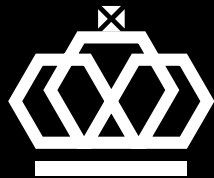


**CTHULHU**  
*Confidential*

**EX  
ASTORIA**



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# EX ASTORIA

This adventure brings Viv into the world of labor unions, city power brokers, and scabs. The city's growing infrastructure comes into conflict with an ancient, toxic evil. What have the workers uncovered and what's the fate of the few exposed? Can Viv prevent further injuries and an environmental disaster?

Although the branch in this scenario is fictional, City Water Tunnel no. 2 was constructed by unionized sandhogs, laboring under extraordinary, dangerous conditions. Buried far below the busy streets, it remains invisible to the millions who rely on it for water access daily. This scenario asks--what else lies, invisible, beneath the city?

If this is your player's first time playing Viv, she will need to choose a starting Problem, like the four given in the opener for "Fatal Frequencies" (*Cthulhu Confidential*, p. 181). If you've already run at least one scenario for your player, the journalist probably has some lingering Continuity Problems still in hand. In that case, write an introduction that connects the most salient of those Problems to the following assignment.

## The Story So Far

In the summer of 1933, sandhogs, the urban miners who construct New York's infrastructure, labor tirelessly 500 feet beneath the city, working to complete the longest large diameter water tunnel in the world, City Water Tunnel no. 2. An ambitious New Deal project, it funnels water from the Catskills Aqueduct into the Bronx, East River, western Queens, Brooklyn, and Staten Island. In his Chanin Building boardroom a thousand feet above them, Adrian Rush, founder of Hudson Enterprises, plans to siphon that New Deal money into his own coffers by proposing an addition to the already-

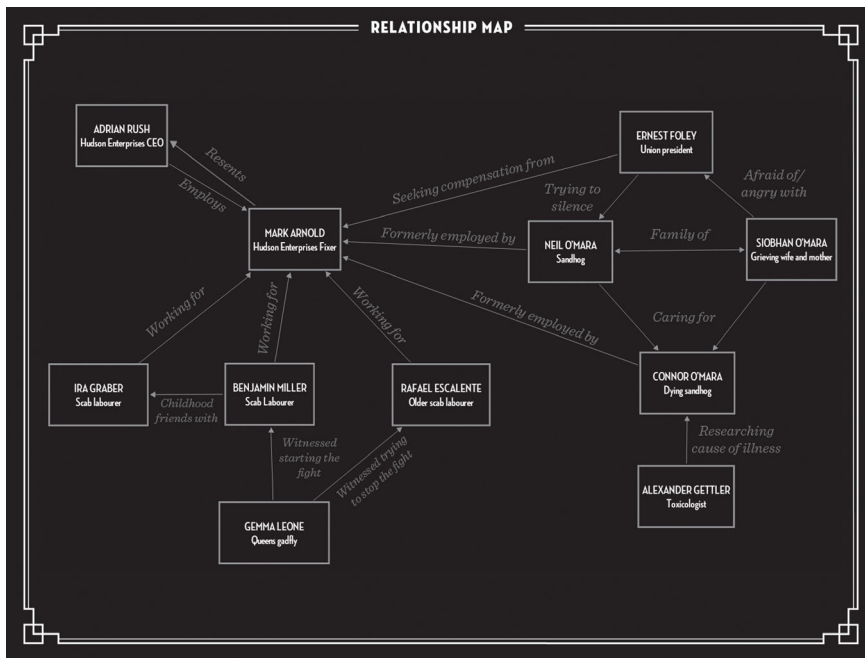
ambitious project. Surely, the borough of Queens deserves more than the few miles of City Water Tunnel No. 2 currently slated to run through it.

Rush and his ambitious assistant, Mark Arnold, move through Tammany back rooms, convincing them that New York can get even more money out of Roosevelt's National Industrial Recovery Act. But they have to move fast—interim Tammany mayor John O'Brien goes up against popular Fusion candidate LaGuardia in the fall. Alderman Samuel Winn sponsors a resolution to build a pipeline, joining City Water Tunnel No. 2 just after it makes landfall beyond Rikers Island. The tunnel will then pass diagonally through the borough, carrying water southeast to the far side of Jamaica Bay.

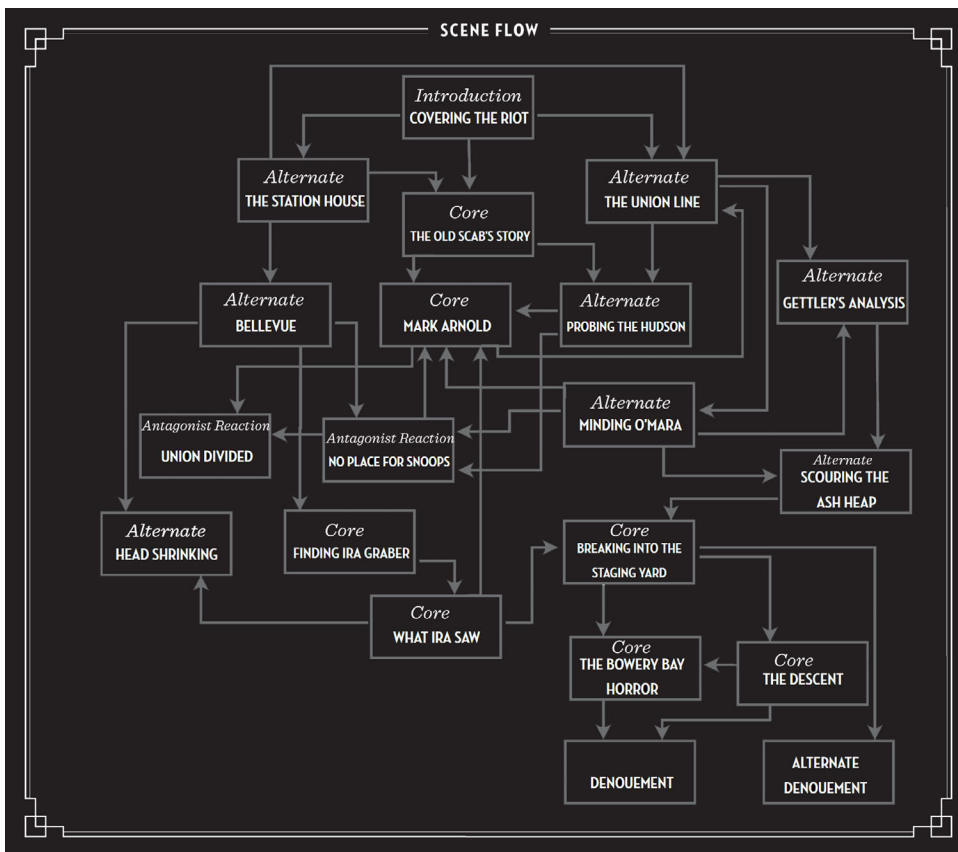
Workers break ground on the Winn Water Tunnel in October 1933. The project proceeds apace until the blast crew encounters an anomaly. A charge intended to blast through solid rock hits something far more malleable and sends a toxic substance in all directions, including back at the blast crew, leaving five sandhogs severely injured. Union president Ernest Foley calls for a work stoppage until the company agrees to the union's safety terms and provides some compensation. Meanwhile, Arnold discovers something far more horrifying beyond the explosion—a tight cluster of enormous, opalescent spheroids in a cavern that stretches wide across the path of the tunnel. Not only does the cavern pose a significant challenge, the toxic substance which debilitated the sandhogs also burned into the rock.

Although initially stunned by his discovery, Arnold returns night after night to the cavern to commune with the strange clutch. Soon, he hatches a plan. While Rush continues negotiations with the union, Arnold recruits scabs from Hoovervilles,

## RELATIONSHIP MAP



## SCENE FLOW DIAGRAM





## VIVIAN SINCLAIR

*Investigative Journalist*

### INVESTIGATIVE ABILITIES

Accounting   
 Assess Honesty   
 Bargain   
 Bureaucracy   
 Cryptography   
 Evidence Collection   
 Flattery   
 History   
 Inspiration   
 Locksmith   
 Oral History   
 Photography   
 Reassurance   
 Research   
 Streetwise

### GENERAL ABILITIES

Athletics   
 Cool   
 Disguise   
 Driving   
 Filch   
 Fighting   
 First Aid   
 Fleeing   
 Preparedness   
 Sense Trouble   
 Shadowing   
 Stability   
 Stealth

### STORY

Pad and pencil in hand, journalist Vivian Sinclair tracks down leads, grills witnesses, and turns in hair-raising stories of corruption, crime, and parts of the city's underbelly most would rather not see. Where a detective sees a case, Viv sees a story. She'll follow it relentlessly to its conclusion, even putting her life in danger to get at the truth.

breadlines, and work registers. They quietly resume construction on the tunnel, as far as the cavern. If they can bring the tunnel right through a path in its center, the inspector and union miners need never know what truly lies below. He engages several scabs in clearing this path and has them remove one egg-sphere for his own purposes. Arnold doesn't suspect the truth, that these are dhole eggs, laid by a creature brought to this dimension in ages past by a sorcerer, and long since banished. He only knows that something about them speaks to his mind.

Meanwhile, the injured miners continue to deteriorate from their exposure to this mysterious acidic fluid. The negotiations drag on. The scabs Arnold uses in his plan to disguise the cavern's existence behave more and more strangely, as their

character warps toward a particular flaw. Their greed outweighs any sense of caution or self-preservation. One of them, Dan Willard, breaks into several stores in broad daylight, starting with a pawn shop near his rooming house. When arresting officers discover the nature of Willard's employment, someone drops a word to Union president Foley. Union picketers face off against the scabs for several days until Benjamin Miller, another of the affected scabs, can't control his temper any longer and sparks a riot. At this point, Viv enters the story....

## Timeline of Past Events

**September 1933 (7 months ago):** Hudson

Enterprises wins their bid for Alderman Winn's proposed Water Tunnel. How they could have prepared such a thorough bid in the time allotted puzzles exactly no one.

**6 months ago:** Construction begins at the tunnel's northeastern end, just south of the Astoria Light, Heat, and Power Company power station.

**22 days ago:** The blasting crew hits the pocket filled with a toxic fluid which severely injures five men, including blasting foreman Connor O'Mara. Sandhogs evacuate the tunnel and union boss Ernest Foley calls a work stoppage until safety can be assessed.

**21 days ago:** Mark Arnold inspects the area of the accident and discovers the mysterious cavern and also the magnitude of the problem. He advises Rush to stall negotiations, promising to take care of things and find a friendly city inspector.

**15 days ago:** Arnold circumvents Rush and the negotiations and quietly brings in scabs to continue the project. He plans to get past the problem by literally getting past it.

**4 days ago:** One of the scabs, Dan Willard, rob several pawn shops in Queens. After learning about his current employment, local police alert buddies in the union to the presence of scabs in the project.

**Today (March 28, 1934):** A brawl between scabs and picketing union men turns into a riot, which Viv and other reporters head out to cover.

## Cast

**Mark Arnold**, 34, the Hudson Enterprises fixer.

His curling blond moustache reinforces his perpetual smile, but his eyes remain hard. He needs the water tunnel project to succeed, or Rush will have his head. If it succeeds, well, maybe he can have Rush's.

**Ernest Foley**, 44, union president. His hair-trigger willingness to picket a job, though it's given him a reputation of incorruptibility, stems as much from his desire to deliver

speeches as his concern for the men. Foley has his eye on a political career.

**Neil O'Mara**, 25, son of the union blast supervisor.

A gangling redhead whose hair has started graying around the fringe and who walks as though he has the weight of the world on his shoulders.

**Benjamin Miller**, 24, and **Ira Graber**, 28. Former coal miners from Pennsylvania, but not union men. Bitter about their pasts and surly to authority figures, they decided to try their luck in the city.

**Rafael Escalente**, 52, a Cuban émigré and former grocer whose desperate circumstances led him to scab for Arnold. The oldest of the scabs, he has a trick of rubbing the corner of his right eye when uncomfortable.

**Gemma Leone**, 48, lifetime Queens resident and proprietor of one of the pawn shops robbed by Miller and Graber. Neighborhood gadfly and amateur local historian.

**Alexander Gettler**, 52 (1883-1959), a toxicologist at the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, located at Bellevue Hospital. Father of American forensic toxicology.

## Properties of Dhole Eggs

Dholes lay dozens of eggs in clutches, festering deep beneath the surface of a planet for a millennia or more before hatching. No one knows whether the eggs gestate for a specific period, or whether certain seismic conditions must arise for them to hatch. The first dhole in a clutch to hatch immediately consumes the surrounding eggs, growing to twenty-five or fifty times its original size. These large, spongy eggs measure about ten feet in diameter. Only an extremely sharp object, or one projected with great force—such as a bullet, or rock exploding from a blasting charge—can pierce the flexible, pliant shell.

The minds of unhatched dholes reach out beyond their shells as a vague, corrupting influence. To the dhole, such contact is merely a benign act of self-preservation, allowing it to hatch prematurely in response to perceived threats. But the touch of their alien psyche warps human personalities. Physical contact with dhole eggs forces a human's stability to contend with the

external influence. The more unstable feel the reinforcement of their worst traits and impulses. Slowly, especially with repeated exposure, the victims enter the grip of mental illness, leading them down a destructive path.

A dhole's body consists of an extraterrestrial, acidic mucous which it can use to form temporary limbs, lob at attackers, or bore through the earth at terrific speeds. This mucous also forms the distributed substance of a dhole's central nervous system, rendering them extremely difficult to kill without completely destroying their bodies. No human caught in the backwash of an adult dhole's death could survive the acidic damage more than a few seconds. For the sandhogs caught in a blast of stone and extradimensional mucous, however, a crueler fate awaits. They decay slowly. Perhaps it'd have been kinder to leave them behind, as no force on Earth could neutralize effects of the alien acid in which they were briefly bathed.

## Scenes

### COVERING THE RIOT

**Scene Type:** Opener

**Lead-Outs:** The Old Scab's Story, The Station House, The Union Line, Probing the Hudson

Around 3:30 on the afternoon of March 28th, Viv's office buzzes with word coming in from Queens. A brawl between picketers from the miner's union and scab laborers working on the Winn Water Tunnel has turned into a riot, and several buildings have already caught fire. The newsroom boss, Greg Callahan, sends Viv along with a photographer, Carmela Savino, to get the word from the street as soon as possible.

