situation, such an insult would have demanded retribution, if only to make a point to those who might take inaction as a sign of weakness." He holds up a hand, imploring you to remain calm. "However, she is also aware of the improper way that you were treated by one of her agents, a man by the name of Howard Klassen. That knowledge has stayed her hand, and she wishes now to meet with you, that you might clear the air and work to find peace between your houses."



ACT III, SCENE I:

THE FALLEN BLOSSOM

In this scene, the Fated are brought to the Fallen Blossom teahouse in the Little Kingdom, where they meet with the Oyabun's daughter, Misaki Katanaka.

The monk Makoto is being truthful in his words to the Fated: Misaki does wish to ensure that both the Ten Thunders and the Fated are compensated for their hardship and struggles, but that wish is couched in the desire to turn the Fated into a useful tool for the Ten Thunders; in her estimation, turning a potential enemy into an ally is of more worth than killing them.

Read the following text:



Makoto leads you to the Little Kingdom and through a maze of food stands, curio shops, and small shrines. The residents of the district step aside to let the little man through the crowd, and soon you find yourselves being ushered into what appears to be an expensive tea house. "I can go no further," the monk says, bowing to each of you as he stops just inside the doorway. "Be at peace, and remember that respect and self-control are seen as virtues by the children of the Three Kingdoms."

As he departs, an attractive serving woman wearing a mask that covers her lower face steps forward and bows to you. "Welcome to the Fallen Blossom. I am Sachiko. Please, follow me," she says, motioning down the hallway. "The First Lieutenant is waiting for you."



Sachiko is reserved and professional, and she leads the Fated to Misaki without hesitation. If the Fated attempt to ask her any questions, they must pass a TN 8 Bewitch Challenge to get an answer out of her; otherwise, she merely claims that “the First Lieutenant will answer all your questions.”

If they succeed on the Challenge, she answers any questions that won't get her in trouble or bring about a loss of face to herself, Misaki, or the Ten Thunders. She knows that Misaki is genuine in her wish to reconcile with the Fated but doesn't know the full details of what Misaki wants from them. She suspects that Misaki only wishes for the Fated to show her that their recent actions against the Ten Thunders were a mistake and were not intended to cause insult to the organization.

When the Fated are finished speaking with Sachiko (if they bother at all), read the following text:



The masked woman leads you down a hallway and into a sparsely decorated room containing only a single table and some stylized calligraphy scrolls on the walls. Seated at the table is a woman in a many-layered silk kimono printed with tiny lotus flowers. A steel crest is woven into her sleek ebony hair, and as you enter, she nods in greeting.

“Thank you for accepting my invitation,” she says, motioning to the cushions surrounding the table. “Please, join me at my table. We have much to discuss.”



The woman introduces herself as Misaki Katanaka and refers to herself as “a representative of the Ten Thunders.” The Fated can attempt TN 10 Bureaucracy or Scrutiny Challenges to realize that she is downplaying her position in the organization, and that she is likely someone with a great deal of influence over the criminal organization.

If the Fated express concern over their safety, she calmly offers her assurances that the Fated are safe so long as they are her guests. Once the Fated are comfortable on the cushions – or as comfortable as they can be – Misaki will continue.

Read the following text, adjusting as appropriate if the Fated's encounters with the Ten Thunders in Act II took place more than one day previously:



Once you're seated, the masked woman returns with tea, which she carefully sets out and prepares at the table. Only after she's served everyone at the table does she stand, bow, and leave the room, quietly sliding the door shut behind her.

“There is enmity between us,” Misaki says once you are alone, her voice studiously calm. “You have offered an insult to the Ten Thunders in your actions, but we have offered you a similar insult in the dishonorable way that you were treated by Howard Klassen.” She takes a sip of tea, and you notice that, despite her elegance and poise, her fingers are calloused like a warrior's.

“In these situations,” she continues, setting her cup back on its plate, “it is customary for both parties to offer an apology to the other so that they can move forward without having to resort to a great deal of bloodshed. Since you are my guests, I shall begin. You were manipulated and betrayed by one of our agents, and to address this insult, I have asked for a line of credit to be set aside for you at the Honeypot Casino. You are free to use it to gamble, drink, or enjoy any of the other pleasures offered by that establishment. It is my hope that this gesture of respect will assuage your honor.”

The apology made, she folds her hands in her lap and waits.



Any Fated who makes a TN 8 Carouse Challenge has heard of the Honeypot Casino, which has a reputation as one of the city's most famous (or notorious) casinos/taverns/brothels. "The party never ends at the Honeypot," the saying goes, and it's only continued to expand in size and popularity with each year of business.

If the character achieves a Margin of Success on this Challenge, they've also heard rumors that the Honeypot peddles drugs to its customers, most notably "Brilliance," which is said to induce feelings of euphoria and heightened intelligence in its users.

If the Fated offer apologies for their own actions, Misaki accepts them with a slight nod of the head and considers the matter closed. To her, this isn't about the Fated regretting their actions, but rather that they're willing to show her (and the Ten Thunders) the respect that she believes they deserve.

If they refuse to apologize (or just miss the hint entirely), then the Fated are essentially admitting that they had intended to insult the Ten Thunders... which will likely earn them a midnight visit from some very unpleasant people at a point in the not-too-distant future. For now, however, Misaki will continue speaking after a long, uncomfortable silence. A TN 11 Scrutiny Challenge will reveal that the characters' refusal to apologize has made her angry, though her expression remains as calm as ever.

Read the following text once the Fated have made their apology (or decided to do no such thing):



"There is a single task that I would ask of you to show your forgiveness, and then we may consider this matter concluded." Misaki looks between you. "During your revelries at the Honeypot Casino, please look for a man named Otto Pletcher. He is a member of the Freikorps mercenary group and is a frequent patron of the Honeypot for weeks, but last night, he began claiming that the Freikorps have discovered how to unlock Nythera."

She pauses, then offers you a small smile. "It is likely that he is merely boasting to impress the Honeypot's whores, but it would be foolish not to investigate his claims. I would ask my own agents to investigate, but the owner of the Honeypot would spot them instantly, and his involvement in anything having to do with Nythera would make things... very complicated."

Misaki folds her hands in her lap and looks to you expectantly. "Will you do me this favor and verify the truth of this man's words?"



If the Fated accept her offer, Misaki says they can return to the tea house when they have learned whether Pletcher is boasting or speaking the truth and speak with Sachiko, who will be their contact with the Ten Thunders from this point onward. If the Fated ask for supplies or a reward, she reminds them about the line of credit at the Honey-pot and says that she will be in their debt... which is worth far more than any material sum she might pay them.

If the Fated refuse to perform the favor, Misaki tells them that she is “very disappointed.” They still have their line of credit at the Honey-pot, and she suggests that they take the time between now and this evening to reconsider their decision.

Either way, Misaki eventually claims that she has other business to attend to and invites the Fated to remain in the room and finish the tea. After she’s left, the Fated are free to leave the tea house at any time.



ACT III, SCENE 2:

FEAR AND LOATHING

Between the Fated's line of credit and Misaki's request of a favor, the Fated will likely end up at the Honeypot Casino at some point. The establishment lies on the outskirts of the Little Kingdom, and while it remains open for business at all hours of the day, the crowds don't really show up until the evening. During the day, the patrons have a strange, haggard look to them, like people in the depths of addiction, and most of the working girls are hung over, giving the casino an air of desperation. In the evening, however, gamblers and revelers stream into the casino, breathing new life into the Honeypot.

In just about every way that matters, the Honeypot Casino is a trap. It is co-owned by Jakob Lynch, a southern gentleman that always has a warm smile and a firm handshake for anyone walking through his doors. The other owner, Mr. Cheng, works for the Ten Thunders but generally remains uninvolved in the day-to-day operations of the casino; so long as the Honeypot makes money, he lets Lynch run things as he wishes.

What Mr. Cheng doesn't know - what only a handful of humans within the city know - is that Lynch has allowed an ancient creature known as the **Hungering Darkness** to bind itself to his soul. With Lynch serving as its host, the **Hungering Darkness** is able to exist in the mortal realm, and together they have turned the Honeypot into a spiritual larder.

The **Hungering Darkness** feeds by instilling a small portion of its essence into a person; this is the "Brilliance" which the people of Malifaux City incorrectly believe is just another rare drug, such as opium or morphine. The feelings of euphoria caused by Brilliance make it incredibly addictive, compelling those caught in its grip to return to the Honeypot again and again... until eventually the **Hungering Darkness** consumes everything they are or could have ever been, leaving them an empty shell of a person. In a way, it's much like marinating a steak.

Misaki knows about the **Hungering Darkness** and has some small inkling of its capabilities. They are technically allies - the Honeypot makes a great deal of scrip for the Ten Thunders - but she does not trust the inhuman Darkness or its unknown agenda. Her use of the Fated to find Otto Pletcher is primarily to keep the **Hungering Darkness** from realizing that she has any sort of interest in him, as she does not wish to hand Nythera and whatever power it might contain over to a creature that feeds on people's souls.

THE MIDNIGHT MERCENARY

It's early afternoon by the time the Fated finish their meeting with Misaki. If they attempt to look for Otto Pletcher before the evening, a few hours of asking around and a TN 8 Bewitch Challenge will put them in contact with a Freikorps agent who claims Pletcher is on duty back at the Freikorps Compound until evening. The agent is reluctant to reveal the location of the Compound, but 2 scrip and a TN 9 Barter Challenge is enough of a bribe for him to reveal that it's in the Powderburg District of the Quarantine Zone, behind so many traps and kill zones that even the Guild has given up on trying to root them out. The agent goes on to suggest that if they really need to speak with Pletcher, he often spends his evenings at the Honeypot Casino.

THE HONEYPOT BECKONS

When the Fated reach the Honeypot, read the following text:



You're not entirely sure what you expected from the Honeypot, but it's certainly a unique sight. The three-story building dominates the nameless buildings around it, and the giant Geissler tubes on the building's facade proclaim its name in electric shades of purple and blue. It's gaudy, lurid, and expensive, and when you look away from the painfully bright lights, the words "Honeypot Casino" remain burned into your vision for a few seconds afterward, like after-images.

A handful of drunken revelers linger in the streets around the Honeypot despite the early hour, and near the swinging doors, women in revealing clothing and bright smiles beckon passers-by into the casino with promises of the delightful vices waiting within.



While the visage of the Honeypot is impressive - it's like an electric beacon, drawing revelers to it like moths to a flame - the real party is within. The women stationed outside the doors are mischievous and tempting, and they will do their best to usher as many people as possible into the Honeypot, even if that means laughing at stupid jokes or flirting with unattractive patrons.

When the Fated enter the Honeypot, read the following text:



Inside the Honeypot, the party is in full swing, and the place is packed. Gamblers huddle around the roulette and craps tables in thick knots, crying out in joy or sorrow with each spin of the wheel or toss of the dice. Others are seated at poker and blackjack tables, looking at cards handed to them or flipped over by smiling dealers in white shirts and black slacks.

Moving through the crowd are attractive women dressed in nothing but lace and good humor, each one more alluring and desirable than the last. Some are deftly carrying trays of drinks through the crowds, while others are right in the center of attention, blowing on dice or sitting in the laps of distracted card players. Judging from the steady stream of giddy-looking men being led upstairs to the second floor and its overhanging balcony, it's probably safe to assume that just about everything in the Honeypot is for sale, one way or another.



A TN 10 Scrutiny Challenge will allow a character to realize that everyone in the Honeypot seems to be in a heightened state of energy and attention. Nearly everyone seems to be upbeat and excited, and there aren't any "sad drunks" parked at the casino's bar.

CHIPS, GAMBLING, AND GOOD FORTUNE

The Fated ask a serving girl or bartender about their line of credit, they are directed to a floor manager who thanks them for coming, gets them some free drinks, and then hands over 30 scrip worth of poker chips that can be used to gamble or purchase additional drinks. The chips can be cashed in at any time for the equivalent amount of Guild scrip.

If the Fated decide to go gambling, they have the option of Craps, Blackjack, Poker, or Roulette. Each game is handled with the same mechanics; the Fated makes a TN 11 Gambling Challenge and on a success earn back their bet plus half again in winnings.

Once a character starts winning a few games, the staff of the Honeypot will start taking steps to distract them and curb their winning streak:

- After two wins in a row, one of the serving girls brings the character a complimentary drink (if imbibed, the character must pass a TN 8 Carouse Challenge or suffer a  on their next Gambling Challenge).
- After four wins in a row, one of the Honeypot's saloon girls will come around and try to distract the character with seductive comments and leading compliments (each Gambling Challenge made while the girl is nearby has its TN increased by +1).
- After six wins in a row, the other gamblers of the casino will be cheering the Fated on, and the Honeypot will bring its cooler, Mr. Tannen, over to congratulate the Fated on their good luck so far. Tannen is a thin man with thick glasses and a wide, vaguely creepy smile. He's also a sinkhole of bad fortune, and he lingers near the Fated for the rest of the scene, ruining their luck. (The character must discard a Fate Card before making a Gambling Challenge while Tannen is near or the flip suffers a   penalty).

OTTO PLETCHER

In the early evening, Otto Pletcher (pg. 118) finally makes his appearance at the Honeypot. Read the following text, choosing one of the Fated as the victim of Otto's alcohol abuse:



Suddenly, one of the serving girls near you shouts "Otto!" in a high-pitched voice and throws herself into the arms of a large man whose cheeks are already flushed from drink. He's dressed in a simple shirt, vest, and slacks, but it only takes a glance to know that he's in excellent physical condition, and the heavy pistol on his hip seems to be well cared for.

"Careful, girl!" the man laughs, some of his drink spilling out onto [FATED] as he grabs her by the waist. Realizing what he's done, he hands the mostly-empty glass to the serving girl, pulls out a handkerchief from his back pocket, and starts dabbing at [FATED] with his free hand. "So sorry, so sorry!" he chuckles. "The women here are just too excited to see me after my long absence! Please, my new friends, let me buy you all a drink to apologize!"

He turns and whispers something in the serving girl's ear, then sends her off with a laugh and a swat to the bottom.



Pletcher is a friendly man, and shortly after meeting the Fated, he already considers himself to be the greatest of friends with them. His easy comradery is helped along by the flask of whiskey that he finished on the carriage ride over, but even when sober, he's a man that believes in living large and well.

He regales the Fated with stories about his mercenary past, and the Fatemaster is encouraged to play these stories fast and loose: Pletcher believes that embellishment is the heart of any good story, and he doesn't care if his stories make sense or end up contradicting each other so long as they get a good laugh out of his new friends.

THE SECRETS OF NYTHERA

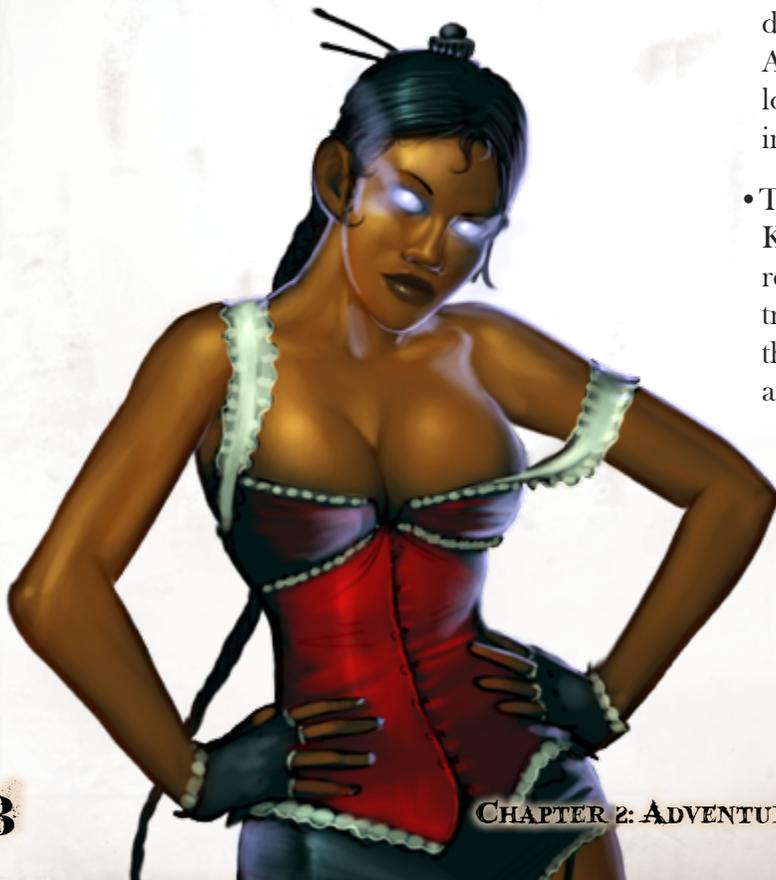
If the Fated ask Pletcher about Nythera, he feigns surprise, then winks conspiratorially at them and claim that “all that Nythera business is hush-hush confidential, my friend.” Getting Pletcher to tell them anything useful about Nythera (and to stay on topic long enough to learn anything of use) requires an Ongoing Challenge:

PUMP THE DRUNK FOR INFORMATION

- **SKILLS ALLOWED:** Bewitch, Carouse, Deceive
- **TARGET NUMBER:** 11
- **DURATION:** 5 minutes
- **SUCCESS REQUIREMENT:** 2 per Fated
- **FAILURE REQUIREMENT:** 1 per Fated

At the end of each Duration, the Fated learn one piece of Information from the list below out of Pletcher for every success they achieved. For each failure, they instead learn one of the Ramblings listed on the following page. If the Fated manage to successfully complete the Ongoing Challenge, they'll learn the Big Secret, which should give them some prime information to bring back to Misaki.

On a Catastrophic Failure, however, they instead get the Brush Off listed on the next page.



Information (in order)

- Pletcher is in charge of monitoring the group's aethervox transmissions from “the Nythera front,” along with the rest of his “teetotalling” squad.
- The Freikorps had intended to march toward Nythera to claim it for their own, but something came up that delayed them at Kethsora, an ancient Neverborn settlement in the Badlands.
- The Freikorps ran into a group of Resurrectionists at Kethsora; from the descriptions given to Pletcher via aethervox, it was apparently a really big fight, and he's disappointed that he missed it, because “you just don't feel bad about shooting a zombie.”
- Von Schill had only stopped at Kethsora on the way to Nythera, but something one of the librarians found in the ruins “just brought the whole campaign to a grinding halt.”
- Some of the librarians back at the Freikorps Compound were reassigned to research the ley lines of Malifaux, in particular those in the southern Badlands. All of “that magic stuff” is confusing to Pletcher, though, and he didn't pay much attention to them.
- They haven't been able to contact the Freikorps for three days, but this is fairly typical, given the distances between Malifaux City and Kethsora. Aethorvoxes are reliable at short distances, but long ranges - particularly when the Badlands are involved - are very touch-and-go.
- The librarians that accompanied Von Schill to Kethsora have been cataloging all the tomes and relics left behind by the Resurrectionists. “It's a treasure trove of necromantic magic, or at least, the librarians seem to think so. Dirty stuff, if you ask me.”

Ramblings

- Pletcher insists that one of the Fated shoot a few rounds of whiskey with him. If the Fated refuses, she can no longer participate in this Ongoing Challenge. If she accepts, she must pass a TN 9 Carouse Challenge or suffer ☐ to her next flip in this Ongoing Challenge
- Pletcher pulls one of the Fated off to play a few rounds of craps. If the Fated refuses, she can no longer participate in this Ongoing Challenge. If she accepts, she must pass a TN 9 Gambling Challenge or lose 5 scrip at the table. If the Fated can't cover this loss, Pletcher fronts her the money, but she suffers ☐ to her next flip in this Ongoing Challenge.
- One of the Honeypot's saloon girls sits down in Pletcher's lap and starts distracting him with her alluring wiles. Each of the Fated may attempt a TN 9 Bewitch or Intimidate Challenge to lure or frighten the woman away from Pletcher, but doing so means that the character can no longer participate in this Ongoing Challenge. If the woman remains with Pletcher, every character suffers a ☐ to all subsequent flips they make as part of this Ongoing Challenge.

Big Secret

If the Fated successfully complete the Ongoing Challenge, Pletcher flashes the Fated a grin and stage whispers. "You see, the thing of it is, it wasn't just tomes and relics that my mates found in Kethsora. There's writing all over the walls, and after a bit of translating, they realized that it was a chant that'd unlock Nythera. All you have to do is say the right words in the Neverborn language while standing atop the central dais, and she unfurls like a flower to an eager bee." He then laughs about how "those Arcanists were looking in the wrong place the whole time" and wonders why they thought that anyone would "hide the key right beside the treasure chest."

Brush Off

If the Fated catastrophically fail the Challenge, Pletcher gives them a wary look, looks at his drink, and pushes it away. "That's probably good for right now," he says, standing. "If you'll excuse me, I have a handful of scrip burning a hole in my pocket and plenty of nice ladies willing to help me get rid of it."

BAR FIGHT!

As the Fated finish their talk with Pletcher - regardless of their success or failure at the Ongoing Challenge - some thugs come up behind him and start some trouble. Read the following text:



A beautiful woman wearing a lace-up corset saunters up to Pletcher and attaches herself to his arm. "Hello there, Mister Pletcher," she coos in a seductive tone. "Are you having a good time here at the Honeypot?"

Pletcher laughs as his cheeks flush with color. "I'm certainly having a better time now! Can I buy you a drink?"

The woman giggles disarmingly as she runs her hand along Pletcher's chest. "Handsome *and* a gentleman! Mmm... can I borrow you from your friends for a little while, sugar? Mister Lynch wants to have a few words with you."

Pletcher looks down at the woman on his arm, his grin almost too large for his face to contain. "Well, I suppose it wouldn't be..."

Just then, a man grabs Pletcher by the shoulder and spins him around, sending the woman on his arm stumbling back in surprise. "Hey!" the man shouts, "get away from my girl! Destiny is mine!" Two of the rude man's friends come up behind him, as if to back him up in a fight.

"Look, I don't want any..." Pletcher's words trail off as the eyes of the three men begin to shine with bright blue light, and then their arms are glowing as well and lengthening into wicked, monstrous claws. Pletcher takes an involuntary step back from the thugs in surprise and draws his pistol. "...what in the hell...?"



The three men are Illuminated, Brilliance addicts who are so infused with the supernatural substance that it transforms their limbs into deadly weapons whenever they become violent. Lynch had overheard Pletcher boasting the night before and decided to ply the mercenary for information by having one of his girls lure the mercenary upstairs, but the arrival of the jealous Illuminated (who is a bit too obsessed with his favorite whore) threw his plan into chaos. The stats for Illuminated can be found on page 119.

At the beginning of combat, Pletcher will realize that he's outnumbered by something he doesn't understand and will look to the Fated for assistance. "I'm not sure what's happening," he says, stepping back from the Illuminated in fear, "but I would appreciate a helping hand here."

The offer is enough for the Illuminated to consider the Fated to be Pletcher's allies, though they won't pursue the Fated if they flee. The first Illuminated attacks Pletcher, hitting him twice a turn for two damage per swing, which is enough to knock the mercenary unconscious after two rounds of attacks (he's not wearing his Freikorps Armor). The other two Illuminated attack the Fated with the desperation of men who don't have much else to lose.

During the battle, Pletcher fights back as best as he is able, but the bodies of the Illuminated sprout temporary patches of glowing chitin in reaction to his attacks (i.e., their armor), making it difficult to damage them. He hits with each attack but only deals one damage per successful strike.

The fight against the Illuminated kicks off a sweeping bar fight all around the Fated; it only takes a few drunk people fighting to cause a distraction, which in turn encourages a couple of drunk gamblers to make grabs for the chips on the gambling tables, and everything just sort of spirals out of control from there.

If Pletcher disappears - most likely as a result of the Fated teleporting him away - the Illuminated turn on the Fated instead. Pletcher returns to the fight as quickly as he is able; he's not the sort of person that leaves his friends (new or otherwise) behind.

When the final Illuminated is defeated, Pletcher regains consciousness if he was knocked out. Choose one of the Fated and read the following text, adjusting as appropriate if Pletcher wasn't wounded during the fight:

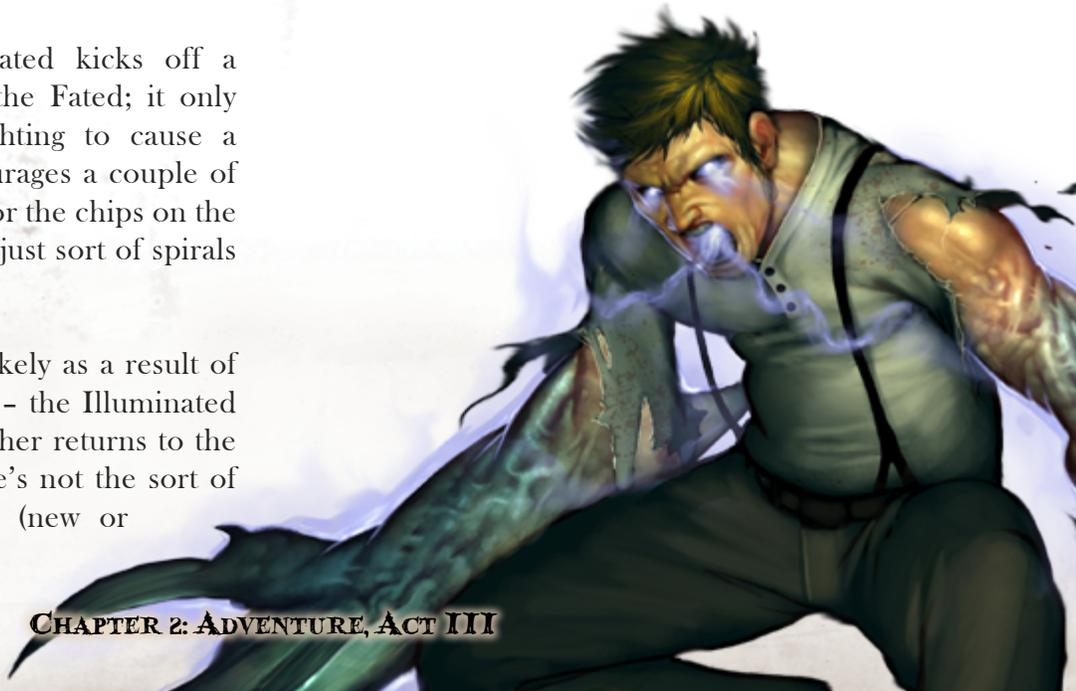


"CASINO'S CLOSED! EVERYONE GET OUT!" The bellowing shout comes from a mountain of a man that has been poured into a casino suit about one size too small for his muscled body. He's wielding what looks to be a fence post like a club and is using its swings to herd the crowd out the casino's door ahead of him. The Honeypot's saloon girls duck for cover beneath roulette and blackjack tables to avoid being hit by the indiscriminate bouncer. There's no sign of the woman who had attempted to lead Pletcher away.

Pletcher places a hand over a wound in his chest and grabs [FATED] by the arm. "Come on, friend. We have to get out of here before any more of those... things show up."



If the Fated go through the pockets of the Illuminated, they'll find a handful of Honeypot casino chips (worth about 2 scrip per Illuminated).



As the Fated prepare to leave, the casino's owner makes his appearance. Read the following text:

ESCAPING THE HONEYPOT

The Honeypot's patrons are still pouring out of the doors and into the street, but they've formed a crowd around the door, essentially trapping Pletcher and the Fated in the room. Fortunately, part of Pletcher's Freikorps training involves knowing how to quickly get out of a bad situation, so he immediately takes off toward a window, jumping through it in a shower of glass.

The Fated can follow after him, and only need a TN 7 Acrobatics Challenge to leap through a window and into the street. One of the Fated can leap through Pletcher's window, but the others will have to break through windows of their own, which deals 1 damage to the character on a successful Challenge.

If a character fails the Challenge, they leap too soon or slip on someone's spilled drink in their rush to the door and fail to make it to the window. The Fated can simply climb out on their next turn, but Lynch's glowing minions are right behind them. Pletcher will unload his pistol into the oncoming mob, slowing them down just long enough for the Fated to climb out of the window and make their escape into the night.

Pletcher leads the Fated to an abandoned home about a mile from the Honeypot. Despite its appearance, the building is actually a Freikorps safe house, and there are sleeping cots, rations, and medical supplies inside.



As Pletcher turns to leave, a voice calls down to him from above. "Leaving so soon, Mr. Pletcher?" It has a distinctive Southern twang to it, and the mercenary turns to see the speaker, a man in a fine suit and top hat, standing on the second floor balcony. Two saloon girls flank him to either side, but their beauty is marred by the blue light shining out from their eyes.

"I don't believe we've been introduced," the man on the balcony continues. "My name is Jakob Lynch, the owner of this fine establishment. I apologize on behalf of my rambunctious patrons; some people simply cannot hold their liquor."

Pletcher barks out a laugh, a hand still pressed to his wound. "No offense, Mr. Lynch, but you and all your glowing friends can go hang, for all I care."

Lynch folds his hands together and smiles disarmingly. "Now, Mr. Pletcher, that's hardly a polite way to talk to the man that wants to help the Freikorps. My associates are already on the way to ambush your fellow mercenaries in the Badlands, but they are not entirely unreasonable. If you are willing to tell me everything you know about opening Nythera, for instance, I believe that I just might be able to call them back."

Pletcher looks back to you and says a single word: "Run."



Pletcher isn't sure what's going on, but he doesn't deal with people who threaten his friends.

ACT III, SCENE 3: REGROUPING

After his adventure at the Honeypot, Pletcher is concerned about the safety of his fellow Freikorps. Once the Fated have had time to get patched up and rest a bit, read the following text:



Pletcher disappears into another room for a few minutes, but returns with a dusty bottle of whiskey and a few equally dusty cups. “I owe you folks for helping me get out of that tight spot back there,” he says, pouring you each a few fingers of the amber liquid. “But I’m worried about my unit. I doubt that they’ll get torn up as much as that pompous peacock claims, but I can’t sit back and do nothing, either.”

He shoots his own glass, then passes the bottle along. “The other Freikorps here in town, they’d tell me to just follow my orders, stay put, and let Von Schill handle everything, but I just can’t do that. I’ve been on the sidelines of this thing for too long, and if there are more of those glowing people coming after them, then they’re going to need every gun they can get.”

Otto takes a long moment to look between you. “That’s sort of where this is going, I guess. You folks know how to handle yourself, so I’d like to ask you to accompany me to Kethsora, out in the Badlands. I don’t have much in the way of scrip to pay you, but I’m sure that I can talk the quartermaster into letting a few arcane tomes or Neverborn relics go missing once we’re out there, if you catch my drift.”



If the Fated agree to help him, Pletcher offers firm handshakes all around and insists that the Freikorps “doesn’t forget a debt.” Once morning comes, he leaves to hire a stagecoach to take the group into the Badlands and instructs the Fated to meet him at the city’s southern gates come noon.

If the Fated refuse his offer, Pletcher is noticeably despondent, but says that he understands that “it’s too much risk to put yourself on the line for someone you just met.” He does note, however, that he thought they were friends. He tells them that he’ll be at the southern gates at noon if they change their mind, which he hopes that they do, because he’s going to have a hell of a time trying to help out by himself.

MISAKI’S FAVOR

If the Fated return to the Fallen Blossom to report what they’ve learned about Pletcher, they will have to wait until the morning, when it opens, to do so. Sachiko is waiting for them, and she will lead them into the same tea room where they spoke with Misaki to debrief them. Read the following text:



Sachiko waits until a serving girl has delivered tea before removing the mask that covers her mouth, revealing delicate features and smooth, pale skin. She sets the mask aside and sips her tea, then carefully sets the drink aside. “Please,” she says, motioning to you with her expertly manicured hand, “tell me what you have learned at the casino.”