Once Viv confirms the existence of a riot and fire, the newsroom boss will want a phone update as soon as possible with material for the evening edition. If she gets a good enough story, and pictures of the flames, she might get the front page of tomorrow's edition.

Viv already has some context for the riot before she arrives, which she may decide to relate to her photographer. (Note, sending a photographer with Viv does not insult her skill in Photography, rather the newspaper expects Viv as its reporter to focus on the story and Carmela to focus on capturing front-page images while Viv works.) Although the photographer doesn't play much of a role in the scenario, the player may describe how she and Carmela, a peer in age and experience with a charming smile and eye for capturing the city's people, have worked together before.

**Streetwise:** The miner's union is technically chapter no. 147 of the Laborer's International Union of North America, but everyone calls them the "sandhogs." They work deep underground, constructing city infrastructure—subways, bridge supports, gas tunnels, water tunnels—and have one of the lowest life expectancies and highest fatality rates in the city. Getting the union's side of the story shouldn't prove a challenge. Their president, Ernest Foley (core, "The Union Line") loves making statements for the paper. Even if police haul him in briefly for the rioting, Foley should spend tonight in the union hall conferring with other officers about official statements.

**History:** (alternate, "Probing the Hudson") The Winn Water Tunnel has been contentious from the start. The Catskill Aqueduct, completed in 1924, brings water through a series of four reservoirs down into the city. Until now, however, the water had only reached the Northern and Western boroughs. The City Water Tunnel No. 2 project promises to bring cleaner water to the rest of the city. Its planned route cuts down to Queens near its border with Brooklyn, then runs across Brooklyn to Staten Island. Plans for the Winn Water Tunnel were developed several years later, at the pushing of a local alderman. Most outside Queens consider it an unnecessary graft project.

When Viv arrives at the scene of the riot, 41st St. and Astoria Avenue, the fire department and police have already set up a cordon at 8th and 15th to keep out civilians. A Difficulty 5 Quick Test of **Stealth** (to blend in with the street's residents, frantically moving their goods to safety)



or **Athletics** (to climb a fire escape and get on the roof) or a Push with **Bargain** will get Viv and Carmela an excellent vantage point to watch the riot in its final moments.

Firefighters struggle to extinguish the blaze that has spread through five buildings on the northern side of the street, but seem to have already succeeded with the two on the southern side. Debris and refuse litter the street alongside the valuable items thrown or carried out of the buildings - primarily business premises, with apartments on their second and sometimes third stories. One rioter still struggles against police, even as his body writhes under truncheons. Police have the rest separated into two groups on either side of the road, as wagons take them off in shifts. Viv's **Streetwise** easily distinguishes the groups; the scabs appear a far more motley collection of drifters.

If Viv attempts to speak with any of the rioters in custody, police shuffle her off. Scabs remain silent as she goes, but a union man will shout "An injury to one, is an injury to all!" Fists fly up along the union line in solidarity and police shift uncomfortably.

A middle-aged Italian-American woman, Gemma Leone, paces just outside the police cordon insisting they let her back in, now that the fire in her place is out. She shouts at the final rioters "It wasn't enough? You and your buddies came back to make sure it's all gone now?" Police and firefighters receive just as much of her abuse, as she demands to speak with someone in authority. If the player doesn't pick this up without a hint, Viv recognizes the value of an eyewitness to interview and maybe a good human interest story in the bargain.

Gemma responds positively to any approach by someone to whom she can tell her story:

- Two nights ago, a no-good drifter smashed a window in her pawn shop, grabbed a bunch of stuff and ran, even though she was right there in the store. But he was such a greedy weasel that the police caught him just up the street, breaking into a jeweler's.
- If that weren't enough, apparently he was working some kind of scab job up on Astoria, so there's been picketers up there making everything tense. Between that and her boarded up

window she's had no business for the last two days.

- And if *that* weren't enough, tonight the picketers got in a fight with the scabs and it exploded back down her street and now everything in her shop has been ruined, thanks to the firemen getting water everywhere.
- She punctuates her speech with agonized gestures; glances at the wet, smoking facade of her pawn shop; and angry sneers for the scabs. Appropriate questions or simple prompts yield the rest:
- About forty or fifty rioters total. Maybe two dozen of the union men who'd been picketing, the rest dirty scabs.
  - (alternate, "The Station House") She's already pressed charges about the man who robbed her and she plans to go down to the precinct tonight and identify the men who started the fight. She wants them all charged with destruction of property.
  - She thinks the scabs started it. Not all of them, but one seemed real hot-tempered yesterday and some of the men held him back. One of the older-looking men tried that again today, but then the scab punched *him* so bad he went down. No honor among scabs. That's when the fight started.
  - (alternate, "The Union Line") The union men kept up one of those monotonous chants all day, it made your head hurt. Something about "An injury to one is an injury to all" and "We're gonna hold this picket line, 'till a city inspector says we'll be fine."
  - If Viv mentions her work, Gemma asks her to include a line about the pawn store and the massive sale she'll be having on Saturday. "All damaged merchandise must go."
- (core, "The Old Scab's Story") Once Viv concludes the conversation or determines there's no more to be gotten out of her, Gemma Leone excitedly points to an older man slipping quietly into one of the street's alleys. She hisses that he's the one who tried to stop today's fight. The man scuttles with a slight limp and cradles one arm. He glances over his shoulder, but the officers on the scene have grouped around a single man who'd remained fighting.

### THE OLD SCAB'S STORY

**Scene Type:** Core

**Lead-Ins:** Covering the Riot, The Station House

**Lead-Outs:** Probing the Hudson, Mark Arnold

Taking advantage of the police's distraction, the injured man tries to make himself scarce. After getting through to a clear street, he moves his broken body as quickly as possible to the nearest elevated station (the Flushing line) and tries to disappear into a train full of commuters.

### FOLLOWING ESCALENTE

**Shadowing**

**Advance 3+:** You stay on his trail all the way to the Central Park Hooverville, where he slips into a makeshift shack.

**Hold 2:** You manage to follow him into the subway, but lose him in the commuter crush. As your car pulls out of a transfer station, you catch a final glimpse of his stooped form hurrying toward an arriving train.

**Setback 1 or less:** As per hold, also gain Problem 1, "Scanty Copy"

**Extra Problem:** Problem 2, "Harried"

The player may attempt to approach him on the train, but **Streetwise** picks up his body language, signaling that he's injured and will attempt to get away as soon as possible. If Viv decides to approach anyway, she may use a Push of **Inspiration** to convince him that the right thing to do is to talk to her. He agrees, but needs to get back to his place and make a sling for his arm before he can give her more than some of the following basic information. However he will let her ride with him the rest of the way.

If Viv either chooses not to follow him or fails the **Shadowing** test, she may still find the old man, Rafael Escalente, by following up at "The Station House" (p. 11).

The Central Park Hooverville, a shanty town named for the president under whom the Depression started, spreads out across the park's old reservoir. Ill-dressed children play around dozens of shacks of varied size and construction. Women lean on doorways, while men hunch down on wooden boxes, playing cards or smoking. They watch Viv as she passes, but avoid eye contact. Escalente stoops to enter a shack constructed of mismatched wooden planks. Blankets hang on the inside, filling the cracks between planks. This place will be a death trap come winter.

Escalente's primary focus is constructing a sling for his arm. A simple use of **Reassurance** that she won't name him but wants to find out what happened will get him to give the following responses to appropriate questions:

- His name is Rafael Escalente. He came to this country from Cuba as a young man, after the Spanish-American war. Used to be a grocer, but most of the people he sold to were now on breadlines and he couldn't afford to keep the store.
- (alternate, "Probing the Hudson") About two weeks ago, another man told him about the chance of work. He and a couple other men from this Hooverville met a fellow representing Hudson Enterprises, who promised them several months of work. He expects he'll have to tell their wives that they've been locked up.
- He hadn't liked the man who slugged him, Benny Miller, from the start. He was the kind of tough guy Escalente's seen over and over again—he thinks he can intimidate his way into anything. Still, it had surprised him to see how violent Miller got with the police—anyone with a lick of sense would've known they had him beat and just surrendered.
- (core, "Mark Arnold") The guy Benny and his buddy Ira Graber, along with Dan Willard, the man who'd been arrested for robbing that old Italian lady, got special favors from Mr. Arnold, who had them stay late the first couple of nights the men worked.
- After that, Arnold kept those three working ahead of the rest of the men. Said it had something to do with the accident cleanup and told the rest to stay back from that area because it

wasn't yet safe. Escalante minded his own business, but after Benny got in a couple of messy fights with the other guys, it surprised him that Arnold kept him on. Must've been because they'd been miners, actually knew about being down deep.

- He had mostly kept the cement mixer running. Mr. Arnold wanted them filling out work the union men had blasted through. No blasting work for them, thank goodness. Some of the fellows said they could weld and they made steel frames for the tunnel. The other guys laid the cement, real thick, in these frames.
- You couldn't pay him to go back down there, even if his arm weren't busted. He's too old for this kind of work. Next time he might get killed. Better just to fade out and die in a place like this Hooverville.

Viv may attempt to assist Escalante by offering him food and shelter, money for a doctor, or by taking him in hand herself. If she gives him money, he'll tell her he's saving it for the winter, if he lives that long, so he can buy a bed in a flop house. In doing so, she may earn Edge 2, "Warm-hearted."

### THE STATION HOUSE

**Scene Type:** Alternate

**Lead-Ins:** Covering the Riot

**Lead-Outs:** The Old Scab's Story, The Union Line, Bellevue, Probing the Hudson

Viv may learn more of what happened before and after the riot at the 115th Precinct station house in Queens (Northern Blvd. and 92nd St.) to get more information for her story. This text assumes that she visits on the night of the riot, although after having followed Escalante. The GM should alter aspects to reflect time passed (if she comes back the next day) or lack thereof (if she chooses to accompany Gemma, rather than tail Escalante).

Entering the station, Viv encounters a satisfied Gemma Leone taking her leave of the sergeant on duty, Sgt. Andy Parker. "Well I'd say it was a pity about that louse, but if he couldn't keep his hands off of other people's things..." Using **Oral History**,

Viv learns the following in response to questions put to garrulous Gemma or delivered in a stilted and official fashion by the sergeant:

- Dan Willard, the louse who robbed Mrs. Leone's shop last week, died in prison last night, after another inmate caught him nicking cigarettes and shived him. Nasty bunch in there.
- (alternate, "The Union Line") The police are holding the scabs in the drunk tank, but are keeping the union men down the hall on benches. The sergeant has made a call to the union HQ and they expect someone to arrive with bail any minute.
- (alternate, "Bellevue") Orderlies from Bellevue have already removed the man, Benjamin Miller, who Gemma identified as so violently attacking the old scab (Police: "'Old Raffy' the prisoners called him"/Gemma "that poor old man"). Police consider Miller the primary instigator of the event, but don't yet know if they'll be able to charge him—it depends on whether or not doctors bring him out of whatever kind of fit he's having. They'll hold the other non-union men overnight, but the sergeant confides he doesn't expect many to manage the bail. Most likely they'll cut them all loose and just prosecute Miller.
- (core, "The Old Scab's Story") Police plan to find and question the old man, whom the sergeant reluctantly admits they lost track of while attempting to restrain Miller. However, they learned his presumed address — although one really can't call directions to a shack an address—from another scab, and will be sending officers to take a statement in due course. The sergeant brushes off the man's slipping away. A mere oversight. Mrs. Leone has testified that he did not take part in the riot and thus they have no intention of charging him.
- A total of five buildings, including Mrs. Leone's, sustained major damage from the fire, and another three will require reinspection. Additionally, houses north toward Astoria Boulevard suffered broken windows and other minor damage from projectiles thrown during the riot.
- (alternate, "Probing the Hudson") The sergeant called Hudson Enterprises, and got assurances

that they shut down all work to avoid this happening in the future. The owner, Adrian Rush, seemed surprised by the whole thing, but the sergeant supposes he wouldn't want people knowing he employed scabs. He thinks the chief should find a way to fine them for causing this kind of public disturbance, to make up for any bail or fines they're likely to get from this crew. Meanwhile, he told Hudson Enterprises to post its own people to preclude sabotage, now that the union men know there's something afoot.

By using a **Bargain** Push, or dropping the name of her police source, she learns the old man's name is Rafael Escalante and he lives in a shack in the Central Park Hooverville. Otherwise, with the information given above, the player finds Rafael Escalante's shack (core, "The Old Scab's Story") after a brief montage of searching from Hooverville to Hooverville, starting in Queens and moving out. Along the way, she meets other broken old men. If, through her own inspiration, the player suggests checking out the Central Park Hooverville right away, she finds him with comparatively little difficulty.

Any attempt to question the union men will end with them referring to Mr. Foley. "Not saying one word we are. You better talk to him." As Viv leaves the station, the union men get led out by a representative who has posted bail for them. He tells the men to get home and clean up, but that Mr. Foley wants to see them at the union HQ tonight, and they'd better not keep him waiting too long.

If, having identified Ira from Escalante's clues, Viv wants to question him, she learns the police took him along to Bellevue too, to answer questions about what might've caused this. All the other scabs claim to know nothing about Benny. The desk sergeant expects he'll be released, too, unless he turns strange and they decide to throw him into Bellevue.

## PROBING THE HUDSON

**Scene Type:** Alternate

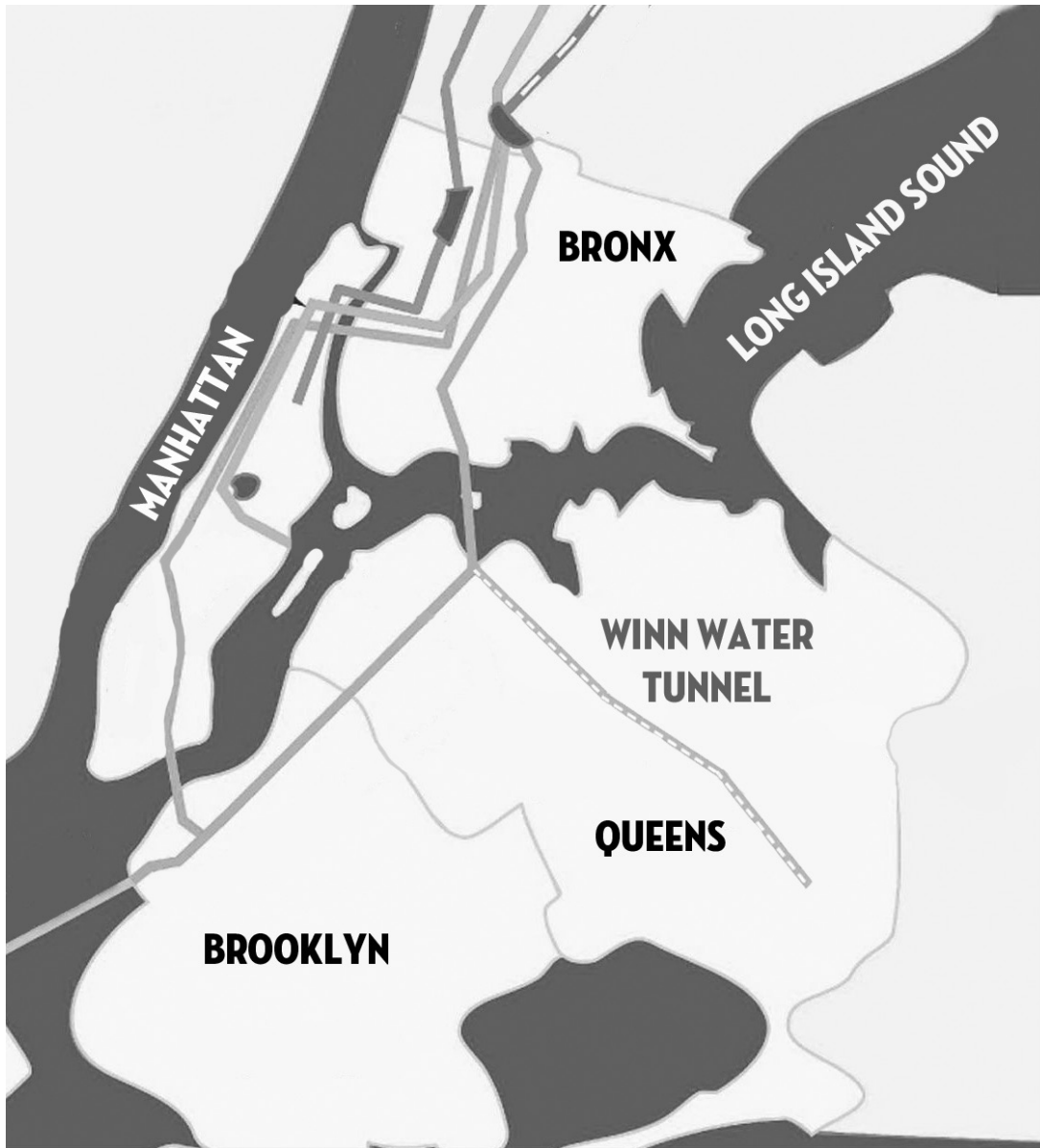
**Lead-Ins:** Covering the Riot, The Old Scab's Story, The Station House, The Union Line

**Lead-Outs:** No Place for Snoops, Mark Arnold

**Research**, whether in the newspaper's morgue or the New York Public Library, reveals the following about Hudson Enterprises, and the Winn Water Tunnel:

- Adrian Rush incorporated Hudson Enterprises during the skyscraper boom of the late 1920s. It currently occupies the 48th floor of the Chanin Building at 122 East 42nd Street, which Viv recognizes as a rather nice art deco building, but nothing special by 1934.
- The only clippings she can find for its constructions projects are several modest office buildings.
- Its stock nearly tanked in 1932.
- In 1933, multiple offhand mentions connect the company with government contracts, and eventually with the work done in putting through the bill for the Winn Water Tunnel. Rush and representatives from Hudson appear in lists of persons at civic hearings.
- Three companies bid for the project, but only the bid from Hudson Enterprises met all the necessary criteria. The other two lacked minor requirements, unclearly described in the legislation. **Bureaucracy** recognizes this as a trick of legislators to ensure their preferred contractor wins the bid.
- (core, "Mark Arnold") Photographs from a Queens hearing on the construction of the water tunnel extension include one of Rush, Winn, and a blond, mustached man named as Mark Arnold. The accompanying story refers to Arnold as Hudson Enterprises' former Chief Engineer and current Vice President of Operations.

## Winn Water Tunnel Map



**Bureaucracy**, in the form of a phone call or trip to the Buildings Department, tells her:

- The Winn Water Tunnel is the only project in the city for which Hudson Enterprises has any permits filed.
- The general path of the Winn Water Tunnel. (See map, above.)
- (pipe, “Breaking Into the Staging Yard”) The company lists two addresses, its headquarters at the Chanin Building, and a lot just south of the Astoria Light, Heat, and Power Company plant, along Winthrop Avenue. The map puts the second address at the northeastern end of the proposed water pipe, making this likely a staging facility.

### ***The Staging Facility***

The location of the staging facility lays pipe for a player to realize later on that Arnold had the opportunity to move a dhole egg the length of the completed pipe and thus surface it somewhere farther from prying eyes. Should the ambitious player jump right to this point and visit the lot, she discovers a fenced facility, guarded by several toughs, also non-union, who ensure its security. If she manages to get a look over the fence, she can see a fair amount of ordinary construction equipment as well as a couple of sheds, one with “Warning: Explosives” painted on the side. If the player successfully argues Viv’s ability to break in in, adapt Antagonist Reaction “No Place for Snoops” for her discovery, and removal to chat with “Mark Arnold.” Adapt that scene to including Arnold’s patronizing attitude about not pressing charges. Frame this positively, as the player now knows to come back to it when she has more context.

### **THE UNION LINE**

**Scene Type:** Alternate

**Lead-Ins:** Covering the Riot, The Station House,  
Mark Arnold

**Lead-Outs:** Probing the Hudson, Gettler’s  
Analysis, Minding O’Mara

The Local 147 headquarters are in a squat building at the corner of 36th and 24th streets in Queens. Its front window is hung with thick curtains, and covered by banners proclaiming labor slogans, flyers advertising current meetings, and remnants of older flyers. Just inside the door, Viv is stopped by Neil O’Mara, a tall, gangly young man with graying hair around his temples. If Viv came straight here from the riot, her arrival surprises him, as he expected the union representative who’d

gone to bail out their men. Either way, he knows Mr. Foley likes talking to members of the press. If she came any time after the “Station House,” she recognizes several men from the riot among those milling in the main meeting room.

In the main meeting room, rows of benches face a podium with a “LOCAL 147” banner permanently draped across it. Tables in the back display buttons, literature from several pro-union sources, and home-made pamphlets with jaunty titles like “Johnny’s First Subway Ride: Courtesy of the Local 147!” “Clean Catskill Water Costs Sandhog Lives!” Viv’s **Streetwise** notices the mark of a sandhog on each man—a small badge worn on the belt reading “Compressed Air Worker” with instructions on where to take him, should he collapse in the street. Even Foley wears one, although he hasn’t worked a job in years.

The bluff Foley likely recognizes Viv and, if not stopped, launches right into a speech to the following effect:

- Clearly his men weren’t at fault, those scabs not only don’t know not to cross a picket line but not to strike, *heh*, a union man (a few silently raise fists).
- By rights, the job belongs to his men, only they encountered some kind of underground pocket of noxious fluid and several became gravely, yes indeed Miss Sinclair, *gravely* ill. And not in the usual way, nothing like the bends at all. Fortunately, the union takes care of its men, so they called a halt on the project.
- (alternate, “Probing the Hudson”) He’s been negotiating with Hudson Enterprises in good faith. He was profoundly shocked by the turn of events which alerted them to the presence of scabs on the project. As far as he knows, negotiations continue, but he will take a firm hand with Rush now.

In response to appropriate questions, he provides the following:

- They have two very reasonable demands; first, compensation for the men whose health was compromised, in a turn of events which Foley would grant even Hudson Enterprises could not have predicted. Second, they wish to see a city health inspector’s certification that the site no longer poses any risk to the miners.



- The turn of events to which he refers? On a job like this, his men work in several teams, one blasting ahead down the tunnel and several more following behind to clear the slag. Then they build the tunnel's frame and pour concrete. They work in segments. Now, the blasting men had one go wrong. It doesn't happen often, except when the kind of rock changes. They build the charge based on the kind of rock they're blasting through and how big a hole they want.
- Here it wasn't so much the rock that changed as they found a kind of empty pocket behind it. So the charge had much too much force for the rock. That's happened before, once on another project they blasted into mud and it sucked three men up into the East River. Only this empty pocket wasn't mud and it wasn't empty either.
- They didn't get a good look at what they blasted into. They immediately evacuated with the injured men, lost a lot of time to the pressure locks, and Hudson Enterprises hasn't allowed anyone to re-enter, except perhaps these scabs.
- (alternate, "Gettler's Analysis") The men were covered in a horrible, gooey substance. It burned them terribly before the others could get them out of their clothes and cleaned out. The doctors don't exactly know what it was. They sent it off to the office of the Chief Medical Examiner.
- (alternate, "Minding O'Mara") None of those men are in the union headquarters. They're doing very poorly, but Foley's been pulling for them. Connor O'Mara, father of the young man who let her in, was the blast supervisor. Such a shame. The hospital sent them home a few days ago—not enough beds and no hope.

Should Viv wish to see an injured miner, Foley will dissuade her by suggesting that she would find the entire experience overwhelming. **Assess Honesty** tells Viv he's not telling the whole story. Neil's reaction, if he overhears, tells her more is definitely up. If she speaks to Neil separately, **Reassurance** convinces him that taking her to see his father would be the right thing to do. She may either make arrangements to meet Neil at a later time—he gives

an address in a rather shabby part of Queens—or ask him to take her to see his father right away.

If Viv wants to learn more about the kind of work sandhogs do and the risks involved, a use of **Oral History** gathers a group of primarily older men wanting to share their stories. From them, she learns the following colorful tidbits:

- Sandhogs first organized when building the Brooklyn Bridge. They died of the bends at terrible rates back then, all that underwater work and people still figuring out how to do it right.
- There's a difference between some of the one-job men and a sandhog. For sandhogs, it's in the family, in the blood.
- You start at 15 or so, just hauling out the slag, not doing the serious work, but then you generally learn what your dad does or your uncle does. The O'Mara family, for example, they blast. Then you've got your welders, like Foley.
- The rules say they have to retire at 40, but the men have a good laugh about that. If you can still work, you work. Ernest Foley looks a little uncomfortable about these remarks.
- Right now, the sandhogs have the Lincoln Tunnel project and City Water Tunnel No. 2 going on as well as the Winn thing, so most of them will find something to do. There are over a thousand sandhogs working in the city right now.



From her source for **Medicine**, Louisa Reynolds, she may learn that "bends" or "caisson disease" (named for the bottomless diving bells in which the men work bridge jobs) happens when someone moves from high pressure to lower pressure too quickly and gas bubbles (mostly nitrogen) form in their blood. It can lead to anything from headaches and nosebleeds to complete collapse and death, even on the first ascent. Companies working on pressurized projects keep hyperbaric chambers on hand for the treatment of men who collapse, although it doesn't always work in time. Repeated exposure can lead to disability and impaired recovery time. If this project wasn't pressurized, men wouldn't be at risk.

**MINDING O'MARA****Scene Type:** Alternate**Lead-Ins:** The Union Line**Lead-Outs:** Mark Arnold, Gettler's Analysis, Scouring the Ash Heaps, No Place for Snoops

The O'Mara family lives in a decaying row home in southern Queens. A smattering of children, some neighbors and some O'Maras, play in the street outside. Neil introduces Viv to his mother Siobhan, a middle-aged woman with a deeply lined forehead and grim mouth. When Neil announces Viv's intention, Mrs. O'Mara simply nods a resigned assent.

Connor O'Mara rests in the darkened bedroom upstairs. Neil brings a miner's lantern, which he points away from his father. The lantern provides enough light for Viv to see Connor's body. Although only in his mid-to-late 40s, O'Mara looks skeletal and haggard, more like the victim of a terminal illness than a man who worked a construction job only a month ago. His breath comes in ragged gasps. His skin sloughs off in patches, leaving some areas exposed and oozing. Neil tuts and busies himself applying bandages to the freshest areas. Scabs over older sores have an unhealthy look to them, and a smell of rot and acid permeates the room.

**SEEING CONNOR O'MARA****Stability**

**Advance 9+:** You interview him calmly and pleasantly, as you would any subject who might bring you a valuable story. Earn Edge 1 "*Neil's Gratitude*"

**Hold 5-8:** You grit your teeth through the interview but manage to keep down the contents of your stomach.

**Setback 4 or less:** You take one look at those sores, catch a whiff of the smell, and lose your last meal. Take Problem 3, "*Miffed Miners.*"

O'Mara breathes out his answers as gasps. He can tell Viv the following:

- (core, "Mark Arnold") Mr. Arnold came by when he was in the hospital and told him not to talk to reporters. He threatened that Hudson Enterprises wouldn't pay a single dime to his family or the other men's if they talked. He guesses from Viv's presence that Neil didn't take kindly to that. He sure didn't either.
- (alternate, "Gettler's Analysis") A man from the chief medical examiner's office, Alexander Gettler, has come by several times to take blood samples and ask him questions about his health.
- He can't remember much about the accident. He calculated the charges himself and they had worked every time before. In the hospital, Foley told him that the stone hadn't been solid all the way through, that there had been empty space and...something else on the other side.
- (alternate, "Scouring the Ash Heap") He wondered if it had something to do with the Flushing River, maybe they had hit it underground. Those old Corona "meadows," the mountains of ash heap you see from the train, used to be some kind of marshy water, too. When he first looked at the job, he'd asked if Arnold thought they might encounter some kind of underground stream, but Arnold didn't think so. And this, well, this wasn't a stream.
- He always expected to die young, his father died at 55 and his grandfather at 48. And he always hoped he would die like them, not in some kind of accident. He just wishes it would all end. Most mining accidents have the decency to kill you right off or it's something you live through. He can't take knowing he'll die without there being a damn thing he can do about it.