If the Fated attempt to lie to Sachiko, they will have to succeed at a TN 11 Deceive Challenge in order to convince her that they are telling the truth. On a failure, her eyes narrow and she asks another character if what the first has told her is the truth. This is a chance for the Fated to rephrase their statement, though if they attempt to lie to her again, the second character must pass a TN 11 Deceive Challenge as well. On a failure, Sachiko merely says “I see,” and falls silent as she sips at her tea. After an uncomfortable silence, she tells the Fated that they can leave, and notes that the Ten Thunders “will be in touch with you soon.”

The Ten Thunders will eventually take action against the Fated for their disrespect, though not immediately, as they are currently preoccupied with trying to learn as much as possible about Nythera. The Fated aren’t important enough to draw their ire at the moment, but the memories of the Ten Thunders are quite good, and they will not forget the Fated or their actions.

On the other hand, if the Fated simply tell Sachiko the truth, she thanks them for their efforts and notes that the Ten Thunders “appreciate and protect their useful agents.” She goes on to mention that if the Fated ever have a problem and need some assistance, they need only to contact her at the Fallen Blossom. The implication here is that the Fated may have found themselves in a similar situation as Howard Klassen and his fellow Wastrels; it always starts with a few favors here and there.

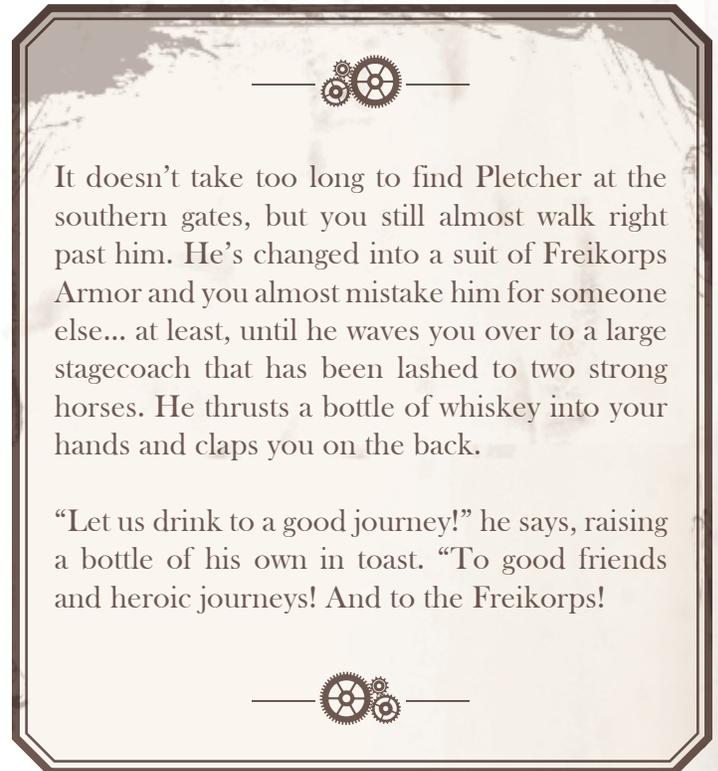
The Ten Thunders don’t know anything about Lynch’s plans to ambush the Freikorps at Kethsora; he’s not using his Ten Thunders contacts to do so, and a TN 10 Scrutiny Challenge will reveal that Sachiko is being honest in her ignorance of Lynch’s plans.

If the Fated take Sachiko up on her offer and ask for assistance in helping Pletcher, she will smile mischievously, nod her head, and say that it can be arranged. She asks where they are meeting, and then arranges for two or three Ten Thunders Brothers – possibly those the Fated fought at the end of Act II, if any survived – to meet them at the southern gates and accompany them to Kethsora. The Brothers

are masked and remain silent through most of the trip, only speaking to the Fated or anyone else when absolutely necessary. Their stats can be found on page 115.

HIGH NOON STAGECOACH

When the Fated arrive at the southern gates at noon, Pletcher is waiting with a stagecoach. Read the following text:



It doesn't take too long to find Pletcher at the southern gates, but you still almost walk right past him. He's changed into a suit of Freikorps Armor and you almost mistake him for someone else... at least, until he waves you over to a large stagecoach that has been lashed to two strong horses. He thrusts a bottle of whiskey into your hands and claps you on the back.

“Let us drink to a good journey!” he says, raising a bottle of his own in toast. “To good friends and heroic journeys! And to the Freikorps!”

Once the Fated have stowed their belongings in the stagecoach, Pletcher climbs up into the driver’s seat and ask if any of the Fated wish to ride shotgun with him. Those who do not are forced to ride in the stagecoach proper, which soon grows warm and stuffy in the heat of the Badlands.

If the Fated choose not to travel into the Badlands, then the Fate of Nythera will be decided without them. The adventure essentially concludes for them at this point. See the Conclusion (pg. 98) for more details.

ACT III, SCENE 4:

THE BADLANDS

The stagecoach makes good time in its journey across the Badlands, but it still takes fifteen days of traveling to cross the Badlands and reach Kethsora. Pletcher has a map to the ruins ("borrowed" from the Freikorps Stronghold), but this is his first time heading this deep into the Badlands, so he's at the map's mercy. He made certain to pack food and water in the stagecoach (military rations and water jugs), but even with stopping to refill their water whenever possible, some rationing will be required, particularly for groups consisting of more than three Living characters.

This travel time assumes that the Fated stop at regular intervals to rest their horses. If the Fated attempt to push the horses by driving through the night, one of them must pass a Husbandry Challenge at TN 9 +1 per previous day without rest. On a success, the Fated are effectively able to cover two days of traveling in a single day, with only minimal stops to rest and water the horses.

On a failure, however, one of the horses begins to froth at the mouth and on its chest and flanks. Its nostrils flare and it staggers forward, only to pass out and collapse... while still attached to a quickly moving stagecoach. If Pletcher is driving the stagecoach, he manages to reign it in to a stop, but it's a desperate and bumpy couple of moments that ends up killing the horse but saving the rest of the stagecoach.

If a Fated character is driving the stagecoach, she must succeed at a TN 12 Husbandry Challenge. On a failure, the horse dies as above, but on a success, the character manages to stop the stagecoach in time for the horse to only suffer some minor injuries. After a day of rest, during which no travel can be made, the horse is fine enough to travel at normal speed, but it can no longer be pushed to go any faster without killing it.

If the driver achieves a Margin of Failure on the Challenge, the horse not only dies, but the stagecoach flips over, inflicting 2/3/5 damage to the driver and anyone riding shotgun and 1/2/4 damage to anyone inside the stagecoach. The stagecoach loses a wheel, and unless the Fated can make a TN 9 Homesteading Challenge to repair it, they will have to finish the rest of their trip on foot.

If the Fated continue the journey with only a single horse, the rest of the journey is delayed and it takes twice as long to complete their journey. The Fated can push the remaining horse as noted above to bring themselves up to the normal "two-horse" speed of travel, but if that horse dies as well, the Fated are on foot.

If the Fated are forced to travel by foot, the journey takes them five times as long as it otherwise would. The characters will also have to check for Heat Stroke during their journey (see the Heat Stroke callout box, below).

HEAT STROKE

Spending time under the sun and heat without the correct clothing can lead to heat stroke. Every day a character spends in the Badlands (and not on a stagecoach), the character must pass a TN 9 Toughness Challenge. On a failure, the character suffers 1/1/2 damage. Regardless of whether they pass or fail, once the duel is resolved the character gains the following Condition: "**Sunstroke +1:** Whenever this character suffers damage from heat (such as from Heat Stroke or a Fire spell), she suffers +1 damage. Reduce the value of this Condition by 1 for every hour the character spends in the shade."

BADLANDS ENCOUNTERS

The Badlands are fairly desolate, consisting of endless stretches of steep, red-brown hills with little in the way of water or vegetation. For the most part, the Fated have a relatively boring journey ahead of them, but there are still moments of sudden action.

Each of these events takes place a set number of days into the journey. If the Fated are traveling faster or slower than normal, the events will happen sooner or later than listed, as appropriate.

THIS IS BAT COUNTRY (DAY 3)

When the Fated are camped out (or riding furiously) at night, a colony of Night Terrors descend upon them. Read the following text:



Malifaux's second moon has just started to rise in the night sky when you hear a shrill shriek from somewhere overhead. Seemingly out of nowhere, a swarm of giant bat creatures descends upon you, biting and scratching at you with their fanged maws and clawed wings.



There are three Night Terrors in the hunting pack, plus one additional Night Terror per Fated. They fight until they're reduced to two Night Terrors or fewer, at which point the remaining Terrors fly away into the night to lick their wounds. The stats for Night Terrors can be found on page 120.

Because of the darkness, characters suffer a  penalty to any  attacks they make in the darkness. If they have a campfire, however, any attacks made against targets within 3 yards of the campfire do not suffer this penalty.

THE SCARECROW SHACK (DAY 5)

The Fated come across an abandoned homestead that holds a sinister secret. Read the following text:



At first, it's hard to make out what the structure in the distance might be - it's too oddly shaped to be anything natural - but as you draw closer, you're eventually able to identify it as a frontier homestead. The homestead is partially burned down and appears to have been abandoned for some time, but there's a nearby well that would allow you to refill your water.



If the Fated stop at the homestead, they can make TN 8 Notice Challenges to spot a scarecrow propped up within the burned remains of the building. If they investigate, they find a soot-covered sewing machine set up in front of the scarecrow. The scarecrow doesn't move, but its foot is on the pedal that operates the sewing machine, and a large swatch of (relatively fresh) human skin is laid out beside the machine. A TN 7 Homesteading Challenge reveals that the pieces are cut in the same way someone would cut fabric if they were preparing to sew it into a suit.

At no point does the scarecrow move or otherwise threaten the Fated.

ANTLION (DAY 8)

As the Fated continue their trek through the Badlands, they disturb one of the region's larger (and deadlier) denizens. If the Fated are on foot, they fortunately get to avoid this encounter; they don't make enough noise to rouse it from its slumber. If they're still riding in the stagecoach, read the following text:



The wind has picked up and the sun is starting to set when Pletcher curses loudly. "What in the...?! Oh mercy, what is that thing?!" he shouts, his voice barely audible above the howling of the wind as he tries to crane his neck to look back behind the stagecoach.

Something has the horses spooked, and the stagecoach pitches back and forth and bounces as they break into a panicked run. Glancing behind you, your heart leaps into your throat as you catch sight of the ground falling away beneath the stagecoach. The wheels are right on the edge of the sinkhole, and as you glance toward the widening pit, a lamprey-like mouth opens at its center and releases a terrifying, screeching roar that is almost painful in volume and pitch.

"It's pulling us in!" Pletcher shouts as the horses struggle to find footing in the crumbling ground beneath them. The stagecoach begins to tip backwards as the toothy maw at the center of the pit opens wide enough to swallow a house.



Fighting the antlion in any traditional sense is completely unfeasible, but the Fated can escape the pit or drive the creature back underground with an Ongoing Challenge:

ESCAPE THE ANTLION

- **SKILLS ALLOWED:** Heavy Gun, Husbandry, Leadership, Long Arms, Pistol, Shotgun
- **TARGET NUMBER:** 10
- **DURATION:** 10 seconds
- **SUCCESS REQUIREMENT:** 2 per Fated
- **FAILURE REQUIREMENT:** 1 per Fated

Each successful Ranged Combat Challenge made as part of this Ongoing Challenge also requires the Fated to possess a weapon of the listed type and to expend one round of ammunition for that weapon.

If the Fated successfully complete the Ongoing Challenge, they manage to drive the antlion back underground and maneuver the stagecoach out of the collapsing pit. The Fated can continue onward, though Pletcher downs an entire flask of whiskey and can't stop his hands from shaking for the rest of the day.

On a Catastrophic Failure, however, the stagecoach slips too far into the pit to be saved. Characters riding in or on the stagecoach may attempt TN 12 Evade Challenges to leap to the edge of the sinkhole and clamber to safety before the vehicle is devoured by the antlion. Characters on the outside of the stagecoach (such as in the driver's or passenger's seat) have a height advantage and don't have to open any doors to escape, which gives them a **+** to this Challenge. Pletcher automatically passes this Challenge.

Any characters that fail to escape the stagecoach in time are likely in for a messy end. The Fated have one round of "cinematic time" where they can attempt to use some sort of magical effect (such as a teleport spell) to save themselves, after which time they and the stagecoach are swallowed up by the antlion. The colossal creature then burrows back into the ground to digest its meal.

DUST DEVILS (DAY II)

As the Fated continue their journey, they're beset by Dust Devils, bits of swirling air and debris that have gained some measure of sentience. Read the following text, adjusting as appropriate if the Fated have lost their horses (or stagecoach):



According to Pletcher's map, you're passing through a particularly desolate portion of the Badlands known as Droma's Teeth, so named due to the vaguely fang-shaped spires of rock that rise up from the ground all throughout the region. Your water supplies are running low, so it's a sign of good fortune that you manage to find a shallow watering hole that lets you refill your jugs and get the horses some water.

As you're just starting to think that your luck might be turning, however, the wind suddenly picks up around you, going from stillness to a howling gale in the span of a few heartbeats. Dirt and chips of rock get picked up by the swirling winds, forming two small cyclones about seven feet in height. Pletcher takes a step back from the nearest cyclone as the crude impression of a screaming face appears in the center of its swirling form.



The Dust Devils throw themselves at the Fated, howling with fury and rage. They're more force of nature than living creature, however, and will mercilessly attack the Fated until one or the other is destroyed. The stats for the Dust Devils can be found on page 121.

BADLANDS FEVER (DAY 13)

Some of the Fated suddenly come down with a malady known as Badlands Fever. Have each character make a TN 10 Centering Challenge and read the following text, noting any characters that fail:



As the day progresses, you notice that some of your companions keep mumbling something under their breath. At first it's not a big deal - it's been a long trip and everyone is getting a bit anxious to see it finished - but then you notice that the words are always the same: "The desert must be fed."

Bringing the matter up to your companions only starts arguments - none of them remember saying such a thing, but with repetition of the phrase, the words grow louder and more insistent, until by evening it has become a steady litany of repetition of increasing insistence.

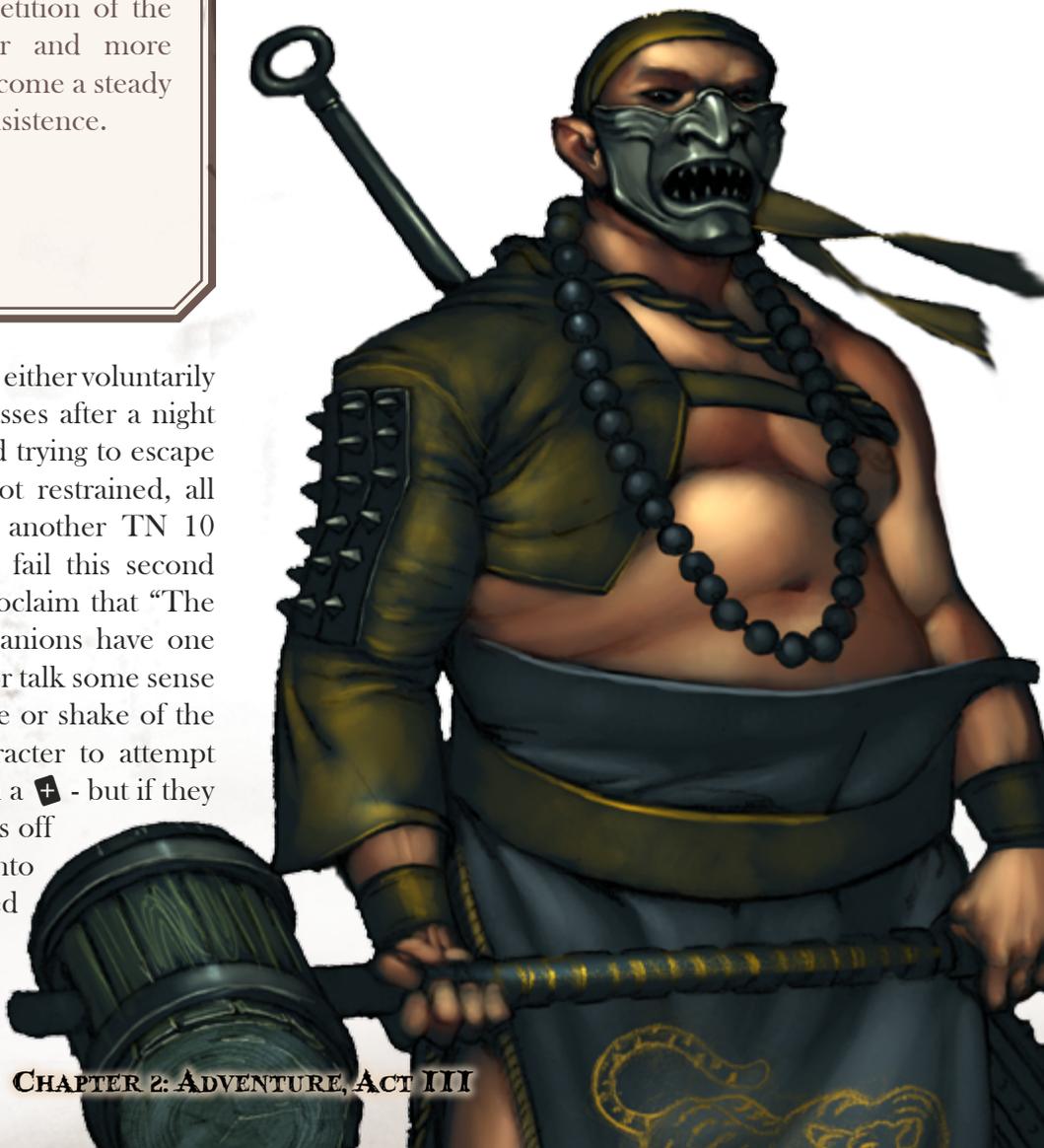


If the afflicted Fated are restrained - either voluntarily or against their will - the fever passes after a night of screaming into the darkness and trying to escape into the surrounding wastes. If not restrained, all afflicted characters must attempt another TN 10 Centering Challenge. Those who fail this second Challenge stand up and loudly proclaim that "The desert must be fed!" Their companions have one round to attempt to restrain them or talk some sense into them - a good slap to the face or shake of the shoulders allows an afflicted character to attempt the Centering Challenge again with a **+** - but if they cannot, the afflicted characters runs off into the desert, shouting loudly into the dark night. If they are not chased down and restrained, they vanish into the Badlands.

If the Fated take the time to follow the character (requiring a TN 8 Track Challenge come morning), they'll find her wandering the Badlands in a daze, bleeding from multiple wounds. The character suffers 4/6/8 damage from these wounds but can't remember anything that happened during her wandering. If this damage is enough to kill the character, the search party instead finds her bleached bones, which appear to have been exposed to the elements for months (if not years).

Both Pletcher and the Ten Thunders Brothers (if they are present) resist the Badlands Fever and do what they can to help the Fated regain their senses (or, failing that, to tie them up until they're rational).

If all of the Fated pass their initial Centering Challenge, however, it's a good idea to have one of the Ten Thunders Brothers (if they are present) succumb to the Badlands Fever to show the Fated the hazard that they have avoided.



ACT III, SCENE 5:

KETHSORA

The original purpose of Kethsora is a mystery, for while it seems to have been built as a library or other repository of texts, it also bears defensive formations such as high walls, parapets, and five robust defensive towers... all of which now lie in ruin. In places the ground seems to have cracked open to swallow the crumbling architecture, but in others, the foundations are only marred by dust and grit blown in from the surrounding Badlands.

When the Freikorps first came to Kethsora on their way to Nythera, they thought of it as nothing more than a defensible location that would provide shelter from the dust storm that was gathering on the horizon. Much to their surprise, the ruins were not only inhabited, but were serving as the stronghold for a cabal of Resurrectionists who were studying the ancient texts found in Kethsora's fallen spires and shattered crypts. A fierce battle ensued, and when the dust storm finally hit, the Resurrectionists used the cover it provided to flee into the relative safety of the Badlands.

The Freikorps paused to tend to their wounded and take stock of their supplies, and during this time, their librarians and archivists discovered passages in the texts referring to Nythera. The Freikorps have been camped out at Kethsora since then, doggedly holding the ruins as their academics worked around the clock to learn as much about the Neverborn ruins as was possible.

“DID WE MAKE IT IN TIME?”

If the Fated traveled at a steady pace, they will arrive at Kethsora after fifteen days on the road. Pushing their horses to go faster might allow them to arrive faster, while suffering delays from antlions or having to hunt down missing people will slow them down.

Read the following text as the Fated arrive:



From when you first broke camp this morning, it's been a tense day; Pletcher is certain that you will reach Kethsora sometime today, and he's anxious about what might have happened to his fellow mercenaries. It's around early afternoon when you first catch sight of the ruins, and a chill runs up your spine as you look upon them.

The windswept, desolate plains surrounding Kethsora's shattered walls and tumbling masonry lend it a forsaken and forbidden air. The damage to the ruins make it difficult to tell if they had once been a single massive structure or merely a grouping of smaller buildings, but either way, it must have been quite impressive to behold back in its day. Even here, miles from Kethsora proper, you can see massive stone blocks peeking out from beneath the dry, cracked ground, like children's blocks that have been half-buried in dried mud.

“Come on,” Pletcher says, a bit of nervousness creeping into his voice. “Let's see if we made it in time.”



The Neverborn have been planning an attack on Kethsora since Jakob Lynch alerted them to Pletcher's boasting, and it happens fifteen days after the Fated leave the Honeypot.

- If the Fated made it to Kethsora in 14 days or less, they arrive before the Neverborn attack. See *The Eleventh Hour* on page 70.
- If the Fated arrive in 15 days, they show up as the battle is raging around them. See *A Desperate Arrival* on page 71.
- If the Fated take 16 days or longer to arrive at Kethsora, however, then the battle has already happened and the Freikorps have retreated. See *Always Too Late* on page 74.

THE ELEVENTH HOUR

If the Fated arrive before the Neverborn attack, read the following text, adjusting as appropriate if the Fated no longer have a stagecoach or only have a single surviving horse:



As you approach the ruins of Kethsora, the silence is broken by the sudden crack of a gunshot that kicks up dirt in front of you, causing the stagecoach's horses to rear up in surprise. "Hold it right there!" comes a distant voice, and after a few moments of panicked searching, you notice a cloaked figure in the same distinctive armor as Pletcher laying down atop a stone block and pointing a sniper rifle in your direction. The dust-covered cloak thrown over his shoulders had done a remarkably good job at hiding him from sight.

"Hey! I'm with the 'corp!" Pletcher shouts, waving his hand in the air. "Private First Class Otto Pletcher!"



The sniper drops down from his stone block and heads over to join up with the Fated, where - after a few minutes of conversation with Pletcher - he leads the Fated down a safe path to the ruins proper. He warns the Fated not to stray too far from him, as "the boss had us rig the whole area up with fladdermine."

When the Fated enter the ruins, read the following:



The Freikorps sniper - he introduces himself as Quentin Judd - leads you into the ruins and the fortified camp that the Freikorps have established there. You're patted down and relieved of your weapons, though Pletcher assures you that they'll be returned in due time. The Freikorps even relieve him of his own pistol, which seems to cause him no small amount of annoyance.

After that, you're taken into what can only be described as a converted holding cell. The walls are stone, but someone has turned a few pieces of wood and some relatively flat rocks into a makeshift bench, and one of the mercenaries brings you each some trail rations and cool water while you wait. Pletcher, meanwhile, is led off in another direction, but he promises to be right back.

It's nearly fifteen minutes before he returns, being led by an annoyed-looking woman with dark hair and delicate glasses. "You're free to go," she says, as Pletcher hands you back your weapons. "Private Pletcher has explained the situation, and we owe you a debt of gratitude for helping him reach us."



FLADDERMINES

Fladdermine are crude but effective mines consisting of ceramic containers filled with glass and metal fragments embedded in the clay. A pressure-operated detonator ignites the gunpowder inside the container when it is depressed, causing the mine to explode. Since the mines are buried just beneath the surface, the explosion - and shrapnel - is channeled upward into the character that stepped on the detonator, dealing 3/4☠/7☠ damage. A character that suffers moderate or severe damage from a fladdermine also suffers a Moderate Critical Effect.

The woman is Hannah Lovelace, the chief librarian of the Freikorps and the second in command of the entire group. She invites the Fated to remain with them at Kethsora and will agree to pay them “standard mercenary wages” (5 scrip per person) for their assistance in the upcoming attack.

The Fated are able to freely look around Kethsora in the time leading up to the attack; the Freikorps are too busy fortifying their positions and preparing for the ambush (which they assume involves Neverborn, Arcanists, or some combination of the two) to pay them too much attention, now that they’ve been cleared by Hannah. If the Fated decide to look around, the only notable area of the ruins being occupied by the Freikorps is the Research Room, which is detailed on page 74.

If the Fated attack the Freikorpsmen (for some reason), that hospitality comes to an abrupt (and very deadly) end. Use Otto Pletcher’s stats (pg. 118) to represent his fellow Freikorpsmen.

When Day 15 arrives, the Fated and the Freikorps will both be prepared for the Neverborn attack. See The Battle for Kethsora (pg. 73) for more details.

A DESPERATE ARRIVAL

If the Fated arrive on Day 15, they manage to arrive right in the middle of the Neverborn attack. Read the following text, adjusting as appropriate if the Fated no longer have a stagecoach:



As you grow closer to Kethsora, the sounds of distant gunfire become more noticeable and Pletcher swears and spurs the horses into a full sprint. “They’re already here!” he shouts back, even as he cracks the reins and steers the stagecoach toward the thickest part of the fighting. “Get your guns ready! We’re going in!”

The stagecoach barrels toward the fight, and you can make out dozens of armored mercenaries fighting back against an attacking force composed entirely of Nephilim: nightmarish creatures with purple-blue skin, clawed hands, and leathery wings. The Freikorps are unloading a truly impressive amount of shots into the creatures, but they’re outnumbered and starting to lose ground.



If the Fated still have the stagecoach, Pletcher will drive it through the center of the Nephilim forces to reach his fellow Freikorps, which – while certainly brave and surprising to the Nephilim – is probably not the wisest of ideas.



Read the following text:



The Nephilim howl and shriek as Pletcher drives the stagecoach into the heart of the Nephilim forces, trampling a few of the smaller ones beneath the hooves of the horses and the wheels of the carriage. Most, however, manage to leap out of the way, and those who stand their ground in an attempt to pounce upon the horses are quickly cut down by the supporting fire of the Freikorps in the ruins.

Suddenly, however, a huge winged Nephilim descends from the sky and lands on the roof of the stagecoach, causing the vehicle to groan and strain beneath its massive weight. “Nythera must remain sealed,” it growls in a deep voice.



Because of the precarious way the Mature Nephilim (pg. 122) is perched atop the stagecoach, it cannot threaten the Fated as easily as it might otherwise be able, and thus the Fated can still use their ⚔ weapons, even if they are within its engagement range (which everyone on the stagecoach is). However, the Stagecoach counts as an Unstable Platform, so those ⚔ weapons will suffer a ▢ to their Attack flips.

If the Fated are able to teleport or push the Nephilim from the stagecoach, that will effectively end the combat, as they’ll reach the safety of the Freikorps defensive lines before it’s able to catch back up with the stagecoach.

If the Fated are on foot, the number of Nephilim between them and the Freikorps make approaching Kethsora all but impossible. Pletcher doesn’t think that they can make it through the Nephilim battle lines, but says that “we have to try” and suggests that they try circling around to join up with the Freikorps. The Fated can attempt TN 12 Stealth Challenges; if all of them succeed, they manage to elude the Neverborn and make it to Freikorps defensive lines.

The Freikorps are all too happy to have help in the losing fight and wait to ask the Fated about who they are and what they’re doing at Kethsora until after the battle is over.

If the Fated fail this Stealth Challenge, they will have to fight their way past a pack of one Young Nephilim (pg. 123) and two Terror Tots (pg. 124) per failed Stealth Challenge (just combine all the Nephilim together into a single group). Once the Nephilim are defeated, the Fated can continue forward to join the Freikorps as noted above.

If the Fated choose to wait the battle out and not join the Freikorps, the mercenaries suffer heavy casualties and are forced to pull out of the ruins. See *Always Too Late* on page 74.



THE BATTLE FOR KETHSORA

If the Fated are present for the battle – regardless of when they arrive – they have a chance to help turn the battle in the favor of the Freikorps. The mercenaries should be portrayed as either holding the Neverborn back with superior training and salvos of withering gunfire (if the Fated arrived early) or fighting a losing battle against superior numbers (if the Fated arrived on Day 15).

Either way, they’ll have a chance to take out the leader of the enemy forces. Read the following text:



The smell of gunfire and blood hangs in the air as the battle rages in front of you. Neither side gives for or asks for quarter. The Freikorps are elite mercenaries with the best equipment and weapons that money can buy, but the Nephilim have them outnumbered and surrounded.

However, as you watch the fight, you notice that wherever the pocket of resistance is greatest, a seemingly human woman in a long coat will appear, cleaving aside all opposition before disappearing back into the shadows and reappearing halfway across the battlefield in a flash of red hair and hate-filled eyes.



If the Fated are in Kethsora with the Freikorps, they hear a sergeant yelling at two Freikorpsmen to hurry up and get “the six-pounder” assembled. The mercenaries have unloaded a portable cannon from a series of crates but are having trouble assembling it. “The engineer isn’t here, sir!” they protest, clearly not understanding how the weapon is supposed to go together themselves.

The Fated can help to assemble the weapon with a TN 10 Artefacting, Engineering, or Heavy Guns Challenge, at which point the Freikorps wheel the weapon out toward the battle and set it up.

Read the following text:



The Freikorps wheel the portable cannon out to the defense lines and block the wheel. “We can’t fire on the leader! She’s teleporting around too quickly! We need to lure her into range,” one of them shouts at you. “Get out there in front of us and cause a distraction, and when she shows up we’ll blow her to hell!”



If the Fated agree to lure the woman closer, they need only to charge out onto the front lines, where they will find themselves engaged with two Young Nephilim (pg. 123) and three Terror Tots (pg. 124). Fortunately, the Fated only have to endure two rounds of combat before the woman appears and the Freikorps can fire upon her.

Read the text on the following page at the start of the third round of combat, choosing one Fated to avoid the woman’s attack.



Suddenly, the world grows darker around you, though you can still see the sun shining overhead. You catch a glimpse of long, red hair, and acting on pure instinct, [FATED] manages leap aside as the Neverborn leader appears out of thin air and slashes at [him/her] with her greatsword. It almost seems impossible that a woman of her size could wield such a massive weapon so easily, but it is seemingly weightless in her hands.

“You humans...” she starts to sneer, but whatever her next words might have been, they’re cut off by the explosion of the Freikorps cannon. The cannon ball strikes the woman square in the back, knocking her forward as she shouts in surprise and disappears back into the shadows in a shower of corrosive black blood.



The chosen character suffers 1 damage from the Nephilim leader's Black Blood.

The cannon shot doesn't kill the Neverborn commander, but it does wound her enough to force her to withdraw, and the Nephilim gradually pull back as they sense that their leader has abandoned them. See *Moving On* (pg. 75) for more details.

If the Fated are unable to fix the cannon or refuse to serve as bait for the Neverborn leader, then the mercenaries cannot repel the Nephilim and find their positions overwhelmed. They are forced to pull out and will bring the Fated with them. See *Moving On* (pg. 75) for more details.

ALWAYS TOO LATE

If the Fated arrive at Kethsora at any point past Day 15, they will find Kethsora deserted. There are signs that a huge battle took place – spent shell casings, plenty of dried blood (both red and black),

a few discarded bones – but no bodies (because the Nephilim carried away their own dead and ate the fallen Freikorps). Pletcher will take the loss of his fellow mercenaries hard and spend the rest of the day searching for survivors, which will eventually lead to him discovering the Research Room and showing it to the Fated.

The strength of the Freikorps will be depleted after their losses at Kethsora, but Pletcher will eventually discover marching orders that indicate that a second, smaller group of Freikorps is stationed at Nythera.

THE RESEARCH ROOM

If the Fated take any time exploring Nythera, they will quickly uncover the Research Room, which is where the Resurrectionists who had previously occupied Nythera stored the tomes and relics they recovered from elsewhere in the ruins.