Neil provides the following information in response to questions about his father, after moving the conversation out of earshot of both his father and the rest of his family:

- His father's condition has worsened since leaving the hospital. Whatever happened caused some kind of progressive wasting. He doesn't understand, he stripped his father's soaked



clothes right off, carried him up through the elevator himself. Surely not enough could have gotten on him to do this much damage.

- (alternate, “Gettler’s Analysis”) The chief medical examiner’s office has sent someone by several times since his father’s release to take blood samples and otherwise track his health.
  - The other men injured in the accident are in similar states nearing death, but their families are unwilling to talk to outsiders since it might risk the compensation from Hudson Enterprises. Neil doesn’t believe anything more than the union pension will ever materialize and considers it now his responsibility to support his family.
  - Because of his father’s age, he’d worked hard to get them on this project and not the main water tunnel work. He thought it would be safer. His father wasn’t even supposed to still be working, but no sandhog worth his salt actually retires at 40. The main water tunnel has to go under several stretches of river, high pressure work. This job should have been more like a deep subway.
- Assess Honesty** tells Viv Neil blames himself for his father’s condition.

## BELLEVUE

**Scene Type:** Alternate

**Lead-Ins:** The Station House

**Lead-Outs:** Finding Ira Graber, Head Shrinking, No Place for Snoops

Viv may choose to visit the prison ward of Bellevue in an attempt to learn more about Benny Miller and his condition. The attendant physician on duty, Dr. Klein, a crisp-toned, graying man, will not allow her into the prison ward. A use of **Reassurance** or **Flattery** persuades him to send a nurse for Benny’s chart with the stern instructions only to share the full list of charges with this nosy reporter.

The nurse, Mabel Ritter, treats Viv with the jovial good-humor found most often among those whose work would otherwise jade their worldviews. She reads off the list of charges as though the length was an inside joke between Viv and herself, raising her eyebrows or feigning shock:

- Disorderly conduct,
- Disturbing the peace,
- Public brawling,
- Destruction of property,
- Attempted murder,
- Failure to obey a police officer,
- Assaulting a police officer, and
- Destruction of police property

Interpersonal use of **Oral History** reveals that only one other person has visited Miller, a young man named Ira Graber. Graber was brought in by the police, as they couldn’t keep Miller lucid enough to answer questions at first. Some days she feels like the whole world’s going mad and they’re all coming to New York. Give her your average burglar with a broken arm any day.

(core, “Finding Ira Graber”) Graber hasn’t come back. Nurse Ritter remembers him saying something about “back to the breadline.”

If Viv wants the rest of the information in Benny’s medical file, she’ll have to wait until Nurse Ritter leaves and make the following test, or make a **Reassurance** Push to convince the nurse she doesn’t intend to publish the details.

Alternatively, if Viv comes up with the idea of using Disguise, a Difficulty 5 Quick Test allows her to impersonate Benny’s sister and read his medical records. On a success, have the player describe the preparations she makes and how she intends to prove her identity.

## READING BENNY’S RECORDS

### File

**Advance 6+:** You tip the file off the table into your lap just long enough to take in the details. See “Psychological Assessment of Benjamin Miller”, below. Earn Edge 3, “Light-Fingered.”

**Hold 2-5:** You tip the file off the table into your lap just long enough to take in the details. See “Psychological Assessment of Benjamin Miller”, below.

**Setback 1 or less:** The nurse turns around at just the wrong moment and calls for the officer stationed outside the ward to evict Viv. Take Problem 4, “In Hot Water.”

**Extra Problem:** Problem 5, “Twitchy”

### Psychological Assessment of Benjamin Miller

Viv learns the following substantive points from reading the assessment:

- Subject is a 24-year-old male from Cambria County, Pennsylvania. Note: subject's friend Ira Graber, was brought by police to provide information about his history. Viv's **History** recognizes this as the heart of Pennsylvania coal country, which flourished in the 1910s and 1920s but got hit hard by the Depression.
- (pipe, "Head Shrinking") Subject suffers from acute homicidal mania of unknown cause. Note: Graber supplied information that source "had a temper" but confirmed this behavior as new. Graber confirmed the subject had been in several violent altercations with other transients in the past week, all incited by the subject and over trivial matters.
- Subject may have been affected by greater depths and different atmospheric pressures on his most recent job than the mines to which he was accustomed. The shortened lifespans of both coal and city miners makes study of long term psychological effects of underground work on the men difficult.
- Subject is being treated with injections of phenobarbital (Viv's source for **Psychology**, Louisa Reynolds, can confirm this as a fast-acting and powerful sedative). His outbursts upon awakening have grown so violent toward himself that, even in a straightjacket, the attending physician feels concern that he may self-injure and has prescribed round-the-clock sedation.

### NO PLACE FOR SNOOPS

**Scene Type:** Antagonist Reaction

**Lead-Ins:** Minding O'Mara, Bellevue, Probing the Hudson

**Lead-Outs:** Mark Arnold, Union Divided

The same persons hired by Hudson Enterprises to keep an eye on union activity notice Viv's presence at the union headquarters, visiting an injured miner, and generally asking questions about the company. When the timing seems right for a Challenge, three men begin shadowing her as she walks between locations, transit, and her home. The scene might occur in unfamiliar alleys in Queens or Manhattan, a subway station temporarily empty during the afternoon or late-night lull, or even around the corner from her own building as a threatened implication "we know where you live."

### FOOTFALLS IN THE ALLEY

**Sense Trouble**

**Advance 9+:** You sense the footsteps matching your own, the pace, the pauses. Someone is moving up on you from behind, but either you're on top of things or they're not being as cautious as they should. Gain Edge 4, "Sharp Senses"

**Hold 5-8:** You feel a bit of a chill walking these streets alone, probably the sharp spring air.

**Setback 4 or less:** A walk down these alleys is a perfect time to contemplate how you'll frame this story. You focus more on the problem in your mind than the surroundings. Take Problem 6, "Off-Guard."

As soon as no one's in sight, two men fall in on either side of Viv and attempt to take her by the arms, turning her to face a third.

## TEACHING THE LADY A LESSON

### *Fleeing or Fighting*

**Advance 11+:** As arms reach for you from behind, you dodge easily out of the way, even managing to get in a couple licks of your own (if the player chose Fighting, invite her to describe her parting shot) before leaving three toughs scratching their heads how a dame could get the jump on them. Gain Edge 5, “On Top of Your Game.”

**Hold 5-8:** A couple of toughs steamroll up beside you, pinning you in place by your arms while another fingers a switchblade, suggesting that you consider moving to a less dangerous line of work. “Ain’t it better for a dame like you to cover something safer like the fashion pages? Or do those Frenchies cut you as bad with their little sewing scissors?” **Streetwise:** As you dust yourself off, you realize they probably didn’t have orders to hurt you badly, just to shake you up so you’d drop the case.

**Setback 4 or less:** Same as above, but take Problem 7, “Hobbled.”

**Streetwise:** These men didn’t show signs of belonging to an organization or mob. Viv doesn’t recognize them from among the scabs she’s encountered. Unlike the scabs, they appear to have regular employment, of the physical variety or as security guards. If she got an Advance on both tests, she clearly recalls seeing one of them patrolling the floor at Hudson Enterprises.

## GETTLER’S ANALYSIS

**Scene Type:** Alternate

**Lead-Ins:** The Union Line, Minding O’Mara

**Lead-Outs:** Scouring the Ash Heaps, Breaking into the Staging Yard, Union Divided

Viv finds Alexander Gettler in his laboratory on the third floor of the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, above the city morgue (see *Cthulhu Confidential*, p.174). Although a ceaseless campaigner for public health, Gettler makes do with a small staff and minimal equipment.

His laboratory contains dozens of ongoing experiments—beakers, sample jars, ovens, chemical solutions all carefully labeled with official case numbers or personal notes.

Until Viv informs him otherwise, Gettler assumes that she’s come to write yet another of the recent news stories about a sensational murder whose trial just ended, and passes her off to an assistant. Upon hearing of her interest in the miners, however, he interrupts and waves off his staffer, showing his first real interest in her presence. He shows her a set of blood sample phials for the five men injured in the accident, taken from every man, three days apart, for the last three weeks.

Meanwhile, one of his lab assistants, wearing thick, padded gloves, unlocks a cupboard and draws out a large glass jar appearing to contain a thick yellow jelly-like substance. The presence of the jar immediately quiets the rest of the laboratory. Gettler himself unscrews the top, which reveals a creamy bubble of mucous-like fluid in the center of the jelly-substance. He volunteers the first two bullet points and, in response to questions, provides the following information about the blood, the strange bubble, and the accident:

- Each of these blood samples has a progressively lower pH; in layman’s terms, they grow progressively more acidic.
- (pipe, “Union Divided”) A normal human’s blood ranges between 7.3 and 7.4 in pH. The first sample he took from the miners has blood range at 7.25—worrying and too low to sustain health but not necessarily fatal. In the weeks that followed it continued going down...7.20, 7.10... Dipping below 7 almost certainly leads to death and he can find no cause or way to reverse this trajectory.
- Right now, the men’s lungs attempt to compensate for the lack of oxygen in their blood by breathing faster. This would explain the deep, labored breathing she’s heard from O’Mara if she’s visited him. But they’ll suffocate in their own bodies if it goes much further. Moreover, whatever affects their blood also seems to be causing lesions on their skin. He can’t tell whether the lesions result from prolonged

hypoxia (deprivation of oxygen to a part of the body) or some other cause.

- The jarred substance is all that remains of the acidic mucous he managed to obtain from the sandhogs' clothing. It slowly ate its way through nearly everything he used to contain it, but luckily it didn't dissolve, it just kept slowly wearing away at whatever was beneath. Gettler describes a rather frantic afternoon spent with his assistants constantly shifting in new substances—lead, limestone, etc., in under one another as it gradually eroded its way through them all.
- The jelly in which he's encased it is a mix of several bases, which keeps it stable enough that he can take it out and work on it, although in the weeks he's had it, he's had to refill the jelly several times.
- His analysis on the mucous has revealed several chemicals of unknown origin, but he makes very slow work on it as it eventually erodes away any tool he uses to examine it. He doesn't have the time or the budget to keep replacing equipment.
- (alternate, "Scouring the Ash Heap") Using records from Hudson Enterprises, he's pinpointed the scene of the accident as occurring directly under the Corona "meadows" ash heap. He doesn't yet have enough evidence to justify launching a full investigation, but he considers it quite likely that the Brooklyn Ash Removal Company may have disposed of dangerous acidic substances, or perhaps those only dangerous in combination, in addition to their ash. If these substances leached far enough down, they might pool in a place where the miners eventually encountered them.
- (core, "Breaking into the Staging Yard") He hadn't yet opened an official investigation because he thought no more work was happening at the. He'd spoken to Foley as part of his investigation and they'd agreed on an inspection as critical. But he's had so much to look into he waited to hear from Foley or Hudson Enterprises. He expresses relief that none of the scabs have experienced that kind of burning again and will call Hudson to ensure they actually stop work this time.

If Viv expresses the desire to get some of Gettler's stabilizing jelly base, "just in case," she may make a Push with **Bargain**, promising to engage her source, Nettie Rice, in the puzzle. This allows her to Take Time with Nettie and work out some practical use of the jelly, as a defence or a weapon (depending on the pulp flavor). A player without Pushes may call in Nettie to Gettler's office later to collect the sample, but the disruption in Nettie's life leaves Viv holding Problem 23, "Nettie's Nettled."

Gettler asks Viv to give him a call if she learns more about what happened. He doesn't have much hope for the men, but the puzzle of the thing will keep him up at night, even after they're gone. If he could know what happened...and prevent this from happening again... He doesn't have enough funding or assistants to keep chasing this, but he'd appreciate a heads up on anything she finds in her sleuthing. If Viv calls him in during the Denouement, she earns Edge 13, "Gettler Owes You."

### SCOURING THE ASH HEAPS

**Scene Type:** Alternate

**Lead-Ins:** Minding O'Mara, Gettler's Analysis

**Lead-Outs:** Breaking Into the Staging Yard

What happens to the land when a dhole passes under it? And the effects of its blighting brood yet unhatched? This scene provides an historical grounding to the horror that lies beneath the city. Keepers may need to convey to players that the ash removal company are digging up the meadows. The player should come away from the scene aware that this problem predates industrialization, and with pipe laid for a thrill of horror over the World's Fair in the Coda (p. 34).

Over fifty million tons of waste—ashes and the residue of Brooklyn householder's burned garbage—forms the ninety-foot mountain and rolling dunes of the Corona Ash Heaps. F. Scott Fitzgerald described the road as shrinking away from these smoking piles of ruin and rubbish, this "valley of ashes." Like most New Yorkers, Viv knows they exist; their bleakness confronts

every rail passenger who undertakes a journey to Queens. Yet familiarity breeds indifference and many in the city look on them as a fixture in the landscape, as unmovable as the Statue of Liberty.

**Research** in the newspaper's morgue quickly turns up the following facts about the Ash Heaps:

- In 1909, the Brooklyn Ash Removal Company purchased the land from the City.
- In November of 1920, the Department of Health investigated reports of rats coming from the Corona meadows dump. The department's agents found horrifying conditions in both the ash dump and the neighboring homes, and ordered massive extermination procedures.
- While the Flushing River runs through the area, it's become a nearly buried creek by this point. Historically, it's been more marsh than river.
- Articles from earlier this year record the new mayor's decision to revoke private ash dumping contracts, most notably that of the Brooklyn Ash Company. The byline on all the articles concerning the subject come from one of the *Herald's* political reporters, Molly Reid.