Should the Fated arrive while the Freikorps are still in possession of the ruins, the room's two tables are stacked with tomes and strange artifacts, and three archivists are working diligently to translate the texts into English. It's slow work, but one of the books details a specific phrase that was used to seal Nythera many centuries previously. The notes in the margins of the translation suggest that if the same phrase is spoken a second time from atop Nythera's central dais, it will reverse the sealing ritual and open the ruins. The phrase is relatively simple: “Til Gran Nythera Fel. Til Hyat Nythera Dow.”

If the Fated succeed on a TN 10 Notice Challenge, they find a Grimoire tucked in with the other texts. It contains the Terrifying Aura and Conjuring Magia, as well as the Increase AP, Pulse, and Reduce AP Immuto. The Freikorps aren't willing to part with any of the tomes in the Research Room, but if the Fated help distract the Neverborn leader, they will let them have the Grimoire.

If the Freikorps have been driven off by the Neverborn, this room is trashed, but the Fated can still find the two tomes listed above with a bit of searching (and, in the case of the Grimoire, the listed Notice Challenge).

MOVING ON

If the Fated were forced to evacuate Nythera along with the Freikorps, then Hannah will lead the survivors to Nythera to rendezvous with the scouts Von Schill took with him to survey the ruins. The Fated are welcome to accompany her, as “the Badlands are a dangerous place for lone travelers.” With the Freikorps, the Fated will have the protection of a group... but that also means that they will have to abide by the Freikorps’ rules and regulations.

If the Freikorps held Kethsora, then the Fated will be seen as valuable heroes for placing themselves at risk to lure the Neverborn commander into the open. They’ll be given plenty of handshakes and pats on the back, and there will even be some offers of sponsoring the Fated, should they decide to join the ‘corps at some point in the future. Hannah will realize that it’s only a matter of time until the Neverborn return, however, and will gather up the survivors and lead them to Nythera as noted above.

If the Fated arrived too late to save the Freikorps, Pletcher will learn that Von Schill led a group of Freikorps to Nythera and asks the characters to accompany him to Nythera. He is certain that some of the Freikorps escaped Kethsora, and in any case, going there will allow them to hook up with Von Schill and return to Malifaux City as part of a group, rather than risk another disastrous trip back through the Badlands by themselves.



ACT IV

As the Fated approach Nythera, they find themselves walking into a sudden (and very unseasonal) winter storm. The Freikorps save the characters, but it's a temporary salvation: they have come into conflict with Rasputina, the so-called "Winter Witch." She has decided to end their week of give-and-take fighting by simply plunging the entire area into sub-zero temperatures.

Von Schill, the leader of the Freikorps, knows that it's essentially come down to "put up or get out," and he's chosen to go with the former. His daring plan to breach the ice wall surrounding Nythera involves having the Fated blow a hole in the wall with some explosives and circle around to outflank Rasputina's December Cultists and their ice construct minions.

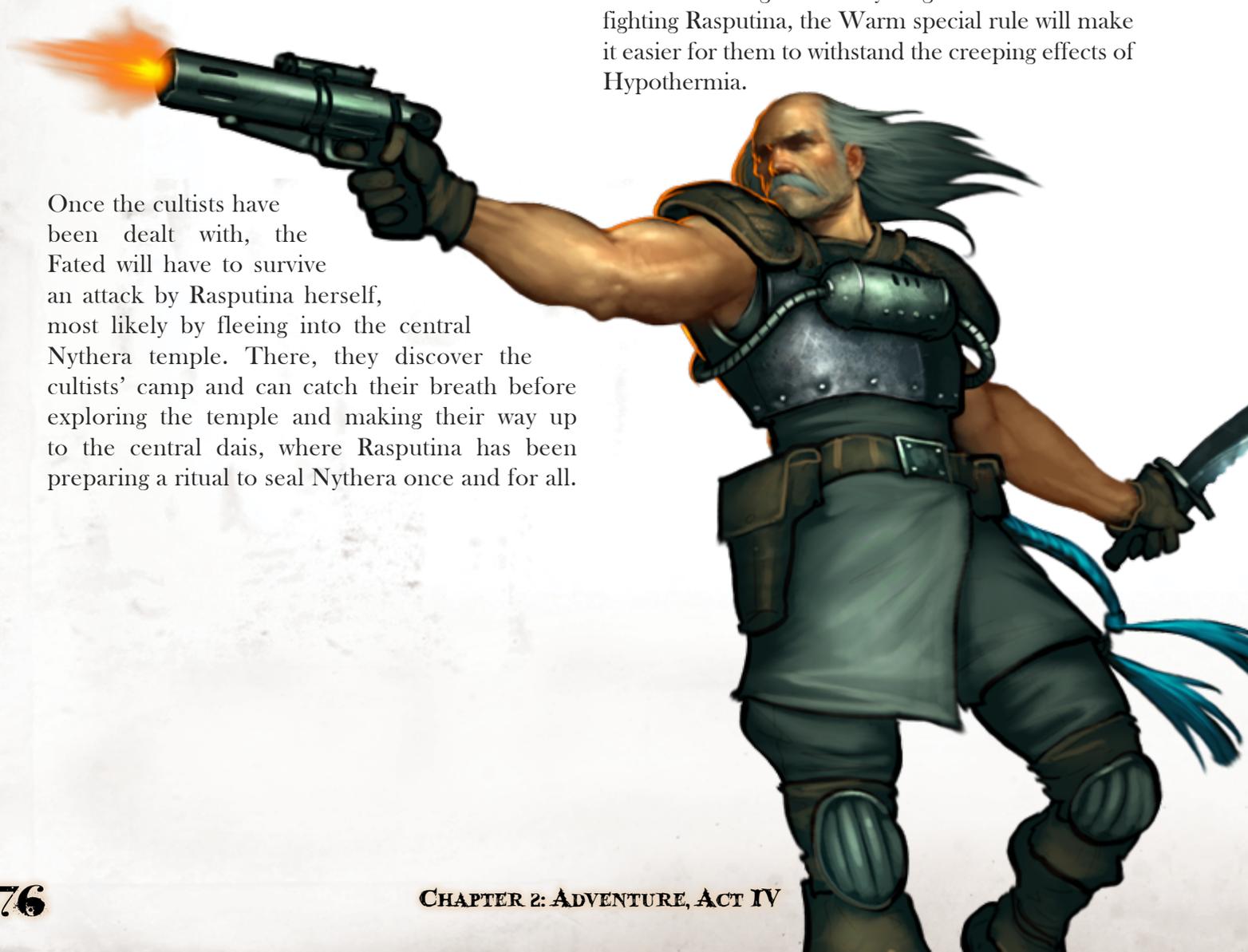
Once the cultists have been dealt with, the Fated will have to survive an attack by Rasputina herself, most likely by fleeing into the central Nythera temple. There, they discover the cultists' camp and can catch their breath before exploring the temple and making their way up to the central dais, where Rasputina has been preparing a ritual to seal Nythera once and for all.

Whether the Fated decide to assist her in locking the ruins or decide to throw open the gates to release the powerful entity trapped within is their choice, but either way, their actions will have a significant impact upon the world of Malifaux (for better or worse).

The constant threat of Frostbite and Rasputina's magical prowess make this a very dangerous conclusion to the adventure. In order to survive, the Fated will have to be quick on their feet and capable of making quick decisions in tense situations.

If you are using *Into the Steam* in your campaign and wish to make things a bit easier for the Fated, consider having the Freikorps give them Fur Armor (*Into the Steam*, pg. 172) instead of Freikorps Armor; the Freikorps came prepared for just about any situation, including the cold!

While this armor doesn't protect the Fated from the blast damage that they might encounter when fighting Rasputina, the Warm special rule will make it easier for them to withstand the creeping effects of Hypothermia.



ACT IV, PROLOGUE:

A CHILLY RECEPTION

Read this section to the players as they arrive at Nythera:



It's been four days since you left Kethsora behind you. The beating sun made the journey a sweaty, unpleasant slog, but as you finally catch sight of the curved spires of Kethsora in the distance, the wind shifts, bringing with it a strong, cold breeze that soon has you shivering and rubbing your arms to stay warm. Within the hour, the sky has grown dark and snow has begun to fall from the clouds overhead, unexpectedly plunging you into winter.

By the time you finally stumble into the Freikorps camp, you're shivering and can barely feel your fingers or toes. The mercenaries posted on guard shout out a warning as they leave the warmth of their campfire, but they quickly realize that you're not a threat and herd you into a large, warm tent and drape heavy blankets over your shoulders.

"Bet you didn't expect to walk into the heart of winter, huh?" one of the mercenaries says, chuckling as he pulls out a flask of whiskey and passes it around the group. "Welcome to Malifaux, where even the seasons can't keep themselves straight."



If the Fated are traveling with the Freikorps group from Kethsora, they're still present with the Fated... but not much warmer. They rejoin their fellow Freikorps and warm up alongside the Fated, all while telling the Nythera Freikorps about any heroic acts that the Fated performed during the Battle of Kethsora (if any).

If Pletcher is still with the Fated, he'll take this opportunity to brag about the Fated's exploits a bit, such as how they saved him from "a dozen twisted monsters" at the Honeyshot Casino. His stories are suitably enhanced to make them more entertaining for his audience, and he plays up any of the Fated's positive aspects while justifying their less favorable qualities. They can be a great opportunity to show the Fated how their decisions and actions appear to other characters... and to provide a bit of humor in the form of Otto's tendency to exaggerate events.



HAVE A DRINK TO STAY WARM!

If you want to throw a bit of a curve ball at the Fated and make this Act more difficult, consider playing up the Freikorps offering the characters whiskey to stay warm. While drinking alcohol certainly makes people feel as if they're warming up, in actuality it counteracts many of the body's natural attempts to keep warm and makes a person more susceptible to hypothermia.

Characters who accept the offered alcoholic drinks suffer a \square to their next attempt to resist Hypothermia (pg. 82).

ACT IV, SCENE 1: COOL AS ICE

Once the Fated have had a chance to warm up and get some feeling back into their fingers, the leader of the Freikorps makes an appearance. Read the following text:



A gloved hand pulls back the flap of the tent, allowing a balding man with white hair and a walrus-like mustache to step inside. “Hell of a thing,” he mutters around the cigar jutting out from his mouth. Despite the man’s age – he has to be in his mid-fifties, at the earliest – his muscular arms and shoulders betray his excellent physical condition, and something about the way he moves sets off instant warning bells in your head.

He pauses to suck on his cigar as he looks you over, then blows out a cloud of smoke that seems to fill the entire tent. “Well, let’s get the introductions out of the way. Name’s Von Schill, these are my Freikorps, and this is my camp.”

He takes another puff from his cigar and gestures to you with its glowing tip as he breathes out a cloud of acrid smoke. “Now, who the hell are you?”



The Fated can introduce themselves at this time. If Pletcher is still with the Fated, he’ll chime in with praise once they’ve given Von Schill their names.

If this happens, read the following text, adjusting as appropriate to account for the Fated’s actions toward Pletcher in Act III:



Pletcher clears his throat as he glances sideways at you. “Ah, excuse me, sir? Private Otto Pletcher, Voxcaster Detail. These people saved me from a Neverborn ambush and helped me cross the Badlands. Without their help, I doubt that I’d be here today. They’re good people, and I trust them.”



If the Fated rescued the Freikorps from the Neverborn in Act III, Hannah will step forward to acknowledge this. Read the following text:



“Pardon me, sir?” A woman pulls back the flap of the tent, allowing a blast of cold air to enter and swirl up the smoke hanging in the air. She quickly steps inside and offers Von Schill a crisp salute.

The mercenary leader shoves the cigar back in his mouth and glances toward her. “Something important, Hannah? Sort of in the middle of something here.”

Hannah nods. “Yes, sir. I’ve submitted my report to the librarians, but I thought it might be relevant to inform you that your prisoners were integral to our successful evacuation of Kethsora. They’re quite capable.”

One of Von Schill’s eyebrows rises in skeptical disbelief as he glances back to you, as if reevaluating your worth. “Is that so...?”



If the Fated failed to save the Freikorps at Kethsora and mention their deaths to Von Schill, he tells them that a few stragglers managed to make it to Nythera to rendezvous with them, but they were “pretty chewed up.” The lack of available troops has limited his options, and he offers the Fated the “going rate” of 5 scrip per day if they’re available for hire. “It’s either that or freeze to death,” he grumbles beneath his breath as he lights up a new cigar.

In any case, Von Schill motions for the Fated to follow him outside. Read the following text:



Despite the blankets around your shoulders, you can’t help but shiver as you step outside. The temperature’s plummeted another five degrees since you first arrived, and you can see your breath in front of you as snow continues to fall from the dark clouds overhead. There’s already an inch of snow on the ground, save for in the well-traveled areas of the camp, where it’s been trodden into dirty, freezing mush.

“So, here’s the problem,” Von Schill says, leading up to a small hill that’s being held by two snipers in full body armor. He uses his cigar to gesture into the distance, toward the ruins of Nythera and the thick, thirty-foot-tall wall of ice which surrounds them.



The Fated can attempt TN 10 Notice Challenges at this point. On a success, they catch sight of humanoid creatures formed entirely from ice moving around in front of the ice wall. Regardless of whether or not any of the Fated succeed, one of the snipers sighs, picks up his rifle, and fires off three quick shots, which strike the creatures in flashes of flame and drop them to the ground.

A character passing a TN 10 Heavy Guns, Long Arms, Pistol, or Shotgun Challenge recognizes the ammunition the snipers are using as “Torch” rounds, which are typically used to light the walking dead on fire. They’re commonly believed to only be available as shotgun shells, however, which makes their use in a rifle – and in a sniper rifle, especially – quite surprising.

If the special rounds are mentioned to Von Schill or any of the Freikorps, they’ll just grin and remind the Fated that the Freikorps are regarded as the best-equipped mercenaries in Malifaux for a reason.





“The Viktorias beat everyone else to the ruins - no surprise there, the two of them are always Johnnies-on-the-spot when it comes to anything having to do with Neverborn relics - but they weren’t looting the place. They were protecting it.” Von Schill shakes his head, like a father who is disappointed with a delinquent child.

“That didn’t last for long, maybe a week or two at best, before the Arcanists showed up in force and drove them out. Way I heard it, one of the sisters had to just about drag the other away kicking and screaming.” He smirks as he takes another puff of his cigar.

“We got here a little over a week ago, only to find the Winter Witch holding the place. Must have driven the other Arcanists out of here, cause there’s no sign of ‘em. Been fighting against December cultists and ice constructs ever since; they’re not much of a match against flamethrowers and torch rounds, but the cultists just keep re-summoning the blasted things, and we’ve only got so much ammo.”

He looks up at the sky and takes a few puffs of his cigar. “Course, now she seems to have decided that it’s easier to kill us by just dropping the temperature so far down into the negatives that even the thermometers freeze solid.”



If the Fated ask about why the Freikorps are interested in Nythera, he claims that there’s a powerful weapon locked away inside the ruins: something that was used long ago by the Neverborn to defeat the tyrants that ruled over them. Or at least, that’s what his librarians were able to translate from the Kethsora ruins. Even if the details aren’t quite right, however, he wants to get that weapon before someone else does.

THE PLAN

Von Schill will tell the Fated that the biggest problem they have is the ice wall. They’ve prepared some explosives to blast through the wall, but every time the demolition team gets close to it, they get swarmed by ice constructs and are driven back. He chomps on his cigar and notes that “We have to get someone behind the wall to take out those cultists.” Then he gives a loaded and very suggestive look to the Fated.

His plan is relatively simple: Von Schill will lead a frontal assault on the ice wall to distract the cultists and draw them into once place. At the same time, the Fated will crawl up to the ice wall through the snow, set some explosives next to the wall, and blow a hole in it. Then the Fated can rush forward and cut down the cultists in a hail of bullets, thus cutting off the enemy’s ability to reinforce their front lines.

Von Schill grins around his cigar as he finishes explaining his plan. “Classic pincer attack.”

If the Fated object to the plan, he’s willing to entertain other suggestions, be he notes that with the way the temperature is dropping, they don’t have much time to come up with a new plan. The ice walls are too thick to allow anyone to see through them enough to teleport someone to the other side, and using fire spells to melt the ice is a slow process that only results in drawing the attention of the cultists (and with them, their summoned ice constructs).

The Fated can refuse to participate in the plan, in which case Von Schill calmly calls them a few less-than-polite names and leaves to arrange an assault. Unfortunately, he’s short on men and the assault fails when the lone demolitionist is ambushed by a lurking cultist and slain, forcing them to withdraw from Nythera to avoid succumbing to the cold. See the Conclusion (pg. 98) to determine how the adventure resolves.

If the Fated agree to the plan, Von Schill claps the nearest character on the back and remarks that he “loves it when a plan comes together.” He then sends the characters to the quartermaster to get “properly equipped.” See Preparing for the Assault for more information.

PREPARING FOR THE ASSAULT

The quartermaster - an efficient woman by the name of Irma Kraub - is set up in a large tent near the center of the Freikorps camp. When the Fated arrive, the tent is coated in a light layer of frost, and two engineers are working nearby to convert a pneumatic water purifier into a heating unit. If the Fated wish to help, a TN 13 Engineering Challenge allows the character to provide the assistance necessary to get the machine converted and up and running, buying a few more hours of survival for the Freikorps.

Kraub doesn't waste any time getting the Fated suited up for their mission. Every Height 2 Fated is given a suit of Freikorps Armor and a dozen rounds of Torch ammunition, though she makes certain to specifically note that the mercenary group expects the armor to be returned at the end of the mission and will go to great lengths to retrieve any armor that goes "missing." She does not have any armor that is designed to fit characters of other Heights; while there are a few Height 3 Freikorpsman, they all have custom armor to account for their great size. See the Freikorps Armor and Torch Ammunition callout boxes on this page for more information. Kraub can supply the Fated with rope and climbing hooks if they ask, but won't make the offer herself (as it's beyond the mission parameters).

If your group is using *Into the Steam*, the Fated can attempt to requisition a flamethrower from Kraub. Doing so requires a TN 13 Convince or Bewitch Challenge, but gets them a bulky Flamethrower (*Into the Steam*, pg. 160) and one extra canister of ammunition.

If the Fated have any need of medical attention, Kraub will send for a librarian, who uses her magic to heal 1/2/3 damage to any wounded characters.

FREIKORPS ARMOR

The trademark armor of the Freikorps is designed to be lightweight and mobile while still providing excellent protection to its wearer. Remember that every point of Armor a character possesses will reduce her Defense Aspect by an equal amount.

ARMOR	EFFECT
Freikorps Body	Light, Protected (☹), Sealed
Freikorps Head	Light, Protected (📖), Sealed
Freikorps Arms	Protected (X), Sealed
Freikorps Legs	Protected (🐾), Sealed

Sealed: If the armor on the character's head, chest, arms, and legs all has this modification, the character ignores all damage from (X) and 🐾 effects.

TORCH AMMUNITION

Torch ammunition is generally only available in Malifaux. The vast majority of torch ammunition comes in the form of shotgun shells, but the arms manufacturer AG Works has produced a small number of Torch rounds designed to be used by other firearms.

Characters who suffer Severe damage from a weapon loaded with Torch ammunition also gain the **Burning +1** Condition. In addition, for the purposes of this adventure, any weapon loaded with Torch ammunition also ignores the Armor of the Cult of December's ice constructs, as the high temperature of the rounds cuts right through their frozen bodies.

ACT IV, SCENE 2:

OPERATION ICE STORM

At the start of this scene, each of the Fated has to check for Hypothermia (see Hypothermia, below).

Once the Fated have made the necessary preparations, the specialist will arrive with the explosives. Read the following text:



A large man dressed entirely in Freikorps armor trudges up through the falling snow and hands you a leather satchel. “Careful with that,” he warns you, his voice taking on a slightly metallic quality as it’s filtered through his armor’s gas mask. “Demo charges can be a bit tricky, but it should be fine so long as you don’t get it near any open flames. The blast radius is around 20 feet, so get it right up against the ice wall, set the timer, and then get out of there.”



If the Fated flip over the flap of the satchel to look inside, it contains a few sticks of dynamite that have been wired up to a simple timing device, similar to a mechanical egg timer. While characters wearing a full suit of Freikorps armor will technically be protected from the blast by its Sealed modification, most people try not to tempt fate and don’t stand next to dynamite as it explodes.

Once the Fated are ready – and with the temperature still dropping, there’s not much time – the Freikorps launch their attack to draw the December cultists away from the portion of the wall the Fated have been instructed to demolish. There’s a few hundred yards between the Freikorps camp and the ice wall, and the ground has become slick with ice and snow.

Read the following text, replacing Pletcher with Freikorps Private Brian Reynolds if Pletcher has been killed:



Von Schill claps you on the back and wishes you good luck, apparently unconcerned with the proximity of his cigar to the satchel of dynamite that you’re holding. Then he’s in motion, shouting orders to his troops as they prepare for the assault on the ice wall. The snow is coming down so thickly that they’re little more than blurry shapes against the washed out gray of the wintery landscape.

Pletcher glances out over the field of snowdrifts that lie between you and the ice wall. “We need to get up to that wall without being seen,” he says, his voice slightly muffled behind his gas mask. “Let’s go.”



HYPOTHERMIA

At the start of Scene 2 and each subsequent Scene in this Act, the Fated must check for Hypothermia. A Hypothermia check is a TN 9 Toughness Challenge. On a failure, the character suffers 1/1/2 damage. Regardless of whether she passes or fails, once the duel is resolved the character gains the following Condition: “**Frostbite +1:** Whenever this character suffers damage from the cold (such as from Hypothermia or an Ice spell), she suffers +1 damage. Reduce the value of this Condition by 1 for every hour this character spends in warmth.”

Crawling up to the ice wall without being seen is handled by an Ongoing Challenge. If the Fated decide to dispense with Stealth and just run toward the ice wall as quickly as possible, proceed directly to Icy Reinforcements (pg. 84) instead.

CRAWLING THROUGH SNOW

- **SKILLS ALLOWED:** Athletics, Stealth, Wilderness
- **TARGET NUMBER:** 9
- **DURATION:** 1 minute
- **SUCCESS REQUIREMENT:** (2 per Fated)
- **FAILURE REQUIREMENT:** 1

Every character present must participate in this Ongoing Challenge. Each duration, make note of the distant sounds of gunfire that mark the Freikorps' battle with the December cultists.

On a success, they reach the ice wall without being spotted and can set the demo charge and blow a hole in the wall. See the Wall Breach section on page @@ for more information.

On a critical failure, however, one of the cultists notices the Fated and summons ice constructs to fend them off. See the Icy Reinforcements section on page 84 for more information.



ICY REINFORCEMENTS

If the Fated are spotted as they approach the ice wall, the cultists summon ice constructs to halt their progress. Read the following text:



Suddenly, the snowdrifts around you lurch forward as creatures begin to rise out of their frozen depths. They're formed entirely from blue ice, as cold and dead as the heart of a glacier. Most of the ice constructs are spindly and only stand a few feet tall, but one - the goliath pulling itself from the largest of the snowdrifts - is a hulking behemoth of solid ice that stands over nine feet tall.



There is a single Ice Golem here, along with one Ice Gamin per Fated. The constructs engage the Fated with unshakeable purpose and fight to the death. The stats for the Ice Gamin and Ice Golems can be found on pages 125 and 126, respectively. If the Fated were crawling toward the ice wall, they begin the battle prone (and gain **+** to Defense flips against ranged attacks and **□** to Defense flips against melee attacks) and will have to use the Stand Up Action to regain their footing.

Because of the slippery ice, any non-ice construct character that declares a Charge Action or a second Walk Action on their turn must pass a TN 7 Acrobatics Challenge. On a failure, the character slips on the ice and instead takes the Drop Prone Action.

The Fated are only fifteen yards from the ice wall when the constructs appear, so it's possible for them to reach the wall and set the demo charge during combat. Setting the charge in such rushed conditions requires a TN 9 Explosives Challenge; on a failure, the character is unable to get the timer working and the charge remains inactive. If the character achieves a Margin of Failure, however, the demo charge explodes as the character is priming it, dealing 4/6 **☠☠☠**/8 **☠☠☠☠** damage to the character.

On a success, the character can set the timer for up to ten rounds; at the end of each round, the demo charge's timer ticks down one round and explodes when it reaches zero. If the charge is adjacent to the ice wall, this results in it blowing a large hole in the ice and killing or scaring off any alerted December Cultists; see the Wall Breach section (pg. 85) for more details.

If the characters are unable to breach the wall - perhaps they detonate the demo charge too far away from the wall or are driven off by the ice constructs - then they will have to find another way past it. The wall is too thick to be damaged by conventional weaponry, but a flamethrower or fire-based magic can melt a hole in the wall, but doing so requires the Fated to deal 20 points of damage to the wall and assuredly draws the attention of the December Cultists on the other side of the wall.

Alternatively, if the Fated have rope and climbing hooks, a TN 12 Athletics Challenge will allow them to climb the 30-foot smooth wall and lower themselves down to the other side, but if they achieve a Margin of Failure on this Challenge, they fall and suffer 3/5/7 damage.

If the Fated can't get past the wall, Freikorps are eventually overwhelmed by ice constructs and come to an end on the frozen wasteland of Nythera. Von Schill is the last to fall, but eventually, the worsening cold and endless waves of ice constructs finally overwhelm the experienced mercenary. See the Conclusion (pg. 98) for more information on what happens if the Fated flee Nythera.



WALL BREACH

When the demo charge blows a hole in the ice wall, read the following text:



The demo charge explodes in an ear-splitting roar of sound and pressure, and the shockwave nearly knocks you to the ground. The explosion blows a gaping hole in the wall, some fifteen feet across, and showers the surrounding area in a hail of slush and jagged ice shards.



The sound of fighting from the Freikorps intensifies, but with the way into Nythera open, the Fated can circle around and rescue the Freikorps... or simply continue into the ruins themselves, dooming the Freikorps to a losing battle and eventual death by freezing as they remain engaged in a losing battle, waiting for reinforcements that never come. If Pletcher (or Reynolds) is still with the Fated, they object to this abandonment, and only a TN 16 Convince, Bewitch, Intimidate, or Leadership Challenge can convince him not to rush off to confront the December cultists by himself.

If the Fated circle around to help the Freikorps, continue onward to Outflanked! in the next section. If the Fated abandon the Freikorps to their deaths, skip forward to Scene 4: The Nythera Ruins (pg. @@).

OUTFLANKED!

Getting around behind the ice wall allows the Fated to strike at the December Cultists from a vulnerable angle. Read the following text as they approach:



The sounds of gunfire grow louder as you hurry through the falling snow toward the battle. Soon, the shapes of a half-dozen December cultists come into view through the wintery haze. They're dressed in thick furs with bone ornamentation, and all are female. Their hands are pressed against the ice wall, and their faces are contorted in concentration as they channel primal magic into their icy minions on the other side of the frozen barrier.



There are six December Cultists here, but the Fated have the element of surprise on their side: the December Cultists cannot act on the first round of combat, and the Fated have **+** on their attacks against the oblivious spellcasters. The stats for the December Cultists can be found on page 127.

Once the Cultists are defeated, the battle on the other side of the wall rages for a few minutes longer before drawing to a close. Eventually a climbing hook appears at the top of the wall, followed by a dozen more as the Freikorps scale the wall and regroup on the other side. Von Schill pulls out a fresh cigar, lights it, and claps the Fated on the back in appreciation for their work. "Helluva job," he says, his cheeks bright pink from the cold. "Let's go put a bullet in that ice witch and get paid."

The Librarians who survived the battle will consult the tomes chained to their waists and use their magic to heal 1/2/3 damage to any wounded characters.

ACT IV, SCENE 3:

THE WINTER WITCH

At the start of this scene, each of the Fated has to check for Hypothermia (see Hypothermia, pg. 82). If the Fated abandoned the Freikorps to the December Cultists and their ice constructs, they can make their way to the central temple without incident; it's the only structure that isn't buried in snow, and the twisted spires that rise from its base mark it as an important location. As the Fated approach the temple, a small blizzard of howling wind will pass over them, carrying Rasputina away from the temple and toward the enfolding battle with the Freikorps; she intends to personally finish off the mercenaries to ensure that they cannot interrupt her ritual. Due to her absence, this means that she will not be present to stop the Fated from entering the temple.

If the Fated rescued the Freikorps, however, Von Schill commands a detachment of mercenaries to relocate to the breach the Fated made in the ice wall to secure their escape route. He then leads the Fated and the rest of the Freikorps into the ruins of Nythera.

Read the following text:



The temperature has dropped to an almost painful level. It's difficult to feel your hands and feet, and your fingers and toes have gone completely numb. The Freikorps' librarians take a moment to consult the heavy tomes chained to their hips, then chant incantations which summon balls of glowing flame into their outstretched hands, providing a bit of warmth in the increasing cold. Even Von Schill has donned his Freikorps helmet at this point.

"We need to find the Winter Witch," he says as he leads you deeper into the ruins. "If we can kill her or drive her off, we might just have a chance of survival." The light of the summoned flames flickers off the sides of stone buildings that are partially buried in sloping snowdrifts, but Von Schill gives them no mind. His only focus is the central structure at the heart of the ruins.



The central temple of Nythera is a massive structure that resembles a dead spider that has fallen onto its back, legs curling above it in the air. The tall, curved spires of the temple are constructed of dark metal, but the street the Fated are following leads into the structure's base.

Von Schill will point at the spires and tell the Fated that they need to reach the central dais to open the ruins, which is where he suspects that they'll find the Winter Witch. Even if she's not there, once they chant the words needed to open Nythera, it'll draw her out into the open, allowing the Freikorps to put her down.

If the Fated did not find the phrase needed to open Nythera at Kethsora, Von Schill will ask one of the librarians what the phrase is, to which she'll respond "Til Gran Nythera Fel. Til Hyat Nythera Dow." Von Schill mutters the phrase a few times under his breath, committing it to memory.

RASPUTINA APPEARS

While Von Schill is correct that Rasputina is preparing a ritual at Nythera's central dais, she has also been monitoring the Freikorps' approach to the central temple. As they draw near, she takes to the air and attempts to remove a meddlesome threat once and for all. Read the following text:



The route you're on leads directly into the central building. Snow is piled up against the dark metal of its walls in heavy drifts, but the doors - if there ever were doors covering its wide entrance - are missing, allowing the snow to spill into its dark entryway.

The air churns with a sudden gust of icy wind as a blizzard springs up out of nowhere, whipping the snow around you into a blinding flurry. The silhouette of a woman gradually appears through the swirling snow, her arms spread out to either side of her as she's carried aloft in the winter storm. She wears a long coat, lined with fur, as is her ushanka hat. "Freikorps!" she shouts, revealing a heavy foreign accent. "Turn back. Nythera is mine."

Von Schill draws his pistol in the blink of an eye and fires three shots at the ice witch, but with a motion of her hand, the wind snaps her to one side and away from the bullets. "Into the temple!" he shouts, gesturing to the spire-topped building ahead of you. "Rendezvous at the central dais!"



What follows isn't so much a battle as a survival attempt. Held aloft by her winter winds, Rasputina is unassailable by melee attacks and nearly untouchable by ranged attacks. She uses her vantage point to rain down blasts of supernatural cold upon the Freikorps, and Von Schill yells out the command to scatter.

Escaping from Rasputina is handled with an Ongoing Challenge:

RAINING FROZEN DEATH

- **SKILLS ALLOWED:** Acrobatics, Counter-Spelling, Evade, Toughness
- **TARGET NUMBER:** 9
- **DURATION:** 10 seconds
- **SUCCESS REQUIREMENT:** (2 per Fated)
- **FAILURE REQUIREMENT:** (1 per Fated)

Every character present must participate in this Ongoing Challenge.

Every time a character fails a Challenge made as part of this Ongoing Challenge, that character suffers 1/2/3 damage as Rasputina catches them with a quick blast of supernatural cold. This damage is considered to be caused by an Ice spell and thus is increased by the Frostbite Condition.

If any characters are knocked unconscious as a result of this damage, another character may choose to voluntarily increase the TN of all her subsequent Challenges in this Ongoing Challenge by +2 to pick up that character and carry the fallen comrade with her. This ensures that the fallen comrade suffers the same fate (for better or worse) as the character carrying them... including any damage suffered from failing Challenges.

On a success, the Fated manage to reach the safety of the temple entrance. See the Escaping Winter section on page 88.

If a catastrophic failure occurs, however, the Fated make a rush for the temple entrance... and fail to make it. See the Trapped by Winter section on page 89.

Alternatively, the Fated could choose to fight Rasputina, though this is unlikely to end well for them. Her stats can be found on page 129; during the battle, she is held aloft by the winter winds and thus spends the entire fight seven to eight yards above the ground. If she is reduced to half Wounds, she throws one final blast at the Freikorps, scattering them before she ascends into the sky and returns to the central dais of the temple.

ESCAPING WINTER

By succeeding at the Ongoing Challenge, the Fated manage to escape Rasputina but find themselves trapped within the central temple. Read the following text:



One of the Freikorps librarians shouts in surprise as the floating witch catches her with a blast of frozen magic, instantly freezing her beneath two inches of solid ice. The witch makes a casual gesture with her hand and the ice shatters violently, breaking it – and the woman frozen inside it – into jagged chunks.

You're already running toward the temple by the time she turns her attention to you. In an attempt to stop you, she makes a lifting gesture with her hand, causing a wall of thick ice to spring up between you and the temple... but not quickly enough. You leap over the wall as it rises, slamming into the snow-carpeted ground on the other side as the ice wall cuts you off from the Freikorps and their desperate battle.



With the ice wall cutting them off from the battle raging behind them, the only way for the Fated to go is deeper into the ruins. They can continue onward in Scene 4: The Nythera Temple (pg. 90).



TRAPPED BY WINTER

By critically failing at the Ongoing Challenge, the Fated end up trapped in a losing battle with Rasputina. Read the following text:



The floating witch turns her full attention to you, and in the span of a single breath, you see your life flash before your eyes. You turn and make a break for the central temple, but just as it seems you're going to make it, a wall of thick ice springs up between you and the temple, cutting you off from safety. You're unable to halt your progress as you slam into the frozen barrier with the unpleasant crunch of bones snapping.

As you crumple to the ground, the witch turns her attention back to the other Freikorps, who are fleeing as best as they are able. Only Von Schill remains behind... frozen solid beneath two inches of thick ice.



Any conscious characters suffer 2/3/4 damage as they plow into the ice wall.

If the characters have flamethrowers or fire magic, they can attempt to melt the ice wall, but unless they can deal 20 points of damage in a single round to breach the wall, the attempt will draw Rasputina's attention.

Starting on round two, Rasputina will fly into range and begin attacking the Fated in an attempt to drive them away from the ice wall. If they flee, she turns her attention back to the remaining Freikorps. If the Fated are able to make it through the ice wall and into the temple, proceed to The Nythera Temple (pg. 90).

Any Fated who are killed by Rasputina are frozen solid beneath the ice. With a gesture of her hand, she shatters them into pieces, then turns her attention to the next character attempting to melt through her wall.

Characters can attempt to attack Rasputina, but the swirling winds provide her with a great deal of mobility and protection; she cannot be attacked by melee weapons and has the following Condition for the duration of this scene: "**Bulletproof +3:** Reduce all damage suffered by this character from Ranged Combat attacks by +3, to a minimum of 1." Her stats can be found on page 129; she retreats if reduced to half her Wounds or less.

If the Fated attempt to flee from the battle, Rasputina will not give chase; she merely wishes to drive the Freikorps away from Nythera so that she can have it to herself. See the Conclusion section (pg. 98) for more information on what happens if the Fated flee Nythera.

ACT IV, SCENE 4:

THE NYTHERA TEMPLE

At the start of this scene, each of the Fated has to check for Hypothermia (see Hypothermia, pg. 82).

Once the Fated are inside the Nythera temple, they'll be able to catch their collective breaths and rest for a few moments... though with the temperature continuing to drop, they should still have plenty of motivation to press forward. Von Schill gave the command to rendezvous at the central dais, but in any case, the wall of ice behind the Fated somewhat limits their options.

THE DECEMBER CAMP

The interior of the Nythera temple is dark, but there are a few places where the metal has corroded over the past few centuries, and just enough pale light filters through to allow them make out their surroundings.

Read the following text:



You find yourself in a cavernous room ten yards wide and fifteen yards long. Thick pillars forged from black metal are scattered liberally through the room, though there doesn't seem to be any rhyme or reason as to their placement: in some places stand single pillars with yards until the next, while in others, two pillars stand so close to one another that slipping between them would be difficult. Cold, pale light filters into the room through small holes in the ceiling, and as the wind howls outside, it produces an eerie moaning sound that almost sounds like voices.

After a moment, you realize that many of the room's furnishings are modern. Fur-lined bedrolls are laid out in one part of the room, while another has been converted into a crude mess hall with portable camp stoves, a row of metal canteens, and leather sacks containing strips of dried meat. Everything is covered in a thin layer of frost; whoever set up camp here doesn't seem to be around any longer.

An open passageway on the left-hand side of the room slopes upward as it trails off into darkness.



This camp belongs to the Cult of December. The cultists are elsewhere in the ruins when the Fated arrive, with the majority either fighting the Freikorps or dead by the hands of the Fated. A few are roaming the area, hunting for food, scouting, or researching the ruins, but they are too far distant to have any impact upon this adventure, unless the Fated decide to spend the night here, in which case they will be constantly interrupted every few hours as a cultist returns to camp. If the Fated chose not to rescue the Freikorps in Scene 2, then the six December Cultists (pg. 127) present for that fight return after two hours with the corpses of as many mercenaries as they can carry.

The Cult of December is comprised of cannibals, and any characters searching the camp can discover evidence of their grisly tastes with a TN 8 Notice Challenge: a pile of gnawed-upon human bones tucked away behind a pillar, a stew pot containing a partially-boiled foot, and a partially-completed necklace of human teeth next to a severed head that is clearly the source of the teeth. The jerky strips mentioned above are from a combination of humans and wild animals. The camp stoves are portable, but only just; each is roughly two feet wide on a side and quite heavy, though they can be broken down and carried in a manner similar to a backpack.

Despite the frost, the camp stoves still function, and if the Fated are willing to take the time to light them up (and risk the return of any remaining cultists), they can use the resulting warmth to slowly recover from their Frostbite.

The passageway leads up a steep inclined slope that twists halfway around the temple and up to the Mural Room (pg. 92).



THE MURAL ROOM

The walls of this room are decorated with a mural, but centuries of exposure to the elements have worn away much of the designs. Read the following text:



The passage curves steeply upwards and around the outside of the temple. Here and there, jagged holes in the metal wall offer you glimpses at the increasingly distant ruins below, until eventually the wind and snow have completely obscured them from view.

The passage soon levels out in a long hallway. The left-hand wall has corroded and is falling apart in places, allowing cold light and gusts of icy wind to blow into the room. Small drifts of snow have piled against the right-hand wall, which bears what must have once been a colorful mural. Whatever pictures the mural forms are obscured beneath a thin layer of white frost.

The wind howls past the open patches in the deteriorated wall like a living thing. The hallway eventually narrows to another passage, which once again slopes upward and to the right as it works its way to the top of the structure.



The room is six yards wide and fifteen yards long.

The mural has suffered from its partial exposure to the elements, but it's still intact enough for the Fated to get a general idea of what the pictures are depicting, if they take the time to brush away the frost covering its surface.

The mural contains the following scenes, reading from left (on the far side of the room) to right (where the Fated enter the hallway); some of the scenes – those marked with **(Frosted)** – are so heavily caked with ice that they are effectively unreadable unless the Fated melt them with a great deal of fire (fire magic or a flamethrower is effective, but a torch is not) or until the ice shatters from the force of their winds unleashed by the Wind Gamin (see pg. 93).

- A winged queen stands atop a shining throne as not-quite humans bow down before her. The two moons of Malifaux hang overhead in positions of distinct symbolism, though what they are intended to convey is unclear to the Fated.
- **(Frosted)** Thirteen dark shadows surround the winged woman and her subjects on all sides. Terror is evident on everyone's face but the queen's, whose features are instead twisted in righteous indignation.
- **(Frosted)** Surrounded by the dead, the queen points toward the distance, where a structure bearing a resemblance to Nythera is being constructed in the center of a forest. A dark, malevolent shadow lingers behind the queen, just out of sight, and her expression appears sly despite her commanding posture.
- The same winged woman stands atop a structure that bears a passing similarity to Nythera, save that it's surrounded by a green forest. Her arms are raised to the sky as blood leaks from her eyes, and her form is surrounded by a dark, malevolent shadow.
- **(Frosted)** The queen floats in the air, her wings spread wide as the dark shadow engulfs her and lashes out into the distance with thirteen tendrils of pure darkness. Beneath her, at her feet and seemingly beneath her notice, her followers are depicted writhing in terrible agony.
- Two humanoid figures are casting the winged woman into a deep pit as curving spires rise up from the ground, as if to swallow her up. The expression on her face is one of indignation and outrage, despite her eyes being little more than black pits.

As the Fated are examining the murals (or ignoring them to continue onward), a group of Wind Gamin attack the Fated and attempt to drag them out of Nythera and to their deaths. Read the following text:



The wind picks up again, kicking up accumulated drifts in a spray of blinding snow. Rather than die down, however, the wind only intensifies in strength. A slow groaning sound fills the hallway as it strains against itself, and then your ears pop painfully as the left-hand wall is torn away from the building and sucked up into the swirling snowstorm outside.

Cold air blasts into the hallway as three feathered creatures, each about the size of a child, soar into the hallway, chittering and cavorting in delight. Were it not for their sharp claws and malicious grins, they might almost be amusing.



These three creatures are Wind Gamin, who have been drawn to the winter storm by its high winds. They attempted to bother Rasputina earlier in the day, but after she froze one of them solid with her magic, they learned that it was best to give her a wide margin. They've started to grow bored and have decided that the Fated should make for interesting playmates. Their stats can be found on page 128.

Unfortunately for the Fated, a Wind Gamin's idea of "playing" is dropping something from high up in the air to see what sort of sound it makes as it hits the ground. The Gamin attempt to push the Fated off the newly-created ledge (where once there had been a wall) and down to the ground far below.

Any character pushed off the ledge can attempt a single TN 10 Acrobatics Challenge to catch onto a jutting piece of metal sticking out from the floor; this prevents them from falling but leaves them dangling over the side of Nythera. Climbing back up into the hallway requires a TN 8 Athletics Challenge.

It's roughly 15 yards to the ground below, so any character that fails to catch themselves suffers 8/10/12 damage as they strike the frozen ground below. If the Fated do not have rope or some form of flight or teleportation magic, this may also result in the character being unable to participate further in the adventure, unless the Fated walk back to the December Camp and breach the ice wall.

Alternatively, the Fated could simply dash forward down the next passage - the Wind Gamin won't pursue the Fated any further into Nythera, as fighting in enclosed spaces just isn't much fun for them.

The change of pressure and sudden blast of strong wind caused by the arrival of the Wind Gamin also shatters some of the ice on the wall, allowing the Fated to read the (Frosted) murals hidden beneath... though the Fated probably don't have much time to look at the pictures until after the Wind Gamin have been defeated.

Whether they defeat the Wind Gamin or merely flee from them, the passage leading forward will incline upwards, bringing the Fated to the temple's central dais (and Scene 5).



ACT IV, SCENE 5:

THE QUEEN RISES

At the start of this scene, each of the Fated has to check for Hypothermia (see Hypothermia, pg. 82).

When the Fated step out onto the central dais, they find the trappings of an arcane ritual. Read the following text:



The passage slopes upward, eventually opening out onto the central dais of the temple. Enormous black spires curl up from the structure like the legs of a dead spider, giving you the impression of standing in the palm of an immense, clawed hand. The wind whips around the central dais in a screaming blizzard of ice and snow, but here, at the storm's center, the air is calm.

Stretched out before you, drawn in white chalk on the black metal of the floor, are dozens of mystical glyphs and arcane symbols. They're arranged in a complicated pattern that could only be part of some esoteric magical ritual. The air practically hums with power, but the ritual's creator seems to be absent; no doubt she's still dealing with the last remnants of the Freikorps. You likely only have a few minutes at best before the Winter Witch returns and completes her spell.



Contrary to what the Fated might suspect, Rasputina's ritual is intended to reinforce the fraying magical seals that keep Nythera closed. If they examine the ritual and succeed at a TN 10 Sorcery or Enchanting Challenge, their brief study of the ritual reveals its purpose, though not the reasoning behind it.

THE WITCH'S MOTIVATION

The Tyrant entity bound to Rasputina knows that Nythera was created by the people of Old Malifaux to seal away the woman who betrayed their people and killed the mortal forms of the Tyrants (including his own). He has no intention of allowing her to return to Malifaux, where she might become a threat to his plans to return to life. While Rasputina and December are often in disagreement, on the matter of Nythera, they are of one mind: Rasputina has no desire to see an entity powerful enough to defeat multiple Tyrants released upon the world.

If the Fated say the words that will open Nythera - "Til Gran Nythera Fel. Til Hyat Nythera Dow" - while on the central dais, the ancient magics that keep Nythera sealed will be dispelled and the ruins will open. Disrupting the ritual by deliberately erasing the prepared runes and symbols has the same effect; Rasputina's ritual has pulled the magical energies of Nythera taut in preparation for tying them off, and any disruption of those energies will cause a backlash that will shatter the binding runes, much like releasing a taut rubber band only to have it snap back in your face. See Nythera Opens (pg. 96) for more details on either scenario.

Alternatively, the Fated may attempt to complete the ritual. Doing so requires that at least one character succeed on the previous Challenge to determine the ritual's intent; once it is known, a TN 12 Sorcery or Enchanting Challenge will complete the ritual and seal Nythera for good. See Nythera Sealed (pg. 96) for more details.

The Fated should be given time to examine the ritual and make some sort of decision as to what they wish to do, but if they wait for too long, Rasputina will return to the dais. She is unlikely to be pleased to find that she has unwelcome company. See Rasputina Returns on page 95 for more details.

RASPUTINA RETURNS

If the Fated linger on the dais for more than a few minutes, Rasputina will eventually return to complete her ritual. Read the following text:



The already icy temperature suddenly drops a good ten degrees as a woman in a long, fur-lined coat and an ushanka hat drops out of the sky and lands with a nimble step. The expression on her pale face is difficult to read, but she doesn't look too happy to see you.

"More Freikorps?" she asks in a heavily-accented voice. "You have made a great mistake by coming here."



At this point, the Fated can attempt to plead their case to the Winter Witch, but they will have to be direct and make it clear that they have no intention of opening Nythera. Rasputina has no reason to keep potential threats alive and even less desire to carry out a conversation with potential enemies when there's an important ritual to finish. If they ask what she's doing, she informs them that she's ensuring that a great evil remains sealed away for all time, but she doesn't volunteer the information or elaborate further.

If the Fated make it clear that they don't want to open Nythera, they can attempt TN 12 Deceive or Convince Challenges to satisfy Rasputina as to their intentions. She will raise the temperature somewhat to keep them from freezing, then ask that they stand back so that she can complete her ritual. If they do so, proceed to Nythera Sealed (pg. 96) as she finishes her ritual. If this is merely a ploy and the

Fated attack Rasputina as she performs the ritual, however, then the energy snaps out of her control as she's attacked and her concentration breaks. The backlash destroys the magic keeping Nythera sealed and causes the ruins to open; see Nythera Opens (pg. 96) for details.

If the Fated fail to make a good case for themselves or claim to want to open Nythera (even if it's to help Rasputina open Nythera), then she attacks them. On her turn, instead of attacking normally, she causes a great gust of icy wind to blow across the dais in an attempt to sweep the Fated off the edge. Every character present (other than Rasputina herself) must attempt a TN 13 Athletics Challenge; on a failure, the character is blown off the edge and suffers 10/12/14 damage as they fall 25 yards to the ground below (the snow drifts cushion their fall somewhat, so this damage is less than normal).

Characters who prove immune to being blown off the edge - such as flying characters who are immune to falling damage or those who just teleport themselves back up to the central dais - instead earn Rasputina's full wrath as she blasts them with her ice magic. If the Fated attacked Rasputina earlier, in Scene 3, then she bears any wounds she suffered during that battle.

Rasputina does not fly during this battle, as she is turning her considerable power over the winter winds toward blowing the Fated off the temple. She only takes to the air when she needs to escape.

She fights until reduced to 0 Wounds or lower, at which point she takes to the air and retreats, leaving Nythera to the Fated. Rasputina's stats can be found on page 129.

NYTHERA SEALED

If the ritual is completed and Nythera is sealed – either by the Fated or Rasputina – then they have succeeded in ensuring that a powerful entity remains locked away from Malifaux for all time (or, at least, for a few centuries longer). Read the following text:



The ruins shudder and groan beneath you, and deep within the ancient, blackened structure, you can hear the sounds of colossal gears turning in an unseen machine. The towering limbs of the temple begin moving toward each other, like a flower blooming in reverse, and you're suddenly struck by the knowledge that Nythera is slowly closing around you!



Fortunately, the spires are moving slowly enough that the Fated can easily escape back down the way they came, so long as they do not linger too long on the central dais. Once they are back in the Mural Room, they are essentially safe.

If Rasputina is present when the temple closes, she will lift the Fated into the air with her winds and safely deposit them on the ground, outside the temple. If they made a positive impression upon her, she suggests that they travel north to the Temple of December: if they can survive the journey, December will surely reward them for ensuring that a threat to His power was once more sealed away. See the Conclusion (pg. 98) to determine the final results of the adventure.

NYTHERA OPENS

If the Fated succeed in opening Nythera – either by saying the phrase needed to dispel the sealing ruins, destroying the prepared ritual, or attacking Rasputina as she performs the ritual – then the temple opens. Von Schill's assumption that the ruins held something dangerous was correct, but it wasn't a weapon... it was a person. Or, more specifically, a group of people: Titania and her most loyal followers. Read the following text:



The taut energy of ancient binding magic snaps like a rubber band stretched too far. The gears buried beneath your feet scream with glee as the twisted spires fling themselves apart. The temple rumbles as the sky darkens overhead, and then the central dais begins to move beneath your feet.

It irises open, a hundred different tooth-shaped sections of floor retracting back to the edges of the dais, leaving a rapidly expanding hole at its center. The scent of rotting flowers and spilled blood wafts up from the opening, so strong as to make you raise a hand to your face to keep from gagging on it.



If Rasputina is present, she screams at the Fated in horror over what they've just done. Read the following text:



The Winter Witch watches the opening dais in horror. "You fools!" she shouts, turning to you with fear in her eyes. "You're insane! Do you have any idea what you've unleashed?!" The wind surges up beneath her, carrying her up into the swirling storm and away from Nythera.



The Fated can flee, if they wish; Nythera still opens, but they will avoid having to come face-to-face with the Queen, which is likely a mercy, all things considered. See the Conclusion (pg. 98) for more details.

If the Fated choose to stand their ground, then are present as the Bloody Queen escapes her prison of centuries. Read the following text:



A winged shape rises up from the darkness at the center of the temple, and a feminine voice whispers the word “freedom.” No sooner is the word spoken than Nythera erupts into bloom, dark roots pushing their way out from beneath snow drifts as thorn-covered vines twist their way up frost-covered stones.

The figure hovering before you is beautiful, but that beauty is marred by her missing eyes and the blood that streams freely down her cheeks. Despite the tattered clothing that hangs loose from her body, she still carries the posture of a queen: arrogant, entitled, and utterly determined to have her way in all things.

She looks up at the sky and smiles, stretching her arms and wings out to either side as if she were awakening from a long slumber. Whatever the creature is, she doesn't seem to have noticed you... yet.



The Fated have one more chance to escape down the passage to the Mural Room while Titania is distracted. If they do, they can escape from Nythera as the wasteland springs into full bloom around them, as if the seasons had been turned back and autumn were fighting to take back the world from winter.

If they choose to stay or otherwise act in such a way as to draw the attention of the Bloody Queen, read the text in the following section.



The Neverborn queen turns to face you, apparently sensing you just fine despite her empty, bleeding eyes. “Your queen thanks you for releasing her from this crude prison,” she says, her wings carrying her closer as she gently alights upon the edge of the pit. “As a reward, I shall grant you the privilege of serving alongside your queen as she casts down those who imprisoned her. What say you?”



If a Fated declines to serve the queen, she scowls and banishes them... which does not end well for the Fated. They may attempt a Willpower flip against Titania's attack value of 6 (19); on a failure, she commands the character to leap from the top of the ruins, which deals 10/12/14 damage when they hit the ground below. If the character resists her command and flees, she allows them to leave. Clearly they were unsuited to be in the presence of royalty.

If a Fated agrees to serve Titania, she punches her fist through their chest and withdraws their beating heart. “A gift for your queen,” she says, smiling in delight at her trophy. For Living characters, the lack of a heart proves fatal, and the character dies... only to pass into undeath as one of the Queen's servants. For Stitched characters, the hole in their chest is probably more annoying than anything, and Titania is more confused about the presence of Invested than anything else. At the end of the session, the character must take a rank in the Autumn Knight Advanced Pursuit.

If one of the Fated has the Nythera Relic from Act II, however, the Queen will graciously accept the relic as tribute from the Fated on behalf of the human race, which not only allows them to leave with their hearts intact, but also softens Titania's initial impression of the human race, allowing her to see them not just as vermin to be squished, but as potential new subjects to be ruled.

Should the Fated choose to fight Titania, it is likely a losing battle; see her stats on page 130.

CONCLUSION

Depending upon the actions of the Fated, the world of Malifaux could be a much different place following this adventure.

If the Fated fled from Nythera before reaching the central dais, then the freezing temperature eventually starts to return to normal the farther they move from the ruins, though this still leaves them on their own, deep within the Badlands. Without their interference, Rasputina succeeds in sealing Nythera.

If the Freikorps retreat from Nythera, then they will continue to survive in some manner or another. If Von Schill survived the battle, he rallies any surviving forces at Kethsora and returns to Malifaux City to rebuild his forces. If he perished, then Hannah takes over the leadership of the Freikorps and works to keep Von Schill's memory alive in the aftermath of the disastrous Nythera campaign.

If Nythera was sealed away, either by the Fated or Rasputina (which happens if they do not intervene), then the fervor over the ruins eventually fades as treasure hunters return with a few interesting relics, but nothing to justify the long trek across the Badlands. A few archeological expeditions travel to the ruins to study them over the next few years, marking the ruins as a scientific curiosity at best.

If the Freikorps persisted and did not retreat, they have much to gain from plundering Nythera. They cannot free Titania from her prison once Rasputina or the Fated have sealed her away (and would have no desire to do so, if they knew that opening Nythera would release her), but there are plenty of minor artifacts strewn about the ruins that fetch the mercenary organization a tidy sum once they're catalogued and sold to collectors back in Malifaux City.

If Nythera opens, however, the world of Malifaux is changed forever. With the Bloody Queen rising from her prison, the Badlands surrounding Nythera springs into verdant bloom, and the blossoms burst open to release her loyal minions back into the world.

She attempts to reassert control over the Neverborn, believing them to be the descendants of her subjects (and thus, subject to her rule), but the process is... less than immediate. Neverborn society fractures as it attempts to adapt to this monumental change, with some welcoming the return of their ancient queen and others proclaiming that she is a traitor to their people who was imprisoned for a reason.

If the Fated chose to serve Titania, then they will have a front row seat to this drama as it unfolds. As the first of her servants in the modern age, she considers it their responsibility to bring her up to speed on how "her" world has changed, which includes the presence of humanity. This could be the basis of an entire campaign, with the Fated either serving Titania loyally or seeking a way to direct her significant power against their enemies and away from their allies. Of course, others will only care about finding a way out from beneath her blood-soaked thumb....

No matter what happens, the frigid cold leaves with Rasputina, and the heat of the Badlands quickly returns to Nythera once her influence over the area wanes.





PEOPLE

Nythera takes place over a few locales with a variety of Fatemaster characters. The important ones have been noted here for ease of reference and are arranged in order of appearance.

As with any roleplaying game, it is the characters in the story, both player and Fatemaster, that make the story worth telling. Part of that is having encounters with memorable characters, and the Fatemaster is encouraged to provide characters in larger groups with their own unique appearances or behaviors.

For instance, when the Fated encounter the Orderlies at Smedley's Asylum, they rush in as a group. However, if they are described as being armed with different surgical instruments - perhaps one has a bone saw, while another is wielding a large syringe of some questionable substance - it adds that extra bit of flavor that can turn a good fight into a truly memorable one.

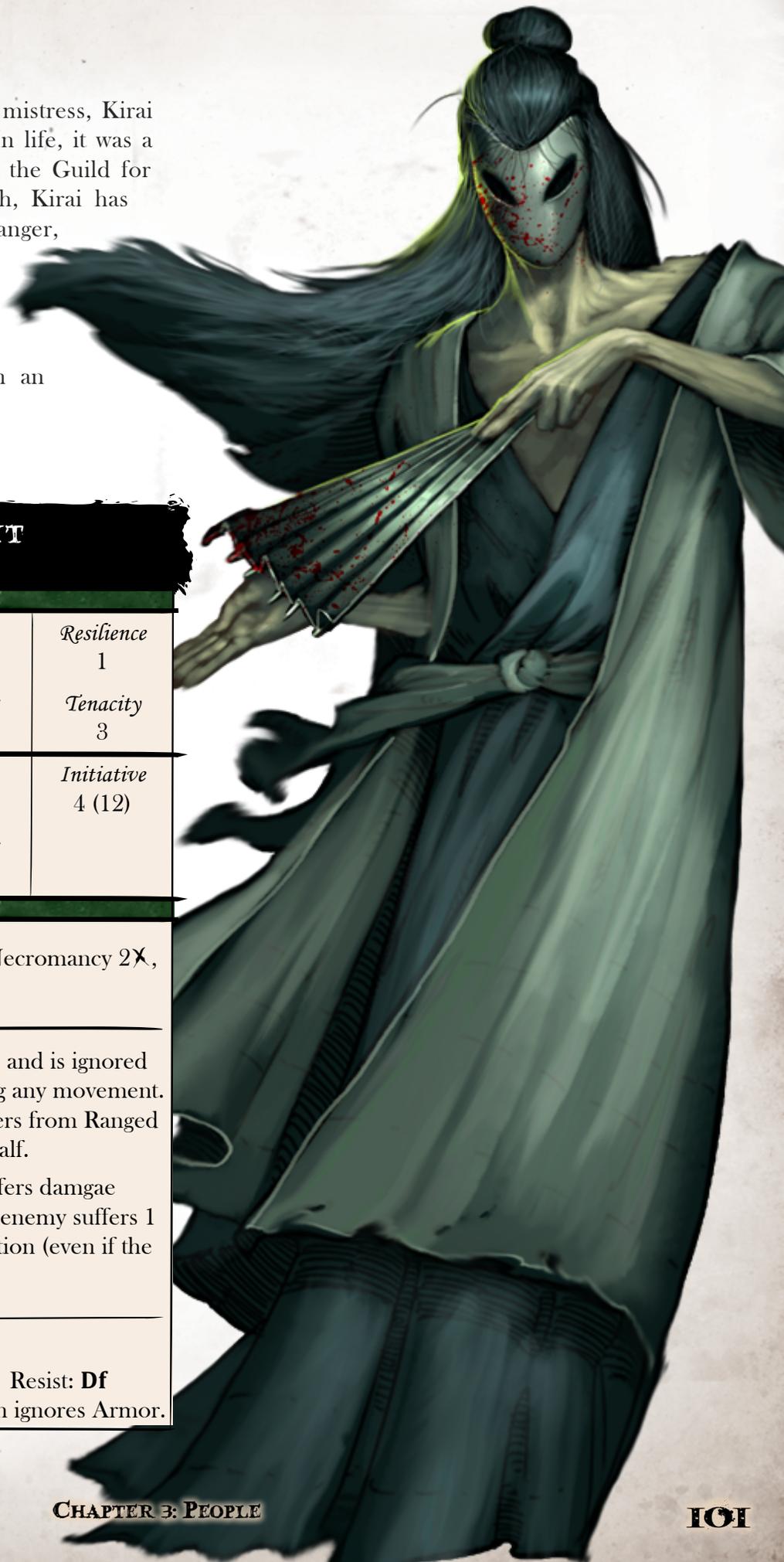
The following pages contain the stat blocks for the Fatemaster characters who are likely to appear in the adventure. They have been created with an eye toward ease of use by the Fatemaster and provide all the information needed to run the characters present in this adventure.



LAUNDRY SPIRIT

This spirit has been tasked by its mistress, Kirai Ankoku, to spy upon the Fated. In life, it was a convict who was gunned down by the Guild for trying to escape custody. In death, Kirai has harnessed the spirit's rage and anger, turning it into a silent assassin.

During their visit to Smedley's Asylum, the Laundry Spirit becomes revealed and attacks the Fated in an attempt to silence them.



LAUNDRY SPIRIT

Enforcer (8), Spirit

<i>Might</i> 1	<i>Grace</i> -1	<i>Speed</i> 2	<i>Resilience</i> 1
<i>Charm</i> -4	<i>Intellect</i> -1	<i>Cunning</i> 1	<i>Tenacity</i> 3
<i>Defense</i> 4 (12)	<i>Walk</i> 5	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 4 (12)
<i>Willpower</i> 5 (13)	<i>Charge</i> 6	<i>Wounds</i> 5	

Skills: Intimidate 2, Martial Arts 3, Necromancy 2✗, Notice 2.

Incorporeal: This character ignores, and is ignored by, other characters and terrain during any movement. Reduce all damage this character suffers from Ranged and Close Combat attack actions by half.

Vengeance: When this character suffers damage from an enemy character's attack, the enemy suffers 1 damage after resolving the current Action (even if the Action killed this character).

(1) Clawed Hands (Martial Arts)

AV: 5 (13) ===== Rg: 2 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/5 damage which ignores Armor.

ORDERLY

The orderlies at Smedley's Asylum are grim former patients who follow their orders without question or complaint. Much of this has to do with the portions of their brains that have been removed as part of their "treatment" and their complete loyalty to Dr. Grimwell. Whether it's kidnapping new patients or performing unethical experiments upon the unwilling, the orderlies never complain or raise their voice. In a way, they're the perfect employees, and Dr. Grimwell delights in seeing them flourish in their new positions of responsibility.



ORDERLY

Minion (5), Living

<i>Might</i> 2	<i>Grace</i> -1	<i>Speed</i> 3	<i>Resilience</i> 1
<i>Charm</i> -2	<i>Intellect</i> -3	<i>Cunning</i> 2	<i>Tenacity</i> 3
<i>Defense</i> 5 (10)	<i>Walk</i> 6	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 5 (10)
<i>Willpower</i> 5 (10)	<i>Charge</i> 7	<i>Wounds</i> 6	

Skills: Grappling 2, Doctor 2, Intimidate 2, Melee 3, Notice 2, Scrutiny 1, Stealth 1, Toughness 1.

Test Subject: At the end of this character's turn, it heals 1 damage.

(1) Surgical Instruments (Melee)

AV: 5 (10) ===== Rg: $\frac{1}{1}$ 1 ===== Resist: **Df**
Target suffers 2/3/5 damage.

✘ *Needle in the Neck:* When damaging, this attack deals no damage. Instead, the target must pass a TN 12 Unconsciousness Challenge.

(1) Hold Still (Grappling)

AV: 5 (10) ===== Rg: $\frac{1}{1}$ 1 ===== Resist: **Df**
Target gains the following Condition: "**Strapped Down:** This character cannot move and can take no Actions other than the (1) Use Skill Action to make a TN 10 Athletics Challenge. On a success, end this Condition."