Viv finds Molly Reid, a capable 50-something with sharp eyes and sharper questions, working on her most recent article in the *Herald's* bullpen, and in need of a sandwich (at any time of day). In response to questions about the Ash Heaps, Molly can provide the following:

- While it may have "Ash Company" in the name, they dump far more than ashes. McCarthy's men would take anything from a dead horse, it's said, to a mattress. However, nothing she's uncovered in allegations about the company's shenanigans hints at chemical waste at scale.
- La Guardia's administration plans to shut it down, and has proposed a number of alternate uses for the land, but first they have to figure out a way to remove all that ash and refuse.
- It wouldn't surprise her if some kind of awful waste filtered down from the ash heap, but that land has always been blighted. She's read up on the history, and as far back as she can find, people have used that land as a dump. Early Dutch settlers described it as "brackish and foul marsh", and called it "a scarred ground in

the midst of plenty." There's something wrong with the land.

- (core, "Breaking Into the Staging Yard") Perhaps the strange substance the sandhogs encountered under the "meadows" filtered *up* to the surface, not down from it. If Viv can get herself down there, she might find answers to more than just an industrial accident. Of course, the only way down is through the construction site. Molly's meaningful look hints that she's engaged in a bit of breaking and entering herself over the years.

Although her conversation with Molly should satisfy Viv that the horror comes from below, not above, a determined Viv may choose to visit the dump. The gate guard and workers confirm the following:

- La Guardia's orders stopped the daily delivery of 110 tons of ash and waste.
- None of the workers have seen anything like the substance the miners encountered.
- The packed ground on which they stand must run ten feet or more deep in sheer refuse accumulation, so they have no idea of what might be beneath it—nobody's seen that land for a long time, only this smoky waste.

#### MARK ARNOLD

**Scene Type:** Core

**Lead-Ins:** The Old Scab's Story, Probing the Hudson, Minding O'Mara, What Ira Saw, No Place for Snoops

**Lead-Outs:** Finding Ira Graber, Union Divided, Head Shrinking, The Union Line

Viv may choose to phone up Hudson Enterprises and ask to meet with Mr. Mark Arnold. Sufficient **Flattery** about the company or other Interpersonal approaches to his secretary gets her five minutes on his calendar. Or she can pull an ambush journalist's move and just show up.

Mark Arnold's outer office is done up in fashionable 20s-era bronze highlights to match the overall decor of the building. His secretary, a well-coiffed young woman in her late twenties, has a high, chipper voice, but Viv's ear detects a tremble

in it. At the time of her appointment, as soon as the secretary presses the buzzer to announce her, Mark Arnold bursts out of his office.

A good looking man in his mid-30s, Arnold sizes her up with hard eyes and invites her to get it over with. He volunteers the first two bullet points:

- Regarding negotiations, he can only comment that they have not yet concluded.
- Hudson Enterprises only wants to lead this city into a better future. He says their state-of-the-art elevator and depressurized project provided a far safer work environment than the rest of City Water Tunnel no. 2, on which half a dozen men have already died.
- The accident? A tragedy, although they must still determine what caused it and whether it was carelessness, or perhaps even sabotage by a disgruntled union worker.
- What he does know is that he found most of those men some call “scabs” in Hooverilles and breadlines, and they just wanted to do the work.
- (core, “Finding Ira Graber”) Why the young man in Bellevue—for which he blames union agitators—Arnold had seen him and his friend in the St. Francis breadline every day while walking to and from Penn Station. He offered them a job. Thanks to those union toughs holding Hudson hostage, one’s institutionalized, and the other man’s probably back in the same breadline again. Does she think the city’s better off now?

If Viv has heard Ira Graber’s story, Arnold switches tactics, and dismisses it as ridiculous. He chalks it up to a fragile mind unused to working underground. It takes a certain type, after all, to withstand the *weight* of rock and city above them.

Should Viv flat-out ask Arnold whether he or Hudson Enterprises sent the men after her, he simply notes that New York is a large and dangerous city with plenty of unfortunate types on the streets. Surely a woman with her penchant for sticking her nose into the affairs of powerful men has made plenty of enemies. **Assess Honesty** confirms that he does indeed believe what he’s saying, including the “powerful men” part.

(pipe, “Union Divided”) As she leaves, Arnold gives her a warning. If they know what’s good for

them, those union fellows will steer well clear of her. If he gets even a hint they’re slandering him to a paper, well, they won’t like the consequences.

Whether Viv pushes him, or accepts his responses and prepares to leave of her own accord, he suddenly turns surly and shouts into his intercom for his secretary to come immediately. He orders Viv to leave his office, berating his secretary for wasting his valuable time with busybodies. “Adrian Rush would never tolerate such behavior in a secretary!” The woman soon returns to her desk, crying.

### Powder Room Confidential

At this point, **Flattery**, **Reassurance**, or **Inspiration** and a clean hankie can convince the secretary that perhaps she should take a trip to the powder room with Viv to wash out her eyes. The switchboard girl can handle Mr. Arnold’s calls for a bit. While washing her face and reapplying powder and lipstick the secretary, Maude, squeaks out the first bullet point and sequential points in response to appropriate questions:

- She doesn’t know what’s come over Mr. Arnold since the accident, he never used to be this way. She used to be so proud to work for him.
- Viv saw the way he was back there, well that’s happening more and more often, and not just when she makes a mistake, like letting Viv in might’ve been. She can’t figure out what he expects of her, all of a sudden. And he’s been behaving so oddly.
- (pipe, “Head Shrinking”) He stopped taking his new ideas to Mr. Rush, like he used to, he just does them. And she caught him practicing giving speeches. Not speeches in front of a crowd but the kind she did before meeting her future in-laws. “Oh, certainly, Mr. Mayor, we’d be only too pleased to take on that for you. If you insist, Fiorello. Of course, men like you and I...” She’d been so excited to think the new Mayor was in there with him... but then there was no one and he was only talking at his window. He reacted furiously, of course.
- This started just after the accident. At first she felt bad for him, he went all to pieces about it, saying they’d never be able to get the work



- done now. Then he started staying out all night. He hired a bunch of drifters without Mr. Rush knowing. Even after the dust-up and Mr. Rush found out, such a fight they had, he still stays out far too late, but he says he's working.
- Maybe it's the influence of those drifters, giving him ideas. Otherwise she doesn't know what could have happened to him.

### FINDING IRA GRABER

**Scene Type:** Core

**Lead-Ins:** Mark Arnold, Bellevue

**Lead-Outs:** What Ira Saw

In a city full of wandering, hungry men, finding Ira may seem like an impossible task. But Viv has several pieces of evidence to go on. If she visited Bellevue, she learned from Nurse Ritter that he planned to go back to a breadline. Mark Arnold got more specific about the breadline (the St. Francis of Assisi church). She may revisit the Station House (p. 11) and use **Bargain**, or call on her Source O'Connor's **Cop Talk** to get a look at Graber's mug shot from the night of his arrest. If she wishes to make a copy of the mug shot, she may either spend a Push with the officer on duty or use her own **Photography** and develop it. Or, she may visit the Central Park Hooverville and use a Push of **Reassurance** to convince Rafael Escalente to help her identify Graber.

Viv finds Graber in the St. Francis of Assisi breadline, near Penn Station. Even without Arnold's lead, it only takes a morning to get through the area's five breadlines, as most wait in these lines for hours, but it only takes twenty minutes or so to scan the line. Escalente, if taking her there, explains that when you're not working, you don't have much else to do anyway. You get up, walk down there, stand in line, and eventually walk back up. The breadline doesn't start moving until at least 10am anyway and, unlike some folks, the monks have a smile and a kind word for the people coming through.

Graber stands in the line with his arms folded across his chest and right foot tapping incessantly

with nervous energy. He glances around every thirty seconds or so, scanning the passersby. The moment he detects Viv's focus on him, he breaks out of the breadline and runs into the street, where he is hit by a car. The accident occurred at no more than 15 miles per hour, but Graber's left leg bleeds freely from where a hood ornament gouged it. He flails in the street, attempting to get himself up, which only intensifies the blood flow. If Viv wants answers, she'd better do something about it now.

### SAVING IRA

**First Aid**

**Advance 6+:** Your hands ably find the exact spot to tie a tourniquet. He'll need medical attention as soon as possible, but you can hold a proper conversation while waiting for the ambulance to arrive. Proceed to "What Ira Saw."

**Hold 3-5:** You manage to staunch the bleeding, but Graber passes out after providing three of the possible answers in "What Ira Saw." Ask, and ask quickly.

**Setback 2 or less:** Despite your best efforts, Graber expires under your hands. His dying words? (core, "Breaking Into the Staging Yard") "Down, they're down...in the tunnels. He he took...one..." Take Problem 8, "Material Witness."

**Extra Problem:** Problem 9, "Covered in Blood".

### WHAT IRA SAW

**Scene Type:** Core

**Lead-Ins:** Finding Ira Graber

**Lead-Outs:** Breaking Into the Staging Yard, Mark Arnold, Head Shrinking

Ragged and bloody, Ira trembles as he answers Viv's questions about everything that's happened:

- (core, "Breaking Into the Staging Yard") Everything started when he took that job down in the tunnels. Down in the tunnels is where they are. Down in the tunnels. He doesn't even want to see that staging yard again. You can't build walls high enough.
- (pipe, "Head Shrinking") He ran because he's afraid. He heard what happened to Dan, the

fella he barely knew, and then saw what happened to Benny. He doesn't know what's going to happen, but he feels like he's being strangled, all the time. Something's trying to get to him, watching him. His heart beats too fast and he can't slow it down. It's been building, growing, inside him ever since he saw those things down in the cavern and...touched them.

- (pipe, "The Descent") This happened down in the water tunnel. The things he saw was big and round like...he would say eggs, but they weren't really hard like eggs. They were softish too, bent like a piece of fabric stretched around your arm, although they rolled ok. And big. Like snowglobes big enough you could fit a person inside them.
- (core, "Mark Arnold") It happened the first afternoon, after they came out. Mr. Arnold asked him and Benny and a big fella named Dan, the one who got pinched for robbing that pawn shop, to come back after supper, told them it'd be worth a sawbuck (\$10) each if they'd help him take care of a little problem up ahead.
- The accident left an enormous hole (If Viv has seen Gettler and his sample by this point, she has the information to deduce why this differs from the sandhogs' report of a small hole), but the really bad thing was what he saw beyond it. The hole opened into a massive cavern. It runs north-to-south-wise from what he can figure and diverting around it would be really tricky, better to go through and build the pipe like a normal above-ground pipe. Only these things ran all across it.
- Mr. Arnold said these things was some kind of natural formation and blowing a couple of them up caused all the trouble. He said to be real careful with them because whatever was inside could burn away through stone and boy did they see that. Mr. Arnold just wanted them moved out of the path of the pipeline. It took all four of them to roll one, including Mr. Arnold. The work made him feel real bad, at first he thought it might be the bends even though they said the pressure shouldn't be bad at all, but he realized later it was the things.
- At the end of the night, Mr. Arnold had them roll one up into the pipe. He said he wanted it

for testing, to figure out what it was made of. A couple of times, trying to get it up into the tunnel, he thought it would break and then everything would be quits for him.

- He doesn't know what happened to it after that, they put it into one of the wagons used to carry off the slag from blasting and he didn't see it the next morning when they came down.
- Mr. Arnold kept them working between the... things... which gave him real chills some days. He wanted a whole set of scaffolding built for the pipe so the other men could get through there in as little time as possible.

### HEAD SHRINKING

*Scene Type:* Alternate

*Lead-Ins:* Mark Arnold, Bellevue, What Ira Saw

*Lead-Outs:* Finding Ira Graber, Breaking Into the Staging Yard

Once she's encountered Connor O'Mara, Mark Arnold, Ira Graber, and possibly Benny Miller, Viv may wish to consult her Source in **Psychology**, Louisa Reynolds, to discuss the men's conditions. Doing so gives her Edge 14, "Popping the Swelled Head."

As understood by the psychological practices of the time, Louisa can tell her:

- Benny's change from hot-tempered to frequently murderous sounds to her like a case of homicidal mania, not fixated on a single person, but now directed at the entire world. Those suffering from homicidal mania don't have a particular reason to lash out violently, just a deep-seated urge to kill. Unless Viv can offer insights to help his doctors, she should probably avoid him for her own safety.
- (pipe, "The Bowery Bay Horror") Mark Arnold displays classic megalomania, a belief in his own power or importance. If Viv approaches him, she may want to play to his ego, as he's likely to overrate his own capacity and let something slip. Louisa notes Mark's not the first man Viv's handled who thought more of himself than he should, although perhaps the most deluded.



- Dan Willard certainly had kleptomania, an irrational need to steal even under conditions where he risked arrest. No one would act like that except under a strong internal compulsion. Clearly an extreme case.
- (core, “Finding Ira Graber”) If Viv has not yet met Ira, Louisa warns that Viv may want to approach him with caution. Should the player take this to heart when roleplaying in “Finding Ira Graber”, the Keeper may wish to improve numbers for the “Saving Ira” Challenge.
- (core, “Breaking Into the Staging Yard”) If Viv has met Ira, Louisa believes Ira Graber suffers from severe anxiety and possibly paranoia. He feels like everyone is out to get him. Given what’s happened to the men he recently spent time with, external forces may have reinforced his delusions. If Viv feels guilt over the accident, Louisa attempts to assuage it. She suggests that the best thing Viv can do for Ira is (if he’s alive) go down there and find answers which might help his doctors, or (if he’s dead) figure out what led to this, and make sure it doesn’t happen to anyone else.

These men may have experienced such symptoms before, either as moderate mental illnesses or personality flaws. By now, each has a full psychological disorder, one whose presence would not have allowed them to function this long. It’s possible existing issues were exacerbated by acute stress, but it seems awfully coincidental.

### UNION DIVIDED

**Scene Type:** Antagonist Reaction

**Lead-Ins:** Mark Arnold, No Place for Snoops, Gettler’s Analysis

**Lead-Outs:** Breaking Into the Staging Yard

This scene triggers if the player wants to engage the union again, instead of heading to the work site after talking with Mark Arnold and being threatened by his guards. The Keeper may also choose to use it if the scenario doesn’t feel dire or horrifying enough, within the limits of the player’s expressed desires.

Viv receives a phone call from Connor O’Mara’s wife, or a message delivered by one of the smaller O’Mara children, which reads, “Come here. You need to see what you’ve done.”

When Viv arrives at the O’Mara household, a red-eyed, angry Siobhan O’Mara hisses at her children to go outside or to a neighbor’s house. She leads Viv to the darkened sitting room, where Neil O’Mara lies on a couch (if at night, a single heavily-shaded lamp provides dim illumination) and motions to him. The bruises from his broken nose spread to blacken both his eyes. One ear has swollen severely and Viv can see the gaps in his gently wheezing mouth where several teeth used to be. His right arm is in a homemade sling.

If Viv tries to speak, Siobhan silences her and, after having let her seen the damage done to Neil, leads her into the kitchen, where she breaks into a hoarsely-quiet tirade conveying the following:

- She found Neil on her stoop earlier today, in this condition.
- She knows exactly who did this to Neil, as they kindly returned his union card and his father’s, both torn in half. She’s already spoken to Foley, the scumbag.
- Last night, one of the other men injured in the accident died. Mark Arnold claimed that since the union had slandered him to nosy reporters, he didn’t feel any need to keep up his end of their deal and pay death benefits. The man’s family was furious, as were the other men. They needed someone to blame, and Neil was that person.
- **Streetwise:** Viv knows bosses like Arnold use any excuse to avoid paying injured workers, even in dire circumstances.
- The families of the dying men pressured Foley into calling a meeting, which ended in them blackballing the O’Maras from the union. Siobhan is sure the beating was an extra touch from the boys of other dying men. Viv’s **Streetwise** tells her that if Foley feels any guilt about having directed Viv to the O’Maras, he certainly wouldn’t let it threaten his control of the union.
- She knew that snake wouldn’t pay anyway, but she’d expected to get something from the union, at least. With her husband not dead yet, she won’t be entitled to anything. With Neil hurt so

bad and blackballed, what's going to happen to her family?

## UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

### Cool

**Advance 5+:** Even when faced with the consequences of your investigation, you make an argument for the value of truth and answers over silence, calming Siobhan, at least a bit. Earn Edge 6, "Assertive."

**Hold 4:** You and Siobhan stand in uncomfortable silence, angry on her side and helpless on yours.

**Setback 3 or less:** You attempt a convincing explanation which trails off miserably as your explanations sound vacuous, even to you. Take on Problem 10, "Loss of Faith."

**Extra Problem:** Problem 11, "Hollow Promises".

If Viv has taken on Alexander Gettler's offer of work, she may choose to reassure Mrs. O'Mara that agents of the city have noticed the situation. Gettler hasn't promised money, of course, but she might be able to use his influence to shame Arnold into something.

Of her husband, Mrs. O'Mara says she's done what she can, and since he can't take food any longer, he's in the Lord's hands now. All they can do is wait. She advises Viv against seeing him, although her bitterness shows in a remark that Viv will do whatever she wants, advice or no.

### If Viv sees him:

A pillow half-covers his face, and you see a story in the trail of fresh blood crusted on its side. His right hand twitches where it hangs in exhaustion, and his one visible eye meets yours. With **Evidence Collection**, you see his agony, and realize from the pillow's position that he's tried to end his suffering, but lacks the physical strength.

His few labored wheezes sound deeper and come farther apart than they did a few days ago. His body appears to melt in slow motion. No bandages could keep up with the exposed, oozing skin and the bits of muscle and tendon that begin to show through. Mrs. O'Mara says that all she can do is wait. Surely only hours remain to him now.

## SEEING WHAT REMAINS OF CONNOR O'MARA

### Stability

**Advance 10+:** You somehow hold yourself together long enough to get back downstairs to sanity. At 12+, Earn Edge 7, "Standing Firm."

**Hold 5-9:** Your mind reels at the depth of suffering he must feel. Take Problem 12, "In Shock."

**Setback 4 or less:** Same as above, but you know you cannot let him continue to exist in this condition. Describe how you dispatch O'Mara, and take on Problem 13, "Put Him Out of His Misery."

If Viv engages with Neil before leaving, no matter what's happened with his father, she gets the impression that he's angry at her, angry at himself, and furious with the union. He feels even more helpless than he did when they first spoke.

### Confronting Foley

After witnessing what's happened to the O'Maras, Viv may wish to confront Foley. If the player feels inspired instead to immediately investigate the work site, but confronts Foley later, this scene may be adapted.

She may again find Foley at the union's HQ. From the atmosphere, she gets the impression that if she were a man, they'd hustle her out or even repeat what they did to Neil. Foley reluctantly provides the following defense:

- He wants to look out for everyone, but he doesn't control the men. If they vote for something, he won't overrule it. It was fraught, but if someone breaks with the union like that, something has to be done. They might have looked the other way if the consequences weren't so catastrophic, but would she like to face all those angry, heartbroken wives?
- He adamantly denies any allegations by Viv that he set up her to talk to Neil, and seems worried about it. She gets the sense that some men around the room find these allegations very interesting.

- (core, “Breaking Into the Staging Yard”) If she wanted to help, maybe she’d come around here with some answers. What’s she doing for them by riling up the bosses when they’re in the middle of a negotiation?

After just a few answers, Foley and the union men insist Viv leave--politely or roughly, as necessary. If the Keeper considers it in line with the story, one may follow her and confirm Foley’s complicity. His tone indicates something’s going to happen in the union, but also that she’s not welcome when or where it does.

### BREAKING INTO THE STAGING YARD

*Scene Type:* Core

**Lead-Ins:** What Ira Saw, Scouring the Ash Heaps, Head Shrinking, Gettler’s Analysis, Union Divided

**Lead-Outs:** The Descent, The Bowery Bay Horror, Alternate Denouement

A reporter worth her salt needs to get down into the tunnel and see all this for herself. The entrance to the work site stands on 20th St., north of the scene of the riot and Gemma Leone’s bedraggled pawn shop. In that most New York way, residents and shop owners have already found ways to pick up their lives and make do as they get things back to normal. A large, hand-painted banner “DAMAGED ITEMS HALF PRICE” hangs in front of Leone’s Pawn Shop.

The East River staging yard sits just south of the massive Astoria Light, Heat, and Power Company plant. It occupies a swath of land eventually designated for the plant’s expansion. Outside its ten-foot wooden fence, in a lighted gatehouse only big enough to hold a chair, a watchman guards the entrances, a locked door for the regular workers and a wide, chain-bound gate big enough to admit trucks and other construction vehicles. The watchman periodically leaves the gatehouse and makes rounds of the fence, flashing his light along the boards. If Viv gets a good look at his face, she recognizes him from her run-in, “No Place for Snoops.”

### GETTING PAST THE GUARD

*Stealth*

**Advance 5+:** You glide past the guard, pick the lock, and disappear inside.

**Setback 4 or less:** Well, now he sees you. Move to the next challenge, “Subduing the Guard”.

**Extra Problem:** Problem 14, “Obvious Trail”.

### SUBDUING THE GUARD

*Fighting*

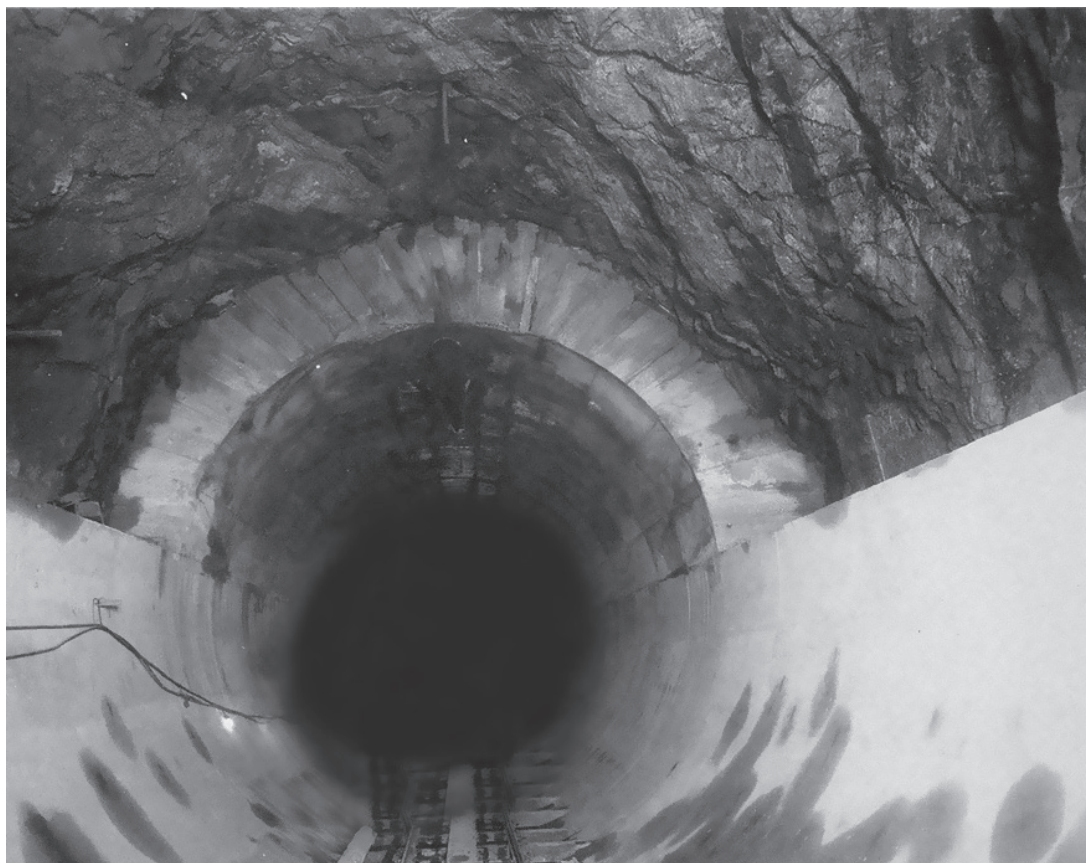
**Advance 9+:** You not only clock him cold, you stash and secure him inside the staging yard. You’ve got until the next shift arrives, at least.

**Hold 6-8:** You clock him hard enough that you can break into the staging yard and lock him out. It’ll buy you the time that it takes for him to get help and get back in, but things could get sticky later on.

**Setback 5 or less:** The guard gets you in a solid hold and secures you long enough to call for backup. Move on to “The Bowery Bay Horror”, p. 32..

Just beyond the entrance, Viv encounters the twin elevator system to which Mark Arnold referred. On one side, a large flatbed open elevator sits under a high roof, evidently meant to carry loads of freight and construction materials. Next to it, a smaller pod-shaped elevator with glass windows and doors appears more suited for human cargo. Along with various safety warnings are a printed list of instructions for operating the elevators. If Viv chooses to go down, move to “The Descent”, p. 29.

Viv may also choose to explore the staging yard instead of, or before, descending. The yard houses twenty-foot towers of unmixed concrete sediment, mixers, handcart-friendly wagons, and a pair of dump trucks. Tiers of tarpaulin-wrapped, twisted steel lie on a large, temporary structure. Even during the day, the sound of the power plant creates a strange sense of isolation rarely



experienced in 1930s New York.

Toward the East River side of the yard stand two wooden sheds, the first labeled “WARNING: Explosives” on all sides and the second, larger shed with a handwritten “KEEP OUT” hung over the handles of its doors. The yard’s only exits are on the western edge toward 20th Ave, a heavily-bolted pair of gates through which a truck might fit, and a smaller locked door, over which hangs one of only three lights in the staging yard. At night, the dimly-lit yard seems darker for its proximity to the power plant’s yellow glare. To the east, Viv may catch sounds from boats on the East River and see their lights flash past between the fence’s rails.

### WARNING: Explosives

The smaller wooden shed, which responds to **Lockpicking**, contains thirteen boxes of DuPont Extra Dynamite 60%, stacked against the wall. On its opposite side are several boxes of blasting caps. Without a General Ability in **Explosives**, Viv knows she has little chance of successfully

cobbling something together using these, although she may choose to take a stick and blasting cap with her—in separate pockets. If the player wants Viv to have familiarity with dynamite, they may supply a story for which she used **Research** to learn more about it. In that case, Viv would know the necessity of a blasting cap for an explosion and how comparatively safe modern dynamite is to handle.

### KEEP OUT

**Lockpicking** also opens the large shed. Whatever Hudson Enterprises *had* kept in here, it now holds only one thing, an enormous, pearly egg. Whether it’s the glow of the sun, the pale moonlight, or the dim yellow glare filtering in from the power plant, Viv can’t help wanting to touch it, at least a little. If Viv already touched another egg of her own volition and failed her Stability check, she automatically fails the test below.

After investigating the yard, and with the guard temporarily out of the way, Viv *may* choose to leave rather than descend below. Keepers may encourage

reticent players by introducing the voices of more security arriving on site, or asking the player to consider whether Vivian Sinclair would leave such momentous stones unturned. If the player remains adamant, move to “Alternate Denouement.”

## NOT TOUCHING THE EGG

### *Stability*

**Advance 8+:** You feel a brief psychic pull, as though something inside it wants to commune with you, but it was probably just your imagination.

**Setback 7 or less:** If not currently held, take on Problem 15, “Tendrils in the Mind.” If already holding Problem 15, the problem intensifies, becoming a Continuity Mythos shock.

## THE DESCENT

**Scene Type:** Core

**Lead-Ins:** Breaking Into the Staging Yard

**Lead-Outs:** The Bowery Bay Horror, Denouement

The pod-shaped elevator’s design allows any worker to operate it in an emergency. Shutting the doors and pulling the lever on its floor begins its descent. The elevator moves far more slowly than those she has used in New York’s buildings, and descent takes nearly five minutes. Should Viv attempt to work the freight elevator, she discovers its mechanism includes switches marked “lower” and “raise” and a button labeled “emergency stop.” She may throw the switch and hop on the elevator, but the GM may wish to note that someone *could* press the emergency stop button, and the elevator does not appear to have an override.

The elevator arrives at the second tier of two levels of open mesh walkways between valve controls, pipes to the surface, and switches. From here, engineers control the pressure of the tunnel’s water and any necessary shutoffs or flushes. Descending the stairs brings Viv to the tunnel and the opening of the freight elevator. Underground, Viv immediately notices the quiet. She has moved completely beyond the city’s noise, as though she’d shifted to another world.

## BEARING THE DEPTH

### *Stability*

**Advance 9+:** Looking around, you see evidence of the power humanity has exerted over the raw forces of natural stone. Earn Edge 8, “Unflappable.”