FIRE GAMIN

Fire Gamin show all the worst tendencies of children. They are mischievous, curious, and cruel, with a sense of humor that could only be appreciated by a sociopath. Like all Gamin, Fire Gamin are artificial creatures, consisting of little more than elemental power bound to a physical body. Their form is unstable, and when they are destroyed, Fire Gamin explode in a ball of scorching flame.

In battle, Fire Gamin cackle gleefully as they torment their foes. Left to their own devices, they are incredibly destructive and need little incentive to run amok, setting everything around them on fire.



FIRE GAMIN

Minion (5), Construct, Gamin

Might 2	Grace 2	Speed 0	Resilience 1
Charm -3	Intellect -1	Cunning 1	Tenacity 2
Defense 4 (9)	Walk 4	Height 1	Initiative 3 (8)
Willpower 4 (9)	Charge 5	Wounds 5	

Skills: Evade 2, Notice 2, Pugilism 3, Thrown Weapons 2

Armor +1: Reduce all damage suffered by this character by +1, to a minimum of 1.

Demise: When this character is killed, all characters within (X)2 suffer 1 damage and gain **Burning +1**.

Saracenar's Plight: Reduce the damage this character suffers from the **Burning** Condition to 0.

(1) Claw (Pugilism)

AV: 5 (10) ===== Rg: /// 1 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 1/3/4 damage and gains the **Burning +1** Condition.

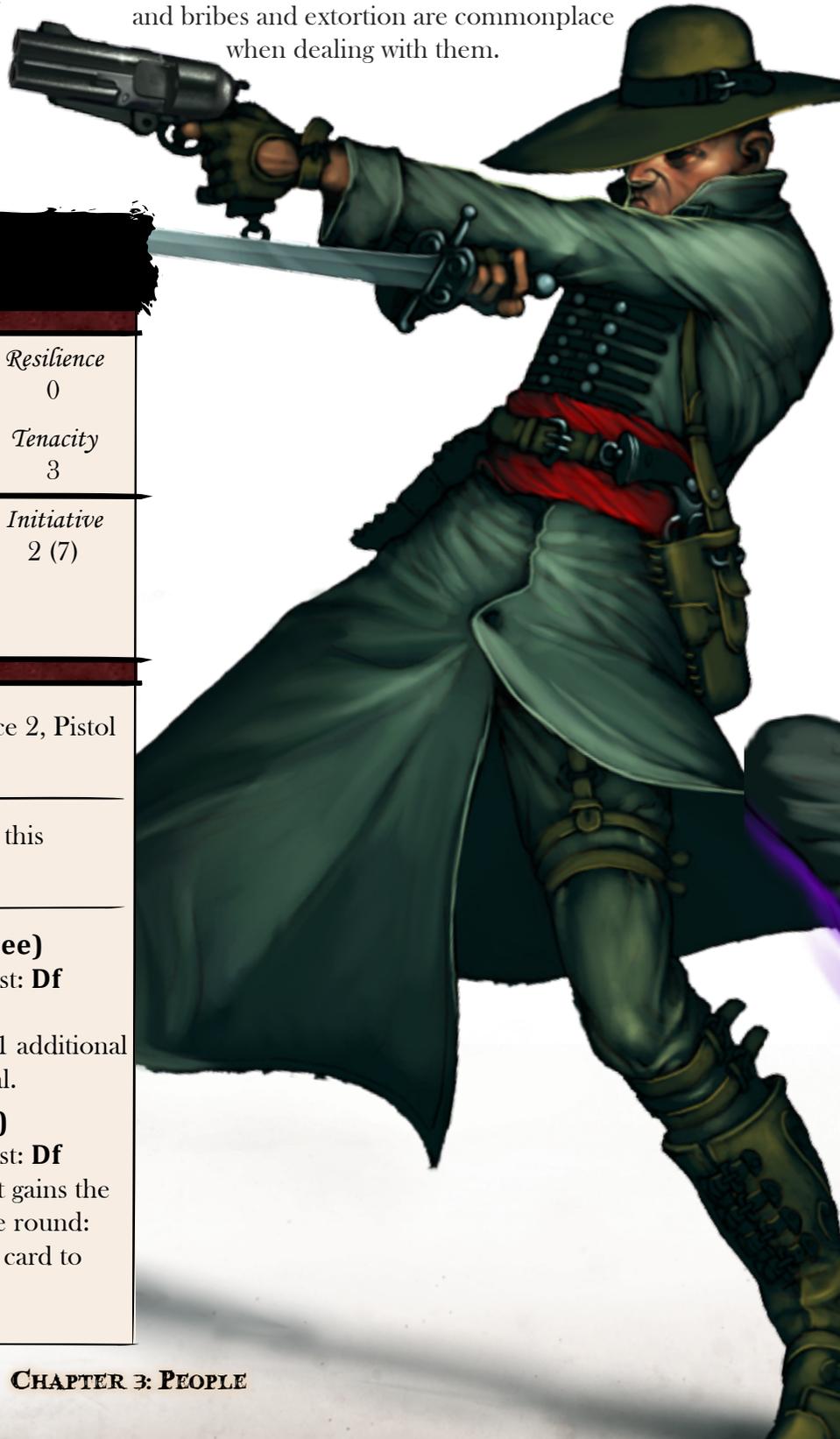
(1) Fire Blast (Thrown Weapons)

AV: 4 (9) ===== Rg: r 8 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 1/3/4 damage and gains the **Burning +1** Condition.

GUILD GUARD

Dressed in their distinctive red and gray uniforms, the members of the Guild Guard are well-armed and well-trained. While this makes them easy to spot in a crowd, the Guild believes that this conspicuousness serves a purpose and helps to deter crime, though some might argue that it just encourages criminals to practice their activities in areas the Guild doesn't care about (and thus, doesn't patrol). So long as the policed areas of Malifaux City remain free of crime, the Guild doesn't particularly care about the distinction.

Most members of the Guard travel the city in pairs or small groups, following their patrol routes, investigating trouble, or responding to alerts raised by other guards. They have been authorized to make arrests and bring criminals to justice, but if a few suspected criminals get shot along the way, then in the Guild's opinion, they shouldn't have been committing a crime in the first place. Needless to say, the Guild Guard tend to be somewhat corrupt, and bribes and extortion are commonplace when dealing with them.



GUILD GUARD

Minion (5), Living, Guardsman

Might 1	Grace 2	Speed 0	Resilience 0
Charm -1	Intellect -1	Cunning -1	Tenacity 3
Defense 4 (9)	Walk 4	Height 2	Initiative 2 (7)
Willpower 5 (10)	Charge 4	Wounds 5	

Skills: Athletics 1, Evade 2, Melee 3, Notice 2, Pistol 2, Toughness 1, Stealth 1

Armor +1: Reduce all damage suffered by this character by +1, to a minimum of 1.

(1) Refurbished Infantry Sword (Melee)

AV: 4 (9) ===== Rg: 1 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 1/3/4 damage.

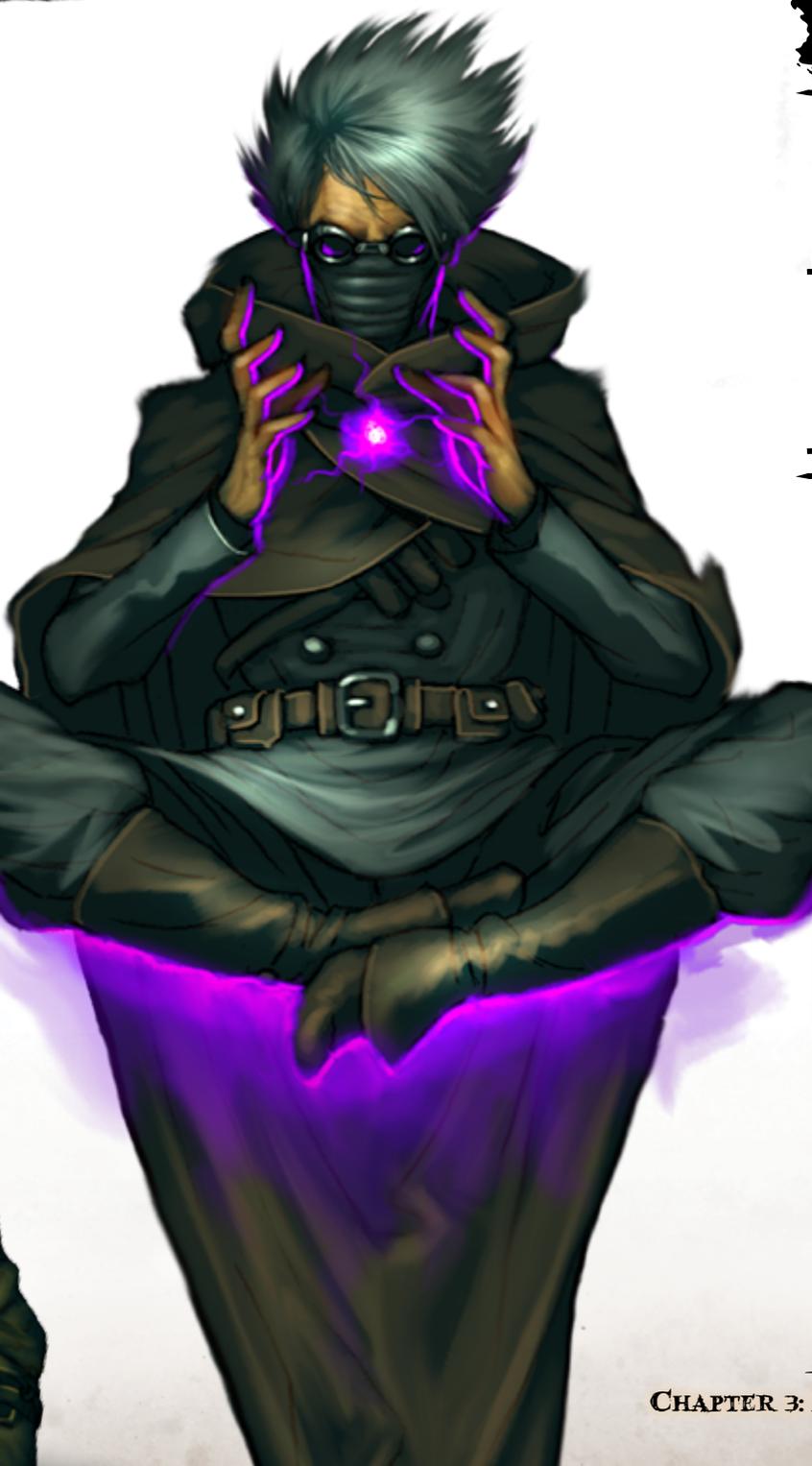
Critical Strike: When damaging, deal 1 additional damage for each in the final duel total.

(1) Refurbished Collier Army (Pistol)

AV: 4 (9) ===== Rg: 12 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 1/3/4 damage. The target gains the following Condition until the end of the round:
"Arrest: This character must discard a card to perform a movement action."

OXFORDIAN MAGE

The Oxford University of Metaphysical Studies occupies a strange gray area in the eyes of the Guild. While the school's teachings run contrary to the Guild's approved magical theory, known as the Thalarian Doctrine, it is still allowed to teach its students its own magical theories. This is primarily due to the fact that on Earth, the Oxfordian Method is difficult to put into practice, making graduates of the Oxfordian University little more than dilettantes.



In Malifaux, however, the Oxfordian Method is a potent magical art. The Guild heavily restricts passage of Oxfordian Mages into Malifaux for this reason, but the Arcanists make it a point to recruit the best and brightest of each graduating class. To entice these mages to their service, the Arcanists often pay off a recruit's (quite expensive) student loans in exchange for a few years of service, after which time the mage is usually in too deep to walk away from the crime syndicate.

OXFORDIAN MAGE

Enforcer (7), Living, Academic

<i>Might</i> -1	<i>Grace</i> 2	<i>Speed</i> 0	<i>Resilience</i> -1
<i>Charm</i> -2	<i>Intellect</i> 3	<i>Cunning</i> 1	<i>Tenacity</i> 2
<i>Defense</i> 5 (12)	<i>Walk</i> 4	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 2 (9)
<i>Willpower</i> 6 (13)	<i>Charge</i> 5	<i>Wounds</i> 5	

Skills: Centering 4, Counter-Spelling 3, Evade 3, Forgery 1, Intimidate 2, Notice 2, Prestidigitation 2, Scrutiny 2, Sorcery 3, Toughness 1.

Arcane Shield: If this character has not yet activated during this round of Dramatic Time, reduce all damage it suffers by 1, to a minimum of 0.

(1) Elemental Projectile (Sorcery + Intellect)

AV: 6 (13) Rg: 10 Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/4 damage.

Blaze: After damaging, the target gains **Burning +1**.

Electrocute: When damaging, this attack ignores Armor.

Freezing Wind: After damaging, the target gains **Slow**.

(0) Burning Strike (Sorcery + Intellect)

AV: 6 (13) Rg: 1 Resist: Df
Target suffers 1/2/3 damage and gains **Burning +1**.

Flaming Strike: When damaging, this attack deals 2/4/5 damage instead.

FRANCESCO MAREK

Francesco "the Murderer" Marek is an up-and-coming boxer at Ringside. His nickname comes from the fact that he was sent to Malifaux as a convict after murdering another man in a barfight back on Earth. When the Guild was moving him between trains at Malifaux Station, Marek broke free and knocked out three guards before they were able to put him down. Jacob Samuels saw the whole thing and snapped up Marek's contract, wagering that he'd be a prize boxer at Ringside. Marek is grateful for his second chance and faithfully serves Samuels as a boxer in the ring and an enforcer out of it.



FRANCESCO MAREK

Enforcer (7), Living

<i>Might</i> 2	<i>Grace</i> -1	<i>Speed</i> 2	<i>Resilience</i> 2
<i>Charm</i> -1	<i>Intellect</i> -1	<i>Cunning</i> -1	<i>Tenacity</i> 2
<i>Defense</i> 4 (11)	<i>Walk</i> 5	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 4 (11)
<i>Willpower</i> 4 (11)	<i>Charge</i> 6	<i>Wounds</i> 7	

Skills: Athletics 2, Barter 1, Carouse 1, Intimidate 2, Notice 2, Pugilism 3, Scrutiny 1, Toughness 2.

Resilient +1: Reduce all damage suffered by this character from Close Combat Attacks by +1, to a minimum of 1.

(1) Bare Knuckles (Pugilism)

AV: 5 (12) ===== Rg: $\frac{1}{1}$ ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/4 damage.

TKO: After damaging, the target must make a TN 10 Unconsciousness Challenge. The TN of this Challenge is increased by +1 if this attack dealt Moderate damage and by +2 if Severe.

CHRISTINA DALTON

Not everyone who works for Jacob Samuels is a thug. Christina Dalton ended up at Ringside after the owner of the restaurant she had been working in was killed and reanimated as a zombie by the serial killer Seamus. The restaurant closed and Christina found herself unemployed and without any references.

She came to Ringside hoping to get a job cleaning up after the matches, but Samuels took one look at her and put her to work as a promoter and announcer. Christina is still struggling to come to terms with the shady things that sometimes happen at Ringside (not to mention the very existence of the Pits), but she can't afford to lose this job over issues of morality.



CHRISTINA DALTON

Peon (4), Living

<i>Might</i> 1	<i>Grace</i> 1	<i>Speed</i> 1	<i>Resilience</i> 0
<i>Charm</i> 2	<i>Intellect</i> 1	<i>Cunning</i> 0	<i>Tenacity</i> -1
<i>Defense</i> 3 (7)	<i>Walk</i> 5	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 2 (6)
<i>Willpower</i> 2 (6)	<i>Charge</i> 5	<i>Wounds</i> 4	

Skills: Barter 2, Bewitch 3, Carouse 2, Evade 1, Forgery 2, Gambling 1, Leadership 2, Notice 1, Pistol 2, Scrutiny 2.

First to the Stage: After flipping for Initiative at the start of Dramatic Time, this character may take a Walk Action.

(1) LeBlanc Grapeshot (Pistol)

AV: 3 (7) ===== Rg: ⚡10 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/3 damage. Capacity 9, Reload 3.

(1) LeBlanc Grapeshot (Alternate Fire) (Pistol)

AV: 3 (7) ===== Rg: ⚡5 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 1/2☠/4☠ damage. Capacity 1. This second barrel is automatically reloaded when the LeBlanc Grapeshot weapon is reloaded.

JACOB SAMUELS

Jacob Samuels is the owner and proprietor of Ringside, the premier boxing and fighting establishment of Malifaux City. Ringside began as a simple bar and restaurant that featured a few rounds of fisticuffs, but as Ringside's popularity grew, so did its size and prestige, until the fights had eclipsed the restaurant and become an event unto themselves. Now Ringside is a fighting arena large enough to accommodate the excited crowds that are drawn to its regular matches, which are promoted as some of the best entertainment that can be found Breachside.

Samuels also manages the Pits, the dark and seedy underbelly of Ringside that features desperate men and women fighting for their lives against monsters, constructs, and each other. These matches aren't promoted in the same way as the bouts at Ringside, but they nevertheless manage to draw crowds wanting to see a more high-stakes form of entertainment.

Ringside gives Samuels plenty of political clout within the city, but it's the Pits that keeps his pocket book filled. His gamblers ensure that he gets a cut of each match, regardless of the winner, and he's not afraid to tell a boxer that it's time to take a fall when the betting becomes too one-sided. Those who refuse usually find themselves fighting as the next "star attraction" of the Pits, while those who take the fall can be assured that they'll have a place at Samuels' side once their careers have cooled.

Samuels' arrangement with Klassen is mutually beneficial, but he doesn't feel any particular loyalty to the man. Klassen isn't consistent with the quality of people he sends to the Pits, and more than once, Samuels has been forced to promote an accountant or housewife as a worthy fighter, much to the disappointment of the Pits' crowd.



JACOB SAMUELS

Enforcer (8), Living

<i>Might</i> 0	<i>Grace</i> 1	<i>Speed</i> 0	<i>Resilience</i> 0
<i>Charm</i> 3	<i>Intellect</i> 2	<i>Cunning</i> 2	<i>Tenacity</i> 2
<i>Defense</i> 4 (12)	<i>Walk</i> 4	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 3 (11)
<i>Willpower</i> 5 (13)	<i>Charge</i> 4	<i>Wounds</i> 6	

Skills: Appraise 1, Bureaucracy 1, Carouse 3, Centering 3, Evade 2, Gambling 2, Necromancy 2✘, Notice 3, Scrutiny 3, Sorcery 3♣, Toughness 2.

Df (☞) "Delegate": When damage is dealt to this character, a friendly character within 3 yards becomes the target of the attack instead.

(1) Sleep (Sorcery)

AV: 5♣ (13♣) ===== Rg: 3 ===== Resist: -
Living Target must make a TN 10 Unconsciousness Challenge. The TN of the Challenge is increased by +2 per Margin of Success.

(1) Forget (Necromancy + Charm)

AV: 5✘ (13✘) == Rg: ♣ 1 ===== Resist: Wp
Living target permanently forgets one short memory (max 5 minutes) of an event that occurred within the past minute.

FORMER BOXER

These people were boxers at Ringside until injuries or flagging public opinion forced them to step out of the ring. Samuels has kept them on as his personal enforcers, and now they provide security at Ringside, threaten gamblers with outstanding debts, and help to secure dangerous fighters that Samuels wants to throw into the Pits. Most sport broken noses and calloused fists, which only adds to their rough appearances and thuggish demeanors.



FORMER BOXER

Minion (6), Living, Mercenary

<i>Might</i> 2	<i>Grace</i> -1	<i>Speed</i> 0	<i>Resilience</i> 2
<i>Charm</i> -2	<i>Intellect</i> -1	<i>Cunning</i> -1	<i>Tenacity</i> 2
<i>Defense</i> 4 (10)	<i>Walk</i> 4	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 2 (8)
<i>Willpower</i> 4 (10)	<i>Charge</i> 4	<i>Wounds</i> 7	

Skills: Athletics 2, Barter 1, Evade 2, Intimidate 2, Notice 2, Pugilism 3, Scrutiny 1, Toughness 2.

Eat Lightning: When this character suffers damage, it gains the following Condition until the end of Dramatic Time: **"Adrenaline +1:** At the end of the round, this character heals exactly 1 damage and lowers this Condition's value by 1."

(1) Brass Knuckles (Pugilism)

AV: 5 (11) ===== Rg: /// 1 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/4 damage. This attack gains \blacklozenge to its damage flip.

☞ *Crap Thunder:* After damaging, this character may lower its **Adrenaline** Condition by 2 to take the Right Hook attack against the same target.

(2) Right Hook (Pugilism + Speed)

AV: 3 (9) ===== Rg: /// 1 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 4/5/6 damage. Increase the Acting Value of this attack by the value of this character's **Adrenaline** Condition.

PIT GUARD

These brutish men and women are employed to keep order in the Pits. They're jaded and have seen just about every trick in the book when it comes to trying to escape from a cell, and as a result, very few people ever make it out of the Pits while still drawing breath. The signature weapons of the Pit Guards are mancatchers, long iron rods with a rope snare at the end that can be used to trap the limbs of unruly prisoners so that they can be safely escorted to the fighting arenas.

PIT GUARD

Minion (5), Living

<i>Might</i> 3	<i>Grace</i> -1	<i>Speed</i> 0	<i>Resilience</i> 2
<i>Charm</i> -3	<i>Intellect</i> -2	<i>Cunning</i> 3	<i>Tenacity</i> 2
<i>Defense</i> 3 (8)	<i>Walk</i> 4	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 3 (8)
<i>Willpower</i> 4 (9)	<i>Charge</i> 4	<i>Wounds</i> 6	

Skills: Evade 1, Heavy Melee 2, Intimidate 2, Labor 2, Notice 3, Pugilism 1, Scrutiny 4, Toughness 1.

Combat Reading: When making disengaging strikes, this character adds half its Scrutiny Skill (+2) to its Acting Value.

(1) Mancatcher (Heavy Melee)

AV: 5 (10) ---- Rg: /// 3 ----- Resist: **Df**
 Target suffers 1/2/4 damage. If this attack inflicts Severe damage, the target gains the **Useless Limb** Condition until the start of this character's next turn (affecting a limb of this character's choice).
 ✕ *Pin in Place:* After damaging, the target must discard a card or become **Paralyzed**.

(1) Grab and Headbutt (Pugilism)

AV: 4 (9) ---- Rg: /// 1 ----- Resist: **Df**
 Target suffers 1/2/3 damage.
 ♣ *Broken Nose:* After damaging, the target is **Dazed** until all damage is healed.

PIT WARDEN

The Guild primarily uses Wardens to patrol the cell blocks of its prison alongside the Guild Guard. They have no need for sleep, never take bribes from inmates, and never question whether the prisoners under its care are being treated humanely. If they weren't so expensive to create, they'd probably be considered the perfect guardsman.

Wardens are sometimes brought out of the prison for special missions, especially those that involve capturing prisoners that are loose within the city. The Guild believes that Wardens serve as a public deterrent to crime: Behave yourself out *here*, their presence seems to say, and you'll never meet us in *there*.

Jacob Samuels acquired this Warden from one of his Guild contacts. Part of its logic engine had been damaged and it was due to be decommissioned and torn apart for scrap, but Samuels swooped in and purchased it for a song.

The Pit Warden, as it's come to be called, may not be as effective as the Wardens employed by the Guild, but it's had far more combat experience and has started to add unexpected flourishes to its attacks to impress the crowd. Samuels isn't sure how it learned to show off, but he's not complaining.

PIT WARDEN

Enforcer (7), Construct, Guardsman

<i>Might</i> 2	<i>Grace</i> -1	<i>Speed</i> -1	<i>Resilience</i> 1
<i>Charm</i> -5	<i>Intellect</i> -5	<i>Cunning</i> -5	<i>Tenacity</i> -5
<i>Defense</i> 4 (11)	<i>Walk</i> 4	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 0 (7)
<i>Willpower</i> 4 (11)	<i>Charge</i> 4	<i>Wounds</i> 7	

Skills: Centering 2, Evade 2, Notice 1, Pneumatic 3, Toughness 2.

Armor +1: Reduce all damage suffered by this character by +1, to a minimum of 1.

Df (📖) Grinding Halt: This character immediately gains an additional Armor +2 for the duration of this Action.

(1) Mechanical Fist (Pneumatic)

AV: 5 (12) ===== Rg: 🌀 2 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/4 damage.

🌀 *Critical Strike:* When damaging, deal 1 additional damage for each 🌀 in the final duel total.

(1) Restraint Claw (Pneumatic)

AV: 5 (12) ===== Rg: 🌀 10 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 1/2/3 damage.





WASTREL

Wastrels are people who have been given every privilege from birth and have subsequently squandered them. They often consider themselves above the law, relying upon their family's wealth and good name to keep them out of any real trouble. Lucas McCabe has gathered a cadre of these ruthless men and women around himself to form a (very unofficial) group of Guild agents with questionable loyalty and ethics.

WASTREL

Minion (5), Living, Black Sheep

<i>Might</i> 1	<i>Grace</i> 2	<i>Speed</i> 2	<i>Resilience</i> 0
<i>Charm</i> 2	<i>Intellect</i> 2	<i>Cunning</i> 1	<i>Tenacity</i> 1
<i>Defense</i> 4 (9)	<i>Walk</i> 4	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 3 (8)
<i>Willpower</i> 5 (10)	<i>Charge</i> 5	<i>Wounds</i> 5	

Skills: Art 1, Carouse 3, Centering 3, Forgery 1, Gambling 2, Lockpicking 1, Melee 3, Notice 1, Pick Pocket 1, Pistol 2, Scrutiny 1, Toughness 1.

Swagger: At the end of this character's turn, it gains the **Defensive +1** Condition if it declared only Walk Actions during its turn.

The Old Ultraviolence: This character deals +1 damage against characters who are prone or under the effects of one or more Conditions.

(1) Gang Weapons (Melee)

AV: 4 (9) ===== Rg: ∞ 1 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 1/2/3 damage.

♣ "And Then He Just Strolled Away...": After resolving, push this character up to 3 yards in any direction.

(1) B&D Pocket Revolver (Pistol)

AV: 4 (9) ===== Rg: ∞ 6 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/3 damage. Capacity 4, Reload 2.

♣ "A Fiver Says I Can Do It Again": After damaging, this character gains the **Focused +1** Condition.

HOWARD KLASSEN

Howard Klassen serves the Guild in an extremely poorly defined manner. It's unclear whether or not he's actually on the Guild payroll, but he's certainly making money off the arrangement through his connection of smugglers, informants, and other "below the table" associates. Unbeknownst to the Guild, he's also working for the Ten Thunders.

HOWARD KLASSEN

Enforcer (8), Living, Black Sheep

<i>Might</i> 1	<i>Grace</i> 2	<i>Speed</i> 1	<i>Resilience</i> 1
<i>Charm</i> 2	<i>Intellect</i> 2	<i>Cunning</i> 3	<i>Tenacity</i> 2
<i>Defense</i> 5 (13)	<i>Walk</i> 4	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 3 (11)
<i>Willpower</i> 5 (13)	<i>Charge</i> 5	<i>Wounds</i> 7	

Skills: Carouse 3, Centering 3, Deceive 3, Evade 3, Forgery 2, Gambling 3, Lockpicking 1, Heavy Melee 2, Notice 2, Pick Pocket 2, Pistol 3, Scrutiny 3, Toughness 2.

The Old Ultraviolence: This character deals +1 damage against characters who are prone or under the effects of one or more Conditions.

(1) The Ol' 10 lb Pick (Heavy Melee)

AV: 3 (11) ==== Rg: /// 2 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 1/3/5 damage.

☞ *Knock Upside the Head:* After damaging, the target immediately take the Drop Prone Action.

(1) B&D Gatling Derringer (Pistol)

AV: 5 (13) ==== Rg: ♣ 6 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/3 damage. Capacity 9, Reload 2.
This weapon may fire a burst of 3 bullets as a single action to gain either + ♣ to Moderate and Severe damage or ♣ to the attack and damage flip.

(0) Insightful Insult (Scrutiny)

AV: 5 (13) ==== Rg: 6 yards ===== Resist: Wp
Target discards a Twist Card.





GERVAS DOHMAN

Gervas Dohman is Klassen's partner in crime, though he mostly leaves the scheming in Klassen's hands. He serves as the voice of reason and moderation, and Klassen's learned to listen to his concerns when he brings them up (and to keep other things hidden). As with Klassen, Dohman also serves the Ten Thunders, but they do not yet have their hooks in him, so they mostly go through Klassen when they need "special favors" from the pair.

GERVAS DOHMAN

Enforcer (7), Living, Black Sheep

<i>Might</i> 2	<i>Grace</i> 1	<i>Speed</i> -1	<i>Resilience</i> 1
<i>Charm</i> 2	<i>Intellect</i> 2	<i>Cunning</i> 1	<i>Tenacity</i> 2
<i>Defense</i> 4 (11)	<i>Walk</i> 4	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 1 (8)
<i>Willpower</i> 4 (11)	<i>Charge</i> 4	<i>Wounds</i> 6	

Skills: Athletics 2, Carouse 1, Centering 2, Convince 2, Deceive 1, Evade 2, Gambling 1, Melee 2, Notice 2, Scrutiny 2, Shotgun 3, Toughness 1.

Calm and Collected: This character adds +1 to the value of any **Focused** Condition he possesses.

The Old Ultraviolence: This character deals +1 damage against characters who are prone or under the effects of one or more Conditions.

(1) Club (Melee)

AV: 4 (11) ===== Rg: /// 2 ===== Resist: **Df**
Target suffers 2/2/4 damage. If this deals Severe damage, the target suffers a Weak Critical Effect.

(1) Sawed-Off Shotgun (Shotgun)

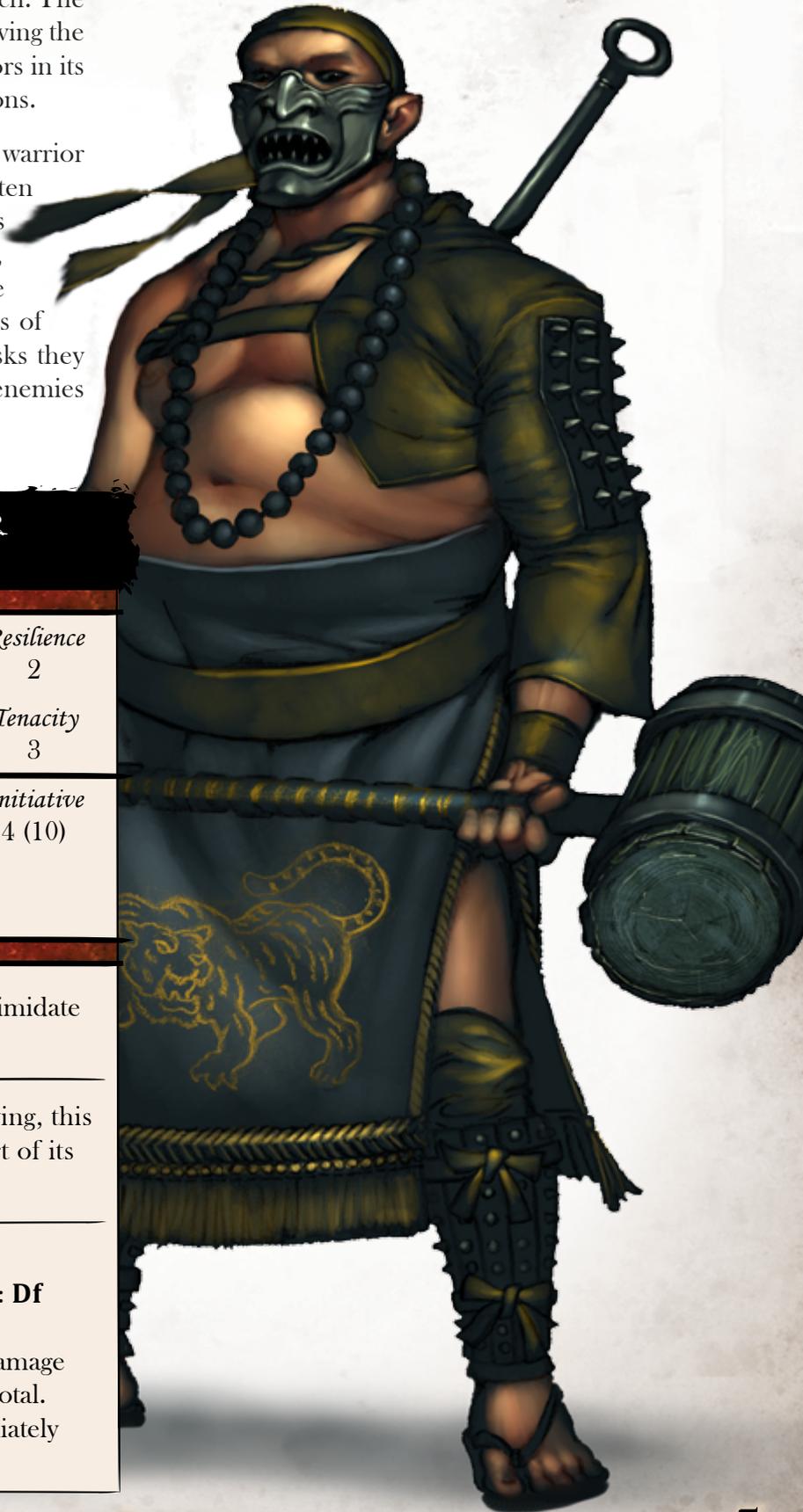
AV: 4 (11) ===== Rg: r 6 ===== Resist: **Df**
Target suffers 2/3 ☠ /4 ☠☠ damage. Capacity 2, Reload 1.

☠ *Blown Back:* After damaging, the target is pushed 2 yards away from this character and immediately take the Drop Prone Action.

TEN THUNDER BROTHER

The Ten Thunders prefer to act with subtlety and guile, manipulating events from the shadows, but some situations require a more direct approach. The Ten Thunder Brothers fulfill this role by serving the organization as enforcers, guards, and warriors in its battles with the city's various gangs and factions.

Each Ten Thunder Brother is a hardened warrior who has mastered one or more of the ten sacred weapons of Wxu-Shu. These weapons include massive hammers, sickle-like kama, twisting chain-knives, and other, more esoteric instruments of death. The identities of the Brothers are kept secret by the oni masks they wear, which not only strike fear into their enemies but also protect their identity.



TEN THUNDER BROTHER

Minion (6), Living

<i>Might</i> 2	<i>Grace</i> 0	<i>Speed</i> 2	<i>Resilience</i> 2
<i>Charm</i> -2	<i>Intellect</i> -1	<i>Cunning</i> -1	<i>Tenacity</i> 3
<i>Defense</i> 5 (11)	<i>Walk</i> 5	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 4 (10)
<i>Willpower</i> 5 (11)	<i>Charge</i> 6	<i>Wounds</i> 6	

Skills: Athletics 2, Evade 3, Gambling 1, Intimidate 3, Melee 3, Notice 2, Toughness 1, Stealth 2

Df (📖) Bend as the Willow: After resolving, this character gains **Defensive +1** until the start of its next turn.

(1) Ten Weapons of Wxu-Shu (Melee)

AV: 5 (11) ----- Rg: 🌀 2 ----- Resist: Df
Target suffers 1/3/5 damage.

🌀 **Crushing Strike:** When damaging, the damage flip gains 📈 for each 🌀 in the final duel total.

🦶 **Trip:** After damaging, the target immediately takes the Drop Prone Action.

LAWRENCE KRAMER

Lawrence came to Malifaux hoping to set up a medical practice, but his love of gambling soon left him broke and in debt to the Ten Thunders. Rather than break his legs and throw him into the river, the Ten Thunders put him to work as a torturer and doctor so that he could repay his debt to them. In the years since, Kramer's come to enjoy his new job, but his employers still consider him to be expendable.



LAWRENCE KRAMER

Enforcer (7), Living

<i>Might</i> -1	<i>Grace</i> 2	<i>Speed</i> 0	<i>Resilience</i> -1
<i>Charm</i> -2	<i>Intellect</i> 3	<i>Cunning</i> 1	<i>Tenacity</i> 2
<i>Defense</i> 5 (12)	<i>Walk</i> 4	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 2 (9)
<i>Willpower</i> 4 (11)	<i>Charge</i> 4	<i>Wounds</i> 5	

Skills: Convince 1, Doctor 2, Evade 3, Gambling 1, History 1, Intimidate 3, Notice 2, Scrutiny 3, Sorcery 3[☞], Toughness 1.

Cynic: This character gains **+** on any duel made to resist deception.

Hard to Wound +1: Damage flips against this character suffer **☐**.

(1) Torture Implements (Melee)

AV: 4 (11) ===== Rg: **///** 1 ===== Resist: **Df**

Target suffers 1/3/5 damage.

✖ *Hobble:* After succeeding, the target gains the following Condition for the remainder of Dramatic Time: **Hobbled:** This character may only declare one Movement General Action per turn."

(1) Unmaking (Sorcery + Tenacity)

AV: 5^{☞☞} (12^{☞☞}) ===== Rg: **☞** 10 == Resist: **Df**

Target suffers 2/3/4 damage that ignores **Hard to Wound**.

☞☞ *Blessings of the Unmade:* After damaging a friendly character, it may take a (1) **///** Action.

SACHIKO

Sachiko is an oiran, which is a more polite way of saying "prostitute." On the surface, she appears to be of little threat, but the Ten Thunders have taught her the importance of information and how to coax secrets out of those who share her company.

As a trusted but relatively low-tier agent of the Ten Thunders, Sachiko has been serving as Misaki Katanaka's personal assistant in recent months, and much of her time is now spent tending to social engagements that are too minor to require Misaki's full attention, but which still require a skilled agent.



SACHIKO

Minion (5), Living, Showgirl

<i>Might</i> -1	<i>Grace</i> 2	<i>Speed</i> 3	<i>Resilience</i> 0
<i>Charm</i> 2	<i>Intellect</i> -1	<i>Cunning</i> 1	<i>Tenacity</i> 2
<i>Defense</i> 5 (10)	<i>Walk</i> 6	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 5 (10)
<i>Willpower</i> 6 (11)	<i>Charge</i> 7	<i>Wounds</i> 6	

Skills: Acrobatics 2, Art 2, Bewitch 2, Centering 4, Melee 3, Notice 2, Scrutiny 2, Toughness 2.

Disguised: This character may not be the target of the Charge Action.

Flick of the Wrist: This character uses Grace instead of Might to calculate her Close Combat Acting Value.

Reading the Stone: The first time that this character takes the Defensive Stance Action during its turn, she gains an additional **Defensive +1** Condition.

(1) Concealed Weapons (Melee)

AV: 5 (10) ===== Rg: /// 1 ===== Resist: **Df**
 Target suffers 1/2/4 damage and gains **Poison +1**.
 ♣ *Flutter:* After succeeding, if this attack did not deal Severe damage, take this Action again against the same target.

OTTO PLETCHER

As a member of the Freikorps, Otto Pletcher is a gun-for-hire, and one of the more elite mercenaries within the city of Malifaux. He's been stuck manning an aethervox ever since the bulk of the Freikorps left the city to travel to Nythera. That suits Otto just fine, as staying in the city allows him to visit the Honeypot Casino and indulge in his vices.

OTTO PLETCHER

Enforcer (7), Living, Mercenary, Freikorps

<i>Might</i> 2	<i>Grace</i> 2	<i>Speed</i> 2	<i>Resilience</i> 1
<i>Charm</i> 2	<i>Intellect</i> 0	<i>Cunning</i> 0	<i>Tenacity</i> 3
<i>Defense</i> 5 (12)	<i>Walk</i> 5	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 4 (11)
<i>Willpower</i> 5 (12)	<i>Charge</i> 6	<i>Wounds</i> 7	

Skills: Athletics 1, Bewitch 2, Carouse 2, Evade 3, Melee 3, Notice 2, Pistol 3, Scrutiny 1, Toughness 2, Track 3, Wilderness 2.

Brilliance +4: This character has the following Condition: "**Brilliance +4:** Each day, this character must succeed on a TN 10 Centering Challenge or be compelled to seek out a source of Brilliance."

Freikorps Suit: This character has Armor +1 and may ignore damage from (X) and ☠ effects.

Unimpeded: This character ignores penalties for terrain while taking Movement Actions.

(1) Hunting Knife (Melee)

AV: 5 (12) ===== Rg: ☞ 1 ===== Resist: Df

Target suffers 1/3/4 damage.

☞ *Critical Strike:* When damaging, deal 1 additional damage for each ☞ in the final duel total.

(1) Clockwork Pistol (Pistol)

AV: 5 (12) ===== Rg: ⚡ 12 ===== Resist: Df

Target suffers 1/2/5 damage. Capacity 6, Reload 2.

☞ *Reposition:* After succeeding, this character may move 3 yards.



ILLUMINATED

Brilliance will bring a person great joy, but it's more than just a drug. It's a substance formed by the magic of the Hungering Darkness, and once a human tastes it - often as a result of drinking tainted water or kissing one of the girls at the Honeypot Casino - the victim begins shivering with pleasure as their mind expands far beyond normal human limits.

With repeated use, however, the victim eventually becomes dependent upon Brilliance, even as it saturates his body. In times of stress, the Brilliance will actually warp a heavy user's body to protect them, transforming soft flesh into chitinous, glowing blue claws and carapaces.

The Brilliance Condition is described in greater detail in *Under Quarantine*, but does not play a significant role in this adventure.



THE ILLUMINATED

Minion (6), Living, Darkened

Might 3	Grace 2	Speed 2	Resilience 3
Charm -3	Intellect 0	Cunning 1	Tenacity 2
Defense 4 (10)	Walk 5	Height 2	Initiative 4 (10)
Willpower 6 (12)	Charge 6	Wounds 7	

Skills: Athletics 3, Centering 4, Carouse 2, Deceive 1, Gambling 1, Intimidate 3, Evade 3, Melee 3, Notice 2, Thrown Weapons 3, Toughness 1, Track 1.

Armor +1: Reduce all damage suffered by this character by +1, to a minimum of 1.

Brilliance +10: This character has the following Condition: "**Brilliance +10:** Each day, this character must succeed on a TN 12 Centering Challenge or be compelled to seek out a source of Brilliance."

Regeneration +1: This character heals 1 damage at the start of its turn during Dramatic Time.

Terrifying (Living) 10: Enemy Living characters must pass a TN 10 Horror Duel when they end a Walk Action within this character's engagement range or target this character with an Action.

(1) Hardened Brilliance (Melee)

AV: 6 (12) ===== Rg: \mathcal{H} 2 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/4/5 damage.

(1) Scintillating Cloud (Thrown Weapons)

AV: 5 (11) ===== Rg: \mathcal{H} 9 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/4/5 damage and gains the **Brilliance +1** Condition.

\mathcal{H} *Spreading Cloud:* After damaging, all characters within (X)2 of the target gain the **Brilliance +1** Condition.

(0) Brillshaper

This character may discard a card to heal 2 damage.

NIGHT TERROR

Night Terrors are the remnants of a race of native Malifaux inhabitants who died out during the fall of Old Malifaux. Rather than pass peacefully into the next life, however, they were trapped between life and death, cursed to an existence in the darkness and shadows.

Decades of spectral existence have left the Night Terrors cloaked in a supernatural darkness that follows them as they hunt. They no longer feed on flesh and blood, but rather upon the very life force of their victims.

For the most part, Night Terrors avoid the more occupied regions of Malifaux and make their lairs in more desolate areas. They are particularly fond of large, hollow knotwood trees, and travelers in the Northern Hills and Badlands are advised to avoid such growths whenever possible.

NIGHT TERROR

Minion (5), Spirit, Beast

<i>Might</i> 0	<i>Grace</i> 4	<i>Speed</i> 3	<i>Resilience</i> 0
<i>Charm</i> -4	<i>Intellect</i> -2	<i>Cunning</i> 3	<i>Tenacity</i> 1
<i>Defense</i> 5 (10)	<i>Walk</i> 6	<i>Height</i> 1	<i>Initiative</i> 5 (10)
<i>Willpower</i> 3 (8)	<i>Charge</i> 7	<i>Wounds</i> 4	

Skills: Martial Arts 2, Notice 2, Track 2, Wilderness 1.

Attracted to Noise: After another character resolves an Action that caused a significant amount of noise (such as an attack with a firearm, shouted commands, or similar, as determined by the Fatemaster), this character may push 2 yards towards that character.

Cloaked in Darkness: The area within 6 of this character is considered to be Ht 3 Soft Cover.

Flight: This character is immune to falling damage and may ignore any terrain or other characters while moving.

Nightstalker: At sunrise, this character is removed from reality. At sunset, this character returns to reality in the same location as if no time had passed.

(1) Clawed Wings (Martial Arts)

AV: 5 (10) ===== Rg: $\frac{1}{3}$ 1 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 1/2/3 damage.

Rake the Eyes: After damaging, the target gains the **Blind** Condition until she receives First Aid from the Doctor Skill (TN 9).

(0) Flock Together

All friendly Night Terrors within 6 may push up to 6 yards towards this character.

DUST DEVIL

When the wind blows across the Badlands, it sometimes swirls up into small, relatively long-lived whirlwinds of dirt and stone shards. Unlike the dust devils of Earth, however, the dust devils of Malifaux are imbued with a crude form of sentience and no small amount of sadism. These malignant whirlwinds hunt the Badlands for as long as their brief existence allows, venting their anger on anyone or anything unlucky enough to cross their path.

DUST DEVIL

Enforcer (7)

<i>Might</i> 3	<i>Grace</i> 1	<i>Speed</i> 3	<i>Resilience</i> -1
<i>Charm</i> -3	<i>Intellect</i> -2	<i>Cunning</i> 3	<i>Tenacity</i> 2
<i>Defense</i> 5 (12)	<i>Walk</i> 6	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 3 (10)
<i>Willpower</i> 4 (11)	<i>Charge</i> 7	<i>Wounds</i> 6	

Skills: Evade 3✘, Martial Arts 3✘, Toughness 2.

Choking Wind: This character may not be the target of the Charge Action.

Hard to Wound +2: Damage flips against this character suffer ☐☐.

Df/Wp (✘) Dissolution: After suffering damage from a ☘ attack Action, the attacking character suffers 1 damage after resolving the current Action.

(1) Choking Wind (Martial Arts)

AV: 6✘ (13✘) ===== Rg: ☘ 3 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/5 damage.

✘ *Choke:* After damaging, the target gains the **Suffocating** Condition until this character is killed.

(1) Whirlwind (Martial Arts)

All characters in (✘)6 must succeed at a TN 13 Walk Duel or suffer 1 damage and be pushed into physical contact with this character.

MATURE NEPHILIM

Few things in Malifaux can compare to the terror instilled by seeing a Mature Nephilim fly over the horizon. These hulking creatures stand nearly twice as tall and wide as a human, even before one takes their impressive wingspan into account. The average Mature Nephilim is more intelligent than a typical human, and this keen mind - in combination with its swift speed and prodigious strength - makes a Mature Nephilim a frightening opponent for anyone to face.

Even though they are fully mature, Nephilim never actually stop growing. Upon killing a living creature, they often stop to drink the blood that remains, which fuels their further growth. This growth is less severe than that of their younger kin, but should a Mature Nephilim live long enough, there is no telling how large it might eventually get.

MATURE NEPHILIM

Enforcer (8), Living, Nephilim

<i>Might</i> 4	<i>Grace</i> 3	<i>Speed</i> 3	<i>Resilience</i> 4
<i>Charm</i> -2	<i>Intellect</i> 3	<i>Cunning</i> 2	<i>Tenacity</i> 3
<i>Defense</i> 5 (13)	<i>Walk</i> 6	<i>Height</i> 3	<i>Initiative</i> 6 (14)
<i>Willpower</i> 5 (13)	<i>Charge</i> 7	<i>Wounds</i> 10	

Skills: Athletics 3, Evade 3, Melee 2, Navigation 2, Notice 2, Pugilism 3☞, Toughness 4, Track 2, Wilderness 3.

Armor +1: Reduce all damage suffered by this character by +1, to a minimum of 1.

Black Blood: All characters without Black Blood within 1 yard suffer 1 damage when this character suffers damage.

Flight: This character is immune to falling damage and may ignore any terrain or other characters while moving.

Terrifying (Living) 12: Enemy Living characters must pass a TN 12 Horror Duel when they end their turn within this character's engagement range or target this character with a harmful action.

(1) Monstrous Talons (Melee)

AV: 6☞ (14☞) ===== Rg: ☞☞☞ 2 === Resist: Df
Target suffers 4/5/6 damage.

☞☞☞ *Charge Through:* After succeeding against an enemy character, instead of dealing damage, push the target 4 yards away from this character, then this character takes a Charge Action against a different target if it is not engaged.

☞☞☞ *Rip in Half:* After killing the target, all enemy characters within (X)6 must immediately perform a TN 12 Horror Duel.

YOUNG NEPHILIM

While not yet fully grown, Young Nephilim are still dangerous opponents. They grow from Terror Tots after consuming enough blood, and the growth process is both sudden and violent, lasting only a few seconds and causing quite a bit of pain to the Nephilim in question.

The growth leaves the new Young Nephilim with a ravenous appetite that never quite leaves them, and this makes them dangerous and reckless in equal measure. Young Nephilim will sometimes hunt in packs of two or three, only parting once one of them has consumed enough blood to grow into a Mature Nephilim.



YOUNG NEPHILIM

Minion (6), Living, Nephilim

<i>Might</i> 3	<i>Grace</i> 2	<i>Speed</i> 2	<i>Resilience</i> 2
<i>Charm</i> -3	<i>Intellect</i> -1	<i>Cunning</i> 2	<i>Tenacity</i> 3
<i>Defense</i> 5 (11)	<i>Walk</i> 5	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 4 (10)
<i>Willpower</i> 5 (11)	<i>Charge</i> 6	<i>Wounds</i> 7	

Skills: Acrobatics 1, Athletics 2, Evade 3, Melee 2, Navigation 1, Notice 2, Pugilism 3☞, Toughness 2, Track 2, Wilderness 2.

Black Blood: All characters without Black Blood within 1 yard suffer 1 damage when this character suffers damage.

Flight: This character is immune to falling damage and may ignore any terrain or other characters when moving.

Thirst For Blood: This character receives the Fast Condition when a Living character within 3 yards is killed by another friendly character.

Mature: If this character kills a Living non-Nephilim character of Enforcer, Henchman, or Master rank, or a character with the Fated Characteristic, with a ☞ attack, it may feast upon the character's remains to become a Mature Nephilim. All damage and Conditions on this character are removed.

(1) Talons (Pugilism)

AV: 6☞ (12☞) ===== Rg: ☞ 1 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/4/5 damage.

☞ *Blood Frenzy:* After damaging, take this Action again against the same target.

☞ *Toss Away:* After damaging, push the target up to 4 yards in any direction.

☞ *Feed the Brood:* After killing the target, push the target's corpse up to 4 yards in any direction. If the corpse ends within the engagement range of a friendly Terror Tot, that Terror Tot may count as having killed the target for the purposes of its Grow ability.

TERROR TOT

Terror Tots are the youngest of the Nephilim race, but their small size belies their ruthlessness. Though they cannot yet fly, they do not lack in mobility. Terror Tots use their horse-like hooves to dig into the ground and sprint at their enemies, often while wielding small arm-blades or other lightweight cutting instruments.

TERROR TOT

Minion (5), Living, Nephilim

<i>Might</i> 1	<i>Grace</i> 3	<i>Speed</i> 4	<i>Resilience</i> 0
<i>Charm</i> -2	<i>Intellect</i> 0	<i>Cunning</i> 2	<i>Tenacity</i> 3
<i>Defense</i> 6 (11)	<i>Walk</i> 6	<i>Height</i> 1	<i>Initiative</i> 5 (10)
<i>Willpower</i> 5 (10)	<i>Charge</i> 8	<i>Wounds</i> 4	

Skills: Acrobatics 1, Athletics 2, Melee 3, Notice 1, Stealth 2, Track 1, Wilderness 1.

Black Blood: All characters without Black Blood within 1 yard suffer 1 damage when this character suffers damage.

Pounce: When an enemy character ends a push or move within this character's engagement range that is not part of a Walk or Charge Action, this character may immediately take a (1) AP melee attack against the character without spending AP.

Grow: If this character kills a Living non-Nephilim character with a /// attack, it may feast upon the character's remains to become a Young Nephilim. All damage and Conditions on this character are removed.

(1) Cutting Implements (Melee)

AV: 4 (9) ===== Rg: /// 1 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 1/2/4 damage.

(0) Sprint (Athletics)

This character may discard a card to take a Walk Action.

Upon killing their prey, Terror Tots will feed upon the corpse, quickly consuming what blood has yet to spill onto the earth in a messy feeding frenzy of snapping teeth and squealing joy. If a Terror Tot is able to consume enough blood, its body undergoes a sudden and violent transformation into a ravenous Young Nephilim.

The Black Blood of Terror Tots (and, indeed, all Nephilim) is extremely dangerous to other creatures. Just a few drops of Black Blood spilled on living flesh can quickly eat through to the bone, and it's acidic enough to damage constructs and other inanimate objects as well. This makes fighting Nephilim at close range incredibly perilous, a fact that no doubt contributes to the Ortega family's fondness for firearms.

Worse yet, repeated exposure to Black Blood has a warping effect upon humans. Those who come into frequent contact with Black Blood gradually begin to develop mutations reminiscent of the Nephilim, until finally, one day, the unfortunate human has become a Nephilim in all but name.

This Blood Sickness is described in greater detail in Under Quarantine, but does not play a significant part in this adventure.



ICE GAMIN

Ice Gamin are magical constructs formed from snow and ice. Though small, their bodies are tough and can take a surprising amount of punishment before they are eventually destroyed. As with most gamin, this magic is unstable, and when wounded unto death, an Ice Gamin explodes in a shower of ice shards that injures anyone standing too close.

Ice Gamin are capable of freezing the air around them, and they make use of this ability to hurl blasts of supernatural cold at their enemies. These blasts are cold enough to freeze and harden any exposed flesh they come into contact with, as are the Gamin's claws. Even when attacking unliving opponents, such as pneumatic constructs, this extreme cold can cause gears and pistons to seize up and cease functioning at the most inopportune times.

ICE GAMIN

Minion (5), Construct, Gamin

<i>Might</i> 2	<i>Grace</i> 2	<i>Speed</i> 0	<i>Resilience</i> 1
<i>Charm</i> -3	<i>Intellect</i> -1	<i>Cunning</i> 1	<i>Tenacity</i> 2
<i>Defense</i> 4 (9)	<i>Walk</i> 4	<i>Height</i> 1	<i>Initiative</i> 3 (8)
<i>Willpower</i> 4 (9)	<i>Charge</i> 5	<i>Wounds</i> 5	

Skills: Evade 2, Notice 2, Pugilism 3, Thrown Weapons 2.

Armor +1: Reduce all damage suffered by this character by +1, to a minimum of 1.

Shattering Demise: When this character is killed, all characters within (X)2 suffer 2 damage.

Frozen Heart: This character is immune to Horror Duels and the **Paralyzed** Condition.

(1) Icy Claw (Pugilism)

AV: 5 (10) ===== Rg:  1 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 1/3/4 damage.

 *Chill:* After damaging, the target gains the **Slow** Condition.

(1) Ice Blast (Thrown Weapons)

AV: 4 (9) ===== Rg:  8 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 1/3/4 damage.

 *Chill:* After damaging, the target gains the **Slow** Condition.



ICE GOLEM

Ice Golems are essentially larger, more powerful Ice Gamin, though that statement belies just how difficult controlling a golem can be. They're both willful and stubborn, and have been known to pound unworthy masters into the ground with a single swing of their bulky, frozen fists.

For those with the strength of will to command them, however, Ice Golems are fearsome warriors. Prodigious strength and the endurance of a glacier enable them to go toe-to-toe with the worst that Malifaux has to offer, but in the unlikely event that they are defeated in combat, their icy bodies explode in a deadly flurry of razor-sharp ice shards.

ICE GOLEM

Enforcer (8), Construct, Gamin

<i>Might</i> 5	<i>Grace</i> 0	<i>Speed</i> 0	<i>Resilience</i> 3
<i>Charm</i> -3	<i>Intellect</i> -1	<i>Cunning</i> 1	<i>Tenacity</i> 2
<i>Defense</i> 2 (10)	<i>Walk</i> 4	<i>Height</i> 3	<i>Initiative</i> 2 (10)
<i>Willpower</i> 5 (13)	<i>Charge</i> 6	<i>Wounds</i> 10	

Skills: Notice 2, Pugilism 3☉, Toughness 4.

Armor +2: Reduce all damage suffered by this character by +2, to a minimum of 1.

Shattering Demise: When this character is killed, all characters within (X)2 suffer 3 damage.

Frozen Heart: This character is immune to Horror Duels and the **Paralyzed** Condition.

Melee Expert: This character gains 1 additional AP on its turn, but this AP may only be used to make a Close Combat attack.

(1) Icy Talon (Pugilism)

AV: 8☉ (16☉) === Rg: ☼ 2 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 3/4/6 damage.

☉ *Toss:* After succeeding, push the target up to 10 yards in any direction.

☰ *Chill:* After damaging, the target gains the **Slow** Condition.

(3) Smash (Pugilism)

AV: 8☉ (16☉) === Rg: ☼ 1 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 9/10/12 damage.

☰ *Chill:* After damaging, the target gains the **Slow** Condition.

DECEMBER CULTIST

These men and women are cannibals who worship the Tyrant entity known as December. They typically keep to their frozen home in the Ten Peaks, but significant threats - such as Titania being freed from her Nythera prison - can sometimes draw them down from their secluded mountain and into conflict with the more civilized people of Malifaux.

In battle, the cultists of December are able to bring the full might of winter to bear against their enemies. While they have less raw power than Rasputina, they use what they do have with great skill and cunning. Living opponents who are not frozen solid by the cultists' ice magic are dragged back to their camp, butchered, and consumed by the cultists who survived the battle.

DECEMBER CULTIST

Minion (6), Living

<i>Might</i> 1	<i>Grace</i> 2	<i>Speed</i> 1	<i>Resilience</i> 1
<i>Charm</i> -2	<i>Intellect</i> 2	<i>Cunning</i> 0	<i>Tenacity</i> 1
<i>Defense</i> 3 (9)	<i>Walk</i> 5	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 3 (9)
<i>Willpower</i> 4 (10)	<i>Charge</i> 5	<i>Wounds</i> 6	

Skills: Acrobatics 1, Athletics 1, Centering 2, Homesteading 1, Navigation 2, Notice 2, Sorcery 3[⚡], Stealth 2, Toughness 1, Track 2, Wilderness 3.

Frozen Heart: This character is immune to Horror Duels and the **Paralyzed** Condition.

Df (⚡) Frozen Statue: After resolving against an enemy attack, this character gains **Armor +2** and cannot declare Walk or Charge Actions until the start of her next turn.

(1) Frozen Touch (Sorcery + Intellect)

AV: 5[⚡] (11[⚡]) === Rg: [⚡] 2 === Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/4 damage and gains **Slow**. If the target is already **Slow**, it instead gains **Paralyzed**.

(1) Freeze (Sorcery + Intellect)

AV: 5[⚡] (11[⚡]) === Rg: 10 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 1/2[⚡]/3[⚡] damage and gains **Slow**. If the target is already **Slow**, it instead gains **Paralyzed**.

[⚡][⚡] *Frozen Shards:* After damaging, take this Action again. This Action may not declare Triggers.



WIND GAMIN

Wind Gamin are mischievous entities that enjoy causing trouble to anyone who crosses their path. They sometimes appear as dust devils or small whirlwinds, but in their true form they are small, feathered creatures about the size of a child. Like their frozen cousins, Wind Gamin are surprisingly durable for their size, though where Ice Gamin are slow and ponderous, Wind Gamin are nimble and capable of effortless flight.



While they are not created as often as Ice Gamin, Wind Gamin are still used by the Cult of December to provide aerial reconnaissance. In their mountain home, this allows the Cult to keep informed of anyone approaching their Temple. The Wind Gamin that Rasputina summoned upon arriving at Nythera serve much the same function, and they spend much of their time riding the winds around the Nythera temple, keeping an eye out for intruders.

WIND GAMIN

Minion (5), Construct, Gamin

<i>Might</i> 2	<i>Grace</i> 2	<i>Speed</i> 0	<i>Resilience</i> 1
<i>Charm</i> -3	<i>Intellect</i> -1	<i>Cunning</i> 1	<i>Tenacity</i> 2
<i>Defense</i> 4 (9)	<i>Walk</i> 4	<i>Height</i> 1	<i>Initiative</i> 3 (8)
<i>Willpower</i> 4 (9)	<i>Charge</i> 5	<i>Wounds</i> 5	

Skills: Evade 2, Notice 2, Pugilism 3, Thrown Weapons 2.

Armor +1: Reduce all damage suffered by this character by +1, to a minimum of 1.

Blustery Demise: When this character is killed, all characters within (X)2 suffer 1 damage and are pushed 2 yards away.

Flight: This character is immune to falling damage and may ignore any terrain or other characters while moving.

(1) Windy Claw (Pugilism)

AV: 5 (10) ===== Rg: /// 1 ===== Resist: **Df**
Target suffers 1/3/4 damage.

☞ *Strong Wind:* After succeeding, the target is pushed 2 yards away from this character.

(1) Wind Blast (Thrown Weapons)

AV: 4 (9) ===== Rg: ↖ 8 ===== Resist: **Df**
Target suffers 1/3/4 damage.

☞ *Strong Wind:* After succeeding, the target is pushed 2 yards away from this character.

RASPUTINA

The woman known as the Winter Witch came to Malifaux as a convict, but in the decade since, she has risen to a position of leadership among the Cult of December. Rasputina is the chosen host of the Tyrant known as December, and while the two of them have frequently come into conflict with each other (primarily over just who should be in control of Rasputina's body), they are united in their desire to see Nythera remain closed.



RASPUTINA, THE WINTER WITCH

Master (13), Living, Tyrant

<i>Might</i> 2	<i>Grace</i> 4	<i>Speed</i> -2	<i>Resilience</i> 6
<i>Charm</i> -2	<i>Intellect</i> 2	<i>Cunning</i> 4	<i>Tenacity</i> 4
<i>Defense</i> 4 (17)	<i>Walk</i> 3	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 2 (15)
<i>Willpower</i> 6 (19)	<i>Charge</i> 3	<i>Wounds</i> 12	

Skills: Athletics 3, Counter-Spell 4, Enchanting 4, Evade 2, Intimidate 4, Leadership 3, Notice 4, Scrutiny 3, Sorcery 5, Stealth 2, Toughness 5, Track 3, Wilderness 4.

Counterspell: When this character is targeted by a Magical action, the attacker loses any Suit associated with their Magical Skill.

Frozen Heart: This character is immune to Horror Duels and the **Paralyzed** Condition.

Ice Mirror: When casting a Spell or Manifested Power, this character may draw Line of Sight and range from a friendly Construct with Frozen Heart within 10 yards and Line of Sight of her. Spells and Manifested Powers cast this way can't declare Triggers.

Swift: This character generates an additional General AP on her turn.

(1) December's Curse (Sorcery + Intellect)

AV: 7 (20) ===== Rg: 12 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/4/5 damage and becomes **Slow**. If the target is already **Slow**, it instead becomes **Paralyzed**.

Overpower: After damaging, immediately take this Action again against the same target. This Action may not declare Triggers.

(1) December's Touch (Sorcery)

Target character within 12 yards gains **Armor +2**, **Frozen Heart**, and counts as a Construct for the purposes of Ice Mirror for 5 minutes.

(0) Shatter

AV: 7 (20) ===== Rg: 10 ===== Resist: Df
Target **Paralyzed** character suffers a Severe Critical Effect.