**Hold 5-8:** You experience the natural moment of awe and fear any surface-dweller feels on their first journey below. But you move forward.

**Setback 4 or less:** The size and weight and stillness of it all floods down on you. This rock and Earth’s molten core far beneath it—so old—this city so vast and populous. Your human life makes no more difference to this rock than an ant crawling on the surface. It stood long before men blasted through it and it will shift back, someday, as this human-made concrete crumbles into the stone from which it was formed. Take Problem 16, “Under Pressure.”

After switching on the lamps hung along the tunnel on deliberate outcroppings in the concrete and steel beams, Viv doesn’t have to worry much about illumination. She finds a staging area for the work, including carefully-secured blasting caps and dynamite, unmixed concrete and several mixers, curved steel beams, drills, pipe mold forms, headlamps, and flashlights. A half-dozen small rail carts with gasoline motors attached stand lined up along the side. Viv sees several large wagons, likely for carrying off slag, and other kinds of attachments which could be fitted onto them. Tracks run down the floor into the tunnel.

Given that the site of the accident is several miles southeast of here, Viv will likely want to take one of the refitted rail carts down the tunnel. Maneuvering it onto the tracks takes some effort, but as she’s not under duress does not require a test. The gasoline motor smells foul and its fumes, in this enclosed space, are doubtless unhealthy for the men who work around it regularly. At the end of the line, beyond the concrete and embedded rail, Viv must walk a final eighty feet or so through the blasted rock, ducking under scaffolds set up within a circular steel frame.

**Evidence Collection:** If Viv inspects the tunnel, she sees the details of its construction and



where the work shifted from skilled to unskilled labor. The tunnel is formed around a steel shell constructed within the path blasted out by O'Mara and his crew. Into this shell, workers poured and pressed concrete, which hardens three feet thick to create long-lasting walls. Blobby welds and rougher concrete show where amateur hands tried to match the sandhogs' decades of skill.

Another twenty feet beyond the steel framework, a cavern stretches from about forty feet to the right down another eighty feet to the left. The distance across at the tunnel's entrance might be only fifty feet. In the light from whatever source of illumination Viv has brought along past the tunnel lights, giant white globules stretch off in either direction, like clumps of insect eggs on the underside of a leaf. A clear path between them, perhaps 25 feet wide, stretches from just below the opening down to the far wall.

**Streetwise:** On the path, someone has laid out the base of a steel frame and heaped slag rock underneath. As a New Yorker, Viv has watched enough concrete pouring to see how this might support a stable pipe, right through the middle of the cavern. Sandhogs might attribute the difference in quality only to inferior craftsmanship.

From the edge of the water tunnel, it's only about a three feet drop to an ovoid crater in the cavern's floor. The edges of the opening gape wide in comparison to the controlled rock tunnel she just passed through. Around the opening, her light reveals a wave-like imprint of something splashing into the rock from inside the cavern, hard or caustic enough to leave a mark. In both the crater and the imprint, the rock bubbles slightly.

**Photography:** The strange bubbles in the splash mark and crater floor call to mind the time Viv's skill with darkroom chemicals led an expedition leader (the player may decide the kind of expedition) to deputize her to clean and photograph fossils. She recalls how those acid baths ate away only the soft stone, leaving harder, fossilized substances behind. It looks as though something similar happened here, although with stone, not fossils.

At any point, Viv may wish to use **Photography** to obtain grainy photographs of her surroundings. The lights hung along the wall and

any source of illumination she brings will provide only minimal light, but she may make a Difficulty 3 Quick Test with Preparedness to see if she brought flash bulbs—if she hadn't already specified them.

A closer look at the eggs shows them to be less white and firm than they appear from a distance. Their surface appears almost soapy with a complex shifting of colors and refractions. It appears far more malleable than eggshell, as Ira indicates if Viv has spoken with him. Of course, confirming that would mean touching an egg.

## TOUCHING THE EGG

### *Stability*

**Advance 11+:** You marvel at the structure and substance of this enormous globe, but something about it chills you.

**Setback 10 or less:** You sense it, the power and life inside this protective sphere. And it senses you back. Take Problem 15, "Tendrils in the Mind".

**Extra Problem:** Problem 24, "Dissolved".

Viv may decide at this point that she needs to destroy the eggs, here and now. This would serve as an entirely appropriate alternate ending to the scenario. However, the GM should remind the player of two things before she makes any such attempt. First, destroying these now would preclude any scientific attempt by Gettler, or her source Nettie Rice, to study the substance of which they're composed, and the acid they contain. Still, the risk may outweigh a loss to science.

Second come the logistical implications. Viv has seen how the acid ate away at the rock. If she manages to destroy all these eggs, the chain will certainly eat away the entire floor of this cavern and might collapse the end of the tunnel as well. In collapsing the end of the tunnel, she risks her own chance of escape. She may certainly use her gun, retrieve blasting caps and dynamite (or have brought them with her) and make a best effort. Viv does not have skill in Explosives and the GM should work with the player to devise a reasonable Quick Test or argument for use of the ability. Anyone can *try* to set off dynamite.

After Viv has seen the cavern, unless she made it down behind the guard's back and without taking on Problem 14, she hears the sound of a motor and voices coming her way down the shaft. Whether the next shift has arrived and noticed her tracks, or the guard came back with help, two men cautiously make their way through the tunnel, shining flashlights in an attempt to discover who's got the lights on and what they're up to.

## EVADING THE GUARDS

### *Stealth*

**Advance 6+:** They don't notice you until they hear the sound of their cart driving off. Meanwhile, they've got to weave back through the eggs to get to the tunnel. Take +2 to "The Long Way Out".

**Hold 4-5:** You barely jump into the cart and start back along the rail before you hear the sound of the second cart's engine revving behind you.

**Setback 4 or less:** You find yourself trapped in the cavern with no way back to the cart. Unless you make a suicidal move at destroying the eggs while hidden among them, the guards catch you, and you move on to "The Bowery Bay Horror."

As the track ends, Viv slides into the main underground staging area. As long as Viv got a Hold or higher on the handcart ("The Long Way Out" Challenge), she has sufficient distance to get on the elevator and start figuring out the controls before her pursuers catch up. If they're close behind her, she barely has time to run up the flight of stairs and slam the doors of the elevator before they catch up. As her elevator begins moving up, she sees them headed back down to the freight elevator. Ascending, the elevator travels even more slowly than on the descent.

## ESCAPING THE STAGING YARD

### *Fleeing*

**Advance 10+:** You weave between mounds, vehicles, and sheds in a way that convinces any pursuers that you've gone in an entirely different direction. You've bought yourself those critical moments to pick the smaller door's lock and escape. Earn Edge 10, "Putting It Behind You."

**Setback 9 or less:** You see the gate, but can't make it there before your pursuers or unexpected guards cut you off. Move to "The Bowery Bay Horror"

**Extra Problem:** Problem 18, "Nightmares".

## THE LONG WAY OUT

### *Driving*

**Advance 7+:** You quickly get the handle of this machinery and put it into overdrive. You follow the path of the rail back to the elevator and are headed aloft long before they arrive. Take on Edge 9 "Head Start."

**Hold 4-6:** You manage to keep ahead of the men, but not by much.

**Setback 3 or less:** Your pursuers swoop up behind, neatly docking their car to the back of yours. One stays to drive while the other climbs over and takes you prisoner. You complete the ride together and, at the end, they take you to "The Bowery Bay Horror."

**Extra Problem:** Problem 17, "Adrenaline Rush"

If she escapes the staging yard, Viv has bought herself enough time to make a clean getaway into the streets of Queens. By the time the men realize she's not hiding in the yard, she's far enough gone for them to be unsure how to track her.

## THE BOWERY BAY HORROR

**Scene Type:** Conclusion

**Lead-Ins:** Breaking into the Staging Yard, The Descent

**Lead-Outs:** Denouement

Viv's captors bind her hands and take her to the larger shed on which the KEEP OUT sign hangs. The shed still smells vaguely of machine oil and marks on the floor indicate that it had recently stored some kind of heavy equipment, all of which has been dragged out to make space for its one central feature... the missing egg. If thrown in with it, it does not tempt Viv as it might should she approach it of her own volition.

After some discussion and argument, one of the men decides to chloroform her, just to make sure she doesn't get up to nothing. Viv awakens sometime after dark (if it wasn't already night; if it was, she may wonder for a moment if it's the same night) to hear the sound of the men's voices outside the door. Her head aches but she doesn't pick up any new Problems for her situation.

### Facing Arnold

Light from the staging yard slants into the shed as one of Arnold's toughs open the door. Several more flank him and Viv notes guns and clubs on their hips. Arnold already holds a gun, which he points at her.

- He thanks Viv for coming to him. If he'd done this on the streets, she'd have been so much harder to catch without a fuss. Now? He doesn't even have to worry about what to do with her body.
- He'd wondered about exactly what happened to those men, those miners. He only saw a little of it. Now he's going to shoot the egg and see exactly what happens and how it affects her. If she tries to run, he'll shoot her too, only he doesn't want to accidentally kill her. That would spoil it.
- Eventually she'll just dissolve and disintegrate on the floor of this shed and nobody will ever know what happened to Vivian Sinclair.

Using her insight from Louisa Reynolds and **Flattery**, Viv may stall him by asking him to clear up some questions before she dies. Surely he has vision she wasn't smart enough to pick up on. Like any egomaniac on the cusp of a presumed triumph, Mark Arnold provides the following answers:

- He brought the egg up here because he knew fate intended for him to find it. Somehow, it's the key to unraveling his glory. On reflection, though, another egg might do. **Assess Honesty** detects that he's trying to convince himself another egg would do as well - he apparently feels a genuine, if bizarre, bond with this one.
- Before the accident, he was a lackey. That night he went down to see the extent of the damage and discovered them, he discovered he was really meant for something more.
- He's come here many times since, to commune with it. There's something alive in there and he knows it makes him stronger, wiser, ready to replace that fool Rush, if only Viv hadn't interfered.
- He hadn't planned to use the scabs forever. They were disposable men. He just had to get the tunnel through the cavern, blast a hole on the other side, and he'd pull it off—a miracle. If only they hadn't turned out to be so useless, hardly men at all.
- That's why he found and brought in these men (the guards/men who jumped Viv). It takes tough men to get jobs done and these are the kind of men he can count on. (The guards present don't react to this statement.)
- Rush doesn't get it. He thinks you can negotiate with a union, that you don't need *initiative*.
- Now he knows he must wait. If this is an egg, then it's all about waiting, no matter how hard Rush pushes him. Rush has no vision. Only he has vision. And soon, he'll know what comes next, he can tell it.
- If reminded of the danger the eggs might pose to the water pipe (and its contents) if they burst...or hatched... he waves it away. The eggs existed for *him*...

If Viv spoke with Arnold's secretary, and discussed him with her source Louisa Reynolds, she can tell that he has indeed fallen deep into the throes of megalomania.



During Arnold's monologuing, Viv may work out various kinds of Quick Tests she could use to escape the situation, most likely **Athletics** or **Fighting**. Only her hands are bound, leaving physical options open. Set a reasonable difficulty for the tests, but allow Viv to be in the moment of succeeding when the dhole awakens. If the player freezes, Arnold comes back to himself after making a suitable number of megalomaniac statements. Either way, as the action begins, Viv feels the vibrations in the floor of the shed. Describe Viv's success at any Quick Tests, or her failure and the antagonists' attempted response, just as...

A white, blobby worm-thing (baby dhole) explodes out of the egg, only about 8 feet long and three in diameter. It writhes, smashing at the sides of the shed. Arnold's reverence changes to terror. He gets off one shot at it, which seems to have no effect, before all hell breaks loose. Before Viv can move, she must make the following test.

## HIDEOUS HATCHLING

### *Stability*

**Penalty:** -2 if holding Problem 15, "Tendrils in the Mind," whether for this egg or another.

**Advance 12+:** You see it now, some kind of great worm or slug, perhaps a prehistoric leftover which the miners awakened by exposing it to air like a spore. Whatever seemed alien or strange about them surely came from their enormous size and the disturbing effects of exploding them. Yet surely, these are things of Earth and merely out of historical time. Counter any Mythos Shock card with this clarity which surely explains all the strangeness you've encountered.

**Hold 4-11:** Whether this thing is alien or prehistoric, it should not exist here in 20th century Queens, in this era of steel and machinery. You escape the staging yard safely, but take on Problem 18, "Nightmares."

**Setback 3 or less:** You stand, spellbound, whether in awe or horror, as its small body comes crashing down on you with unexpected force, smashing your bones on the floor of the shed. Workers from the power plant find your broken body near the lifeless corpses of Arnold and one of the guards. Take on Problem 19, "Shattered."

**Spending Edges:** Any to Stability or General / Mental

If she can withstand the mental shock, nobody will stop Viv from running, as the guards have gone into the self-protection business. Whether or not Viv escapes, Arnold stands mesmerized by the event which he had thought would bring his transformation. As the fledgling body flails in search of eggs to consume or a path of escape, it tosses Arnold aside. He flies against a pile of steel and his neck twists with a sickening snap. As for the other men, of four present, two escape out the front gate, leaving it open, while another runs back to the elevator to get himself underground. The fourth, like Arnold, froze and died, crushed under the powerful throes of the infant menace.

If Viv looks back or returns later, she sees the devastation it wreaks on the staging yard as it thrashes itself towards the East River edge of the yard. There, it burrows into the gravelly bank and seems to vanish below the bed of the river. The rocks, sand, and bits of waste thrown from East River boats shift for a while on the bank's surface and then settle into a disturbed pattern.

## Avoiding the Horror

Viv may successfully complete her adventure without ever witnessing the hatching of Arnold's pet egg. If so, essentially the same scenario unfolds, although to Mark Arnold alone. By the time police, Gettler, Rush, or others whom Viv may engage make it to the staging yard, they discover the havoc wreaked by the newly-hatched dhole. Mark Arnold's body lies crushed under flattened piles of steel and fine-ground stone. Something writhed here, recently, before bursting through the fence on the East River side. The gravelly sand along the river's edge oozes in a discomfiting way which suggests perhaps it didn't go into the water...