TITANIA

The Bloody Queen of the Fae is an ancient entity who ruled over the Neverborn during their war with the Tyrants. A fierce and manipulative woman, she entered into an agreement with the sinister Grave Spirit, betraying her people in order to tap into its power and shatter the physical forms of the Tyrants.

Before the Grave Spirit could be brought entirely into the world, however, Titania's subjects realized what sort of dark entity their Queen had courted for her newfound power and turned on her, trapping her away beneath Nythera for what they had hoped would be an eternity.

Over the centuries of her imprisonment, Nythera drew upon the Queen's connection with the natural world to keep her imprisoned, gradually leeching the life from the surrounding Badlands in order to keep the lock of her prison intact. Whether or not these wards remain intact at the end of the adventure - and if the Bloody Queen is released upon an unsuspecting Malifaux - rests in the hands of the Fated.

TITANIA, THE BLOODY QUEEN

Master (13), Undead, Fae

<i>Might</i> 3	<i>Grace</i> 3	<i>Speed</i> 2	<i>Resilience</i> 6
<i>Charm</i> 5	<i>Intellect</i> 2	<i>Cunning</i> 5	<i>Tenacity</i> 5
<i>Defense</i> 5 (18)	<i>Walk</i> 5	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 6 (19)
<i>Willpower</i> 7 (20)	<i>Charge</i> 6	<i>Wounds</i> 12	

Skills: Acrobatics 3, Bewitch 3, Bureaucracy 2, Convince 2, Enchanting 2♣, Evade 3, Intimidate 4, Leadership 5, Necromancy 4, Notice 4, Pugilism 3♣, Scrutiny 4, Toughness 5.

Flight: This character is immune to falling damage and may ignore any terrain or other characters while moving.

Impossible to Wound: Damage flips against this character suffer \square and may not be cheated.

Swift: This character generates an additional General AP on her turn.

The Thirsty Roots: Enemy characters beginning their turns within $\odot 6$ of this character may choose to gain the **Slow** Condition. Those that do not suffer 2 damage, then this character heals 1 damage.

(1) Bloody Claws (Pugilism)

AV: 6♣ (19♣) =---- Rg: \lll 2 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/4 damage.

♣ "Behold My Glory": After succeeding, the target gains the following Condition until the end of its next turn: **In Awe:** If this character declares an Action which targets a character other than Titania, the Action immediately fails unless this character discards a card."

✕ "Kneel Before Me": After succeeding, the target immediately takes the Drop Prone Action.

(3) A New Harvest (Acrobatics)

This character may make a (1) \lll Attack against every enemy character within a number of yards equal to her Charge Aspect. Then, this character may move to any location within that range.





FATED CHARACTERS

The following fourteen characters were specially designed to be used with this adventure as part of the Nythera Event. Each Faction had two characters that could be played during the adventure, and as the Nythera Event progressed, the characters advanced in predetermined ways.

We've included these characters here so that your group can make use of them in whatever fashion you'd like. Whether it's using these characters to play through the adventure like the first groups that braved the dangers of Nythera or just using them as colorful NPCs in other adventures, they're yours to do with as you see fit.

All of the spellcasters presented here have been fitted with Control Collars. If you are playing through the adventure with unique characters, consider having the Guild fit each known or suspected spellcaster with a Control Collar to heighten tension during the adventure.

Control Collars channel the aetheric fluctuations created by their wearer, essentially allowing an attuned Guild officer to control the wearer's magic. They're also equipped with explosive devices, ensuring that troublesome spellcasters who rebel against the Guild's control can be dealt with in a rather spectacular fashion.

Characters who wish to remove their Control Collars need access to either a set of lockpicks or similar fine tools (such as surgical instruments) to pick the lock. Removing a Control Collar requires a TN 12  Lockpicking Challenge. On a success, the collar comes free, but if the character achieves a Margin of Failure the collar detonates, killing its wearer and dealing 3 damage to everyone within 1 yard. If a character attempts to pick the lock on a Control Collar they are wearing, the odd angle imposes a  on the duel.

THE CAST AT A GLANCE

Below is a quick look at each of the pregenerated characters available for this adventure.

CATALINA ORTEGA (GUILD)

Catalina is a tough Gunfighter hailing from the legendary Ortega family. She has a fast draw and focuses on shooting things with her custom pistol.

LUKAS ZIMMERMANN (GUILD)

Lukas is an Overseer who focuses on supporting his allies in combat and during Ongoing Challenges. He focuses on speaking with others.

MARISA DEL OLMO (RESURRECTIONISTS)

Marisa is a Drudge, an exceedingly tough melee combatant who has been operated upon by the Iron Zombies. She's exceedingly difficult to take down.

JAMES BECKETT (RESURRECTIONISTS)

James is a Graverobber, a spellcaster who has focused upon Necromancy magic. He is capable of exiling his enemies to a nether realm or assaulting them with angry spirits.

DR. ALEXEI SOKOLOFF (ARCANISTS)

Alexei is an Augmented, a person who has had significant portions of themselves replaced by machinery. He is both a man of learning and a melee combatant, and his abilities straddle both worlds.

ROXANA VASILESCU (ARCANISTS)

Roxana is a Dabbler, a spellcaster who has focused upon Sorcery magic. She is capable of burning her enemies with fire, teleporting them around the battlefield, or just lifting their wallets when they're not looking.

CLOVER BRIGGS (NEVERBORN)

Clover is a Performer, a social powerhouse who draws attention no matter where she goes. In Mr. Cooper's Dark Carnival, she performed as an acrobat and stage magician.

HIROTO SUZUKI (NEVERBORN)

Hiroto is a Wastrel, a jack-of-all-trades with a penchant for gambling. Hiroto's quite the lucky man, and he can stack fate in his favor.

CLARENCE MCCOY (OUTCASTS)

Clarence is a Criminal, and his abilities straddle the line between skill use and ranged combatant. With his paired pistols, he's deadly at range.

SELINA VOKLOV (OUTCASTS)

Selina is a Mercenary, a gun-for-hire with a customized rifle and the inclination to use it. She's also skilled in Systema, a martial arts form hailing from her native Russia.

HARLEY HUSTON (GREMLINS)

Harley is a Pioneer, a skill-focused person who is most comfortable living on the frontier. His hunting skills are superb, and more than one large pig has fallen due to his poison-tipped arrows.

BUTAKO (GREMLINS)

Butako is a Primal, a person who has turned their back on civilization to embrace the wonders of the natural world. As a girl raised by wild pigs, Butako is a fearsome melee combatant who can also speak with animals.

QIANG FAN (TEN THUNDERS)

Qiang is an Infiltrator, a person who makes their living pretending to be someone they are not. Deception and stealth are at the heart of everything Qiang does, but he's also a decent melee combatant.

VINH PHAM (TEN THUNDERS)

Vinh is a Tinkerer, a spellcaster who has focused upon Enchanting magic. She's capable of healing and protecting her allies, and her shotgun allows her to contribute to combat in a more active role.

CATALINA ORTEGA

Catalina traveled to Malifaux a few years after the Breach opened and joined her family at their fortified Latigo ranch. She had dreamed of riding alongside her cousins on their regular Neverborn hunting trips, but to her frustration, she instead ended up fixing fences and repairing barns.

As she grew up, Catalina developed a surly personality and foul mouth that alienated her from the rest of her family. More and more often, Catalina ended up escorting shipments of ammunition, livestock, and dry goods from the nearby Edge Point station to Latigo. It wasn't particularly exciting work, and the only amusement she found in her assignment was the rare opportunity to take a few pot shots at the curious Gremlins who got too close to her cart.

A few weeks ago, though, Catalina finally got what she thought was her big break. One of the men hanging around the Edge Point station was acting strangely, and she was certain that he was a Neverborn shapeshifter - a Doppelganger, as her family called them. She put four bullets in his chest and two in his head, but rather than thank her for putting down a dangerous predator, the Guild Guard at the station tackled her to the ground and put her in chains.

She's had some time to think about what she did from the inside of her jail cell, but Catalina is still certain that the man she killed was a Neverborn agent. Maybe he wasn't a Doppelganger exactly, but he was still up to something strange at the train station.

Gear: Custom Weshorn & Smitte #3 (custom grip), 30 bullets, Duster (Protected ☞), 5 scrip.

Destiny: "When your shadow is cast upon the wall, she will sit alone amongst your misery; as you begin, so shall you end. The end's a miracle that you dare to dream, and he will watch you drink the venom."

Twist Deck: Rams (1, 5, 9, 13), Tomes (4, 8, 12), Crows (3, 7, 11), Masks (2, 6, 10)

CATALINA ORTEGA

Fated, Living, Gunfighter

<i>Might</i> 0	<i>Grace</i> 2	<i>Speed</i> 1	<i>Resilience</i> -1
<i>Charm</i> -3	<i>Intellect</i> 0	<i>Cunning</i> 1	<i>Tenacity</i> 2
<i>Defense</i> 4	<i>Walk</i> 5	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> +3
<i>Willpower</i> 5	<i>Charge</i> 5	<i>Wounds</i> 6	

Skills: Athletics 1, Carouse 2, Centering 3, Evade 2, Homesteading 1, Intimidate 1, Notice 2, Pistol 3, Pugilism 2, Toughness 2.

Finger on the Trigger (Gunfighter): When Catalina fails a Ranged Combat duel during Dramatic Time (such as Pistol), she may draw a card from her Twist Deck.

Quick Draw: Catalina treats the (1) Ready Weapon Action as if it were a (0) Action and gains the following Trigger on all Challenge Flips (including Initiative):

☞ *Quick Draw:* After resolving, take a Ready Weapon Action.

Languages: English, Spanish.

(1) Custom Weshorn & Smitte #3 (Pistol)

AV: +5 ===== Rg: ⚔ 12 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/4 damage. Capacity 6, Reload 1.
This weapon gains ☞ to attack flips.

📖 *Armor-Piercing Bullets:* When damaging, this attack ignores Armor.

(1) Brawlin' (Pugilism)

AV: +3 ===== Rg: 🥊 1 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/3 damage.

(0) Shrug Off

This character may discard a Twist Card to remove one Condition on herself.

LUKAS ZIMMERMANN

Lukas Zimmermann hails from Berlin, where his parents were struggling artists. He and his brothers spent most of their nights hungry and cold, especially in the winter months. This left him with a healthy appreciation for the value of money, and once he was old enough, he tried to get a job in a factory to help support his family. The first few months he spent on the assembly line floor were exhausting, but when Lukas got promoted to a supervisor position, he realized that he had finally found his niche.

After years of exemplary service and high production yields, the Guild approached Lukas and offered him a position in Malifaux. He accepted the moment they told him what his salary would be, and soon he had passed through the Breach and was working for the Guild as a mining supervisor in Contract Town #26. The Union men were initially surly towards him, but eventually they realized that he had come from humble beginnings like themselves and warmed up to him.

Unfortunately, Lukas' greed got the best of him. He thought it would be easy; who would miss a single Soulstone from all the carts of the stuff they were shipping back to Malifaux City? Unfortunately, the Guild did notice, and Zimmermann was arrested and thrown into prison. He's had plenty of time to regret his decision, and not a day passes that he doesn't curse his foolishness in ruining a perfectly good job by trying to steal from the Guild.

Gear: US&E Flintlock, 10 bullets, Posh Hat (♣ to Bewitch duels), 2 scrip.

Destiny: "When you sup upon your pride and dance with cadavers, the last man will speak the lies of your glory, but there are dragons here. You will hold the myth of life in your hands, and you will let your blood run cold."

Twist Deck: Rams (1, 5, 9, 13), Masks (4, 8, 12), Tomes (3, 7, 11), Crows (2, 6, 10)

LUKAS ZIMMERMANN

Fated, Living, Overseer

<i>Might</i> -2	<i>Grace</i> 1	<i>Speed</i> 2	<i>Resilience</i> 0
<i>Charm</i> 1	<i>Intellect</i> -1	<i>Cunning</i> 3	<i>Tenacity</i> -2
<i>Defense</i> 4	<i>Walk</i> 5	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> +4
<i>Willpower</i> 3	<i>Charge</i> 6	<i>Wounds</i> 4	

Skills: Art 1, Barter 3, Bewitch 1, Convince 2, Labor 1, Leadership 3, Notice 2, Pick Pocket 3, Pistol 1, Stealth 1.

Oversight (Overseer): When Lukas fails a Social duel (such as Barter, Bewitch, or Convince), he may draw a card from his Twist Deck.

Concerted Effort: Before friendly characters make Initiative Flips, they may choose not to flip and instead use Lukas' Initiative value instead.

Plain Spoken: Lukas doesn't try to muddy his conversation with flowering language. He gains ♣ to Social Duels made during Dramatic Time.

Leadership Trigger: Lukas gains the following Trigger on his Leadership Duels:

♣ *Let's Do This!:* After succeeding during an Ongoing Challenge, every other character participating in the Ongoing Challenge gains a ♣ to any Challenge Duels they make during the next Duration.

Languages: English, German.

(1) US&E Flintlock (Pistol)

AV: +2 ===== Rg: ⚡8 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/3 damage. Capacity 1, Reload 2.

(1) Embarrassing Attempt (Martial Arts)

AV: +2 ===== Rg: ♣ 1 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 0/1/2 damage.

MARISA DEL OLMO

Marisa's life has been terrible ever since she arrived in Malifaux. Back home in Argentina, she lived a relatively pleasant life on her family's farm; she was always working, but it was good work, the kind that she could be proud of after a long day under the sun. Then one day, she saw one of the worn Guild flyers promising settlers ownership of a tract of land in Malifaux. The idea of setting out on her own was a bit scary, but Marisa's family was supportive and even helped her raise enough money to afford passage on a ship to North America.

It was all quite an adventure, and Marisa was hopeful for her future. She arrived on the last train to Malifaux City and decided to look around the town a bit before her meeting with the Guild surveyors in the morning. Unfortunately, Marisa was attacked by ghoulish creatures that combined the worst parts of a machine and a rotting corpse and dragged her down into the sewers. The nightmarish creatures strapped her to a rusted gurney and began to operate on her, cutting away her flesh and replacing it with mechanical augmentations.

A Guild patrol arrived in time to save Marisa's life, but their gunfire did little to lessen her misery. Her once-attractive body was now a roadmap of crude stiches and pneumatic pieces, and she could feel something whirring steadily inside her chest where she once had a heartbeat. The patrol brought her back to the Guild Enclave for medical treatment, but the doctor took one look at her, decided that the patrol had unwittingly rescued "one of the Iron Zombies," and signed Marisa's execution order.

Gear: Pneumatic Arm (Mercenary Brace with Dissector), 2 scrip.

Destiny: "When the seventh gifts despair, she strikes with daggers battered from your shield, for the coldest court will bow to their king. The end will find him in the garden, and the mage's knee bends before your river."

Twist Deck: Crows (1, 5, 9, 13), Rams (4, 8, 12), Masks (3, 7, 11), Tomes (2, 6, 10)

MARISA DEL OLMO

Fated, Living, Drudge

<i>Might</i> 2	<i>Grace</i> 0	<i>Speed</i> -3	<i>Resilience</i> 3
<i>Charm</i> -1	<i>Intellect</i> -1	<i>Cunning</i> -1	<i>Tenacity</i> 3
<i>Defense</i> 3	<i>Walk</i> 3	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> -2
<i>Willpower</i> 5	<i>Charge</i> 3	<i>Wounds</i> 9	

Skills: Athletics 2, Evade 2, Farming 1, Intimidate 1, Labor 2, Melee 3, Notice 1, Pneumatic 2, Scrutiny 1, Stealth 1, Toughness 3.

Hard Days Night (Drudge): When Marisa fails a Training duel (such as Athletics, Evade, Labor, Notice, or Toughness), she may draw a card from her Twist Deck.

Armor +1: Reduce all damage suffered by this character by +1, to a minimum of 1.

Hard to Kill: Marisa may choose to ignore one Critical Effect per Dramatic Time.

Long Days: Marisa may discard a Twist Card to automatically pass any Unconsciousness Challenge. She gains the following Trigger on her Resilience and Tenacity Duels (but not Defense or Willpower Duels):

☞ *Recuperate:* After resolving, heal 1 damage.

Languages: English, Spanish.

(1) Retractable Dissector (Melee)

AV: +5 ===== Rg: \mathcal{M} 2 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/4 damage.

☞ *Bloody Mess:* After killing the target, draw a Twist Card and then discard a Twist Card.

JAMES BECKETT

James came to Malifaux from America, hoping to start up a new life for himself somewhere away from his troubled past. He took a job as a carpenter, but soon he started to hear voices. The voices reminded him about his wife, about coming home to find her in the arms of his brother, about the wood axe and what he did with it. Rather than make him feel guilty about what he had done, however, the voices comforted James, reassuring him that what he did had been the right choice... and suggesting that there were other people out there who deserved a few good whacks with an axe.

When the Guild finally caught James, he was midway through a murdering spree and had raised his victims from the dead as zombie servants. The undead managed to kill three Guild Guard before a Death Marshal finally shoved James into her coffin, at which point things got... weird. As he was trapped in the nothingness between dimensions, James heard a voice calling to him, one far different from the voices that had convinced him to go on a murdering spree. He was pulled free of the coffin before he could explore it further, but one word lingered in his mind: Nythera.

The Death Marshals tortured James for hours before realizing that he didn't have any accomplices or other connections with the Resurrectionists, at which point they slapped a Control Collar around his neck and tossed him into a cell to await his execution. They claimed that if he tried to escape, they could detonate the collar and blow his head off... and the device is bulky enough that James believes them.

Gear: Journal of Crazy Ramblings (Grimoire), Control Collar, Pocket Watch, 5 scrip.

Destiny: "When you open the dead man's eyes, the wondering hour will settle on your hearth, and the moon shines upon the forest but not your path. Worlds of marble turn flesh again, and you will kiss the crown."

Twist Deck: Tomes (1, 5, 9, 13), Crows (4, 8, 12), Rams (3, 7, 11), Masks (2, 6, 10)

JAMES BECKETT

Fated, Living, Graverobber

<i>Might</i> -1	<i>Grace</i> -1	<i>Speed</i> 3	<i>Resilience</i> -1
<i>Charm</i> 0	<i>Intellect</i> 0	<i>Cunning</i> -1	<i>Tenacity</i> 3
<i>Defense</i> 5	<i>Walk</i> 6	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> +5
<i>Willpower</i> 5	<i>Charge</i> 7	<i>Wounds</i> 4	

Skills: Counter-Spelling 3, Deceive 2, Leadership 2, Literacy 1, Necromancy 3, Notice 2, Scrutiny 2, Sorcery 2, Stealth 2.

Black Soul (Graverobber): When James fails a Magical duel during Dramatic Time, he may draw a card from his Twist Deck.

The Whisper (Magical Theory): James gains a \blacklozenge to Necromancy Duels but suffers \square on Intellect duels.

Book Smart: James has learned quite a bit from his books, but all that reading has dulled his reaction time. He gains a \blacklozenge to all non-Magical Intellect Challenges, but suffers a \square on Initiative Flips.

Morbid Thoughts: James' focus on death allows him to remove a \blackcross from the TN of any Spell he casts.

Languages: English, Algonquian.

*** Immuto (Increase Damage):** When casting Engulfed by Spirits, +2 TN to increase the damage to 2/3/4 or +4 TN to increase the damage to 3/4/5.

*** Immuto (Increase AP):** Before casting a spell during Dramatic Time, spend +1 AP to lower TN by -3.

(1) Engulfed by Spirits (Sorcery+Tenacity)

AV: +5 === Rg: 5 ==== TN: 9 \square === Resist: **Wp**
The target suffers 1/2/3 damage, ignoring Armor and Hard to Wound.

(1) Bury (Necromancy + Tenacity)

AV: +6 === Rg: 5 === TN: 10 === Resist: **Wp**
Target is removed from reality. It reappears in a safe spot within 1 yard of you at the end of the round.

DR. ALEXEI SOKOLOFF

Dr. Alexei Sokoloff was recruited by the Arcanists a little over five years ago. They had been interested in his research in pneumatic prosthetics, and after a visit from an Arcanist agent who made Dr. Sokoloff an offer he couldn't refuse, Alexei packed up his workshop and research notes and traveled to Malifaux. Despite the involuntary nature of Alexei's cooperation, the Arcanists granted him ready access to charged Soulstones and wounded miners in need of prosthetics, and soon his research had progressed into areas he had once thought purely theoretical.

Things took a bad turn a few months ago when Alexei was dismantling a new model of Guild prosthetic. The manufacturer had fitted the prosthetic with a small explosive device - likely to deter its owner from faulting on their prosthetic payments - and it exploded right in Alexei's face. His assistants were able to save his life, but Alexei hasn't been quite the same ever since.

Even after he had recovered from the surgery, Alexei found it difficult to concentrate on his work, and he sometimes found himself unknowingly speaking in French instead of English... which was surprising, as Alexei had not been able to speak French before his accident. He might have eventually adjusted to his new life, had the Guild not stormed his workshop, confiscated his research, and arrested him on charges of amalgamation: illegally grafting machines to flesh. Alexei showed them his steamfitting license and explained that he was not operating illegally, but the Guild didn't care; they had suspected that Alexei's work was funded by Arcanists, and they intended to punish him as severely as possible.

Gear: Pneumatic Arm (Integrated Brass Knuckles, Piston Driver), 10 scrip.

Destiny: "Once you cross the bloody threshold, she will sicken to the blessed touch, but love was left behind. He tightens the strings and tugs at the rivets, and you will forget yourself."

Twist Deck: Tomes (1, 5, 9, 13), Rams (4, 8, 12), Masks (3, 7, 11), Crows (2, 6, 10)

DR. ALEXEI SOKOLOFF

Fated, Living, Augmented

<i>Might</i> 2	<i>Grace</i> -2	<i>Speed</i> 0	<i>Resilience</i> 1
<i>Charm</i> 0	<i>Intellect</i> 2	<i>Cunning</i> -1	<i>Tenacity</i> 0
<i>Defense</i> 3	<i>Walk</i> 4	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> +1
<i>Willpower</i> 4	<i>Charge</i> 4	<i>Wounds</i> 6	

Skills: Artefacting 3, Convince 3, Doctor 2, Evade 1, Literacy 2, Notice 1, Pneumatic 2, Pugilism 3, Toughness 1.

End of the Line (Augmented): When Alexei fails a Might duel (such as Pneumatic or Pugilism), he may draw a card from his Twist Deck.

Armor +1: Reduce all damage suffered by this character by +1, to a minimum of 1.

Armor Training: Alexei's Defense is not reduced by his Armor.

Artefacting Trigger: Alexei gains the following Trigger on his Artefacting Duels:

✘ *Give It A Good Thwump:* After failing, immediately make another Artefacting Challenge against the same TN. If this Challenge is successful, your first failure is ignored.

More Machine Than Man (Brain Pan): Alexei is immune to Horror duels and has gained +1 Willpower.

Piston Driver: Once per Dramatic Time, Alexei may increase his Might to 5 for the duration of one Duel.

Languages: English, French, German, Russian.

(1) The Steel Fist of Innovation (Pugilism)

AV: +5 ===== Rg:  1 ===== Resist: **Df**
Target suffers 2/3/4 damage. This attack gains  to the damage flip.

 *Electrocute:* When damaging, this attack ignores Armor.

ROXANA VASILESCU

Roxana's father was a gambler, and she grew up next to the card tables, watching her father happily lose at poker as her mother worked the crowd, lifting wallets and pocket watches with nimble fingers. When she was old enough, Roxana followed suit, and the three of them traveled all across Romania, always one step ahead of those they had robbed.

That came to an end when Roxana foolishly attempted to steal from a Guild official. He caught her and dragged her out of the tavern as her parents begged and protested for mercy, which only earned them each a bullet from the official's gun. Roxana was tossed into jail, and two days later, she was loaded up into a train with other convicts and shipped to Malifaux.

As Roxana's train was stopped in Malifaux Station, it was attacked by Arcanists intent upon rescuing some of their brethren. Sensing her raw ability, the Arcanists brought Roxana with them and taught her how to use magic. Alone and in need of something to believe in, Roxana embraced her new identity as an Arcanist (and her hatred of the Guild) with open arms.

Unfortunately, Roxana's passion outpaced her common sense, and when the Guild recaptured her a few weeks later, she openly admitted to being an Arcanist. She was fitted with an explosive Control Collar and sentenced to death within the hour.

Gear: Burnt Gold Coin (Grimoire), Control Collar.

Destiny: "When the seventh gifts despair, she will sit alone amongst your misery, for your secrets are not yours alone. Frozen hearths crawl along the stone, and it shoulders aside the guardian."

Twist Deck: Masks (1, 5, 9, 13), Tomes (4, 8, 12), Crows (3, 7, 11), Rams (2, 6, 10)

ROXANA VASILESCU

Fated, Living, Dabbler

<i>Might</i> -1	<i>Grace</i> 2	<i>Speed</i> 0	<i>Resilience</i> 0
<i>Charm</i> 0	<i>Intellect</i> 2	<i>Cunning</i> 1	<i>Tenacity</i> -2
<i>Defense</i> 4	<i>Walk</i> 4	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> +0
<i>Willpower</i> 4	<i>Charge</i> 4	<i>Wounds</i> 5	

Skills: Acrobatics 1, Centering 2, Convince 1, Deceive 1, Evade 2, Gambling 2, Labor 1, Pick Pocket 3, Prestidigitation 2, Sorcery 3, Toughness 1.

Epiphany (Dabbler): When Roxana fails a Magical duel during Dramatic Time, she may draw a card from her Twist Deck.

The Oxford Method (Magical Theory): Roxana gains a  to the Casting Duel of any Spell with an AP cost of 2 or more.

Scoundrel: Roxana gains the following Trigger on her Social Duels:

 *Scoundrel:* Make a Pick Pocket Action with a  as part of resolving this Social Action.

Arcane Musings: Roxana's arcane studies allow her to remove a  from the TN of any Spell she casts.

Languages: English, Romanian.

* **Immuto (Fire):** When casting Flame Blast, +2 TN to add **Burning +1**, any number of times.

* **Immuto (Increase Damage):** When casting Flame Blast, +2 TN to increase the damage to 2/3/4 or +4 TN to increase the damage to 3/4/5.

* **Immuto (Reduce AP):** Reduce the spell's AP by 1 for +5 TN, or to a (0) Action for +10 TN.

(2) Flame Blast (Sorcery + Intellect)

AV: +5 === Rg:  5 ===== TN: 5 === Resist: **Df**
The target suffers 1/2/3 damage and gains **Burning +1**.

(2) Teleport (Prestidigitation + Intellect)

AV: +4 === Rg: 30 === TN: 10 === Resist: **Wp**
Target is teleported to a safe location within range.

CLOVER BRIGGS

Clover spent her childhood in her mother's brothel in Atlanta, surrounded by the wealthy and their concubines. While not what anyone would call an ideal childhood, it impressed upon the young girl the importance of being polite and charming no matter her current company. She carried that lesson with her onto the road and, eventually, into Malifaux.

After a few failed attempts to find employment in Malifaux - including a disastrous audition at the Star Theater where its owner suggested that she find another profession - Clover eventually fell in with Mr. Cooper's Dark Carnival. It wasn't the life that she had dreamed of, but as the months passed, Clover eventually started to make friends and learned to look beyond the strange and sometimes bizarre appearances of her fellow performers.

As she became more accustomed to the carnival, however, Clover began to notice that things were a bit... off. Mr. Cooper had meetings with people that only came and went in the middle of the night, the other performers had a haunted look in their eyes, and far too few children returned home to their families at the end of each performance. She must have asked too many questions, because when the carnival last pulled up its stakes and rolled down the road, Clover found herself holding a bloody knife and standing over a murdered child, without any memory of what had happened. She was under arrest and in a jail cell before she could come up with a plausible story, but in the days since, Clover has become certain that Mr. Cooper set her up in order to keep her from discovering his secrets.

Gear: Elaborate Opera Mask (♣ to Notice Duels), Driving Whip.

Destiny: "If justice finds you guilty of the only crime, she will fear your iron, but not your thread, and you will pan the gutter's glitter. The halo slips around your throat like a noose, and he is to you as the hermit is to the forest."

Twist Deck: Masks (1, 5, 9, 13), Rams (4, 8, 12), Crows (3, 7, 11), Tomes (2, 6, 10)

CLOVER BRIGGS

Fated, Living, Performer

<i>Might</i> -1	<i>Grace</i> 3	<i>Speed</i> -2	<i>Resilience</i> 1
<i>Charm</i> 3	<i>Intellect</i> -1	<i>Cunning</i> 0	<i>Tenacity</i> -1
<i>Defense</i> 3	<i>Walk</i> 3	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> -1
<i>Willpower</i> 2	<i>Charge</i> 3	<i>Wounds</i> 5	

Skills: Acrobatics 2, Bewitch 2, Carouse 1, Deceive 3, Evade 1, Flexible 1, Intimidate 1, Notice 1, Pick Pocket 3, Scrutiny 3.

Flare for the Dramatic (Performer): When Clover fails a Social duel (such as Bewitch, Deceive, or Intimidate), she may draw a card from her Twist Deck.

Governor's Gift (Male): Clover has a certain effect upon the menfolk of Malifaux. She gains a ♣ on Bewitch and Scrutiny Duels made against men.

Powerful Impression: Clover draws attention wherever she goes. She gains the following Trigger on her Social Duels:

♣ *Impress:* After resolving, draw a card.

Languages: English (Southern Drawl).

(1) Driving Whip (Flexible)

AV: +4 ----- Rg: ♣ 2 ----- Resist: Df
Target suffers 1/2/3 damage and becomes **Slow**.

♣ *Cruel Laugh:* After succeeding, this character gains the **Focused +1** Condition.

HIROTO SUZUKI

Hiroto Suzuki turned his back on the family profession of caring for the sick in favor of living the fast-paced life of a professional gambler. Through all the drugs, women, and near-brushes with death, he relied upon his luck to protect him and keep him safe. A few months ago, he emerged from a game of Russian Roulette with a pocket full of money and a feeling that the Three Kingdoms had become a bit too small for a man of his tastes and skills.

He used his wealth to travel to Malifaux, but the moment he crossed through the Breach, his luck turned. He lost every hand of poker he played, never drew the right mah jong tiles, and couldn't even get a thrown dart to hit the dart board from five feet away. Hiroto's wealth was gone within a week, and he found himself unable to afford a ticket back to Earth. Just as he was contemplating robbery, Hiroto heard a rumor about an old swamp witch who could change a person's destiny... for a price.

The trek through the swamp was harrowing, but eventually Hiroto reached Zoraida's shack and sat down across from her to play a game of cards. He beat her with a terrible hand, and she chuckled as she promised that his luck had changed. In his first hand of poker after returning to the city, Hiroto drew into a royal flush on three successive hands, and the other gamblers accused him of cheating. Hiroto drew his pistol and threatened them, but unfortunately, one was an off-duty Guild officer. Within the hour, Hiroto was in a jail cell and staring down a death sentence gained from trumped-up charges of cheating and attempted assault.

Gear: Calligraphy Tools (+ to Forgery Duels), Collier Navy, 30 bullets, 1 scrip.

Destiny: "As the hunter watches you swallow the maggots, you will refuse to open the tome, and upon wings of fear you will approach the tower. The water falls like envy, the river runs like rage, as you seek the sound of your last breath."

Twist Deck: Masks (1, 5, 9, 13), Crows (4, 8, 12), Rams (3, 7, 11), Tomes (2, 6, 10)

HIROTO SUZUKI

Fated, Living, Wastrel

<i>Might</i> 0	<i>Grace</i> 2	<i>Speed</i> 1	<i>Resilience</i> -1
<i>Charm</i> -2	<i>Intellect</i> 1	<i>Cunning</i> 2	<i>Tenacity</i> -1
<i>Defense</i> 3	<i>Walk</i> 5	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> +3
<i>Willpower</i> 2	<i>Charge</i> 5	<i>Wounds</i> 4	

Skills: Deceive 2, Doctor 1, Forgery 1, Gambling 4, Notice 2, Pistols 3, Scrutiny 2, Stealth 2.