**DENOUEMENT***Scene Type:* Denouement*Lead-Ins:* The Descent, The Bowery Bay Horror

If Viv survives to the coda, she may determine how she wants to use the information she has to resolve the situation, whether by going to Gettler, bringing the entire problem to Rush (whom Arnold seems to have kept in the dark on most of this), marshalling the union to investigate below, or taking it to her editor. Her discoveries within the cavern convince Gettler that the city must destroy the rest of the eggs for public safety. This effectively halts the construction project, as the acid works down through the stone, lowering the cavern's floor by another 50 feet. Either way, Hudson Enterprises folds soon after the incident at its staging yard and its inability to address the union's concerns.

After resolving any other elements of her coda, Viv flashes forward to September 23, 1935, when she picks up the New York Times and reads "GREAT WORLD FAIR FOR CITY IN 1939 ON SITE IN QUEENS," "City to Lend New Park," built on what had been the valley of ashes and...what may still lie beneath.

**ALTERNATE DENOUEMENT***Scene Type:* Denouement*Lead-Ins:* Breaking Into the Staging Yard

With no more than hints of wrongdoing, Ira's statements from his recovery bed in one of Bellevue's regular ward/Viv's summary of a dead Ira's testimony, and Viv's own attestation of witnessing one of these strange egg-things while illegally on company property, it takes Gettler weeks to get a warrant. The judge only backs down when Mark Arnold mysteriously vanishes. A search of the staging yard finds nothing but ordinary construction equipment. A descent below finds the cavern empty of any eggs, although it has sunk another fifty feet and Gettler detects in the rock residual traces of the same acid substance from the miner's clothes.

Hudson Enterprises folds under its inability to complete the project, the shaft lies abandoned, and Viv must resolve Problem 20, "Too Little, Too Late" in her coda.

## ANTAGONIST REACTIONS

Trigger	Reaction	Setback	Hold	Advance	Extra Problem
Viv holds Problem 3, "Miffed Miners"	A miner's wife comes up to her in the street and accuses her of interfering in the whole thing. <i>Cool.</i>	2 or less. You start doubting your own abilities. Take on Problem 22, "Illegitimate"	3-5: Viv successfully defends her motives and promises to provide results.	6+: You win her over. Gain Edge 12, "In to Win."	Problem 11, "Hollow Promises"
Viv holds Problem 13, "Put Him Out of His Misery"	Sinead O'Mara sends police to interview Viv, the last person to see her husband alive. <i>Cool.</i>	1 or less. Viv is briefly charged with the murder before a judge finds the evidence insufficient. Problem 20: "Too Little, Too Late."	2-5: Viv quashes any suspicions of murder.	6+: Viv eloquently lays out the pathos of O'Mara's situation. Gain Edge 6: "Assertive"	n/a
Viv holds Problem 8, "Material Witness"	Lt. O'Connor comes by to see why Viv left the scene of an accident. <i>Cool.</i>	1 or less. Viv's friendship with O'Connor chills.	2-4: Viv manages to patch things up, but O'Connor urges her to work with the police in future.	5+: O'Connor admits Viv had good reason to keep going with her investigation.	n/a
Mark Arnold decides Viv didn't take his warning seriously. (occurs after "No Place for Snoops")	The same three men jump Viv again, this time with the intent to do her harm. <i>Fighting</i>	2 or less: Viv takes on Problem 21: "Stabbed".	3-9: Viv gets away.	10+: Viv cleanly takes out her attackers, earning Edge 11, "Dishing it Out".	Problem 7: "Hobbled"

## Ex Astoria Problem Cards

### PROBLEM 1

#### Scanty Copy

You spent so much time trying to get back on his trail that you have almost nothing to report to your boss. Photographs of the riot and fire appear on the front page of the *Herald* tomorrow, but without your story or byline.



### PROBLEM 2

#### Harried

You nearly lost him in the subway crowd. The near miss left your nerves on edge. Succeed at a Difficulty 4 Quick Test of Cool not to snap at the next person who irritates you—whether Escalante or your boss. Or Take Time to get your head straightened out to discard this card.



### PROBLEM 3

#### Miffed Miners

You'd do better presenting yourself as some kind of friend to the victims of industrial accidents if you had the stomach to back it up. Even union men not present below hear what happened and go frosty, though they cooperate. Get rid of this problem by ensuring Neil knows of the case's outcome.



### PROBLEM 4

#### In Hot Water *Continuity*

News gets back to Lt. O'Connor and sours your relationship. It's not just that people know you and he are friends, it's that he expected better of you. Resolve this card by assisting the police in some way or Taking Time to connect with him.



### PROBLEM 5

#### Twitchy

For a moment, you wondered if the police caught you whether they'd lock you up right there. Paranoid, sure, but it's left you shaken. Take a -2 to your next **Cool** test..



### PROBLEM 6

#### Off Guard

You've gotten so caught up in your own successes that you worry more about not being able to put together all the details of a story than the physical perils into which your work might take you. Take a -2 to your next **Fighting** or **Fleeing** test and discard this card.



## PROBLEM 7

**Hobbled**

You managed to hold it together while the men threatened you, but once they leave, you realize the sharp twinge in your knee is more than the awkward position in which you stood. Whether on purpose or as a side effect of their threat, they left you temporarily hobbled. Take a -2 to Athletics and Cool tests until you Take Time to get medical attention and a brace.



## PROBLEM 8

**Material Witness**

The police will want a statement. Take Time to make it now, opening yourself to an Antagonist Reaction on your way back to the work site, or deal later with hostile cops who eventually track you down from the statements of other witnesses.



## PROBLEM 9

**Covered in Blood**

You didn't let anything stop your efforts to save Graber, definitely not worry over a few blood stains. The bloodstains come off a bit differently when you're not in the middle of working over a dying man. You can't Push with Interpersonal abilities until you Take Time to resolve your sartorial situation.



## PROBLEM 10

**Loss of Faith**

You let things get out of hand and people got hurt. Maybe you could have approached this differently, gotten fuller union support, done something. You've lost faith in the worthiness of what you do. Take a -2 to your next General/Mental test.



## PROBLEM 11

**Hollow Promises**

In convincing others that the miners made the right choice in speaking to you, you promise that things will work out well for the O'Mara family in the end. Resolve this card during the coda (or before), such as by using remaining Pushes to convince Adrian Rush he should generously compensate the families of injured miners.



## PROBLEM 12

**In Shock**

You just witnessed a new level of human suffering. Take a -2 to Mental Abilities and you can't Push with Interpersonal Abilities until you Take Time to recover or reconnect with something which makes you feel the possibility of goodness again.



## PROBLEM 13

**Put Him Out of His Misery***Continuity*

You know you took the only course open to a merciful person, but it doesn't make you feel any better. If O'Mara's family realize the truth, they may use it against you. If Gettler does, he may charge you. And even if you know you did him a mercy, you still must live with having taken a life. Resolve by spending a Push to improve their quality of life.



## PROBLEM 14

**Obvious Trail**

You manage to get past the guard and successfully into the work site, but in your haste, you don't have time to cover your tracks. You've bought yourself some time below ground, but expect company.



## PROBLEM 15

**Tendrils in the Mind***Mythos Shock* ☆

Your perspective slowly warps in tune with your deepest character flaw. Decide Viv's worst vice. How does cosmic contact whisper of her rightness and convince her to ignore voices of reason around her? A fastidious sense of dress could become a fixation on clothes. A fear your rival Lawrence Ames will scoop your story turns to mild paranoia. If you take on this Problem twice, it becomes a continuity Problem.



## PROBLEM 16

**Under Pressure**

You can't shake the weight and the scale of what you experienced beneath the surface. Lose a die on your next Stability test.



## PROBLEM 17

**Adrenaline Rush**

Flying through the tunnel leaves your head spinning with the combination of thrill and biochemistry. Take -2 to your next Mental Ability Test and then discard.



## PROBLEM 18

**Nightmares**  
*Continuity*

You wake nightly in a cold sweat, half-remembering dreams in which you are fleeing, always fleeing. The dark pit of the city threatens to swallow you up. Something far more horrible lurks above if only you could see it and run faster. Counter by spending an Edge giving benefits to either Cool or Stability.



## PROBLEM 19

**Shattered***Continuity***Mythos Shock** 

You'll live, but only after dozens of surgeries and time in a sanitarium doing rehabilitation. As for the psychological damage, what you saw before it crushed you, you'll carry that with you even longer.



## PROBLEM 20

**Too Little, Too Late***Continuity*

You lose weeks of bylines. Your editor starts assigning you the stories nobody else wants. The general public only cares briefly about the sensationalism and you have to start working your way back up the newspaper's hierarchy.



## PROBLEM 21

**Stabbed**

This time, they mean business. -3 to your next General/Physical test and -2 to all subsequent tests. Counter by Taking Time to see a doctor. If you don't resolve this card, you grit your way through the story but collapse and die at the end.



## PROBLEM 22

**Illegitimate**

You spend enough time proving yourself to others, you don't have time to start proving yourself to yourself too. Take a -2 to General/Mental tests until suffering a Setback, then discard.



## PROBLEM 23

**Nettie's Nettled**

Nettie seems bent on doing two lifetimes' work in one, but she can't manage two lifetimes and your urgent call, right when her experiments were at a sensitive stage and she had midterms to grade. Smooth out your relationship by Taking Time to help her catch up on some administrative tasks and bring her some real food.



## PROBLEM 24

**Dissolved**

Whatever you use to touch it dissolves in your hand, and you let it go just in time. Your brain recoils in shock at your close escape, and fixates what could have happened. You have lost the item, and take a -2 to General/Mental tests until suffering a Setback, then discard.



# Ex Astoria Edge Cards

EDGE 1

## Neil's Gratitude

You proved your grit and treated his father with respect. After leading you back downstairs, Neil shakes your hand. "It means a lot. If you need a hand with this case, Miss Sinclair..." Spend this card to give you +2 to a Stability test or bring in Neil as your backup.



EDGE 2

## Warm-Hearted

You know you're a force for good in this world. Spend this card to take a +2 to your next Cool test.



EDGE 3

## Light-Fingered

Feeling light of foot and finger, spend for a +1 to your next General/Physical test.



EDGE 4

## Sharp Senses

You're ready for whatever comes next. Take +2 to your next Fighting or Fleeing test.



EDGE 5

## On Top of Your Game

Someone thinks they can get between you and a story. That someone clearly knows little of Vivian Sinclair. Take an extra die to your next Mental test.



EDGE 6

## Assertive

You convincingly back up your belief that you're doing the right thing. Discard to make a Push. This Push may be used on Ernest Foley to reinstate the Connor O'Mara's pension because you'll make his life hell if he doesn't. It may also be used on Adrian Rush to resolve Problem 11, "Hollow Promises".





EDGE 7

**Standing Firm**

You have looked into the hell of this man's suffering and felt only pity, not horror. Spend to take an additional die on a Stability Test.



EDGE 8

**Unflappable**

Your mind remains complete in itself, confident in the power of humans and the many ways science and industry have shaped this country for the better. Spend to recover from the effects of a Mythos Shock.



EDGE 9

**Head Start**

You've picked up momentum and you keep it going. Spend to take a +2 to your a General/Physical test.



EDGE 10

**Putting It Behind You**

As the door to the staging yard slams behind you, your head clears. You see everything as a story, divorced from the horrifying real world consequences. You can fix it. Spend to recover from the effects of a Mythos Shock.



EDGE 11

**Dishing It Out**

Spend for a Push or an extra die on a General/Physical Test.



EDGE 12

**In to Win**

You not only convince the woman, you remind yourself of past successes and lives you've saved or changed. Spend to take a +2 to a General/Mental Test.



EDGE 13

**Gettler Owes You**

You've got a friend in the city's most senior toxicologist. He doesn't have much funding, but he's got the equivalent of a Chemistry Push, a Bureaucracy Push, or an introduction to just the person Viv needs to know in the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner.



EDGE 12

**In to Win**

You not only convince the woman, you remind yourself of past successes and lives you've saved or changed. Spend to take a +2 to a General/Mental Test.





## VIVIAN SINCLAIR

*Investigative Journalist*

### INVESTIGATIVE ABILITIES

Accounting   
Assess Honesty   
Bargain   
Bureaucracy   
Cryptography   
Evidence Collection   
Flattery   
History   
Inspiration   
Locksmith   
Oral History   
Photography   
Reassurance   
Research   
Streetwise

### GENERAL ABILITIES

Athletics   
Cool   
Disguise   
Driving   
Filch   
Fighting   
First Aid   
Fleeing   
Preparedness   
Sense Trouble   
Shadowing   
Stability   
Stealth

### STORY

Pad and pencil in hand, journalist Vivian Sinclair tracks down leads, grills witnesses, and turns in hair-raising stories of corruption, crime, and parts of the city's underbelly most would rather not see. Where a detective sees a case, Viv sees a story. She'll follow it relentlessly to its conclusion, even putting her life in danger to get at the truth.

### SOURCES



#### LT. JOSEPH O'CONNOR, Detective

Cop Talk, Forensics, Intimidation, Law, Streetwise

*His honesty and honor is bigger than his bulb nose. Lt. O'Connor serves as a valuable ally to shake up or question suspects.*



#### ASTELLE "STELLA" ABRAMS, Amateur Occultist

Architecture, Craft, Cthulhu Mythos, Occult, Theology

*A bohemian bombshell easily identified by her heavy kohl makeup, bangles, and robe-like dresses; it's no wonder Viv and Stella were once an item.*



#### ESTEBAN MANUEL ARAGON GONZALES, Explorer

Anthropology, Archeology, Art History, Geology, Outdoorsman

*A first generation Cuban immigrant, Esteban caught wanderlust early. He guides amateur archeological expeditions across the world and has found many mysterious idols.*



#### ANETTE "NETTIE" RICE, Professor

Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, Languages, Physics

*In her opinion, journalism could use a generous dose of the scientific method. Clad in tweed and over-caffeinated, she's here to help.*



#### LOUISA REYNOLDS, Nurse

Medicine, Pharmacy, Psychology

*Viv's third cousin is a stern, no-nonsense woman in her mid 40's. While neither a doctor nor psychiatrist, she's absorbed a vast amount of knowledge of medicine.*