Educated (Wastrel): When Hiroto fails an Expertise duel (such as Doctor, Forgery, Gambling, or Scrutiny), he may draw a card from his Twist Deck.

Cheating So and So: Hiroto gains the following Trigger on all Expertise Duels:

♣ *Stack the Deck:* After resolving, you may look at the top card of the Fate Deck and then choose whether or not to put it on the bottom of the deck.

Deceive Trigger: Hiroto gains the following Trigger on his Deceive Duels:

✕ *"Guys, He Said It's Not A Real Knife!":* After succeeding during Narrative Time, the target turns their back on you. You may draw a one-handed weapon and make an immediate attack against the target with + to the attack flip.

Luck of the Draw: When the Fatemaster shuffles the deck, Hiroto draws two cards instead of one.

Languages: English, Japanese.

(1) Collier Navy (Pistol)

AV: +5 ===== Rg: ♣ 12 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/4 damage. Capacity 6, Reload 2.

(1) Embarrassing Attempt (Martial Arts)

AV: +1 ===== Rg: ♣ 1 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 0/1/2 damage.

CLARENCE MCCOY

Much to his annoyance, Clarence grew up in a relatively comfortable and peaceful family in the heart of Paris. While the other children were roughhousing in the street and playing Revolution, he was stuck in school, learning his English and German letters and trying desperately to act tougher than he felt. When he finally left for school abroad, he quickly fell in with the wrong crowd and started gambling, stealing, and contributing to the general decline of Western civilization.

Unfortunately, Clarence's need to brag about his criminal exploits soon caught up with him and he was expelled from school. Rather than return home, he stayed on the streets, eventually falling in with professional criminals who used him as a look out, errand boy, and thug. Despite living in the gutter, Clarence was happy that he had finally connected with the rough-and-tumble lifestyle that he had envied so much from his safe and cultured home.

Clarence was eventually nabbed by the police for a beating he had given a man who had fallen behind on his protection payments. At the trial, he was so surly that the judge sentenced him to four years of hard labor, which was in turn extended twice due to Clarence getting into fights with the other convicts. He was eventually sent to Malifaux to work in the mines, but he attacked a guard and escaped while the train was stopped at Malifaux Station. It only took two days for the Guild to find Clarence and toss him back into jail, which annoyed him: he thought he could make it five days for sure.

Gear: Glass Eye (in head) (⚡ to Intimidate Duels), Volyer Patent Revolving Pistol x2, 35 bullets, 2 scrip.

Destiny: "Once your silver thread spends like golden promises, you will wait when you should act, as the jester dances where he will. The circle will bind as well as the grave, and the arches will crumble."

Twist Deck: Masks (1, 5, 9, 13), Crows (4, 8, 12), Rams (3, 7, 11), Tomes (2, 6, 10)

CLARENCE "ARIZONA" MCCOY

Fated, Living, Criminal

<i>Might</i> 1	<i>Grace</i> 3	<i>Speed</i> -1	<i>Resilience</i> -1
<i>Charm</i> -2	<i>Intellect</i> -1	<i>Cunning</i> 2	<i>Tenacity</i> 1
<i>Defense</i> 5	<i>Walk</i> 4	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> +0
<i>Willpower</i> 3	<i>Charge</i> 4	<i>Wounds</i> 6	

Skills: Athletics 1, Carouse 1, Evade 3, Gambling 1, Intimidate 1, Labor 2, Literacy 1, Notice 1, Pistol 3, Pugilism 2, Stealth 1, Toughness 2.

Opportunist (Criminal): When Clarence fails an Expertise duel (such as Gambling), he may draw a card from his Twist Deck.

Competitive Edge: Clarence has good instincts and can often rely upon his instincts. He gains the following Trigger on his Expertise Duels:

♣ *Fortunate:* After resolving, draw a card.

Paired Weapons (Pistol): When Clarence is wielding two pistols, he gains a ⚡ to his attack flip. He still only makes one attack flip and one damage flip, despite firing with both pistols.

Languages: English, German, French.

(1) Volyer Patent Revolving (Pistol)

AV: +6 ===== Rg: ⚡ 10 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/4 damage. Capacity 7, Reload 4.

✂ *Loud Blank* After succeeding, reduce all damage dealt by this attack to 0. The target gains **Slow**.

(1) Brawlin' (Pugilism)

AV: +2 ===== Rg: ⚡ 1 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/3 damage.

SELINA VOKLOV

Selina is the daughter of a minor Russian politician who was killed in one of the many assassination attempts against the Undying Tzar. As the oldest child, it became her responsibility to provide for her mother and siblings, and to do so, she enrolled in the Russian military. The training drills and long hours in the field toughened her up, and early on she was chosen to receive sniper training.

When her period of service ended, she took her skills westward, plying her trade as a mercenary across Europe. While this paid better and allowed her to send more money back home, it also thrust Selina into a strange new world. Gradually, she came to enjoy Europe, and when word came that her mother had finally passed away and that her youngest sister had become engaged, she cut her last ties with the Motherland and set out to explore the world.

Eventually, Selina's path took her to Malifaux, where it was rumored that a good mercenary could make enough money to retire in just a few short months. Though Selina was skilled and determined, she more often than not found herself beaten to a bounty by one of Malifaux's various mercenary groups. While on the trail of Black-Tooth Barnaby, an infamous member of the Parker Gang, Selina shot an innocent man who bore a striking resemblance to the ruthless bandit. She attempted to flee once she realized her mistake, but the Guild caught her and sentenced her to death.

Gear: Clockwork Carbine (custom action), Duster (Protected ♣), 10 bullets, 2 scrip.

Destiny: "After the branch snaps beneath your sorrow, you will refuse the call, but love was left behind. The red woman will light the path, and the eyes in the darkness change you."

Twist Deck: Rams (1, 5, 9, 13), Crows (4, 8, 12), Tomes (3, 7, 11), Masks (2, 6, 10)

SELINA VOKLOV

Fated, Living, Mercenary

<i>Might</i> -1	<i>Grace</i> -2	<i>Speed</i> 2	<i>Resilience</i> 2
<i>Charm</i> -1	<i>Intellect</i> 2	<i>Cunning</i> -1	<i>Tenacity</i> 1
<i>Defense</i> 4	<i>Walk</i> 5	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> +4
<i>Willpower</i> 2	<i>Charge</i> 6	<i>Wounds</i> 6	

Skills: Athletics 1, Convince 2, Doctor 2, Leadership 1, Long Arms 3, Martial Arts 3, Notice 2, Toughness 1, Track 2, Wilderness 2.

Deadset (Mercenary): When Selina fails a Ranged Combat duel during Dramatic Time (such as Long Arms), she may draw a card from her Twist Deck.

Cynic: Selina has no faith in humanity. She gains a ♣ on any Duel made to resist deception.

Speed Loading (Long Arms): Selina gains the Speed Loading Trigger on her Long Arm attacks.

Languages: English, Russian.

(1) Custom Clockwork Carbine (Long Arms)

AV: +5 ===== Rg: ♣ 16 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/4 damage. Capacity 1, Reload 2.
This weapon gains ♣ to attack flips. The range of this weapon is multiplied by x10 for each ♣ it gains from the **Focused** Condition.

♣ **Critical Strike:** When damaging, deal 1 additional damage for each ♣ in the final duel total.

♣ **Speed Loading:** Reload this weapon.

(1) Systema (Martial Arts)

AV: +5 ===== Rg: ♣ 1 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 1/3/4 damage. If this attack deals Severe damage, the target suffers a Weak Critical Effect.

♣ **Low Blow:** After succeeding, the target gains the **Dazed** Condition until the end of its next turn.

HARLEY HUSTON

Harley had a pretty good thing going down in the Bayou. He had grown up around hogs all his life, so when his papa came to him with the idea of starting up a hog farm in Malifaux - where the pigs were twice as big - it seemed like the best idea this side of homemade moonshine. It didn't take much to get the farm set up, and the local Gremlins were more than happy to trade him pigs by the dozen for whatever old clothes they had packed away in their things.

Initially, things went great. The Gremlins were happy that Harley and his family were keeping the pigs out of their villages, and the people of Malifaux were far more willing to buy pork from Huston Family Farms than some shady Gremlin on the edge of the Bayou. Unfortunately, all good things had to come to an end, and midway through a drunken argument with a loud Gremlin, Harley lost his temper and punched the green little nuisance. The offended Gremlin fired a shot at Harley, but it missed him and instead hit the rear flank of a large sow.

To make a long story short, Huston Family Farms was stampeded into the swamp that day. Harley managed to escape, but his papa and brother were devoured by the pigs, along with the loud Gremlin. Harley returned to Malifaux City and tried to drown his sorrows in strong liquor, but some city slicker started making fun of the way he smelled, so Harley stabbed him in the gut with his jack knife. By the time he had sobered up, he was in jail and awaiting execution.

Gear: Recurve Bow, Pig-Scratching Stick (+ to Husbandry Duels), Jack Knife, 15 arrows, 2 scrip.

Destiny: "If you open the gates of wonder in the wall of lies, she must lurk within your joyless paradise, for you will be reborn in soot and flame. Love knows not the heart but the bosom, and you will leave a twig to hold the sand."

Twist Deck: Tomes (1, 5, 9, 13), Rams (4, 8, 12), Crows (3, 7, 11), Masks (2, 6, 10)

HARLEY HUSTON

Fated, Living, Pioneer

<i>Might</i> 1	<i>Grace</i> 1	<i>Speed</i> -2	<i>Resilience</i> 2
<i>Charm</i> 0	<i>Intellect</i> -2	<i>Cunning</i> 1	<i>Tenacity</i> 1
<i>Defense</i> 5	<i>Walk</i> 3	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> -1
<i>Willpower</i> 3	<i>Charge</i> 3	<i>Wounds</i> 5	

Skills: Archery 3, Athletics 1, Barter 1, Evade 3, Homesteading 2, Husbandry 1, Labor 1, Melee 1, Notice 1, Scrutiny 1, Wilderness 3.

Rugged Individual (Pioneer): When Harley fails a Training duel (such as Athletics, Husbandry, or Scrutiny), he may draw a card from his Twist Deck.

Born Under A Wandering Star: Harley never suffers negative Fate Modifiers to his Navigation or Wilderness Challenges.

Threading the Needle: Harley knows how to put his arrows exactly where they need to go. When making an Archery attack, he may ignore other characters when determining line of sight and does not randomly determine his target when firing into an engagement.

Languages: English.

(1) Recurve Bow (Archery)

AV: +4 ===== Rg: 14 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/4 damage. This weapon can be fired without line of sight, but when doing so, this attack receives a  on the attack flip and neither attack nor damage can be cheated.

 *Poisoned Arrowhead:* After damaging, the target gains the **Poison +1** Condition.

(1) Jack Knife (Melee)

AV: +2 ===== Rg:  1 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 1/2/4 damage.

BUTAKO

Hikaru came to Malifaux as a young girl. Unlike most new arrivals, however, she arrived via the Second Breach controlled by the Ten Thunders, of which her parents were members. She had been taught never to speak of what her parents did or said, inside or beyond their home, and as a result, Hikaru grew up quiet and withdrawn, never wanting to speak out of turn for fear of getting her parents in trouble.

During a trip south, Hikaru's group was ambushed by Gremlins that came rushing across the Frostrun River, shooting everyone and stealing anything they could... which, as it turns out, included Hikaru. Exactly what the Gremlins had intended to do with the young girl is a mystery, for no sooner had the Gremlins retreated back into the Bayou than her green-skinned captor was eaten by a large pig.

Dropped in the swampy water, Hikaru stared up at her porcine savior with wide eyes, and the pig stared back down at her as it chewed on the struggling Gremlin. Whether due to fate or some wisp of innate magical ability, the pig chose not to eat Hikaru and instead picked her up and carried her back to its den, where it raised her as one of her own piglets.

Years passed, and Hikaru - now calling herself Butako - was eventually captured by a Guild patrol who couldn't decide what to make of the snorting, squealing young woman in their net. They took her back to Malifaux City, where she promptly attacked one of them the moment she was let free. Having learned their lesson, they tossed the girl into a cell and decided to just hang her and be done with it. Butako, for her part, has since realized that trying to fight the guards for dominance was probably a bad idea.

Gear: Pig Skin Hat and Cloak (Protected ☞, 📖).

Destiny: "When the accounting passes you by, you will fall from grace, for you will know that a long life is a hundred curses. The reflection in the water shows the truth, and the Empress will know the traitor."

Twist Deck: Rams (1, 5, 9, 13), Masks (4, 8, 12), Crows (3, 7, 11), Tomes (2, 6, 10)

BUTAKO

Fated, Living, Primal

<i>Might</i> 1	<i>Grace</i> -2	<i>Speed</i> 2	<i>Resilience</i> 1
<i>Charm</i> -1	<i>Intellect</i> -2	<i>Cunning</i> 3	<i>Tenacity</i> 0
<i>Defense</i> 4	<i>Walk</i> 5	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> +5
<i>Willpower</i> 2	<i>Charge</i> 6	<i>Wounds</i> 7	

Skills: Acrobatics 1, Athletics 3, Husbandry 1, Intimidate 1, Labor 1, Martial Arts 3, Navigation 2, Notice 3, Scrutiny 1, Stealth 1, Toughness 1, Wilderness 1.

On the Scent (Primal): When Butako fails a Notice, Track, or Wilderness duel, she may draw a card from her Twist Deck.

Force of Nature: When Butako deals damage with a natural attack (typically Pugilism, Martial Arts, or Grappling), she deals +1 damage. This modifier has already been applied to her listed attacks.

Beast Whisperer: Butako can communicate with Beasts on a basic level. She and any Beasts she communicates with can discern the general disposition of the other and pass on general concepts. Any Beasts she encounters will not attack Butako or her allies unless she provokes them or they are being controlled by another character. Butako can make Social Skill tests with Beasts as if they were humans, without any penalties.

Languages: Broken English, Broken Japanese.

(1) Pork-Fu (Martial Arts)

AV: +5 ===== Rg: 🌀 1 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/4/5 damage. If this attack deals Severe damage, the target suffers a Weak Critical Effect.

☞ *Jump Kick:* After succeeding, if this attack was taken as part of a Charge Action, take an additional Martial Arts attack against the target. You may only declare this Trigger once per turn.

QIANG FAN

Qiang Fan is the youngest in a long line of spies and infiltrators stretching back eight generations. All were members of the prestigious Order of the White Lotus, a mysterious organization within the Ten Thunders that trains and manages the criminal network's undercover operatives. Those who serve the White Lotus are kept distant from the rest of the Katanaka Clan to protect their secrecy, and their exploits are often unknown save to the leaders of the White Lotus and the Ten Thunders.

The training is difficult, and Qiang's lineage meant that his instructors expected much more from him than their other students. When he passed his last assignment - a week spent masquerading as a Guild Guard along the walls of the Quarantine Zone - Qiang was allowed to speak with his parents one last time before he became an active agent of the White Lotus. It was a bittersweet moment, but his parents expressed their pride in his accomplishments, which was enough to brace Qiang's heart against the coming trials.

It took three days to find his target: a Western man who had cheated the Ten Thunders out of a few scrip. Qiang got into a fight with him in the middle of a crowded bar and beat him within an inch of his life, ensuring that the other patrons had reason enough to call for the Guard... and that the Westerner would never walk again. The Guild threw Qiang into jail, where he has been patiently waiting for the day of his execution... just as the White Lotus had planned. Two birds, one stone.

Gear: Custom-Tailored Sandals (+ to Athletics Duels), 10 Throwing Knives.

Destiny: "If you allow the hands to pull you down, your journey will never begin, for new enemies are made from old allies. Love knows not the heart but the bosom, and you will murder the deserving."

Twist Deck: Masks (1, 5, 9, 13), Tomes (4, 8, 12), Crows (3, 7, 11), Rams (2, 6, 10)

QIANG FAN

Fated, Living, Infiltrator

<i>Might</i> 2	<i>Grace</i> 1	<i>Speed</i> -1	<i>Resilience</i> -2
<i>Charm</i> -1	<i>Intellect</i> 2	<i>Cunning</i> 1	<i>Tenacity</i> 0
<i>Defense</i> 5	<i>Walk</i> 4	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> +1
<i>Willpower</i> 3	<i>Charge</i> 4	<i>Wounds</i> 4	

Skills: Athletics 1, Centering 1, Deceive 3, Evade 3, Forgery 1, Intimidate 1, Notice 2, Pugilism 3, Stealth 1, Thrown Weapons 2.

Act Like You Belong (Infiltrator): When Qiang fails a Deceive or Stealth duel, he may draw a card from his Twist Deck.

Strike First: When Qiang attacks someone who believes him to be friendly or who has not yet acted during Dramatic Time, he may add a suit of his choice to his final duel total.

Sneaky (Deceive): Qiang gains + to Deceive Duels.

Undermine Confidence: Qiang knows how to talk big and let nervousness slowly set in. He gains + on all Intimidation Duels made during Narrative Time.

Languages: English, Japanese.

(1) The Fury Unleashed (Pugilism)

AV: +5 ===== Rg: /// 1 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/4 damage.

Rabbit Punch: After succeeding, take an additional Pugilism attack against the target. This attack may not declare Triggers.

(1) Throwing Knife (Thrown Weapons)

AV: +3 ===== Rg: r 6 ===== Resist: Df

Target suffers 1/2/3 damage. This weapon grants a + to any attempts to hide it.

VINH PHAM

Vinh came to Malifaux to take a job as a Steamfitter, where she expected to repair and maintain the constructs used by the Guild and Union for their day-to-day activities. Indeed, Vinh's life seemed relatively normal, and while the hours were long, she enjoyed her work.

That all changed when Vinh returned home to her apartment to find a masked man waiting for her. The man informed her that her parents had been assassins for the Ten Thunders and that her family still owed a debt to the Katanaka Clan. Vinh wasn't entirely sure that she believed him, but it was clear that refusing to do his bidding wasn't an option.

At the behest of the masked man, Vinh reprogrammed a Guardian Construct to turn against and murder its ward, a lawyer who was prosecuting a case against a known Ten Thunders informant. It didn't take long for the Guild to follow the trail back to Vinh, and soon she found herself behind bars and awaiting execution. To make matters worse, because Vinh was a spellcaster, they fitted her with an explosive Control Collar. Vinh was familiar with the devices: they allow a Guild officer who is attuned to the collar to control the wearer's magic, and if the wearer steps out of line, they can be made to detonate quite spectacularly. The Guild was taking no chances on her.

Gear: Partial Pneumatic Arm (Focus Object, reduces the TN of Vinh's spells by -3; this bonus has already been applied to her stat block), US&E Pump Action, Control Collar, 20 bullets.

Destiny: "As you walk the lonely road, she must lurk within your joyless paradise, but love was left behind. The water falls like envy, the river runs like rage, and you are a breeze unto the leaves."

Twist Deck: Tomes (1, 5, 9, 13), Rams (4, 8, 12), Crows (3, 7, 11), Masks (2, 6, 10)

VINH PHAM

Fated, Living, Tinkerer

<i>Might</i> 1	<i>Grace</i> 2	<i>Speed</i> -1	<i>Resilience</i> -1
<i>Charm</i> -2	<i>Intellect</i> 0	<i>Cunning</i> 2	<i>Tenacity</i> 1
<i>Defense</i> 1	<i>Walk</i> 4	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> -1
<i>Willpower</i> 3	<i>Charge</i> 4	<i>Wounds</i> 4	

Skills: Artefacting 2, Barter 3, Centering 1, Enchanting 3, Lockpicking 2, Pneumatics 2, Shotgun 3, Sorcery 2.

Gear Head (Tinkerer): When Vinh fails a Magical duel during Dramatic Time, she may draw a card.

Tradition Magic (Magical Theory): Vinh gains a **+** to her Enchanting Duels.

Armor +1: Reduce all damage suffered by this character by +1, to a minimum of 1.

Calm and Collected: Vinh increases the value of any **Focused** Condition on her by +1 (maximum +3).

Push the Limits: Vinh may cause a construct under her control to suffer 1 damage to give it a **+** to its next Action. She may also use this ability on herself.

Languages: English, Vietnamese.

*** Immuto (Increase Range):** Increase the spell's TN by +2 to increase the range from **1** to **2**, **2** to **3**, **3** to **5**, or **5** to **10**.

*** Immuto (Reduce AP):** Reduce the spell's AP by 1 for +5 TN, or to a (0) Action for +10 TN.

(1) US&E Pump Action (Shotgun)

AV: +5 ===== Rg: **12** ===== Resist: **Df**
Target suffers 2/3/4 damage. Capacity 4, Reload 2.

(1) Heal (Enchanting + Cunning)

AV: +5 === Rg: **1** == TN: **4** === Resist: **Df**
A Living target heals 1/2/3 damage. If cast on the same target within 1 hour, the TN increases by +3.

(1) Shield (Sorcery + Tenacity)

AV: +3 === Rg: **1** == TN: **7** === Resist: **Wp**
Target gains **Armor +1** for 10 minutes (max +3).

TAROT TIE-INS

Below is a list of possible Tarot Tie-Ins for each Act, pulling from the Tarots of the *Fated Almanac*, *Into the Steam*, and *Under Quarantine*. Use these as ideas to help fuel your players' Destiny Steps.

The first two letters of a Tie-In stand for the Tarot used. In this case, CR stands for Cross Roads Tarot, AL stands for Assembly Line Tarot, and LL stands for Lifeline Tarot.

The next two letters indicate the card's position, according to the Tarot in question:

- For the Cross Roads Tarot, St is Station, NC is Northern Card, etc.
- For the Assembly line Tarot, AL is Allegiance, Ro is Root, etc.
- For the Lifeline Tarot, Br is Brush, Ro is Root, etc.

Finally, the two values - the number and suit - indicate the specific card tied to that destiny step.

ACT I

CRSC 5♠: "Once you rise from the ashes" seems appropriate given the beginning of the adventure, as it allows the character to narrowly escape certain death and offers them a chance to turn their fortunes around by working with the Guild.

CRSC 12♠: "If justice finds you guilty of the only crime" might easily refer to the character being arrested and convicted at the start of the adventure, and their attempts to escape that fate.

ALAL 6♣: "When your life seems to be forfeit" is an easy reference to the Fated beginning the adventure believing that they are about to hang for their crimes.

ALRC 2♣: "And the Asylum will be your prison" has an obvious connection with the character's visit to Smedley's Asylum. Perhaps the orderlies focus upon the Fated character in question when they attack the group?

LLBC 10♠: "If you stand within the shadow of the ram" adequately describes the character's situation at the start of this adventure: captured by the Guild and forced to do its dirty work to earn a pardon and escape their watchful attention.

LLBC 9♣ "Under the red fog of a burning dawn" could describe the character's flight from the battle between Kirai and Kaeris and the inferno that erupts around them. Obviously, this works best if the encounter takes place at dawn.



ACT II

CREC 11☞: "You will fall from grace" might refer to the character's betrayal at the hands of Klassen, especially if he suggested that he and the character could do great things together at the end of the first Act.

RCEC 9☞: "He chooses not you, but the downfall" seems like a fitting reference to Klassen; when push comes to shove, he chooses his own life - and his eventual downfall at the hands of the Fated - over helping the Fated with their investigation.

ALMC 9☞: "Vengeance will be yours at last" could easily refer to the character's return to the Rusty Bucket to seek revenge upon Klassen for his betrayal.

ALMC 8☞: "The one you trust will reveal hands stained with blood" could also refer to Klassen's betrayal, particularly if the Fated found themselves trusting their savior at the end of the previous Act.

LLRC 11☞: "Your path will lead you through fields of poison" might refer to Klassen's lies sending the character toward Jacob Samuels... and into a trap.

LLMC 6☞: "And only the ram knows the truth" is a reference to Klassen, a Guild agent, and how he knows exactly who kidnapped the mercenary and why they did it.

ACT III

CRNC 13☞: "For the stars illuminate your path" could easily refer to the Fated's trek through the Badlands, especially if you make frequent mention of Pletcher using the stars to pick out the correct path towards Kethsora.

CRWC 3☞: "Hence, the dried lands are watered with the blood of sinners" references the Badlands and all the blood shed in them, especially from morally-questionable people like the Fated (or failing that, Pletcher). When the Fated are wounded, play up the sight of their blood sinking quickly into the dried ground and give a bit more time and description to the Badlands Fever event to make the Badlands that little bit creepier than normal.

ALAC RJ: "When your one true friend wanders into the wilds" could refer to Pletcher, his easy friendship with the Fated and lack of ulterior motives, and his wish for the Fated to accompany him into the Badlands. If this is the case, Pletcher might become a steadfast ally for the character in the future.

ALBC 2☞: "The words of the wilds will tempt you" could come into play during the Badlands Fever event, if the characters who succumb to the Badlands Fever begin to hear voices whispering to them from somewhere deep in the heart of the wasteland.

LLRC 13☞: "You will cross the frontier on bloodied feet" might adequately describe the character's journey across the Badlands... particularly if their horses die, forcing them to walk the rest of the way to Kethsora.

ACT IV

CRNC 5♣: "But welcome the song of frozen winter" is an obvious reference to the presence of Rasputina at Nythera and a hint that the Fated should welcome her assistance is keeping the ruins sealed.

CRWC BJ: "You will carry the seed of a thousand-fold damnations" is a clear reference to the character's knowledge of the phrase that can open Nythera... and thus, their ability to release Titania and all the terrors she brings with her upon an unsuspecting Malifaux.

ALBC 10♣: "The whirlwind will devour you" might refer to Rasputina or the Wind Gamin in this Act, both of whom employ a strong command of the winter winds to vex the Fated. Taking this a bit more literally, Rasputina is also a cannibal...

ALBC RJ: "The curse of the land will be your savior" is a reference to Titania, who will become a scourge upon all of Malifaux... but an ally (or mentor) to the character.

LLMC 5♣: "But there is no mercy in her heart" could refer to either Rasputina or Titania, as neither are particularly kind or forgiving women. In this situation, whichever woman is selected as the subject of this destiny step should be portrayed as more heartless and cold than normal.

LLEC 1♣: "You will draw blood from the stone" is a reference to the character feeling Titania - the Bloody Queen - from Nythera. If this option is chosen, it's best to portray the temple as a structure of worked stone and metal, rather than the primarily metal structure that is described in this adventure.



AUTUMN KNIGHT

Many centuries ago, the Autumn Knights served as the champions of Titania, the Bloody Queen. They were her enforcers, executioners, and bodyguards, and each was fanatically loyal to his or her queen.

When Titania betrayed the Fae and made a pact with the Grave Spirit allowing her to wield its power against the Tyrants, the Autumn Knights stood at her side while the rest of the Fae recoiled in horror at her betrayal. For their loyalty, they were rewarded with the privilege of sharing their queen's punishment and were hurled into Nythera after her.

Proximity to the Grave Spirit corrupted Titania with undeath and her knights were not spared this fate. Despite sharing the same scars as their queen - empty eye sockets that constantly weep blood - they can perceive the world in the same manner as a sighted creature.

Upon her release from Nythera, Titania "rewarded" those who freed her by transforming them into Autumn Knights. While this transformation results in the death of the subject, Titania still perceives this as one of the greatest rewards she can bestow upon someone; what more could one wish than to stand proudly at her side as she reclaims her world from the unworthy vermin that have overrun it in her absence?

Subservience to Titania rewards the Autumn Knight with impressive control over the natural world. As her service continues, she is rewarded with more gifts from her queen, until eventually the plants and vegetation of Malifaux rise up to answer her call.

As Titania reestablishes herself as a power in Malifaux, the Autumn Knights are at the forefront of her plans, whether that might be diplomatic attempts to bring the Neverborn beneath her rule or fighting alongside her against the minions of her ancient enemies: the Tyrants. The most active of their number - December, Plague, Nytemare, Oblivion - are sure to react strongly upon learning that their fallen nemesis once more walks the world.

The war has begun, and the Autumn Knights are Titania's front line in the battles to come.

REQUIREMENTS

To become an Autumn Knight, the character must sufficiently impress Titania, the Bloody Queen, to the point where she believes that they would be a worthwhile servant. Exactly what the Fated could do to impress her in such a way is up to the Fatemaster, but the Autumn Knights that served her centuries ago distinguished themselves by slaying fearsome creatures and bringing her trophies to honor her majesty. In the later years, as the war with the Tyrants grew more fearsome, Titania began creating Autumn Knights from those who distinguished themselves on the field of battle, whether through strength of arms or arcane power.

The actual process of creating an Autumn Knight is simple: Titania needs only to touch the forehead of an applicant and will them to become an Autumn Knight.

ADVANCEMENT

At each step, an Autumn Knight gains the Talent listed below:

STEP	TALENT
1	The Curse of Autumn
2	A Sword for My Queen
3	Thirsty Roots
4	Royal Magic
5	The Land's Hunger

**"YOUR HEAD SHALL MAKE
A FINE TROPHY FOR MY
QUEEN!"**

-THE CLAW, AUTUMN KNIGHT



THE CURSE OF AUTUMN

If this character has the Living Characteristic, they lose it and gain the Undead Characteristic in its place, becoming a Stitched (see *Under Quarantine*, pg. 66). The character gains the Fae Characteristic and may add her rank in this Advanced Pursuit to the total value of Critical Effects she generates against enemy characters.

This character also gains **Hard to Wound +1**: Damage flips made against this character suffer \square .

A SWORD FOR MY QUEEN

The weapons wielded by the Queen's servants are formed from vine and thorn, rather than steel. By touching a tree or similar large plant, the character may draw forth a living close combat weapon from its depths. These weapons must be simple in design and cannot feature any moving mechanical parts (so a whip or sling would be fine, but not a firearm or pneumatic weapon). This weapon may not have any modifications, but gains +1 Rg and \blacklozenge to its attack flips.

THIRSTY ROOTS

The natural world yields to the command of the Bloody Queen, and those in her service may invoke her name to create patches of clinging vines, grasping roots, and twisting thorns. The character gains the following Manifested Power:

THIRSTY ROOTS

ACTING VALUE	AP	TN	RESIST	RANGE
Charm + Enchanting	0	12 \blacklozenge	-	8 yards

Effect: A patch of ground 5 yards in diameter, plus 2 yards per Margin of Success, becomes severe terrain that deals 1/2/3 damage to any creature that begins its turn inside or moves through the affected terrain. A given creature can only suffer this damage once per turn. The ground returns to normal after 1 minute.

ROYAL MAGIC

This character gains access to the Elemental Engulf Magic and Natural Immuto, no matter her current Grimoire. If she does not possess a Grimoire, she may act as if she possessed a Grimoire with this Magic and Immuto. If she does not possess a Magical Theory, she gains the Hedge Magic Magical Theory with the Natural Immuto as its focus.

Weapons created by this character's A Sword for My Queen Talent gain the following Trigger:

\blacklozenge *Brambles:* After damaging, the target gains the following Condition until the end of its next turn: **"Rooted:** This character may not take Walk or Charge Actions. If this character is pushed, remove this Condition and the character suffers 3 damage."

THE LAND'S HUNGER

When this character casts her Thirsty Roots Manifested Power, the damage increases to 2/3/5. At the end of the turn, any non-Fae character within 3 yards of an affected patch of ground must pass a TN 12 Walk duel or be pulled into the center of the patch by grasping tendrils.



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NYTHERA

OR

THE POLITICAL RAMIFICATIONS
OF THE DISCOVERY OF NEVERBORN
RUINS FOR THE CITY OF MALIFAUZ

Wyrd

THE RUMORS ARE SPREADING



Nythera has been discovered in the Badlands, sending all of Malifaux into chaos. As the factions of Malifaux struggle to lay claim to the ancient ruins, a schism begins to form in the Guild as its most powerful members attempt to ascend to the lofty position of Governor. In the midst of this turbulence are the Fated, who have been spared from death and tasked with finding the severed head of Philip Tombers...



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